



Department of Justice

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Lambert Family Sentenced to Federal Prison for Brockton Embezzlement Scheme

GREAT FALLS - Four members of a Brockton family were sentenced to federal prison terms today for their role in the embezzlement of over \$130,000 from the Town of Brockton on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation, the latest development in the ongoing probe into public corruption involving federally funded programs known as the Guardians Project.

The United States Attorney's Office announced that Desiree Lambert, 59, Bernard Lambert, 66, Kaycee Lambert, 35, and Kayla Lambert, 30, were all sentenced to prison during a federal court hearing on March 5, 2015, before U.S. District Judge Brian M. Morris.

The Lambert family was indicted in August of 2014 by a federal grand jury for wire fraud, public corruption, and aggravated identity theft. At the changes of plea, Assistant U.S. Attorney Ryan G. Weldon outlined the embezzlement scheme spearheaded by Desiree Lambert, then the Business Manager for the Town of Brockton. In her role as Business Manager, Desiree Lambert handled the municipality's finances, books and records. Beginning in December 2012, Desiree Lambert began writing illegitimate checks to herself, her husband (Bernard Lambert), and her daughters (Kaycee and Kayla Lambert) and forging the signature of the Mayor of Brockton. The embezzlement scheme netted the Lamberts \$132,563 over approximately a year-and-a-half time period. When interviewed, the Lamberts admitted to spending the money on gambling and other household items.

At sentencing, Weldon requested stiffer prison sentences for Bernard and Desiree Lambert due to their previous criminal history. In 2006, Bernard and Desiree Lambert embezzled \$12,000 from the Department of Education while Bernard Lambert was the Superintendent of the Brockton School District and Desiree Lambert was the Director of the Fort Peck Department of Education. Desiree Lambert authorized four payments to her husband for writing ten grant applications on behalf of the Ft. Peck Department of Education. The alleged grant applications were for grants from various corporations and a 21st Century Grant from the U.S. Department of Education (DOE). Investigation revealed, through contact with the various corporations and the DOE, that none of the grant applications that Bernard Lambert was paid to write were ever received or funded. As a result of their past fraud, Bernard and Desiree Lambert each served a year in federal prison. After the pair was released from federal supervision in 2011, Desiree Lambert was hired to handle the finances of Brockton.

Weldon told the Court that “[u]ndeterred, this time the Lamberts regrouped and increased their criminal efforts with more vigor. As a result, they embezzled \$132,563.95—many times more than that of the first conviction. Worse yet, they used their children to move money and feed their gambling addictions.”

Judge Morris sentenced Desiree Lambert to 44 months of prison, and Bernard Lambert received 20 months of prison. Desiree Lambert received an increase in her sentence, in part, because she abused and used her position with the Town of Brockton in order to embezzle public funds. Judge Morris also ordered Desiree and Bernard Lambert to serve three years of supervised release and to repay \$132,563.95 in restitution.

Kayla Lambert and Kaycee Lambert facilitated the embezzlement and public corruption scheme by cashing fraudulent checks on behalf of their mother and father. Judge Morris sentenced Kayla Lambert to 5 months in federal prison, followed by two years of supervised release. Of the two years on supervised release, Kayla Lambert must spend 5 months in home confinement. Kaycee Lambert was sentenced to one more month in federal prison than Kayla. As a result, Kaycee received a federal prison sentence of 6 months, which will be followed by two years of supervised release. Of the two years on supervised release, Kaycee Lambert must spend 6 months in home confinement. Kayla Lambert was ordered to pay \$93,656.00 in restitution, and Kaycee Lambert was ordered to pay \$39,774.07 in restitution.

Because there is no parole in the federal system, the truth in sentencing guidelines mandate that the Lamberts will serve all of the time imposed by the court. In the federal system, Bernard and Desiree Lambert do have the opportunity to shorten the term of custody by earning credit for good behavior. However, this reduction will not exceed 15% of the overall sentence.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Justice Office of Inspector General.