



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

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For Immediate Release

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Employee of Columbia, Illinois, Business Pleads Guilty to Wire Fraud and Filing False Tax Return

Randy G. Massey, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that **ANGELA FINCH**, age 38 of Valmeyer, Illinois, pled guilty to the offenses of **WIRE FRAUD** and **MAKING AND SUBSCRIBING A FALSE 2004 FEDERAL INCOME TAX RETURN**.

The offenses carry a total statutory maximum possible punishment of up to twenty-three years imprisonment, a fine of up to \$500,000, three years supervised release, and mandatory restitution. Sentencing is scheduled for August 31, 2007.

According to the Stipulation of Facts filed at the time of the plea, **ANGELA FINCH** was employed as the office manager for Heartland Barge Management in Columbia, Illinois, from approximately July 2001 to August 2006. During her employment she made unauthorized electronic funds transfers from a corporate bank account to her personal account. To coverup the embezzled funds **FINCH** created fictitious vendor invoices and then made false journal entries in the general ledger for the business. The total amount embezzled between 2001 and 2006 by **FINCH** was \$625,200. During the same time period, **FINCH** failed to report the embezzled funds as income on her federal income tax returns. **FINCH's** total tax due and owing for the years 2001-2005 for the unreported income totals

approximately \$136,922.00.

FINCH, used some of the embezzled income to start and run a business which was owned by a family member. Besides the money spent on the business, **FINCH** used the embezzled, unreported income to pay off credit cards, purchase vehicles, a motorcycle, a 4-wheeler, a swimming pool, clothing, as well as go on family trips to Florida, Mexico, and other places. The income was also used to pay off student loans **FINCH** had acquired as well as other bills.

The investigation was conducted by the Internal Revenue Service, Office of Criminal Investigations, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Norman R. Smith.

If you suspect or know of an individual or company that is not complying with the tax laws, you may report this activity by contacting the local Internal Revenue Service/Criminal Investigation Office at (618) 622-2160 or by mailing information to: Internal Revenue Service, Fresno, CA 93888 Please include the following information, if available: Name and address of the person you are reporting. The taxpayer identification number (social security number for an individual or employer identification number for a business). A brief description of the alleged violation, including how you became aware of or obtained the information. The years involved. The estimated dollar amount of any unreported income Your name, address and daytime telephone number. *Although you are not required to identify yourself, it is helpful to do so. Your identity can be kept confidential. You may also be entitled to a reward.*