

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO:
AIGI

FILE NUMBER:
I01060012

DATE:
January 16, 2002

Subject:

Physics Department

ALLEGATIONS OF FALSE STATEMENTS

-C-

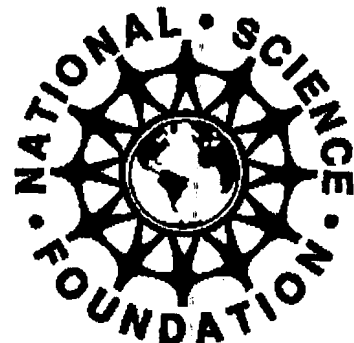
Action:

On 11JUN01(MON) at approximately 0920, (()) Receptionist, National Science Foundation ((NSF)), Office of Inspector General ((NSF/OIG)) received a telephone complaint from Ms. (()) alleging that (())), Professor, Physics Department, submitted fraudulent receipts for expenses.

On 11JUN01(MON), Special Agent NSF/OIG/INV ((S/A)) interviewed to obtain background information relative to her initial allegation. stated that Dr. submitted a number of fraudulent receipts, specifically those for condominium rentals utilized by visiting research professors. added that on 30JUN01 her position as will be abolished and she felt that it is a direct result of her questioning as to many of the questionable receipts.

COPIES MADE:

SURNAME & TITLE	PREPARED BY:	CLEARED BY:		
	AGENT:	ATTORNEY:	SAC:	AIGI
INITIALS & DATE				



On 11JUN01(MON), S/A interviewed (()), NSF/DFA/DGA with the purpose of identifying the NSF grant awarded to at stated that served as the Primary Investigator ((PI)) on NSF grant # awarded in 1991 with an expiration date of added that he anticipated that would request a no-cost extension.

On 22JUN01(FRI), S/A received documents from claiming that they supported her claim alleging fraud committed by relative to NSF grant The documents provided, focused on the elimination of the Project Assistant position held by and lodging receipts at the

A review of the documents relative to the elimination of the Project Assistant position identify that the position was eliminated due to the expiration of NASA PACE and NSF grants which were the source of the funds used to fund the position. did not provide any documents in support of her claim that the Project Assistant position was eliminated as a direct result of her questioning as to many of the receipts she claimed were questionable.

Investigator Note: The documents provided by clearly indicate that the Project Assistant position was funded with NASA and NSF grant awards. With the expiration of the awards there no longer existed funds to support the position. In accordance with statement that he anticipated that was going to request a no-cost extension, it would have appeared to that she was "fired" since the project continued after her position was eliminated, but unaware that the funds for the project had terminated. claim that she was fired from the position as a direct result of her questioning as to many of the questionable receipts is not supported by the facts as disclosed by the interview and documents obtained.

A review of the documents provided by relative to fraudulent receipts for condominium rentals identified seven (7) lodging receipts from 27AUG99 to 07NOV00 at the claimed that had fraudulently filed these receipts for lodging never taken by visiting professors.

Investigator Note: provides these documents on 11JUN01 as supporting evidence of fraudulent receipts for condominium rentals from 27AUG99 to 07NOV00, but it must be noted that she did not report her suspicions contemporaneous to the occurrence of the suspected fraudulent activity, she only reported her assumptions to NSF/OIG three (3) days after she was notified that her position is being eliminated due to the expiration of NSF and NASA grant funds.

On 03JUL01(TUE), S/A conducted a telephonic interview with (()), Maintenance Department, relative to statement concerning s submission of fraudulent receipts for condominium rentals utilized by visiting research professors. stated that he manages and conducts routine maintenance for Apartment 4-0 located at the The condominium is owned by and is rented on a weekly or monthly basis. As part of duties, he is responsible for obtaining rental agreements and collecting the payments. stated that employed by

... routinely rents the apartment for visiting professors working at ... It is routine for ... to write a check to ... or ... for the rent. ... stated that the visitors have never paid the rent, since ... always pays in advance.

Investigator's Note: This statement made by ... does not support the allegation made by that ... filed fraudulent receipts for condominium rentals utilized by visiting research professors since ... states that ... has paid rent for the use of the condominium by visiting professors.

On 03JUL01(TUE), S/A ... conducted a telephonic interview with ((...)), ... relative to ...'s statement concerning ...'s submission of fraudulent receipts for condominium rentals utilized by visiting research professors. ... stated that she is the owner of condominium Apartment 4-0 located at the ... She has employed ... to manage the property as a rental. ... said she has rented the property to ... with ... several times during the past two (2) years. ... as always paid the rent for the visiting professors, who were working at ...

Investigator's Note: This statement made by ... also does not support the allegation made by that ... filed fraudulent receipts for condominium rentals utilized by visiting research professors.

The subsequent NSF/OIG investigation (I-01-06-0012) opened on 11JUN01, conducted by Special Agent ..., disclosed no evidence to substantiate ... allegations that ... submitted fraudulent receipts.

On 23OCT01 (TUE) at approximately 1015, ..., AIGI NSF/OIG forwarded the case file to Special Agent ... for a status review. Upon review of the allegations made by ... on 11JUN01, inspection of the evidentiary information, provided by ... under separate cover dated 15JUN01 (received by the NSF/OIG on 19JUN01), and evaluation of the investigative actions taken by the S/A ..., I support the conclusion of S/A ... that the results of the interviews conducted and review of the documents obtained do not support the allegations made by ... All investigative leads have been completed and I add my recommendation that this investigation be closed.