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Sandra J. Hairston  
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**CHAPEL HILL MAN SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON FOR  
DEFRAUDING UNC NEWMAN CENTER CATHOLIC STUDENT PARISH  
TO FUND LAVISH LIFESTYLE**

GREENSBORO, N.C. – A Chapel Hill man was recently sentenced to 57 months in federal prison on charges of bank fraud, access device fraud, and aggravated identity theft, announced Sandra J. Hairston, Acting United States Attorney for the Middle District of North Carolina.

Brian Lee CANSLER, 27, of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, was sentenced on November 27, 2017, by the Honorable Catherine C. Eagles, United States District Judge for the Middle District of North Carolina. CANSLER previously pleaded guilty to charges relating to his tenure as Financial Director of the UNC Newman Center Catholic Student Parish, a Catholic student ministry and parish located at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The UNC Student Parish ministers to both the UNC student body and the Chapel Hill community. CANSLER worked for the UNC Student Parish in various roles from February 2014 to July of 2016. From September 2014 to his termination, CANSLER served as Financial Director of the UNC Student Parish. CANSLER pleaded guilty to bank fraud in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1344(2) for counterfeiting UNC Student Parish checks, aggravated identity theft in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1028A for forging the signature of the then Pastor of the parish on counterfeit checks and to access device fraud in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1029(a)(2) for misuse of the UNC Student Parish Bank of America card issued to him for use for parish business.

CANSLER exploited his position as finance director to defraud the UNC Parish. First, he fraudulently obtained approximately \$8,000 by making two parish checks payable to himself in the amounts of \$4,500 and \$3,500. CANSLER forged the signature of then serving pastor onto both fraudulent checks and presented them for payment from the UNC Parish's account at PNC Bank.

Second, CANSLER fraudulently misused a Bank of America card and a PNC Bank credit card issued to the UNC Student Parish for official parish use. CANSLER was authorized to use these credit cards only for parish expenses such as liturgical and office supplies. However, from October 2014 to July 2016, CANSLER made over \$146,000 in unauthorized purchases with the credit cards and paid the bill with UNC Student Parish funds. These purchases included fine dining, clothing, computer products and travel. CANSLER used UNC Parish credit cards to pay for trips to London, Brussels, and Disney World and to Las Vegas to see Celine Dion in concert. CANSLER or his girlfriend posted photos from these parish-funded trips on Facebook. CANSLER used his position as Finance Director at the Student Parish to pay for these charges with Parish funds.

In addition to a 57-month term of imprisonment, Judge Eagles sentenced CANSLER to five years of supervised release and ordered him to pay over \$171,000 in restitution.

The United States Postal Inspection Service and the United States Department of Treasury Officer of Inspector General Task Force participated in the investigation. Assistant United States Attorney Frank Joseph Chut, Jr. prosecuted the case.

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