

For Immediate Release
December 15, 2011

**TOHAJIILEE MAN RECEIVES SENTENCE OF 43 YEARS
IMPRISONMENT FOR CHILD RAPE CONVICTION**

ALBUQUERQUE – Earlier today **Eddie Chaco, Jr.**, 30, was sentenced to 43 years in prison for child sex abuse offenses, announced U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales. Chaco will be on supervised release for 10 years after completing his prison sentence, and also will be required to register as a sex offender. Chaco, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation from Tohajiilee, N.M., was convicted of three counts of aggravated sexual assault of a child under 12 years of age on August 11, 2011, after a three-day trial.

Chaco was indicted on December 29, 2010 and charged with engaging in sexual acts, including sexual intercourse, with a female child under the age of 12 on three occasions between August 2008 and May 2010. The offenses were committed in within the Navajo Indian Reservation.

The evidence at trial established that the investigation into Chaco began after a woman who had temporary custody of the child contacted the New Mexico Children, Youth and Family Department (CYFD) in Albuquerque on June 9, 2010, to report that Chaco had sexually assaulted the child. During the initial call to CYFD, the child, who was then 11-years-old, reported that, a month earlier (in May 2010), Chaco had sexual intercourse with her while she was residing with her grandparents in Tohajiilee.

After CYFD referred the matter to the FBI, the child was forensically interviewed at All Faith's Receiving Home, a non-profit organization in Albuquerque that provides child abuse intervention, prevention and treatment services. During the interview, the child described numerous instances during which Chaco sexually assaulted her while she was living with her

grandparents in Tohajiilee. The abuse occurred between August 2008, when she was only 9-years-old, and May 2010, when she was 11-years-old.

The child, now 12-years-old, testified during the trial, and described the pattern of sexual abuse she suffered at Chaco's hand over an extended period of time. She also told the jury that Chaco usually was drunk when he sexually assaulted her.

Chaco testified in his own defense, and denied the charges against him. The jury deliberated two and a half hours before returning a verdict of guilty on all three counts in the indictment.

After sentence was imposed on Chaco, U.S. Attorney Gonzales commended the FBI for its exemplary and thorough investigation and the prosecutors who handled the case, and said: "I cannot think of many acts more courageous than a young child having to testify against the man who repeatedly raped her. Chaco's acts are simply unspeakable, and because of this little girl's courage, he will probably never have the chance to victimize another child again."

The case was investigated by the FBI with assistance from All Faith's Receiving Home, and was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jack Burkhead and Niki Tapia-Brito.

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