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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: January 16, 2013 **Contact:** Jonathan Raven, Chief Deputy District Attorney
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Brentwood Couple Convicted of Embezzlement

Benjamin Chaney and Kara Brown embezzled from a Davis Business

(Woodland, CA) – **January 16, 2013** - District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced that, on January 11, 2013, the District Attorney's Office convicted 43-year-old Kara Leigh Brown of Brentwood, California for her part in the embezzlement from a business in Davis in which her husband was employed. Brown pled to a charge of Accessory to a Felony for assisting in the theft and embezzlement by her husband, Benjamin Joseph Chaney, age 32, also of Brentwood. On the same date, Chaney admitted the charge that he embezzled an amount between \$100,000 and \$500,000. On an earlier date Chaney pled to the majority of charges in this case, multiple theft-related felonies and felony tax evasion. Brown agreed to pay \$340,000 in restitution to the victims.

During the years 2003 to 2007, Chaney was employed as a Chief Financial Officer for Harper Model Home Maintenance, a Davis company owned by the Harper family. The Harpers had spent decades building the company, which specializes in model home cleaning, doing most of the labor themselves and sometimes driving as much as 3000 miles a month to reach the work site. As this family business grew, they hired Chaney, their then son-in-law, in various management positions. Chaney eventually became the Chief Financial Officer.

Later, after Chaney's marriage ended, the Harpers kept Chaney on as CFO. In 2003, Chaney began stealing from the company by writing checks and using the company credit card on various personal items, including gifts, child-support payments, electronics, computers, home mortgage payments, furniture, appliances and other personal items amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars over the five year period. The thefts were not discovered until Chaney left the company in November 2007, after which a review of his work computer showed that he had started a competing business using funds from the Harper's business.

A Yolo County Grand Jury indicted the couple on March 20, 2010. Brown, Chaney's second wife, was involved in the criminal acts from 2005 to 2007. As part of the plea agreement, Brown will receive probation and Chaney agreed to serve five years in State Prison. The Honorable Stephen L. Mock presided over the case and is scheduled to sentence on February 22, 2013 at 8:30 a.m. in Department 3 of the Yolo County Superior Court.

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