



Justin P. Wilson, Comptroller

May 2, 2016

Food Program Leader Steals \$162,165 of Money Intended to Feed Children

A special investigation by the Tennessee Comptroller's Office has found that Jeannette Jives-Nealy stole \$162,165 in federal grant funds. Ms. Jives-Nealy operated Kingdom Dominion Worldwide Ministries, Inc., in Memphis, TN, and received grant funds through the Summer Food Service Program for Children, a U.S. Department of Agriculture program administered by the Tennessee Department of Human Services (DHS). This investigation was completed in conjunction with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation.

During June and July 2014, Jeanette Jives-Nealy received money for the purpose of providing free meals to children living in economically disadvantaged areas during the summer months. Although Ms. Jives-Nealy claimed she fed thousands of children, investigators determined that all of the money was converted to personal use.

Ms. Jives-Nealy received the grant funds even though they she did not supply any credible documentation to DHS verifying that they were actually acquiring, preparing, and providing food to children. When state auditors asked to review documentation, Ms. Jives-Nealy claimed the records had been destroyed by flooding that had occurred earlier in the day. In October 2014, DHS issued a letter to Kingdom Dominion demanding a full repayment of the grant amount.

On April 26, 2016, Jeannette Jives-Nealy was indicted by the Shelby County Grand Jury on one count of theft over \$60,000.

"Whenever a program allows for cash advances, it's important that program administrators carefully monitor how the money is being used," Comptroller Justin P. Wilson said. "It is disappointing to learn that such a large sum of public money could be provided without any credible documents to support the feeding of children. The victims in this case include not only taxpayers, but the thousands of children who may have otherwise been fed."

To view the special investigation online, go to: <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/ia/>.

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Media contact: John Dunn, Public Information Officer, (615) 401-7755 or john.dunn@cot.tn.gov