



NEWS

From the Office of the New York State Inspector General
Kristine Hamann

Contact: Kate Gurnett
(518) 474-1010

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Armory Superintendent Indicted in Bribes

Inspector General Kristine Hamann and state Attorney General Andrew Cuomo announced Wednesday a 31-count indictment against James Jackson, the former Superintendent of the Lexington Avenue Armory on charges including extortion and bribery.

Today's indictment, unsealed in New York State Supreme Court, charged Jackson with multiple felonies for demanding more than \$30,000 from businesses that used the Armory, including the Marc Jacobs fashion shows.

The Inspector General investigated after it got a complaint that Jackson, 56, was pocketing extra cash beyond what renters were required to pay. On other occasions, Jackson asked for free gym or computer equipment for renting the facility.

For his September, 2006 show, for example, Marc Jacobs' event producer allegedly approved the \$9,300 purchase of two Bowflex fitness machines for the troops that use the armory. Jacobs' event producer has rented the Armory for his spring and fall New York shows since 1998.

"We found a pattern of payoffs to Jackson that covered nearly a decade," Inspector General Kristine Hamann said.

Shortly after Jackson tapped a rug show producer for \$1,500, an undercover investigator for the Inspector General posed as the rug show's representative and made the cash exchange with Jackson leading to his arrest. The 32-year state employee of the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs (DMNA) was then fired.

Here is the Inspector General's undercover shot of Jackson accepting a bribe in the IG sting operation that led to his arrest:



Inspector General Kristine Hamann said she is expanding her investigation and audit into seven other armories in New York City.

“As the state’s internal watchdog, it

is our role to ensure that armories are properly run and that no state worker approaches the public for an illegal purpose,” she said. “As a state employee, Mr. Jackson's job was to maintain the integrity of the Lexington Avenue Armory, not to extort funds and divert them for his own use. We must ensure that those who rent New York’s armories can do so through a fair and open process.”

The state's armories were created for use by the military and the public and are intended as community assets. As part of the public role, armories offer lower rental rates than many commercial spaces.

Attorney General Andrew Cuomo said: “In cases in which we find public employees abuse their positions for personal gain, it is not just a violation of law but a betrayal of public trust. We will continue to combat public corruption across all levels of government and hold public servants accountable for dishonest acts such as the bribery schemes exposed today.”

Inspector General Hamann encourages the public to contact her office to report any fraud or misconduct either by or against a state employee or state agency.