



THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
EASTERN DISTRICT *of* NORTH CAROLINA

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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Eastern District of North Carolina

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Former Fort Bragg Army Sergeant and Owner of California Telemarketing Company Plead Guilty to Gratuity and Bribery Charges

GREENVILLE –The United States Attorney's Office announced that today in federal court, **ANTONELLE ANN SANCHEZ**, 35, pled guilty to two counts of Accepting and Receiving a Gratuity. As part of her plea, **SANCHEZ** agreed to pay \$95,610 in forfeiture. She faces a maximum of four years' imprisonment. **GEORGE SZEKERES**, 67, pled guilty to one count of Bribery. As part of his plea, **SZEKERES** agreed to pay \$95,610 in forfeiture, which he has already done. He faces a maximum of fifteen years' imprisonment.

According to the Government's recitation of the facts at the plea hearings, **SANCHEZ** was a supply sergeant with the United States Army stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. She began accepting gift cards and later money orders from Advance Imaging Supply, Inc., a telemarketer that supplied printer cartridges. **GEORGE SZEKERES** was the owner of Advance Imaging. From May 13, 2011 to September 11, 2012, **SANCHEZ** received over \$95,000 in postal money orders from Advance Imaging Supply, Inc. During this same time period, **SANCHEZ**, as Supply Sergeant, purchased more than \$1,000,000 in printer cartridges from Advance Imaging. These cartridges were sent both to Fort Bragg and around the country. In early 2012, **SANCHEZ** reached an agreement with Advance Imaging, approved by **SZEKERES**, to receive 10% of the purchase price of the cartridges in money orders because she was sending them so much business.

"Our office was pleased to partner with DCIS and the FBI on this significant case. Fraud in government procurement is a serious matter and we will continue to prosecute it vigorously," stated United States Attorney John Stuart Bruce.

"DCIS will pursue and expose corrupt contractors and government officials who abuse their positions of trust to line their own pockets with illegal kickbacks and gratuities," stated Special

Agent in Charge John F. Khin, Southeast Field Office, Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS). "Effective joint law enforcement efforts resulted in these defendants pleading guilty and forfeiting substantial monetary assets, demonstrating

once again that fraud schemes rarely go undetected, and once they unravel, those involved must pay the price for their crimes."

"These defendants made a deal with each other to defraud the government. Instead of conducting business in the best interest of the American public, they chose to line their own pockets. These type of crimes are at the center of the fight against public corruption," said John Strong, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI in North Carolina.

The criminal investigation of this case was conducted by Defense Criminal Investigative Service, the FBI, and U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command-Major Procurement Fraud Unit. Assistant United States Attorney David Bragdon is handling the case on behalf of the government.

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