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Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Eastern District of Louisiana

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, May 18, 2017

Superseding Indictment Handed Down in Alternatives Living, Inc. for Conspiracy and Theft of Federal Funds

Acting U.S. Attorney Duane A. Evans announced that **RICKEY ROBERSON**, age 47, and **ADA CRAIGE-ROBERSON**, age 43, both of New Orleans, were indicted today in a twelve-count Superseding Indictment for conspiracy and theft of federal funds.

According to the Superseding Indictment, from at least 2009 to the present, **ROBERSON** and **CRAIGE-ROBERSON** operated Alternatives Living, Inc., a non-profit that received federal funds from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the form of Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). Alternatives Living provided affordable housing to the elderly, families who were homeless, and individuals suffering from mental disabilities. As a condition to receiving federal funds, Alternatives Living agreed to comply with applicable rules and regulations governing the manner and use of the CDBG funds. Applicable program rules, including OMB Circular No. A-122, prohibited the use of CDBG funds for entertainment purposes (i.e., social activities and tickets to shows and sporting events), fundraising, personal tuition costs, and costs of goods or services for personal use. Rules allowed reimbursement for travel costs and conferences only if those costs were related to the mission of the organization and consistent with those costs normally allowed.

Count 1 of the Superseding Indictment alleges that beginning at a time unknown, but prior to in or around January 2009 and continuing through July 2015, in the Eastern District of Louisiana and elsewhere, **ROBERSON** and **CRAIGE-ROBERSON**, and others did knowingly and willfully combine, conspire, confederate, and agree to embezzle, steal or knowingly convert to their own use or the use of another, any money or thing of value of the United States or of any department or agency thereof in excess of \$1,000. Some of the conduct charged in Count 1 includes allegations that **ROBERSON** and **CRAIGE-ROBERSON** conspired to use federal funds to pay their children's cellular phone charges, personal travel, satellite radio, concert tickets, medical bills for their children, cruise tickets, repairs to a personal Cadillac Escalade and Audi TT, and pet

expenses. The Superseding Indictment alleges that the defendants stole more than \$110,000.00 in federal funds directed to Alternatives Living, Inc.

Count 2 charges **ROBERSON** with using federal funds to purchase a 2011 New Orleans Saints season ticket package totaling more than \$1,000.

Counts 3 through 12 allege that **ROBERSON** and **CRAIGE-ROBERSON** used federal funds for specific personal expenses including:

- 2012 Carnival Cruise costs, totaling \$1,395;
- their daughter's Sprint cellular phone bill, totaling \$5,735;
- a 2012 New Orleans Hornets season ticket package, totaling \$4,554.80;
- a 2012 New Orleans Saints season ticket package, totaling \$3,804;
- expenses related to a 2012 fundraiser aboard the Creole Queen totaling \$12,430;
- repairs to their personal vehicle, an Audi TT, totaling \$1,914;
- repairs to their personal vehicle, a Cadillac Escalade, totaling \$3,300;
- a 2013 New Orleans Saints season ticket package, totaling \$3,804;
- a 2013 New Orleans Pelicans season ticket package, totaling, \$1,560; and
- expenses related to a 2013 fundraiser aboard the Creole Queen, totaling \$1,560.

If convicted of the conspiracy to steal federal funds alleged in Count 1 of the Superseding Indictment, **ROBERSON** and **CRAIGE-ROBERSON** face a maximum penalty of 5 years imprisonment, a maximum fine of \$250,000 and a special assessment of \$100.00. **ROBERSON**, who is charged with theft of federal funds in Count 2, faces a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment, a maximum fine of \$250,000 and a special assessment of \$100.00. **ROBERSON** and **CRAIG-ROBERSON**, are charged with theft of federal funds in Counts 3 through 12, each face a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment, a maximum fine of \$250,000 and a special assessment of \$100.00 as to each count.

Acting U.S. Attorney Evans reiterated that the Superseding Indictment is merely a charge and that the guilt of the defendants must be proven beyond a reasonable doubt. U.S. District Judge Kurt D. Engelhardt set trial for August 28, 2017.

Acting U.S. Attorney Evans praised the work of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Inspector General, and the Office of State Inspector General for investigating this matter and thanked the Louisiana Legislative Auditor's Office for its assistance. Assistant U. S. Attorneys Sharan E. Lieberman and Brian M. Klebba, both of the Fraud Section, are in charge of the prosecution.

Topic(s):

Financial Fraud

Component(s):

USAO - Louisiana, Eastern