



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

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Public Affairs
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TRIBAL LEADER IN ARIZONA SENTENCED FOR THEFT OF \$300,000 IN TRIBAL FUNDS

PHOENIX - Evelyn James, 54, of Tuba City, Ariz., and a Tribal Council member of the San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe in Arizona, was sentenced yesterday by U.S. District Judge Frederick J. Martone to 24 months in federal prison and fined \$75,000 for making False Statements, Theft from a Tribal Government Receiving Federal Funds and Money Laundering. In pleading guilty, she admitted to stealing almost \$300,000 in tribal funds. James must self-surrender by January 15, 2010, to begin serving her sentence.

James intermittently served as the Tribal President of the San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe and in that capacity, completed, signed and submitted false statements and records to obtain funds for the tribe from the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program. Administered through the Department of Justice, COPS provides financial assistance to eligible police departments to help improve community policing efforts.

James submitted falsified accountings in which she asked for reimbursement from the COPS program for expenditures that were never made by the tribe. The false submissions indicated that the tribe hired and paid three police officers when no peace officers were ever hired, trained or employed. Through James's false submissions, the tribe wrongfully received approximately \$224,997 in grant funds from the COPS program. Beginning in 2005, James wrote checks to herself from money drawn on the tribal bank account. During 2005, James stole approximately \$300,000 in tribal funds in this fashion.

The investigation was conducted by the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General, the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The prosecution was handled by Leta Hollon and Peter Sexton, Assistant U.S. Attorneys, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-08-1035-PCT-FJM
RELEASE NUMBER: 2009-375(James)

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