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EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
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8 IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
9 EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

10
11 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
12 Plaintiff,
13 v.
14 SULIANA CALDWELL,
15 Defendant.

CASE NO.
1:26 CR 00052 JLT SKO
18 U.S.C. § 1343 – Wire Fraud

16
17 I N F O R M A T I O N

18 COUNT ONE: [18 U.S.C. § 1343 –Wire Fraud]

19 The United States Attorney charges:

20 SULIANA CALDWELL,

21 defendant herein, as follows:

22 1. At all relevant times, defendant Suliana Caldwell resided in Fresno County, State and
23 Eastern District of California. Defendant Caldwell was the operations manager for the Fresno Art Council
24 (“FAC”). As the FAC’s operations manager, defendant Caldwell’s duties included managing its bank
25 accounts, payroll, and general finances. Her duties also included providing periodic updates and reports
26 on the FAC’s finances to the FAC’s executive director and board members, the City and County of Fresno,
27 and others.
28

1 2. The FAC is a nonprofit organization incorporated under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal
2 Revenue Code for the purpose of promoting the arts and culture in Fresno and Central Valley. The FAC
3 promotes and supports the regional arts community through programming, advocacy, public art
4 management, grants, and services for artists.

5 3. The FAC received funding from grants, donations, and public programs. Almost all FAC
6 funds were received from the City of Fresno and other public entities.

7 4. Measure P is a tax initiative approved by Fresno County voters in 2018 to provide local
8 funding to parks, recreation, and arts and cultural projects in Fresno. Twelve percent of Measure P funds
9 were to be allocated to expand access to arts and culture in Fresno.

10 5. In 2023, the Fresno City Council approved a measure designating the Fresno Arts Council
11 as the administer of a grant program involving Measure P Funds. In August 2023, the Fresno Arts Council
12 received \$9.4 million in Measure P funds in an initial round of funding. In October 2024, the Fresno Arts
13 Council received an additional \$5.7 million in Measure P funds in a second round of funding.

14 6. Beginning on a date unknown to the government, but no later than in or about June 2022,
15 in Fresno County, State and Eastern District of California, as well as Washington and Nevada, defendant
16 Caldwell knowingly participated in a scheme to defraud the FAC by making false representations. In June
17 2022, defendant Caldwell began making unauthorized transfers from the FAC's bank accounts to her
18 PayPal accounts and on to her bank accounts. Caldwell's unauthorized transfers significantly increased in
19 2023 after the FAC received millions of dollars in Measure P funds. She continued to withdraw FAC
20 funds regularly through February 2026.

21 7. To facilitate and conceal the scheme, defendant Caldwell abused her position as the
22 FAC's operations manager by creating false financial reports that she submitted to the FAC's executive
23 director and board members, the City and County of Fresno, and others. Specifically, she altered and
24 misrepresented the financial figures in the reports to make the reports appear as though no unauthorized
25 transfers occurred from the FAC's bank accounts when, in fact, she was taking the funds for the benefit
26 of herself.

27 8. These misrepresentations were material, in that, the FAC's executive director and board
28 members, and the City and County of Fresno would not have allowed defendant Caldwell to stay in her

1 position as the FAC's operations manager and to continue to take the FAC's funds had they known about
2 her fraudulent scheme. Caldwell's misrepresentations allowed her to continue the scheme unnoticed and
3 influenced the FAC and others to part with their money and property.

4 9. In total, defendant Caldwell caused over 300 unauthorized wire transfers to occur and stole
5 approximately \$1,820,000 from the FAC. She then used the funds to gamble at local casinos, pay for
6 vacations, and for other improper personal expenses. These transfers generated interstate wire
7 communications from bank accounts and computers in Fresno County to bank accounts and computers
8 located outside California.

9 10. Defendant Caldwell knowingly transmitted and caused to be transmitted, by means of wire
10 and radio communication in interstate commerce, writings, signs, signals, pictures, and sounds, including
11 a wire transmission on or about July 9, 2024, of monies in the amount of \$58,750.00 originating from
12 bank accounts and computers in the Eastern District of California and sent to bank accounts and computers
13 outside the state of California.

14 11. Throughout the scheme, Caldwell acted with intent to defraud, that is, with intent to deceive
15 and cheat the FAC and others.

16 All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1343.

17 Dated: *April 8, 2026*

ERIC GRANT
United States Attorney

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21 By: 

CODY S. CHAPPLE
Assistant United States Attorney