

Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

District of Vermont

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, May 6, 2022

Louise Larivee Imprisoned for Non-Profit Embezzlement

The United States Attorney for the District of Vermont announced that Louise Larivee, 63, of Swanton, was sentenced today in United States District Court in Burlington upon her guilty plea to a charge of federal program embezzlement. Chief U.S. District Judge Geoffrey Crawford sentenced Larivee to serve 8 months of imprisonment, to be followed by three years of supervised release. The court also ordered Larivee to pay restitution in the amount of \$96,700. Larivee had pleaded guilty on the third day of her jury trial in Rutland last November. The court ordered Larivee to report to the Federal Bureau of Prisons on July 5 to begin serving her sentence.

In June 2019, a federal grand jury in Burlington returned a two-count indictment charging Larivee with conspiracy and federal program embezzlement. Candy Thomas, 64, also of Swanton, a separately charged co-conspirator, had previously pled guilty to the federal program embezzlement charge. According to the indictment, between 2013 and 2017, Larivee was employed by the Abenaki Self Help Association, Inc. in Swanton as the director of a federal grant program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor. ASHAI functioned as a service arm of the Abenaki Nation, promoting economic and social development through programmatic efforts in education, employment and economic development. Each year, ASHAI received tens of thousands of dollars in grant money from the Department of Labor. During that same period, Candy Thomas worked at ASHAI as an office worker and bookkeeper. Thomas had check signing authority on ASHAI's bank accounts.

According to the indictment and testimony at Larivee's trial, between 2013 and 2017, Larivee and Thomas conspired to embezzle, and did embezzle, more than \$100,000 from ASHAI. Thomas aided the commission of this theft by issuing checks and giving cash to Larivee, at Larivee's request, in amounts that significantly exceeded Larivee's authorized compensation. Larivee also received travel reimbursement checks based upon fraudulently inflated mileage claims. Thomas helped cover up this fraud by sending tax forms to the Internal Revenue Service that concealed the true amount of ASHAI funds that were being paid over to Larivee.

Thomas, who testified at Larivee's trial, was sentenced to probation in December and was ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$20,000.

This case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General.

Larivee is represented by David Kirby. Thomas was represented by the Office of the Federal Public Defender. The prosecutors were Assistant U.S. Attorney Gregory Waples and former Assistant U.S. Attorney Spencer Willig.

Topic(s):
Financial Fraud

Component(s):
[USAO - Vermont](#)

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