

3 Miami Subcontractors Charged with Providing Jobs for Illegal Aliens

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Three Miami residents have been charged with conspiring to induce undocumented aliens to enter and remain in the United States by providing them with employment at a Miami-Dade school construction project in a case investigated by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Miami-Dade County Schools Office of Inspector General (OIG). If convicted, they each face a maximum statutory penalty of 10 years in prison.

ICE special agents initiated an investigation after the OIG discovered undocumented aliens, as well as lawful residents and citizens of the United States, were paid substandard wages by Daniel Builders at an elementary school construction project. According to the allegations, the construction workers hired for the project did not receive overtime wages nor Social Security and income taxes deducted from their paychecks. Between October 2008 and March 2009, the three defendants used their corporation to hire and underpay illegal aliens to increase their profit margin. Thereafter, the defendants allegedly created a scheme to conceal the fact that its workforce was comprised primarily of undocumented aliens, by creating corporations that acted as labor providers and payroll administrators, in order to insulate Daniel Builders from the responsibility and tax consequences of hiring illegal workers.

In March 2009, ICE agents arrested 20 individuals, who had been observed working at the elementary school construction site. All 20 undocumented workers provided sworn statements to ICE special agents and OIG stating they did not have to fill out any paperwork, including employment applications or I-9 forms, in order to be employed at the construction site. Some of the individuals stated they were being paid under fictitious names. To date, all but one have been removed from the United States and that one worker was convicted of illegally re-entering the United States, after deportation, as an aggravated felon and was sentenced to 46 months in prison.