



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

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FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WINSLOW RESIDENTIAL HALL INDICTED FOR TRAVEL FRAUD

PHOENIX - A federal grand jury in Phoenix returned a 1-count indictment today against Mike Kee James, Sr., 64, of Ganado, Ariz., for Embezzlement from an Indian Tribal Organization. James will be summonsed to appear in U.S. District Court for an arraignment on the charge.

Winslow Residential Hall, Inc. is a corporation organized under the laws of the Navajo Nation to provide dormitory facilities to students from various tribal nations who attend school in Winslow, Ariz. The indictment alleges that from March 2004 through August 2006, while he was the Executive Director of the organization, James claimed \$21,467.23 in travel reimbursements and advances not due to him. The indictment further alleges that James made false travel claims using three different methods: first, by charging to the corporate credit card lodging and other expenses for which he had already received a cash advance; second, by requesting travel advances for overlapping events; and third, by receiving reimbursement for travel he did not take.

A conviction for Embezzlement from an Indian Tribal Organization carries a maximum penalty of five years in federal prison, a \$250,000 fine or both. In determining an actual sentence, the assigned district court judge will consult the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

An indictment is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The investigation preceding the indictment was conducted by the Department of the Interior, Office of the Inspector General. The prosecution is being handled by Gary M. Restaino, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-09-TBD
RELEASE NUMBER: 2009-067(James)

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