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03/24/2011

Anchorage man sentenced for falsely claiming US citizenship

ANCHORAGE, Alaska - A local resident, who stole the identity of his deceased nephew pleaded guilty and was sentenced Wednesday for falsely claiming to be a U.S. citizen and filing a false Social Security application. The case was investigated by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

Alvaro Jimenez-Aguilar, 41, was named in a two-count indictment unsealed Friday. He was sentenced to time served and one year of supervised release.

According to the court documents, Jimenez-Aguilar entered the United States on March 11, 2008 as a six-month visitor visa. He failed to depart after six months and has remained in the United States illegally.

Court documents describe how Jimenez-Aguilar assumed the identity of Andres Martin Kellerman, a U.S. citizen who was born in Virginia in 1978. While visiting Costa Rica in 2003, Kellerman drowned in a surfing accident.

In November 2008, Jimenez-Aguilar married Kellerman's aunt in Alaska, using his true identity. At the time of the marriage, both the defendant and his wife had overstayed their visas and were living illegally in the United States. His wife returned to Costa Rica and lives there.

The defendant obtained Kellerman's Virginia birth certificate, and in April 2009 he applied in person for a duplicate Social Security card in Kellerman's name. Within days, he also submitted applications to the Alaska Department of Motor Vehicles, using the name, Social Security account number, and date of birth belonging to his deceased nephew. He falsely claimed to be a U.S. citizen.

In March 2010, Jimenez-Aguilar applied for an Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend, again using Kellerman's identity, and again, falsely claiming U.S. citizenship. In addition, he registered to vote in Alaska.

The defendant in this case took advantage of the tragic death of a family member and used that tragic event to commit fraud," said Leigh Winchell, special agent in charge of Alaska's ICE HSI office. "HSI remains strong in our commitment to investigate this type of crime and to ensure that those who attempt to abuse the legal system by hiding their true identities are brought to justice."

At the conclusion of his court hearing March 23, Jimenez-Aguilar was transferred from the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service to ICE HSI. He will be processed for deportation.

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