



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Distribution

January 4, 2012

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### **Carson Man Sentenced to 12 Years in Federal Prison for Running Investment Fraud Scheme Involving Wind Energy Technology**

*LOS ANGELES* – A Carson man is in custody today after being sentenced to 12 years in federal prison for running a \$1 million scheme that bilked dozens of victims – including a U.S. Army staff sergeant who was serving on active duty in Afghanistan – who thought they were investing in a legitimate wind energy technology business.

James A. Rivera, 42, was sentenced late yesterday by United States District Judge Stephen V. Wilson, who remanded the defendant into custody at the conclusion of the hearing. In addition to the 144-month prison term, Judge Wilson ordered Rivera to pay restitution of just more than \$1 million, a figure that represents the total amount lost by victims in the case.

At the conclusion of a jury trial in June 2010, Rivera was convicted of mail fraud and 10 counts of wire fraud Rivera related to the scheme he ran out of the Carson offices of companies Rivera called Apostles, Inc. and Almighty Wind, Inc. Through word-of-mouth, telephone conference calls and seminars conducted over the internet, Rivera solicited investments in his companies, which he claimed would manufacture and market a revolutionary new form of windmill or “wind turbine” that would be used for electricity production. Beginning in 2007 and continuing into 2009, Rivera marketed his scheme by making numerous false statements, including that the Nigerian government had committed to buying more than \$1 billion worth of the windmills, that the International Monetary Fund was providing hundreds of millions of dollars in financing for the business, and that a prominent Hollywood director was planning to purchase the

windmills to power the movie set of his next production. Rivera also falsely told investors that he held multiple patents on the windmill design and that he would be mass-producing the windmills within several months. In reality, there were no such customer orders, financing arrangements or patents, and the windmill had never progressed beyond the early design stage.

While Rivera touted his financial integrity and used religious rhetoric and imagery to appeal to investors, Rivera failed to disclose to investors that he had eight prior criminal convictions, five of which were for fraud and fraud-related offenses. Nor did Rivera reveal to investors that he was on probation for one of his prior fraud convictions and was on bail awaiting trial on additional fraud charges filed in California state court.

The investigation of Rivera was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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Release No. 12-002