



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 20, 2009

**OWNER, MANAGERS AND CORPORATIONS
AFFILIATED WITH LOCAL RESTAURANT
SENTENCED ON FEDERAL CRIMINAL IMMIGRATION CHARGES**

*First Successful Prosecution of an Employer in Mississippi for Federal Criminal Immigration Violations
Owners and Managers Sentenced to Prison; Over \$600,000 Forfeited and Fined*

Jackson, Miss - Two corporations and their owner, along with two former managers of Stix Restaurant in Flowood, Mississippi, were sentenced for violating various federal criminal immigration laws relating to hiring, continuing to employ and harboring illegal aliens, U.S. Attorney Donald R. Burkhalter, Michael Holt, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and Richard Walker, Special Agent in Charge, United States Department of Labor Office of Labor Racketeering and Fraud Investigations announced today. All three individuals were sentenced to prison and over \$600,000 was required to be forfeited and paid in fines.

U.S. District Court Judge William H. Barbour sentenced **GIN HSING CHEN a/k/a David Chen**, former owner of Stix Restaurant in Flowood, Mississippi, to 12 months in prison and 1 year of supervised release. **CHEN** was also fined \$72,000 dollars and was required to forfeit \$100,000 in lieu of a home he owned in Flowood that was used to house some of the illegal alien employees of Stix Restaurant.

Chen's sister, **SHAO LI CHEN a/k/a Judy Chen a/k/a Judy Wong**, a former manager of the local eatery, was sentenced to 8 months in prison and 2 years of supervised release and fined \$5,000 for harboring illegal aliens for the purpose of commercial advantage and private financial gain. **SHAO LI CHEN'S** husband, **KARL KWOK HING WONG**, another former manager at the Flowood establishment, was sentenced to 12 months and one day in prison and 2 years of supervised release and fined \$5,000 for harboring illegal aliens.

The two corporations that controlled and operated Stix Restaurant in Flowood, Mississippi, **MT. FUJI RESTAURANT d/b/a Stix Restaurant**, a Mississippi corporation, and **FLOWOOD PARTNERS, LLC**, an Alabama corporation, were sentenced to probation for a term of 2 years for conspiring to harbor illegal aliens. The corporations also agreed to an immigration compliance program and to forfeit \$418,171.47, which included \$52,017.00 cash seized at the restaurant, bank accounts used in the crime, and the net equity of the Flowood restaurant property.

FACTUAL BASIS

GIN HSING CHEN a/k/a David Chen was the owner of Stix Restaurant, while his sister, **SHAO LI CHEN a/k/a Judy Chen a/k/a Judy Wong** and her husband, **KARL KWOK HING WONG**, managed the Flowood eatery. The defendants hired illegal aliens at the Flowood restaurant

knowing that such aliens were illegal, paid illegal alien employees in cash while paying legal employees by check, provided housing to illegal alien employees in apartments leased by the defendants or in a house owned by **GIN HSING CHEN**, and transported or arranged for transportation of illegal alien employees between the restaurant and employer-provided housing. Further, the defendants failed to report their illegal alien employees to the Mississippi Department of Employment Security or the Internal Revenue Service as required by law. From May 2006 through March 2008, a total of 23 illegal aliens then-employed at Stix Restaurant were arrested by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents.

"ICE aggressively targets employers who knowingly and recklessly employ an illegal alien workforce," said Michael A. Holt, Special Agent-in-Charge for ICE's Office of Investigations in New Orleans. "We will use all our investigative tools to pursue employers who take advantage of illegal labor to make an unlawful profit and gain unfair advantages over businesses which operate within the law."

U.S. Attorney Burkhalter said, "If you knowingly hire illegal aliens, you get to go to jail and pay for that privilege. Employers know better, and if caught and convicted, will have an opportunity to join these defendants."

Burkhalter commended the investigative efforts of the Special Agents of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General. The case was handled by Assistant United States Attorney Mike Hurst.

###