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**QUEENS MAN CHARGED WITH SCAMMING IMMIGRANTS
OUT OF \$40,000 BY CLAIMING TO BE ABLE TO GET THEM
GREEN CARDS AND WORK PERMITS**

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that a Hollis man accused of defrauding twelve Queens immigrants of approximately \$40,000 has been charged with grand larceny and scheme to defraud. The defendant allegedly promised to help them expedite various immigration related matters – including getting them work permits and green cards.

District Attorney Brown said, “The defendant is accused of unscrupulously exploiting individuals new to this country – and who were in need of assistance – to steal tens of thousands of dollars from them. If true, the defendant took advantage of his victims’ desperation to line his pockets with their hard-earned cash and should be severely punished.”

Postal Inspector-In-Charge Ronald Verrochio said, “Once again we have an example of an opportunist attempting to make money, illegally, from a most vulnerable sector of our society – new arrivals to the U.S. The victims may have learned an expensive lesson – know who you are dealing with – but they also now know there are many dedicated public servants who will bring those who commit such selfish crimes to justice on their behalf. I am proud of the long and successful relationship Postal Inspectors of the NY Division have with the Queens District Attorney’s Detective Bureau.”

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Marc Payen, 27, of 18-318 91st Avenue in Hollis. Payen is awaiting arraignment today in Queens Criminal Court in Kew Gardens on six counts of third-degree grand larceny, two counts of fourth-degree grand larceny, six counts of third-degree criminal possession of stolen property, fifty-four counts of second-degree criminal possession of a forged instrument, two counts of fourth-degree criminal possession of stolen property and first-degree scheme to defraud. Payen faces up to seven years in prison if convicted.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the criminal complaint, Payen met with the victims at his place of business, Educovision, located at 109-19 Farmers Boulevard. He is accused of meeting with husband and wife victims on numerous occasions between November 2007 and August 2008, promising them work permits and green cards for various fees. The defendant allegedly told the victims that the money would be paid to the Department of Homeland Security/United States Citizenship and Immigration Services for fingerprint checks, application fees,

and other costs.

In some of the cases the victims allegedly gave the defendant money orders, leaving the “Pay To” portion of the money orders blank. The money orders were traced during the course of the investigation and it is alleged that the money orders were made out to and endorsed by the defendant or his company.

The complaint further alleges that the defendant stole money from eight families using the same ruse. He is alleged to have taken amounts ranging from \$1,650 to \$13,105, in the form of blank money orders, cash and personal checks, in exchange for a promise to help facilitate getting the victims green cards or work permits. The complaint alleges the crimes occurred between November 2007 and August 2008.

The defendant is the president of Educovision, Inc., which prides itself as “promoting a humanitarian concept” and working to solve the education crisis in Haiti. He allegedly has a side business in which he claims to help illegal immigrants gain legal immigration status. An investigation disclosed that there are no applications on file with DHS/USCIS on behalf of the victims by Payen.

The investigation was conducted by Detectives Joseph A. Falgiano and Jerome D. Pugh of the District Attorney’s Detective Bureau under the supervision of Lieutenant Rafael Torres, Lieutenant Robert Burke and Sergeant John Kenna, under the overall supervision of Lawrence J. Festa, Chief Investigator and Albert D. Velardi, Deputy Chief Investigator, along with accountant James J. Dever of the District Attorney’s Economic and Environmental Crimes Bureau. Postal Inspector Michael P. Giannone also investigated the case, under the supervision of Philip Bartlett, Assistant Postal Inspector-in-Charge and Ralph Franzese, Team Leader.

Assistant District Attorney Nathalie Bell, of the District Attorney’s Economic and Environmental Crimes Bureau is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Christina Hanophy, Deputy Bureau Chief, and Gregory C. Pavlides, Bureau Chief, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney of the Investigations Division Peter A. Crusco and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Linda M. Cantoni.

It should be noted that a complaint is merely an accusation and that the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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Note to Editor: An e-version of this press release is posted on QDA website at www.queensda.org.