



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott

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FORMER PROGRAM DIRECTOR OF BRONX NOT-FOR-PROFIT CONVICTED OF BRIBERY FOR SOLICITING \$100,000 IN HOME IMPROVEMENTS FROM CONTRACTOR WHO RECEIVED WORK FROM THE NOT-FOR-PROFIT

New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott announced that Satnarine Seebachan, age 51, of Glen Cove, NY, the former program director of Bronx Shepherds Restoration Corporation (Bronx Shepherds) was convicted of bribery after a trial before United States District Judge George B. Daniels.

Inspector General Scott stated: "Justice has been served by this jury's verdict. The defendant was convicted of abusing his position of trust in overseeing bids and awarding contracts that utilize funds designed to assist New Yorkers in need. The jury has determined this defendant wrongfully engaged in such conduct for personal gain. I stand committed to vigorously investigating such matters, and ensuring that any person placed in a position of trust is held to the highest standards of integrity. The close cooperation between my office and the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York resulted in the defendant's abuse coming to an appropriate end in our court system."

Until last year, Seebachan was program director at Bronx Shepherds, a not-for-profit corporation established to provide housing and housing restoration in the Bronx. Two of the programs - the Weatherization Assistance Program and the Home Program - were funded by the federal government through contracts with New York State Homes and Community Renewal. At Bronx Shepherds, Seebachan was in charge of the bidding selection process, as well as choosing and paying construction companies that were to perform the necessary work on the buildings, apartments and houses funded by these programs.

According to the federal indictment and the evidence at trial, thousands of dollars in home improvements were made to Seebachan's house by a contractor who received weatherization assistance and home renovation contracts for low and middle-income residents on federal assistance. Seebachan solicited and accepted approximately over \$100,000 worth of labor, materials and supplies from a contractor, with the intent to steer work from Bronx Shepherds to the contractor.

While the contractor was performing work and supplying materials to Seebachan's Glen Cove home, he bid for and received numerous contracts with Bronx Shepherds under the federally funded programs paid through contracts with New York State. The investigation revealed

Seebachan received approximately over \$100,000 in labor and materials from the Bronx Shepherds affiliated contractors.

The evidence at trial established that Seebachan:

- Received over \$90,000 in exterior renovation and repair work and concrete beautification work at his home.
- Received over \$43,000 of marble and marble installation services in his home paid for by a contractor.

Seebachan was found guilty of one count of bribery concerning an organization that received federal program funds. He is scheduled to return to court for a sentencing hearing on January 30, 2014, and faces a maximum of 10 years in prison

Inspector General Scott thanked Preet Bharara, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and his staff, Assistant United States Attorneys Carrie H. Cohen and Rebecca Ricigliano, for their assistance with investigating and prosecuting this case.

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