

Biscayne Building
19 West Flagler St., Suite 220
Miami, FL 33130
Phone: (305) 375-1946
Fax: (305) 579-2656
www.miamidadeig.org

**Office of the Inspector General
Miami-Dade County**

Memorandum

To: The Honorable Carlos Alvarez, Mayor

The Honorable Chairperson Joe Martinez
Members, Board of County Commissioners

From: Christopher Mazzella
Inspector General

Date: June 30, 2005

Re: Arrest of Steven Davidson, Manager of the Wolfson Archive

Attached is a news release relating to the arrest of County employee Steven Davidson (Davidson), on fraud related charges concerning the misappropriation of Louis Wolfson II Florida Moving Archive, Inc., (Archive) funds.

Davidson, a Miami-Dade County librarian, was on loan to the Wolfson Archive and held the position of Manager of the Archive since 1987. As part of his duties, Davidson purchased necessary equipment for the Archive and controlled an Archive bank account at City National Bank. A joint investigation by the Office of the Inspector General, the Miami-Dade Police Department's Public Corruption Bureau and the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office uncovered that Davidson had been stealing funds from an Archive bank account to purchase items for personal use, submitting phony invoices for equipment that ultimately disappeared from the Archive, and preparing a fraudulent expense report for personal travel.

Davidson's fraud resulted in the Archive paying for computers, laptops, and iPods, among other equipment, some of which were delivered directly to Davidson's home or which were removed from the Archive by Davidson. Davidson purchased some equipment using phony invoices. The Archives approved invoices for T.V.'s, VCR's and projectors not knowing that the real orders submitted by Davidson were for computers, computer hardware and software. Additionally, Davidson submitted a fraudulent expense report to the Archive claiming to have traveled on Archive business when in fact he attended a Children's Film Festival in Rhode Island where his son was one of the festival participants. In total, Davidson's fraud was in excess of \$5,000.

cc: Mr. George Burgess, County Manager
Mr. Raymond Santiago, Director, Miami-Dade County Public Library System
Ms. Cathy Jackson, Director, Audit & Management Services

Clerk of the Board (Copy Filed)



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

MANAGER OF LOUIS WOLFSON ARCHIVE ARRESTED FOR STEALING

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG), the Miami-Dade Police Department's (MDPD) Public Corruption Unit and the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office (SAO) announced today the arrest of Steven Davidson (Davidson), age 51, of Miami Beach, Florida, on charges of Grand Theft, Uttering a Forged Instrument and Official Misconduct. The arrest followed the execution of search warrants at Davidson's home and office on Tuesday.

Davidson has been an employee of Miami-Dade County since 1987. Davidson, hired as a Librarian III with the County, has been on loan to the Louis Wolfson II Florida Moving Image Archive, Inc. (Wolfson Archive) since 1987. He is the Manager of the Wolfson Archive, which preserves and stores film and videotape spanning over nine decades of Florida's history and culture. In his position as manager of the Archive, Davidson was authorized to purchase equipment and supplies for the use of the Wolfson Archive. The joint investigation revealed a scheme by Davidson to steal computers and other equipment by submitting phony invoices for Wolfson Archive materials, stealing funds from an Archive bank account to purchase items for personal use, and submitting a fraudulent expense report for reimbursement of personal travel.

According to an affidavit filed by the OIG and MDPD, Davidson submitted check requests and invoices for equipment such as television sets, projectors and VCRs necessary for Wolfson Archive business. The investigation revealed that the invoices submitted for approval by Davidson were phony. The real invoices obtained from the vendor reflect that what was actually ordered by Davidson for delivery to the archives were computers and supporting hardware and software, such as Adobe Photoshop and disc drives. This equipment, though shipped, vanished from the Archive.

Davidson made additional purchases in December 2004 of two iPod digital music players. The iPods were delivered to the Wolfson Archive and Davidson advised his employees that he would return the iPods since they were delivered in error. The investigation uncovered that the iPods were never returned to the shipping company though, in fact, paid for by the Archive.

Additionally, the investigation revealed that Davidson, who was a signator on a Wolfson Archive bank account held at City National Bank, withdrew funds from the account to pay for two computers totaling \$1,830.21. Using funds from the Wolfson Archive account, Davidson purchased cashiers checks at City National Bank to pay for the computer purchases. The computers were delivered directly to Davidson's house in Miami Beach.

In addition to the theft of equipment, Davidson fraudulently submitted for reimbursement the cost of a personal trip to promote his son's entry into a children's film festival held in Rhode Island. Davidson flew to Boston with his son, rented a car and drove to Rhode Island to have his son participate in the Flying Popcorn! International Children's Film Festival sponsored by Kid Filmmakers in Newport, R.I. The OIG and MDPD investigators verified the attendance of both Davidson and his son at the Children's Film Festival and the absence of any events that would justify the reimbursement of expenses "to attend meetings and conduct research." Davidson received a total of \$654.03 as reimbursement for lodging, air fare, rental car, taxi and per diem expenses.

In total, Davidson submitted fraudulent invoices totaling in excess of \$3,000 to disguise the purchase of unauthorized items, embezzled over \$1,800 to purchase goods delivered directly to his home, and submitted bogus expense reports for over \$600.

Inspector General Christopher Mazzella and Director Robert Parker, in commenting on the charges brought against Davidson expressed their disappointment in Davidson's abusive behavior, particularly since he was entrusted to manage an important County program. Mr. Mazzella confirmed that dishonesty, at any level of County government, will be rooted out. Director Parker noted that he is encouraged that County government remains fully committed to exposing and correcting employee improprieties, such as those exhibited by Davidson.

Media Opportunity – Inspector General Mazzella will be available for a media opportunity today, between 1:30 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. at the OIG office.