Silicon Valley Executive Settles Insider Trading Charges

**July 26, 2016** – The Securities and Exchange Commission today announced that a former Silicon Valley executive has agreed to settle insider trading charges after secretly purchasing thousands of stock shares in family members’ brokerage accounts to illegally profit on the news of her company’s acquisition.

An SEC investigation found that Yi Chen, who was the corporate controller at Fremont, Calif.-based Oplink Communications, learned confidentially that the company was in discussions to be acquired by Koch Industries. She worked on due diligence for the acquisition and participated in calls and meetings with Koch representatives. Despite the fact that she was working on the acquisition and subject to a “blackout period” prohibiting her from trading in Oplink stock, Chen attempted to circumvent the rules by trading in other family members’ accounts based on the nonpublic information. Oplink’s stock price rose by nearly 14 percent when the companies publicly announced the acquisition. Chen then sold all of the Oplink stock in her family accounts for more than $34,000 in profits.

Without admitting or denying the SEC’s findings, Chen agreed to pay $36,086.31 in disgorgement and interest plus a $34,678.44 penalty for a total of $70,764.75. She is barred from serving as an officer or director of a public company for five years and she is suspended from appearing or practicing before the SEC as an accountant, which includes not participating in the financial reporting or audits of public companies. The SEC’s order permits her to apply for reinstatement after five years.

The SEC’s investigation was conducted by Walker Newell and supervised by Jennifer J. Lee of the San Francisco office. The SEC appreciates the assistance of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority.

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