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### Colorado Couple Charged With Operating \$17 Million Ponzi Scheme

Sept. 30, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TOPEKA, KAN. – A Colorado couple is charged in a federal criminal complaint unsealed today with operating a \$17 million Ponzi scheme that lulled investors in 13 states with claims of big potential returns on investments in diamonds and trading international notes, U.S. Attorney Barry Grissom said today. The couple has been arrested in Atlanta and will be returned to face the charges in U.S. District Court in Denver.

Prosecutors from U.S. Attorney Barry Grissom's office have been appointed as special counsel in the case.

**Richard Dalton**, 65, and **Marie Dalton**, 60, both of Golden, Colo., are charged with one count of conspiracy to commit mail fraud, wire fraud and interstate transportation of stolen funds. The complaint alleges the couple operated a company called Universal Consulting Resources LLC that defrauded investors with claims of guaranteed investment returns of 48 to 120 percent. In fact, the company operated as a Ponzi scheme in which investor moneys were commingled and used to pay out profits to early investors to create the false appearance to new investors that the investments were performing as promised.

The indictment alleges the Daltons used investor funds to pay \$936,000 for their home in Golden, Colo., as well as to purchase a \$35,000 Toyota Highlander and to make a \$5,000 deposit for their daughter's wedding.

The indictment alleges that when the Daltons learned they were under investigation by the Securities Exchange Commission they discontinued making payments to investors and falsely represented to investors that they could expect payments soon. They also misled investors with false claims that the company's European trader was switching banks, that the company was liquidating a cache of diamonds to pay investors back, that a plane carrying diamonds had been forced to land in Amsterdam because three engines had gone out and that the company had discovered it was holding 18,000 fake diamonds.

"This investigation is not over as we are committed to following the money trail," said Sean P. Sowards, IRS Criminal Investigation Special Agent in Charge. "We will continue to pursue the evidence wherever it leads."

If convicted, they face a maximum penalty of 20 years in federal prison and a fine up to \$250,000. The FBI, IRS-Criminal Investigations and the Securities Exchange Commission investigated. Assistant U.S. Attorney Richard Hathaway and Assistant U.S. Attorney Christine Kenney are serving as Special Attorneys to prosecute the case.


*In all cases, defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. The indictments merely contain allegations of criminal conduct.*

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