



**OFFICE OF
STATE TREASURER
DENISE L. NAPPIER**

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, December 15, 2004

Record-Setting Response in Opening Two Weeks of "Big List" Campaign; Treasury Working to Return Millions to Rightful Owners

Numbers Tell the Story: 223,000 Web Hits; 45,000 Email Inquiries; 31,000 New Claims Currently Being Processed, Potentially Exceeding \$9 Million

State Treasurer Denise L. Nappier said today that more than 31,000 claims filed during the opening two weeks of the Treasury's unclaimed property public awareness campaign are now being processed, with a potential value to the recipients of more than \$9 million. The numbers surpass all previous Treasury initiatives to reunite individuals with their unclaimed assets.



"Our goal is to return millions of dollars to thousands of state residents, and we're off to a great start," Nappier said. "People are checking The Big List in unprecedented numbers, and filing claims to get back money that is rightfully theirs. We continue to encourage people to check for their names, as well as the names of businesses and organizations they may be associated with."

Nappier cited the extraordinary response to publication of **The Big List**, which appeared in newspapers statewide on December 1st, and upgrades to the Treasury's website. During the first two weeks of the record-setting effort, the Treasury has received:

- 223,078 "hits" on the Treasury website, www.nameitandclaimit.org
- 8,814 telephone calls to the toll-free number
- 45,062 email inquiries
- 1,715 coupon responses from the newspaper supplement
- 31,559 claims generated and now being processed for verification

The record-setting effort to reunite individuals, businesses and organizations was kicked-off on November 30 in Milford at the Westfield Shoppingtown Connecticut Post mall. The following day, daily newspapers throughout the state published a special 112-page supplement containing nearly 39,000 new names. State law requires the Treasury to publish in newspapers, every other year, names that have been added to its database since the previous publication.

The Treasury's website, www.nameitandclaimit.org, was also updated just prior to the campaign launch, and now includes more than 600,000 listings worth \$481 million. Individuals can request a claim form directly on-line, or call the Treasurer's Office, toll-free, weekdays between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm at **1-800-833-7318**, or for assistance in Spanish: 1-800-618-3404.

The State Treasurer's Office collects and safeguards cash and other financial assets that have been unclaimed for a period of generally three years. The assets, called "unclaimed property,"

CONTACT: **BERNARD L. KAVALER**
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATION
(860) 702-3277 FAX (860) 702-3043
BERNARD.KAVALER@PO.STATE.CT.US

include dormant balances in savings and checking accounts, unredeemed stocks, bonds and mutual fund shares, unreturned security deposits, and un-cashed checks, such as insurance benefits, commissions or wages.

Nappier noted that at the outset of the current effort, there were 57,250 claimants with between \$1,000 and \$5,000 and another 5,351 with between \$5,000 and \$10,000. She said that often individuals are unaware that they have inherited money, and others may simply have forgotten about an old bank account, security deposit or other monetary asset.



In addition to the supplement in newspapers earlier this month, copies of **The Big List** have been provided to municipal town halls, public libraries and senior centers throughout Connecticut.

During the first month of the 2002 campaign, a total of 13,712 claims were generated.

“We have intensified efforts to reunite citizens with their money, and achieved unparalleled levels of success. The beneficiaries of our efforts are the individuals, families and businesses who are reunited with assets that rightfully belong to them. That’s what our work is all about – and we’re one of the few state agencies devoted to giving money back to people!”

In fiscal year 2004, the Treasurer’s Office returned more money than ever before in a single year -- a record \$10.8 million to individuals, businesses and organizations. The primary sources of unclaimed property are employers, banks, insurance companies, and hospitals which hold uncashed checks, stocks, insurance benefits and other forms of unclaimed property. Businesses are required to report unclaimed property to the Treasurer’s Office annually by March 31.

Nappier also emphasized that searching the Treasury’s unclaimed property list is free, and it is not necessary to hire outside consultants, sometimes called “heir finders” to pursue a search. The Treasury’s website also contains links to databases of unclaimed assets from other states.