

Whistleblowers rise to the FinReg bait

By KAJA WHITEHOUSE

Wall Street crooks, watch out! Your ex-wife or accountant, or both, are champing at the bit to make a quick buck ratting you out.

Since launching an advertising campaign seeking whistleblower clients a little more than a week ago, New York securities lawyer Stuart Meissner says he's received roughly 25 calls from wannabe snitches, claiming to know about juicy fraud.

Among the best is a tip about po-

tential stock fraud passed along by the ex-wife of a top executive at an NYSE-listed company, Meissner tells The Post.

As a result of legislation passed in July, the Securities and Exchange Commission is offering financial rewards to whistleblowers of up to 30 percent of whatever fines and ill-gotten gains above \$1 million are recovered.

SEC spokesman John Heine declined to say how many tips the

agency has received thus far. But if Meissner's experience is any reflection, the regulator whose reputation was tarnished when it repeatedly failed to act on complaints surrounding the dealings of convicted Ponzi king Bernie Madoff is seeing a lot of opportunities to redeem itself.

Meissner launched his ad campaign to coincide with the release of Oliver Stone's new flick about corporate greed, "Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps."

The ads, which are running in four New York theaters, including the Ziegfeld in Midtown, alert financial sector workers or their family members to the new whistleblower rules and direct them to Meissner's Web site.

In one instance, a man called Meissner's office with a tip about wrongdoing at a big bank. But in a follow-up conversation, the man said he was being threatened by his employer, and declined to pursue working with Meissner.