

Local Corruption

State's Attorney Cracking Down On Local Corruption

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CHICAGO (CBS) Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez

A crackdown on local corruption has netted everyone from a city treasurer with sticky fingers to a financial manager who stole funds earmarked for special education students. CBS 2's Roseanne Tellez has more on "Operation Cookie Jar."

Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez says corruption occurs at every level, and we all deserve better.

"We really have to chisel away at the problem, and so you have to start there. So that's what we've been focusing on, moving from the ground going up," she said.

Accused of stealing the most in Operation Cookie Jar: 62-year-old Donald Jacobs, a former treasurer of the Posen Park District.

Authorities say he wrote \$266,000 worth of checks to a company that never did business with the park district, and listed only him and his wife as signers on the company account.

Martin Boyd, 62, former accountant for Harwood Heights, is charged with stealing \$135,000 by overpaying himself for three years.

Charged with stealing more than \$55,000 from the Southwest Bar Association in Tinley Park is 48-year-old Michael Tracy, who simply wrote checks out to himself.

And Robert Baldwin, 67, used a Niles Township credit card to buy more than \$10,000 worth of stuff like airline tickets, computers and cell phones for himself. The money came from a fund for special education students.

"Charging a special education director may not be as glamorous as indicting a governor," said Alvarez. "But when a person steals public money needed to help children with special needs, this is a high priority for those children, their families, and of course for the Cook County State's Attorney's office."

If you have your hand in the cookie jar, or know someone who does, the state's attorney's office is looking for you.

Alvarez stressed having checks and balances, no matter how much you trust someone. The men charged today face between two and 30 years in prison.