

## GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS

In December 1986, the General Accounting Office (GAO) established the Office of Special Investigations (OSI) in the Office of General Counsel to assist in Congressional oversight responsibilities. As its primary mission, OSI investigates matters alleging misconduct or impropriety (including fraud and conflict of interest) in federal programs and activities. OSI was set up to ensure that trained, experienced criminal investigators handle questionable matters involving possible violations of federal law uncovered in GAO's diverse work.

OSI's investigations are generally initiated at the request of or in consultation with GAO's audit divisions performing Congressionally-mandated reviews. Congress and GAO's authority to investigate programs or agencies receiving federal funds provides OSI with the authority to investigate a diverse number of agencies, issues and programs.

These investigations generally focus on violations involving fraud, waste and abuse in government programs and activities; misconduct within agencies and regulated industries; contract and procurement fraud or impropriety; or conflict of interest and ethical misconduct. OSI also conducts enforcement reviews, reexamining matters previously investigated or evaluating other federal criminal justice agencies. OSI directs and operates the GAO Fraud Hotline.

Women constitute 26 percent of the investigative staff of OSI. Barbara Cart, OSI's Assistant Director for the Defense and National Security Group, is representative of our multifaceted investigators.

In 1975, the Arkansas State Police commissioned Barbara Cart as their first female trooper, where, among other duties, she was responsible for accident investigations and worked special undercover

assignments for the Criminal Investigations Division.

After completing her law degree at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and working for law firms (generally on labor issues), Barbara served on Capitol Hill - first as a legislative aide and then as staff attorney for the Senate's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. There, in between drafting reports and legislative proposals and other duties, she investigated organized crime activities, labor racketeering, and the efficiency of federal programs such as Medicaid.

Barbara came to OSI in early 1987 as one of our first investigators. Here she and her coworkers have investigated alleged or suspected violations of federal statutes or regulations, such as the inappropriate use of \$1.5 million in federal laboratory funds for research and development. OSI work has led her to all corners of the country and overseas and to her current position as assistant director.

When asked what differences she sees in the way OSI approaches and conducts investigations as opposed to the approaches of other investigative agencies, Barbara's answer provides insight into OSI's mission.

"Many times our information is an allegation or a lead," and not necessarily a crime that has already been uncovered. "We tend to do more background work" and have the opportunity to "broaden the scope of our investigation," if warranted, whereas other agencies are generally trying to prosecute a person and have to look more at the "specifics."

Other agencies' investigative products are generally given to the prosecution and are "built into court case(s)." Our products - briefings, testimonies, and reports to congressional Members and Committees - alert the Congress that legislative

changes may be needed to address a reported problem. OSI gives any evidence of fraudulent or criminal activity to the appropriate agency for further investigation and possible prosecution.

As befits OSI's wide-ranging mission, women investigators bring an equally wide-ranging investigative expertise to OSI. Among them, the following gained their investigative experience and area expertise in numerous federal, state, and local entities.

Leigh Jackson: Criminal Investigator, Department of Labor; Security Analyst, Private Industry; Policy Analyst, North Port, AL, Police Department.

Cecelia Porter: Special Agent, Defense Criminal Investigative Service; Contracting Officer, U.S. Marine Corps Headquarters; Deputy Chief of Staff, Installations and Logistics, Department of the Army.

Patricia Walker: Special Agent, U.S. Secret Service; Undercover Police Officer, Sweetwater County, WY, Sheriff's Office and Green River, WY, Police Department; Patrol Officer, Cheyenne, WY, Police Department

Carin Wyche: Special Agent, IRS Criminal Investigation; Tax Examiner, IRS.

Their educational background is equally varied. They hold numerous degrees, including an almost completed Ph.D. in Public Administration; master's degrees in Forensic Science, Crime and Commerce (emphasizing environmental policy and quantitative analysis), and Public Administration; and bachelor's degrees in Criminology, Criminal Justice Administration, Foreign Affairs, and Political Science.

They have enhanced that background by attending Glynco's Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (where Cecelia Porter is a certified instructor) and various other

law enforcement academies. The many and varied courses and training they have taken in the areas of accounting, contracting, procurement, systems design, energy, and the environment frequently assist in determining potential fraud.

Women investigators have been an integral part of OSI since its inception, having recently assisted in investigations of conflict of interest involving contract awards and government officials, savings and loans irregularities, money laundering, the

mischarging of fees to government contracts, and the fraudulent handling of laboratory samples from hazardous waste sites. They will continue in that integral role. Any of OSI's investigators may be contacted at (202) 272-5500.

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- Leigh Jackson, Criminal Investigator, Department of Labor
- Security Analyst, Private Industry
- Policy Analyst, North Carolina
- Police Department
- Cecilia Foster, Special Agent, Defense Criminal Investigative Service, Contracting Office, U.S. Marine Corps Headquarters, Dept. of Staff Installations and Logistics, Department of the Army
- Father Walker, Special Agent, U.S. Secret Service, Undercover
- Police Officer, Bawelwater County
- WY. Sheriff's Office and Chief
- River WY. Police Department
- Patrol Officer, Cheyenne WY. Police Department
- Curt Wyrse, Special Agent, IRS Criminal Investigation, Tax Examiner, IRS

Their educational backgrounds are equally varied. They hold numerous degrees, including an MBA from Peter P.D. in Europe. Administration, master's degrees in Criminal Science, Crime and Commerce (emphasizing auditing, mental policy and legislative analysis), and Public Administration and bachelor's degrees in Criminology, Criminal Justice Administration, Foreign Affairs, and Political Science.

They have enhanced their backgrounds by attending Clynova Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (where Cecilia Foster is a certified instructor) and various other

at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and working for law firms (gradually on labor issues). Barbara served on Capitol Hill - first as a legislative aide and then as staff attorney for the Senate's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. There, in between drafting reports and legislative proposals and other duties, she investigated organized crime activities, labor law violations and the efficiency of federal programs such as Medicaid.

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