



OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE INSPECTOR GENERAL  
FOR THE AGENCIES OF THE ILLINOIS GOVERNOR

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**Three Separate OEIG Investigations Reveal  
CTA Employee Misconduct and Abuse of Public Resources  
at the Illinois Board of Higher Education and Northern Illinois University**

**Chicago:** Executive Inspector General Ricardo Meza today discussed the release of three additional OEIG investigative reports. Today's releases bring the total number of OEIG investigative reports made available to the public in FY14 to 19.

*In Re: Donnella Anderson-Watkins and Sammie Watkins*

One of the three OEIG investigations released today involved a husband and wife team of now-former CTA bus drivers who engaged in an elaborate scheme to unlawfully obtain CTA retirement funds. OEIG investigators discovered that now-former CTA employees **Donnella Anderson-Watkins** and **Sammie Watkins** submitted a series of false documents, including documents claiming that their children died and had suffered serious injury when in fact they had not, in order to unlawfully obtain retirement funds.

"The conduct these two CTA bus drivers engaged in was unlawful, deliberate and repeated which is why our office recommended their termination," said Deputy Inspector General and Chief of the Regional Transit Board Division Fallon Opperman, who supervised the CTA investigation.

Following the OEIG investigation, both **Donnella Anderson-Watkins** and **Sammie Watkins** resigned, the CTA instituted new training for human resources staff and most recently, the Office of the Illinois Attorney General initiated criminal proceedings against them.

*In Re: George Reid*

Another investigation involved the abuse of public resources and a waste of funds by now-former Executive Director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) **Dr. George Reid**. Investigators concluded that **Dr. Reid** violated the Illinois Fiscal Control Act after discovering he commandeered a State-owned vehicle for extended periods of time, causing

IBHE to pay more than \$6,500 in unnecessary car rental fees. **Dr. Reid** and IBHE eventually entered into a settlement agreement whereby **Dr. Reid** was paid three months' salary upon leaving IBHE, \$32,000 in State funds more than his contract called for in the event of a voluntary departure.

The IBHE Board included a clause in the settlement agreement apparently requiring **Dr. Reid** to consult with IBHE through the transition to a new executive director. OEIG investigators, however, found email traffic revealing this clause was added at the last minute and at IBHE counsel's request "to make sure there are no press issues that he is being paid for services not performed." In its report, the OEIG recommended that the IBHE Board avoid agreeing to public statements that "are not accurate and may be misleading." This recommendation came after investigators discovered that the Board issued a press release suggesting **Dr. Reid** voluntarily left State employment, when in fact he had been asked to depart. Deputy Inspector General Laura Bautista supervised the investigation. Since **Dr. Reid** had already resigned, the Office of the Governor directed IBHE placed a copy of the OEIG report in his personnel file.

### ***In Re: Tom Folowell***

In the Northern Illinois University investigation, the OEIG found that NIU's Convocation Center Director of Operations **Tom Folowell** knowingly directed an NIU employee to clean the house belonging to his NIU supervisor during her regularly scheduled work hours. In other words, **Mr. Folowell** allowed a NIU employee to serve as a personal maid from time to time when she was originally scheduled to do university work. Upon receipt of the OEIG report and findings, NIU suspended **Mr. Folowell** for 7 days without pay.

All three OEIG investigatory reports were made public on Friday, June 20, 2014 and are available on the OEIG's website, [inspectorgeneral.illinois.gov](http://inspectorgeneral.illinois.gov). (Public reports are located here: <http://www2.illinois.gov/oeig/Pages/PublishedOEIGCases.aspx>)

### *About the Office of Executive Inspector General for Agencies under the Illinois Governor:*

The OEIG was created by the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430) in 2003. The OEIG receives, evaluates, and investigates allegations of fraud waste, abuse, mismanagement, misconduct, and violations of the 2003 Ethics Act, the 1990 US Supreme Court *Rutan* ruling, and other laws. The 2003 Ethics Act generally prohibits the OEIG from releasing reports of investigations to anyone except state and federal law enforcement agencies, other inspectors general, the heads of agency(ies) involved in the investigation, the appropriate ultimate jurisdictional authority such as the Office of the Governor or the Board of Trustees of a state university, and the Executive Ethics Commission. Only the Executive Ethics Commission has statutory authority to release OEIG reports to the public.

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