



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott

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QUEENS NOT-FOR-PROFIT EXECUTIVE GETS THREE MONTHS IN JAIL AND MUST PAY RESTITUTION FOR EMBEZZLING 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 today announced the federal sentencing of a Queens not-for-profit top executive who embezzled approximately \$100,000 in federal and state funds meant to serve the developmentally disabled in order to subsidize her posh personal lifestyle, including maids and nannies, a personal spa and luxury furnishings for her home.

Yolanda Vitulli, 53, formerly of Merrick, N.Y., and now of Mohnton, PA., was sentenced today in Brooklyn federal court to three months of jail time for embezzling public funds. The court also required Vitulli to pay \$88,659 restitution and serve up to as much as three hundred hours of community service over three years of supervised release. She was indicted on the charge by a Brooklyn federal grand jury in June 2016.

Between January 2001 and May 2016, Vitulli 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 her 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 child care 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 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.”

"This defendant preyed on our most vulnerable people to enrich herself and subsidize a life of luxury," said Inspector General Leahy Scott. "I will relentlessly pursue anyone who exploits the developmentally disabled and steals taxpayer funds."

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, Robert L. Capers and his office for prosecuting this case and Assistant Director-in-Charge of the FBI New York Field Office William F. Sweeney, Jr., and his agents for their partnership investigating this matter.

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