



Federal Bureau of Investigation  
San Francisco Division



# FBI San Francisco and Monterey County District Attorney Announce New Task Force

## *Monterey County Financial Crime Task Force to Provide New Federal Resources*

For Immediate Release: March 29, 2018

**MONTEREY** – Special Agent in Charge John F. Bennett of the FBI’s San Francisco Division and District Attorney Dean D. Flippo for Monterey County today announced the creation of the Monterey County Financial Crime Task Force (MCFCTF). The mission of the MCFCTF is to identify, investigate, and prosecute individuals engaged in financial crimes, specifically financial fraud, who are committing, or have committed, violations of federal or state criminal statutes.

“The creation of this task force demonstrates our serious commitment to diminishing the threat of financial fraud in Monterey County,” said FBI Special Agent in Charge John F. Bennett. “We look forward to a close partnership with the Monterey County DA’s Office in identifying, investigating, and prosecuting individuals who defraud victims for their own personal gain.”

Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo stated “Joining this partnership creates a task force that will enable the FBI and our office to increase resources that will make it more difficult for defendants committing fraud to escape accountability.”

The creation of the MCFCTF formalizes the ongoing partnership between the FBI and the Monterey County DA’s Office, and provides additional federal resources to address financial crimes in Monterey County. The task force will build on past successes such as the following cases:

- In December 2012, Thomas Joseph O'Meara, III, a former Carmel real estate developer, was sentenced to 78 months in federal prison for wire fraud and money laundering arising out of his golf course investment fraud scheme in which he defrauded more than 50 victims of more than \$16 million. The prosecution was the result of a multi-year investigation by the FBI, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Monterey County DA’s Office.
- The FBI, U.S. Postal Inspection Service and the Monterey DA’s Office investigated David Nilsen and Manoel Errico for conspiring to defraud over 1,000 Cedar Funding investors by purporting to invest their money in a \$160 million portfolio of performing loans. In April 2012, Mr. Nilsen was sentenced to 97 months in prison and ordered to pay \$69,828,833. In 2017, Mr. Errico was sentenced to 15 months confinement, three years supervised release and ordered to pay \$8,025,588 in restitution after being extradited from Argentina.



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- On March 20, 2018, John McEwan pleaded guilty to fraud charges related to his Monterey-based payroll company Pinnacle Workforce Solutions. McEwan was charged with one count of violating 18 U.S.C. 1343, Wire Fraud, based on evidence which showed McEwan illegally diverted client money to cover Pinnacle operating expenses. The charges significantly disrupted Pinnacle's ability to further defraud victims.

For more information on some of the cited cases:

Thomas Joseph O'Meara, III:

[https://www.justice.gov/archive/usao/can/news/2012/2012\\_12\\_05\\_omeara.sentenced.press.html](https://www.justice.gov/archive/usao/can/news/2012/2012_12_05_omeara.sentenced.press.html)

Manoel Errico: <https://www.justice.gov/usao-ndca/pr/international-fugitive-extradited-united-states-face-charges-regarding-alleged-cedar>

David. A. Nilsen: <https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/sanfrancisco/press-releases/2012/former-monterey-businessman-sentenced-to-97-months-for-real-estate-investment-fraud>

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