

ATLANTIC COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

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Prosecutor

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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MAYS LANDING— A former bookkeeper at a Northfield accounting firm was sentenced to five years in prison today for second-degree theft by failure to make required disposition, for writing checks with funds from three clients of the firm totaling over \$107,879, and using it for personal expenses, Atlantic County Prosecutor Ted Housel said.

Patricia Ahearn, 32, of Egg Harbor City, who had no prior criminal record, was sentenced in the third-degree range, after Superior Court Judge Max Baker reviewed the final restitution amounts submitted by the victims and ordered Ahearn to pay back an additional \$7,000. Ahearn worked for Michael Goloff, a Certified Public Accountant in Northfield from December 2007 to March 2009, when she wrote numerous checks and diverted most of the money to her own personal checking account, according to Assistant Prosecutor John Flammer.

On May 28, 2009 Goloff and his wife, Carol Goloff, contacted the Prosecutor's Office to report the theft. They advised law enforcement that they fired Ahearn as soon as they suspected her of stealing money from their clients. Ahearn wrote out checks to herself in a total amount of over \$25,000 from the Friends of Dennis Levinson account, and over \$25,000 from the Emma Mary Amato Trust account. She took the remainder of the \$107,879 from the Island Medical Associates account. An Atlantic County Grand Jury indicted Ahearn in September, Flammer said.

Prior to being sentenced, Ahearn addressed the court. She expressed remorse for her actions and apologized to her victims and her family.

"At one time the defendant was a trusted employee. She destroyed that trust when she allowed her greed to overcome her duty to safeguard the funds of her firm's clients," Flammer said. "She raided \$25,000 of an elderly woman's trust fund and the doctor's office (Island Medical) had to lay off some of their employees because of the theft."

Flammer added that, "While the magnitude of Miss Ahearn's thefts and the number of her victims is not on the order of some of the recent financial crimes we have seen nationally, the impact felt by the victims is no less severe. Hopefully, the ramifications

for such actions will serve as a deterrent to others who may be contemplating this type of act.”

Anyone with information involving serious crimes is asked to call the Atlantic County Prosecutor’s Office at 609-909-7800 or go to the Prosecutor’s Office Web site at <http://www.acpo.org/tips.html> and provide information by filling out the form anonymously on the Submit a Tip page. People can also call Crime Stoppers at 609-652-1234 or 1-800-658-8477 (TIPS) or visit the Crime Stoppers Website at <http://www.crimestoppersatlantic.com/>. Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards for information leading to the arrest and indictment of those who commit crimes in Atlantic County.