



718.286.6000
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

QUEENS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568



MELINDA KATZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE (718) 286-6315
QDACommunications@queensda.org

TWO QUEENS RESIDENTS CHARGED WITH STEALING THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS
INTENDED FOR NYC'S SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM

Approximately \$20,000 Stolen;
Defendants Face Up to Seven Years in Prison if Convicted

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, joined by New York City Department of Investigation Commissioner Margaret Garnett, today announced that Rahmello Poole and Mariah Moore, have been charged with grand larceny, defrauding the government and other crimes for allegedly stealing thousands of dollars intended for youth summer employees. The pair – who worked at the Central Queens Y in 2018 – allegedly filed bogus timesheets for non-active employees and then used the earnings deposited on debit cards for their own personal gain.

District Attorney Katz said, “The funds allocated to the City’s Summer Youth Employment Program is intended to provide job opportunities to Queens teenagers as well as funding for literacy services, after school programs and more. As alleged, these defendants found a way to manipulate the system to enrich themselves by withdrawing funds from the debit cards and making point of sale transactions. I want to thank the investigators with DOI for their hard work looking into this matter. And let this be a warning to those who seek to cash in with crooked schemes, my Office will continue to team up with our law enforcement partners to root out fraud and other illegal cons.”

Commissioner Garnett said, “As charged, these defendants committed a series of alleged crimes to pocket the nearly \$20,000 in taxpayer funds intended for the City’s summer youth program: brazenly submitting false timesheets for real but inactive program participants and cashing debit cards that provided the wages to these participants, defrauding this government-subsidized program. Thankfully, when the parents of the teenage participants received paperwork showing wages their children never received, they alerted the Central Queens Y. The Central Queens Y double-checked and then notified the City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), and DYCD reported the financial discrepancies to DOI for further investigation. I thank all the parties that stepped up to report this matter and help DOI stop the corruption. And I thank the Queens County District Attorney’s Office for its partnership on this investigation.”

Poole, 27, of 141st in South Jamaica, Queens, and Moore, 23, of Dix Avenue of Far Rockaway, Queens, were arraigned late yesterday before Queens Criminal Court Judge Edwin Novillo on a 34-count complaint. The two are charged with grand larceny in the third and fourth degree, falsifying business records in the first degree, offering a false instrument for filing in the first degree, defrauding the government and tampering with public

records in the second degree. Judge Novillo ordered the defendants to return to Court on December 16, 2021. If convicted Poole and Moore face up to 2 1/3 to 7 years in prison.

According to the charges, in the summer of 2018, Poole worked as a worksite coordinator and Moore was his clerk. Poole's duties included providing oversight for the teenagers' work areas and processing their timesheets. In this role, Poole had access to the debit cards that were used to pay the workers and the PIN numbers. Defendant Moore, in her role as an administrative clerk, was responsible for organizing and entering the timesheets into the system's payroll database. Debit cards were used to pay some workers in lieu of direct deposit into bank accounts.

DA Katz said, an investigator with DOI audited the records and found 13 youth workers who were registered with the program but were not actually employed in the summer of 2018. Yet, there were timesheets created for those participants and debit cards used to pay for the hours those young people supposedly worked. Defendant Moore allegedly inputted the false work hours and Poole is accused of approving those timesheets.

According to the complaint, Poole loaded debit cards with \$10,144 and allegedly withdrew \$9,330 from ATMs for his own personal use and made a \$56 point of sale transaction. Moore is accused of fraudulently uploading \$8,043 and made ATM withdrawals totaling \$7,582 and spent another \$360 in point of sale transactions at various merchants.

The investigation was conducted by Deputy Inspector General Trenton Sweeney of the New York City Department of Investigation, under the supervision of Inspector General Andrew Sein, and under the overall supervision of Commissioner Margaret Garnett.

Assistant District Attorney Yvonne Francis, Supervisor in the District Attorney's Public Corruption Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys James Liander, Bureau Chief, Khadijah Muhammad-Starling, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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