



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott

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QUEENS NOT-FOR-PROFIT EXEC EMBEZZLED PUBLIC FUNDS TO COVER HER POSH LIFESTYLE WITH MAIDS AND NANNIES, A PERSONAL SPA AND LUXURY FURNISHINGS

NEW YORK CITY - New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott, Robert L. Capers, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, and Diego Rodriguez, Assistant Director-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office (FBI), today announced the federal indictment of the head of a Queens not for profit on charges she embezzled approximately \$100,000 in federal and state funds meant to serve the developmentally disabled to subsidize her posh personal lifestyle, including maids and nannies, a personal spa and luxury furnishings for her home.

Yolanda Vitulli, 52, formerly of Merrick, NY., and now of Mohnton, PA., was indicted today by a federal grand jury in Brooklyn on a charge of embezzling public funds.

Between January 2001 and May 2016, Vitulli has served as the Executive Director of Tender Care Human Services Inc. ("Tender Care"), a not-for-profit social service provider based in Queens, New York, that provided services to individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities throughout the metropolitan New York City area. Tender Care received approximately \$3 million in federal and New York State Medicaid funding each year.

An investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott and federal law enforcement partners found that between 2009 and May 2014, Vitulli used the charity's funds to pay housekeepers who were employed at her personal residence and who cleaned, did laundry and provided childcare services for Vitulli.

Additionally, between January 2012 and November 2013, Vitulli used stolen Tender Care funds to hire a contractor to purchase and install a Bahama Spas hot tub, which promises to "bring a sense of vacation to your backyard and a sense of serenity to your life." She also allegedly used the taxpayer-subsidized charitable funds for the installation of a new dishwasher, a security camera system, fencing at her property and bedroom furniture from Ethan Allen promoted as "icons of livable luxury."

"The defendant allegedly stole public funds meant for the developmentally disabled in order to subsidize her own life of luxury," said **Inspector General Leahy Scott**. "This indictment should serve as warning to any officers and agents of charitable providers who exploit taxpayer funds intended for critical public services; they will be identified, apprehended, and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. I will continue to work closely

with my state and federal law enforcement partners to pursue and hold accountable anyone who attempts to defraud the public welfare system and the people it serves."

"Embezzlement of public funds meant to benefit members of our communities most in need of assistance is a serious crime," stated **United States Attorney Capers**. "With this indictment, we serve notice that those who engage in such conduct will be dealt with aggressively."

"The very definition of charity is to give to those in need. Instead, the subject in this case decided the \$100,000 she's accused of stealing would be better spent making her life easier. Theft is a crime, but to take from those who are in need of help makes this case more egregious," stated **FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge Rodriguez**.

Vitulli is expected to appear in Brooklyn federal court on Friday.

The charge in the indictment is merely an allegation, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law. If convicted of embezzling public funds, the defendant faces a maximum sentence of ten years' imprisonment.

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