

For Immediate Release
April 6, 2011

**ALBUQUERQUE MAN RECEIVES 57-MONTH
PRISON SENTENCE FOR FEDERAL FIREARMS CONVICTION**

ALBUQUERQUE – United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales announced that, today in federal court in Albuquerque, New Mexico, **Nicholas Johnson**, a 32-year-old Albuquerque resident, was sentenced to 57-months in prison to be followed by a three-year term of supervised release based on his conviction for being a felon in possession of a firearm.

Johnson was one of 32 defendants indicted on federal and state firearms offenses in June 2010 as part of Operation Jokerz Traderz, a long-term investigation designed to remove unlawfully possessed firearms from the streets of Albuquerque, and to target and prosecute felons in possession of such firearms. During the investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) operated an undercover store-front in Albuquerque, also aptly named “Jokerz Traderz.” ATF operated “Jokerz Traderz” as a thrift store at 1309 San Mateo Blvd. NE. Undercover agents purchased a variety of firearms from a substantial number of individuals, most of whom were later arrested as part of the operation. In total, 230 firearms were removed from the streets of Albuquerque never to be used again for any unlawful purpose.

Johnson was charged in two counts of a five-count indictment filed in the case on June 10, 2010. Count 4 of the indictment charged Johnson and his co-defendant Mario Montoya, 24, with possession of a stolen firearm, and Count five charged Johnson as a felon in possession of a firearm. According to the indictment, Johnson was prohibited from possessing firearms because he previously had been convicted of larceny over \$500 in the Seventh Judicial District Court for the State of New Mexico and possession of methamphetamine in the Second Judicial District Court for the State of New Mexico. The remaining three counts of the indictment

charged co-defendant Montoya alone with possession of a firearm with an obliterated serial number (Count 1), possession of a stolen firearm (Count 2), and possession of a stolen firearm (Count 3).

Johnson was arrested on June 22, 2010, and has been in federal custody since that time. On March 2, 2011, Johnson entered a guilty plea to an information charging him with being a felon in possession of a firearm under a plea agreement with the United States Attorney's Office.

Co-defendant Montoya, who was transferred from state custody to federal custody on July 9, 2010, entered guilty pleas to Counts 1, 2 and 3 of the indictment on November 22, 2010. Montoya remains detained pending a sentencing hearing on April 21, 2011.

Assistant United States Attorney Linda Mott prosecuted the case, which was investigated by ATF.

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