

Shakeup in Minn. U.S. Attorney's Office

by UPI

MINNEAPOLIS - Three top lawyers in Minnesota's U.S. Attorney's Office have resigned management positions to return to prosecuting cases, the Minneapolis Star Tribune said.

First Assistant U.S. Attorney John Marti took a demotion, along with civil division head Erika Mozangue and criminal division head James Lackner. Marti had been appointed first assistant in December by U.S. Attorney for Minnesota Rachel Paulose.

Citing a source with direct knowledge of the events, the Star Tribune said news of the resignations was communicated internally late Thursday afternoon, following a visit to the office by a representative of the Executive Office of the U.S. Attorney in Washington.

Paulose was appointed U.S. Attorney for Minnesota in March 2006.

"It's just absolutely extraordinary that these three top managers would voluntarily demote themselves," a defense attorney familiar with the office told the newspaper. "I mean, it's a rank cut. ... And then it would be a salary cut, too."

A source told the Star Tribune the resignations had more to do with management style and communication than politics. However, the newspaper said a number of other managers have voluntarily stepped aside under

Paulose -- who issued a statement saying "the community will benefit" from having the attorneys prosecuting cases.

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