U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

PRESS RELEASE

No Amount Too Small, No Fraud Too Large—And Counting: $3.1 Million Nigerian Money-Laundering Ring and Farmworker Visa Scam Busted

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General

WASHINGTON— This week, the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General (DOL OIG) secured key convictions against those who sought to exploit American workers and federally funded labor programs. Working alongside federal, state and law enforcement partners, and in coordination with President Donald J. Trump and Vice President J.D. Vance's White House Task Force to Eliminate Fraud, the DOL OIG remains mission-focused in its pursuit of fraud, waste, and abuse, no matter where it hides or how far it reaches.

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico— Nigerian national Oluwasegun Baiyewu was sentenced to 95 months in prison for his role in a money laundering conspiracy involving millions of dollars tied to various fraud schemes, including business email compromise, romance and unemployment insurance fraud scams, perpetrated against U.S. citizens. Baiyewu led a conspiracy that laundered over $3.1 million in proceeds of various fraud schemes by purchasing used cars with illicit proceeds and then shipping those cars to West Africa. Between approximately May 2020 and October 2021, Baiyewu worked with at least six other co-conspirators in the United States and Nigeria. **"Baiyewu and his co-conspirators tried to turn stolen public funds into personal wealth by laundering millions of dollars through car purchases and overseas shipments," said Anthony P. D'Esposito, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Labor. "Alongside President Trump and Vice President Vance's White House Fraud Task Force we will continue to follow the money across borders and hold accountable anyone who steals from programs meant to support American workers. There will be no safe haven for fraudsters who exploit these programs for criminal profit."**

LOS ANGELES—Jorge Vasquez, of Santa Maria, was sentenced to 12 months and one day in federal prison and ordered to pay $165,157 in restitution. Vasquez illegally collected tens of thousands of dollars in fees from Mexican nationals in exchange for visas permitting them to be employed as farmworkers in the United States. He then paid the workers at a reduced rate for their labor. Vasquez recruited foreign workers on H-2A visas to work at two entities he controlled and charged farmworkers between $8,000 and $15,000 for their visas. In total, Vasquez and his co-conspirators fraudulently recruited 162 foreign workers for H-2A visas. **"The Office of Inspector General at the U.S. Department of Labor is deeply committed to pursuing those who take advantage of America's workers and communities through unlawful, violent, or deceptive practices. This investigation underscores our dedication to safeguarding vulnerable employees and preserving the integrity of our labor system. I applaud the excellent teamwork demonstrated by our federal and state partners. We will not tolerate exploitation in our labor programs, and we will address it with a unified, comprehensive government approach to guarantee that justice prevails," said Inspector General D'Esposito.**

DES MOINES, DAVENPORT, COUNCIL BLUFFS, Iowa —Jodi Dyan Spargur-Tate, was sentenced to 18 months in federal prison and ordered to pay $426,837 in restitution, for stealing more than $426,000 from Children and Families of Iowa (CFI) over nearly seven years. During her time as Program Director at CFI, Spargur-Tate submitted hundreds of false and fraudulent reimbursement requests, including falsified invoices and receipts. She also diverted over one hundred payments from CFI to herself and her family members. **"Spargur-Tate stole Department of Labor funds intended to help Americans secure meaningful employment, instead using the money for personal gain. Spargur-Tate's selfish actions undermined the integrity of federally funded programs designed to support individuals facing significant barriers to work. This sentencing is a reminder to those who believe DOL grants are opportunities for personal enrichment. My office will continue partnering with our law enforcement colleagues to relentlessly pursue and hold accountable anyone who attempts to siphon money from programs meant to serve Americans in need," Inspector General D'Esposito added.**

For additional information on DOL OIG, please visit oig.dol.gov. If you suspect wrongdoing involving DOL programs or operations, contact the DOL OIG Hotline at (800) 347-3756 or visit oig.dol.gov/hotlinecontact.htm.

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