

U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Southern District of Florida
99 N.E. 4 Street
Miami, FL 33132
(305) 961-9001*

August 12, 2015

NEW RELEASE:

Six Defendants Charged in Extensive Tax Refund and Identity Theft Fraud Scheme Involving Thousands of Individuals' Personal Identifying Information

Six defendants were indicted on charges stemming from their participation in an extensive tax refund and identity theft fraud scheme involving thousands of individuals' personal identifying information (PII).

Wifredo A. Ferrer, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida, Kelly R. Jackson, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI), Alysa D. Erichs, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations (ICE-HSI), Ronald J. Verrochio, Inspector in Charge, U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), Miami Division, Rafiq Ahmad, Special Agent in Charge, United States Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Office of Labor Racketeering and Fraud Investigations Miami Office (DOL-OIG), Hugo J. Barrera, Special Agent in Charge, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Miami Field Office, George L. Piro, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Miami Field Office, Ray Black, Chief, City of Miramar Police Department, Steve Steinberg, Chief, Aventura Police Department, J. Scott Dennis, Chief, North Miami Beach Police Department (NMBPD), and Franklin Adderley, Chief, Fort Lauderdale Police Department, made the announcement.

Harlan Decoste, a/k/a "Money King," a/k/a "Moneyking_111," 26, Frances Jeudy, a/k/a "Money Makin Rab," a/k/a "Brizzleon111," 26, Kerby Luma, a/k/a "Money Makin Kerb," 26, Frantz Decoste, a/k/a "Gripe_111," 20, all of Miramar, and Andy Cherrelus, a/k/a "Risktakers111," 24 of Miami, were charged with one count of conspiracy to defraud the government with respect to claims, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 286, one count of conspiracy to possess fifteen or more unauthorized access devices, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1029(b)(2), one count of possession of fifteen or more unauthorized access devices, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1029(a)(3), and seven counts of aggravated identity theft, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1028A(a)(1). Jeudy and Decoste were each also charged with five counts of possession of stolen mail, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1708. Chad Davis, a/k/a "Chadillac," a/k/a "Chadillac 305," 29, of Miami, was charged with one count of conspiracy to

possess unauthorized access devices, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1029(b)(2), and one count of possession of fifteen or more unauthorized access devices, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1029(a)(3).

According to allegations contained in the indictment, the defendants obtained personal identifying information ("PII"), including the names, dates of birth, and Social Security numbers of thousands of individuals, and used this PII to file fraudulent federal income tax returns with the IRS. The defendants provided payment instructions on the tax returns directing the IRS to transfer the tax refunds to various accounts in other persons' names that the defendants and their co-conspirators controlled. The defendants then allegedly withdrew the unlawfully obtained tax proceeds for their personal use and to further the fraud scheme. Court documents further allege that Jeudy and Decoste also unlawfully possessed five United States Treasury checks that had been stolen out of the mail.

If convicted, the defendants each face a maximum of ten years imprisonment for each of the conspiracy to defraud the government and access device charges, a maximum of five years imprisonment for the conspiracy to possess access devices, a maximum of five years imprisonment for possession of stolen mail, and a mandatory term of two years' imprisonment, consecutive to any other prison term, for the aggravated identity theft charges.

U.S. Attorney Wifredo A. Ferrer stated, "Our efforts continue to identify and prosecute those who unlawfully access, possess, use and/or disseminate personal identifying information. We will not tolerate offenders who target hard earned monies of private citizens. The dedicated efforts of our federal, state and local law enforcement partners make these prosecutions possible."

IRS-CI Special Agent in Charge Kelly R. Jackson stated, "Stealing identities and filing false tax returns is a serious crime that will not be tolerated. These investigations remain a top priority for IRS Criminal Investigation. We will continue to hold accountable those who steal and use other peoples' identities to commit tax fraud and other offenses."

"This investigation serves as a clear warning to individuals that steal the identities of innocent taxpayers and use the information for personal profit, that they will be aggressively pursued, investigated and prosecuted," said Alysa D. Erichs, Special Agent in Charge for HSI Miami.

"South Florida law enforcement partners continue to work together to stop these criminals from committing identity theft and tax fraud," said Ronald Verrochio, Inspector in Charge, USPIS, Miami Division. "We have proven that together we can make a huge impact in the fight against identity theft and tax fraud."

"Unfortunately, this is another example of the growing wave of stolen identity tax fraud," said George L. Piro, Special Agent in Charge of FBI Miami Division. "The FBI

and our partners continue to actively target these fraudsters who seek illicit gains by victimizing hard-working taxpayers.”

Mr. Ferrer commended the investigative efforts of the IRS-CI, ICE-HSI, USPIS, DOL-OIG, ATF, FBI Miami Cyber Task Force, NMBPD, as well as the Miramar, Aventura, and Fort Lauderdale Police Departments. Mr. Ferrer thanked the Miami-Dade Police Department and the Georgia State Patrol, and the United States Attorney’s Office for the Northern District of Georgia, for their assistance in this matter. The case was initially handled by Assistant United States Attorney Gera R. Peoples and is currently being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Brooke C. Watson.

An indictment is merely an allegation, and every defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

A copy of this press release may be found on the website of the United States Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of Florida at www.usdoj.gov/usao/fls. Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Southern District of Florida at www.flsd.uscourts.gov or on <http://pacer.flsd.uscourts.gov>.