

Jackie Lacey
District Attorney
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NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact:

Greg Risling
Public Information Officer
213-974-3525
GRisling@da.lacounty.gov
Twitter: @LADAOoffice

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**Pair Enter Not Guilty Pleas to Theft
from Catholic Nonprofit**

A former development consultant for a Catholic nonprofit and his assistant pleaded not guilty yesterday to charges that they stole about \$180,000 from the agency, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Charles Thomas Sebesta (dob 1/2/65) and Christine Lynn Rowe (dob 3/28/66) entered their pleas to one count each of grand theft of personal property in case BA425552. Bail was set at \$20,000 and they are both scheduled to return to court July 22.

Deputy District Attorney David Cheng said Sebesta was hired by Lay Mission-Helpers to help with charity fundraising. The nonprofit issued checks totaling approximately \$180,000 between October 2013 and April 2014 to a business Sebesta allegedly recommended.

The checks were diverted to a bank account under the company's name that was created by Rowe, Cheng said. The funds were then transferred to Sebesta's personal account, the prosecutor said.

If convicted, Sebesta and Rowe each face up to three years in state prison that would be served in county jail.

The case was investigated by Los Angeles Police Department's Olympic Division.

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About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety. Last year, the [Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#) prosecuted more than 73,000 felony defendants and 113,000 misdemeanor defendants.