

**U-T WATCHDOG: RICKY YOUNG**

## **\$2M embezzlement nets two years**

### **SAN DIEGO**

A supervisor at a San Diego-based metals company was sentenced on Friday to two years in prison for embezzling about \$2 million and using it for expenses including vacations in Hawaii, Las Vegas and Disneyland, the U.S. Attorney's Office said.

Edward Abellana, 40, worked as the accounts payable supervisor for Argen Corp. He was there from December 2011 to October 2015. From June 2012 to October 2015, Abellana made purchases on a company credit card issued to an executive, according to his plea agreement. He would then alter the invoices and conceal the personal expenses as business costs in the company's records.

He also wrote \$162,000 in checks against the company's checking account to his own benefit. Abellana used the money to fund a lavish lifestyle including a trip to Super Bowl XLIX in Glendale, Ariz., in 2015.

He also charged \$70,500 to charter a jet to go with his family and friends from Carlsbad to Honolulu, according to the plea.

Abellana failed to report the embezzled

funds on his tax returns from 2012 to 2015, he admitted in court. For instance, he reported to the IRS in 2015 that he had no taxable income — when he had actually taken in \$857,000.

He pleaded guilty in San Diego federal court to charges of wire fraud and making a false tax return in January, on the same day he was charged.

He was ordered to pay \$1.95 million to the company and \$661,000 to the IRS.

Abellana faced up to 20 years in prison on the wire fraud charge and three years on the tax charge. He was ordered by Judge U.S. District Judge Janis L. Sammartino to surrender to authorities on June 2.

"When a trusted employee uses federal wires to feed his own greed, he will be vigorously investigated and prosecuted for his crimes — not only for stealing the money, but also for failing to report the income and pay taxes," Acting U.S. Attorney Alana W. Robinson said in a news release.

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