

ALABAMA SECURITIES COMMISSION

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Email: asc@asc.alabama.gov Website: www.asc.alabama.gov

**Ocean Springs, Mississippi and Pensacola, Florida Men
Plead Guilty to Securities Violations in Montgomery County, Alabama**

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA (April 18, 2014) Daryl Bailey, District Attorney for the 15th Judicial Circuit, Montgomery County, Alabama; and Joseph Borg, Director of the Alabama Securities Commission (“ASC”) announced that on April 16, 2014, Martin Franklin Blane of Ocean Springs, Mississippi; and Robert Neil Robinson, of Pensacola, Florida, pled guilty before Montgomery County Circuit Court Judge Eugene Reese to selling unregistered securities. The charges are violations of Section 8-6-4 *Ala. Code* (1975), and are Class C felonies punishable by not more than 10 years, nor less than 1 year and 1 day in prison and not more than a \$15,000 fine per charge, upon conviction.

The plea was the result of a November 2013 Grand Jury indictment charging both Defendants with violations of the Alabama Securities Act and their subsequent arrests by the U.S. Marshal’s Fugitive Task Forces in Jackson County, Mississippi and Escambia County, Florida. Both Blane and Robinson will be required to pay restitution in the amount of \$81,000 and \$185,520, respectively, to multiple victims in Montgomery County and surrounding areas.

ASC’s Enforcement Division investigation revealed that both Blane and Robinson sold shares of stock in Eyewonder, Inc., an Atlanta based company, to the victim investors. Ultimately, a third party involved in the sales, failed to transfer the shares to the victims who therefore received nothing in return for their investment. The ASC’s investigation revealed that neither Blane nor Robinson were registered with the ASC to legally offer and/or sell securities into, within, or from Alabama, as required by law. In addition to their guilty pleas and restitution, Blane and Robinson have agreed to cooperate in the ongoing investigation. Sentencing is scheduled before Judge Reese on June 10, 2014.

ASC Director, Joseph Borg said, “We hope this prosecution will send a clear message about the potential dangers involved in the buying and selling of securities and the reason for the requirement that both the sellers and the securities be registered with the Alabama Securities Commission. Anyone unlawfully offering and selling securities in Alabama, without being properly registered to do so, will be held accountable for their actions.”

The ASC cautions potential investors to thoroughly scrutinize and research any investment opportunity or offer. Contact the ASC with inquiries concerning securities broker-dealers, agents, investment advisers, investment adviser representatives, financial planners, registration status of securities or debt management programs, to report suspected fraud or to obtain consumer information. The ASC provides free investor education and fraud prevention materials in print, on our website and through educational presentations upon request.

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For further information contact Dan Lord, Education and Public Affairs Manager, 334-353-4858.

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