



GREGORY D. TOTTEN
District Attorney

NEWS RELEASE

vcdistrictattorney.com

Twitter: @VenturaDAOoffice

Contact: Danny Lo
Deputy District Attorney
Telephone: (805) 662-1714
E-mail: Danny.Lo@ventura.org
Approved: MDS *mbs*
Date: Friday, September 28, 2018
Release No.: 18-097

FIVE CONVICTED IN FRAUDULENT DEBT COLLECTION SCHEME

VENTURA, California – District Attorney Gregory D. Totten announced today the felony conviction of five members of a debt collection scheme: Timothy Edmond Burke, Jr. (DOB 8/24/81), of Las Vegas; Deisi Tapia Rivera (DOB 10/18/83), of Las Vegas; Veronica Esther Ventura (DOB 8/20/84), of Oxnard; Angela Maire Covarrubias (DOB 5/14/76), of Ventura; and Elizabeth Angie Olvera (DOB 12/26/77), of Santa Paula. The defendants were charged with multiple felony counts including grand theft, theft from an elder, money laundering, and conspiracy to commit false advertising. In addition, they were charged with the aggravated white-collar crime enhancement for stealing over \$100,000. The case was the result of an investigation by the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation.

From 2013 to 2017, Burke and Rivera ran a series of fraudulent debt collection agencies in Ventura County. These entities included Nationwide Debt Busters, Walker Adams & Associates, Financial Service Bureau, Steven Chasity & Associates, and Rutter Riesman & Associates. They offered debt collection services on a contingency basis to businesses and individuals throughout the United States. After paying upfront fees, however, no collection services were provided. Furthermore, if a debtor paid the agencies, the agencies would keep the money. Burke and Rivera used the stolen proceeds to pay their personal expenses. Veronica Ventura joined the scheme in 2015, and acted as the general manager in charge of daily activities. In 2016, Covarrubias and Olvera were involved in the management of the businesses and in taking of money from victims.

Burke and Rivera each pled guilty to 21 felony counts and are currently serving six- and five-year sentences in the California Department of Corrections, respectively. Ventura pled guilty to 16 felony counts and is due to be sentenced on October 1, 2018, at 9:00 a.m. in courtroom 12. Covarrubias and Olvera each pled guilty to 9 felony counts and are due to be sentenced on January 9, 2019, and November 14, 2018, respectively.

###

The Ventura County District Attorney's Office is the public prosecutor for the county's 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 280 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and other professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.

Follow the Ventura County District Attorney's Office on Twitter @VenturaDAOffice