

Miami Man Pleads Guilty In University of Hawaii Scam

By [Jim Dooley](#) - November 8, 2012

Sean Barriero, one of two men accused of scamming the University of Hawaii out of \$200,000, pleaded guilty in federal court today and will testify against co-defendant Marc Hubbard.

Barriero, 44, a Miami entertainment promoter, wore a conservative dark pinstripe suit to his appearance before U.S. Magistrate Judge Kevin Chang, admitting that he lied to UH officials about how their money would be used.

The funds were supposed to be a deposit securing the appearance of entertainer Stevie Wonder at an August fundraiser for the UH Athletics Office.

But the money disappeared after it was wired to a Barriero bank account in Miami. The concert was cancelled after Wonder's representatives told the university that he knew nothing about the planned concert.

Barriero will be sentenced next year and faces maximum penalties of 10 years in prison and \$200,000 in fines.

Barriero will also be jointly responsible for repaying the \$200,000 to the university, said Asst. U.S. Attorney Les Osborne.

But Barriero claims to have very limited funds and qualified for free representation by the U.S. Public Defender's Office.

He admitted today that he falsely told UH officials that the \$200,000 deposit would be wired to an escrow or trust account, but instead was routed to a business account controlled by Barriero and his fiancé/business partner Sannise "Sunny" Crosby.

Barriero then took consulting fees for himself and another agent involved in setting up the Wonder deal, Helen Williams, before forwarding the balance to Hubbard in North Carolina.

Some of the money retained by Barriero was used as a \$25,000 down payment on a 2010 Mercedes Benz automobile that has been seized from Crosby, according to court records.

Hubbard, 44, was arrested by FBI agents in Charlotte today on a charge of wire fraud and is being held pending a hearing next week on his extradition to Hawaii.

He is already facing unrelated state fraud charges in South Carolina and has a history of unsuccessful and fraudulent business ventures.

Barriero said he asked Hubbard to help arrange the Wonder appearance in Hawaii because Hubbard was "a music industry veteran who claimed to have access to Stevie Wonder through a member of Stevie Wonder's entourage."

Barriero's lawyer, U.S. Dep. Public Defender Sean Coutain, said Barriero "cooperated fully with the FBI investigation, which confirmed that Marc Hubbard deceived Mr. Barriero and others by falsely claiming be in talks with Stevie Wonder."

In the South Carolina case brought against Hubbard last month, he is accused of defrauding investors of \$700,000 for a concert by entertainer Alicia Keys that never took place.

State Attorney General Alan Wilson said in a written statement that Hubbard "acquired approximately \$700,000 from the victim without using those funds for that purpose, and without evidence that he even had the contacts or the ability to deliver the concert."

State regulators in North and South Carolina, California and Nevada have repeatedly filed cease and desist orders against Hubbard for false and fraudulent investment programs centered around non-existent entertainment ventures, business records show.

Last year, the South Carolina Securities Division said Hubbard solicited \$1.8 million investments through a company he operated, Sports Dimensions, Inc. The company promised investment returns of 30 per cent because it claimed to operate in "a recession-proof industry."

The South Carolina regulators said entertainer Alicia Keys had no association with Hubbard, who has filed personal and corporate bankruptcies in North Carolina.

The Internal Revenue Service filed tax liens against Hubbard totaling \$747,000 in 2008 and 2009.