

# For Your Inspection



**"Mission First, People Always, Integrity Forever"**

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**Office Of Inspector General, Corporation For National And Community Service**

## OIG Profile

### Stuart G. Axenfeld Audit Manager

Stuart G. Axenfeld, who joined the Office of Inspector General in March 2004, serves as an audit manager and oversees both OIG staff and contractor-produced audits of Corporation programs and grantees.



Prior to joining the OIG, Axenfeld was Senior Auditor at the Library of Congress Office of Inspector General, where he led a team that performed audits of programs, contracts, and grants. He began his Federal career at the Defense Contract Audit Agency, where he supervised an audit team and was responsible for the quality and timeliness of reports, compliance with Federal guidelines and establishing the team's annual audit plan.

A Washington, DC, native, Axenfeld received a Bachelor's Degree from the University in Maryland in 1983. He is a Certified Public Accountant and a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

Mr. Axenfeld, an avid soccer player, youth coach and fan, lives in Silver Spring, MD, with his wife Cheryl and their three children.

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## Teamwork Helps Secure Conviction

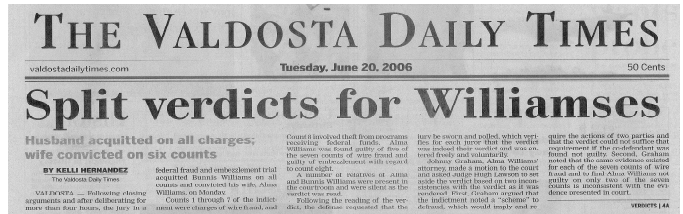
A former Georgia Senior Corps program director has been convicted of fraud and embezzlement of more than \$100,000 thanks to the concerted joint efforts of the Office of Inspector General (OIG) and officials of the Corporation for National and Community Service (Corporation).

Alma Williams, former executive director of the Eastside Training Academy in Valdosta, GA., was found guilty in Federal Court on June 19, 2006, of six counts of Theft of Federal Funds. She was sentenced on September 18, 2006, to 33 months in jail plus three years of probation, fined \$100,536.88 and assessed \$600 in court costs.

Williams, who had received Corporation Senior Corps grants to operate Foster Grandparent and Retired Senior Volunteer Program units, faced a formidable array of OIG and Corporation witnesses during her trial. They helped to present what

proved to be an airtight argument that Williams had stolen and diverted more than \$100,000 in Federal taxpayer dollars for her personal use and to operate business ventures.

Robert J. Walters, Assistant Inspector General for Investigations had worked on the case for several



years after receiving an anonymous tip via the OIG's Fraud Hotline. He traveled to Valdosta to see justice served and, throughout the weeklong trial, sat at the prosecution table, aiding Assistant U.S. Attorney Jim Crane.

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## Documents Are Crucial Factors in Audits

Missing documents attesting to the eligibility of AmeriCorps members and other volunteers top the list of recurring concerns and questioned costs raised in audits conducted by the Office of Inspector General (OIG).

Are your AmeriCorps members U.S. citizens or legal Residents? Have they earned a high school diploma or its equivalent? Have they undergone a criminal background check if they serve with children or other vulnerable persons? Do your Senior Corps members meet age and income requirements?

All officials of programs receiving Federal funds from the Corporation for National and Community Service (Corporation) must abide by these basic eligibility requirements and retain adequate documentation as proof of compliance.

OIG auditors regularly mine members' files in their evaluations of local and national programs' performance and compliance. Far too often, those files lack basic eligibility documents, leading the auditors to question costs for living allowances and education awards. These questioned costs must be addressed by grantees and Corporation



officials through the audit resolution process.

In some cases, claimed costs are disallowed, meaning the grantee must make a refund to the Corporation. And OIG audit findings indicating poor record keeping and financial management can have a negative impact on grantees seeking renewals or additional financial

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## From Page 1, Teamwork Helps

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Besides building a strong case and testifying at the trial, Walters helped to prepare prosecution arguments and exhibits and lined up a number of Corporation officials as expert witnesses.

Suzanne Fahy, Executive Director of Senior Corps, explained the Corporation's programs and regulations to the jury. Daryl James, the Corporation's Georgia State Director and Southern Area Manager, recounted his interactions and his concerns with Alma Williams, which led him to shut down her program in 2002. Veda Williams, Director of the Corporation's Southern Service Center, detailed Alma Williams' questionable financial transactions involving Federal funds.

"It takes a lot of coordination to mount a successful prosecution and the testimony from Corporation officials played a crucial role," said Walters. "It made our case very complete and thorough."

The trial was a high profile event in Valdosta. Alma Williams is a former local school board member. Her husband, Bunnis, a former city councilman who was also involved with Eastside Training Academy, was acquitted by the jury of Federal fraud charges.

Walters, whose trial participation is usually limited to giving sworn testimony, said he enjoyed his expanded role in the Williams case. "It was rewarding to see this one through to the finish first hand," he said.

"We appreciate the cooperation and assistance that Corporation officials gave us in this case," said Deputy Inspector General Robert Shadowens. "The OIG's primary mission is to support the Corpora-

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support from the Corporation.

How far spread is the problem? A 2005 OIG study of recurring audits issues found missing eligibility documents accounted for more than \$18 million in total questioned costs for the 25 audit reports included in the survey.

These oft-recurring audit issues can easily be addressed with better record keeping and increased oversight by program officials. Keeping track of all required paperwork is the best antidote for preventing a claimed cost from becoming a questioned cost.

### Document Checklist

- Review Corporation regulations on the types of documents you need to prove member eligibility and the amount of time you need to retain them.
- Create an eligibility check list detailing all required documents and include one in each member of volunteer's file.
- Conduct regular reviews of member files, especially when there has been a change of assignment or status.
- Make every attempt to assemble a complete eligibility document file for each member before he or she begins their community service.
- In the case of criminal background checks, always complete and document the check *before* deploying a member to serve with children of other vulnerable persons.

## Ex-VISTA Member Pleads Guilty to Theft

A former VISTA member has found out the hard way that a paperwork lapse is no excuse for Theft of Federal funds.

An Office of Inspector General investigation found that Jannette Maughan, a former Utah VISTA member, knowingly pocketed more than \$8,000 in subsistence allowance payments after she resigned from the program. Maughan left VISTA on November 16, 2002, but her departure was not immediately reported, as required, to the Corporation by local program officials.

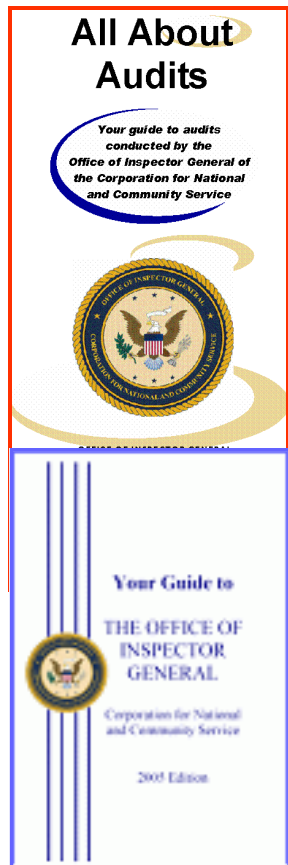
Maughan kept receiving allowance payments until August 23, 2003. Despite her program's administrative error, she was required to report the erroneous payments to program officials and to return any funds to which she was not entitled.

Maughan pled guilty to misdemeanor theft on July 27, 2006, in Utah District Court and was sentenced to 12 months in prison (which was suspended), 25 months of probation, fined \$250 (plus \$25 in court costs) and required to make full restitution to the Corporation.

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