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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FORMER ADMINISTRATOR CHARGED WITH 29 FELONIES RELATED TO MORE THAN \$579,000 THEFT FROM PENN CHRISTIAN ACADEMY



KATHERINE PAPROCKA

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (Dec. 14, 2022) — Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin R. Steele and East Norriton Township Police Chief Phil Pulaski announce the arrest of Katherine Paprocka, 36, of Paoli, on multiple felony counts and other charges related to the theft of more than \$579,000 from Penn Christian Academy in East Norriton. Paprocka was employed as the senior administrator at the private, non-profit school in East Norriton from July 2020 to December 2021.

The investigation began when East Norriton Police were contacted by a Penn Christian Academy/East Norriton (PCA/EN) school donor regarding possible embezzlement and co-mingling of funds by Paprocka. The donor had documents from a private inquiry into funding irregularities that she shared with police, which showed that there were regular payments to a crowdfunding platform as well as three other small-business lenders that help organizations that don't qualify for traditional bank financing. Loans with all four lenders were electronically signed by Paprocka and listed her as the "Senior Administrator and Owner" or "Executive Director and Owner" of Penn Christian Academy, but as a non-profit educational institution, Penn Christian Academy does not have ownership. Further, the information provided to East Norriton Police showed that \$62,974.79 had been paid to Paprocka's American

Express credit card and when the school's board requested information about those expenses, Paprocka only submitted approximately \$12,000 in school-related expenses.

The East Norriton Police and Montgomery County Detective Bureau began a joint investigation into the apparent theft and illegal business practices. Through interviews, analysis of data from banks, credit cards and school records, the investigation found that Paprocka defrauded Penn Christian Academy, its employees and payroll/billing companies of \$579,651.89. The defendant committed the fraudulent activities by assuming the identities/forging the signatures of multiple employees and volunteers of PCA/EN, including obtaining credit cards in the names of several PCA/EN employees without their knowledge or consent. Paprocka claimed to be the majority owner of the non-profit school to secure payroll funding and mismanaged hundreds of thousands of dollars that belonged to Penn Christian Academy.

The investigation found that Paprocka used the more than a half million dollars of stolen funds for family vacations to visit London, New York and Florida, as well as for other activities including rental property payments, car rentals, clothing purchases, restaurant meals, Amazon purchases and payments for in-vitro fertilization medical treatments.

"This non-profit school was defrauded and taken advantage of by someone they trusted as an administrator," said DA Steele. "This is a reminder that every non-profit organization needs to have checks on any employee who has access to its funds so more than one person has control and oversight of the monetary activity. It's the only way to be assured the organization's money is safe."

Paprocka is charged with multiple felony counts of Dealing in Proceeds of Unlawful Activities, Theft by Unlawful Taking, Receiving Stolen Property, Forgery, Theft by Deception, Theft of Services, Deceptive or Fraudulent Business Practices and other related charges. She was arraigned before Magisterial District Judge Katherine E. McGill, who set bail at \$99,000 cash. Paprocka was unable to make bail and was remanded to the Montgomery County Correctional Facility. A preliminary hearing is scheduled for 12:15 p.m., Dec. 19, 2022 before Magisterial District Judge Marc A. Alfarano.

The case will be prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Gwendolyn Kull, Captain of the Economic Crimes Unit.

Approved for release:

Kevin R. Steele

CRIMINAL CHARGES, AND ANY DISCUSSION THEREOF, ARE MERELY ALLEGATIONS AND ALL DEFENDANTS ARE PRESUMED INNOCENT UNTIL AND UNLESS PROVEN GUILTY.