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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MONDAY, APRIL 28, 2014

2 1/3 to 7 Years in State Prison for Role in Golden Town Buffet Identity Theft Scam



ALBANY, NY- District Attorney P. David Soares announced today that PHENG SATHONGOTH, 42, of Manhattan, New York, was sentenced to 2 1/3 to 7 years in State Prison and ordered to pay \$4,549.64 in restitution before the Honorable Stephen Herrick in Albany County Court this morning.

On March 31, 2014, SATHONGOTH pleaded guilty to (1) Count of Identity Theft in the First Degree, a Class D Felony.

On August 5, 2013 the Bethlehem Police, United States Secret Service, United States Department of Homeland Security, New York State Police, and other local law enforcement agencies executed a search warrant pursuant to an identity theft investigation at the Golden Town Buffet on Route 9W in the Town of Bethlehem.

The search warrant did uncover that SATHONGOTH, acting in concert with others, used stolen credit card numbers and identities to purchase thousands of dollars' worth of merchandise. One employee, HENG LI, 27, of Brooklyn, did use a credit card skimmer device to obtain personal identification information of 39 credit card numbers by fraudulent pretenses.

LI also was in possession of a forged Michigan driver's license and under an active deportation order at the time of the search warrant execution, as were three other employees that were present at the restaurant at that time.

On December 11, 2013, HENG LI was sentenced to 2 1/3 to 7 years in State Prison after pleading guilty to (1) Count of Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, a Class D Felony, and (1) Count of Scheme to Defraud in the First Degree, a Class E Felony, before the Honorable Stephen Herrick in Albany County Court.

This case is being prosecuted by Bureau Chief of the Financial Crimes Unit Daniel Lynch.

For more information please contact Cecilia Walsh (518) 275-4710.

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