



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2009
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COLUMBUS MAN SENTENCED TO 46 MONTHS IMPRISONMENT FOR POSSESSION OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Remanded to custody to begin serving sentence immediately

COLUMBUS – Joseph P. Mascari, 39, Columbus, was sentenced in United States District Court here today to 46 months imprisonment followed by five years of supervised release for possessing approximately 150 images of child pornography on a computer in his apartment.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, Keith L. Bennett, and other agencies participating in the Central Ohio Cybercrimes Task Force announced the sentence handed down today by United States District Judge Algenon L. Marbley. Judge Marbley ordered Mascari, who had been on electronic monitoring since his plea, remanded to the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service to begin serving his sentence immediately.

Mascari pleaded guilty on March 3, 2009 to one count of possession of child pornography. Law enforcement agents began investigating Mascari after he contacted an undercover agent to inquire about traveling abroad to have a sexual encounter with a minor. Based on this information and other investigative leads, a search warrant was obtained for Mascari's Columbus apartment.

While interviewing Mascari, agents learned that he had downloaded child pornography and used a computer software program to try and "wipe" the images from his computer's hard drive. Forensic examination of his computer revealed approximately 150 images of child pornography and child erotica, as well as one child pornography video. Within these images, 90 identified child-victims of child pornography were identified upon submission of the images to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

"Mascari's sentence includes being under court supervision for five years after his release from prison," Lockhart said. "He must also register as a sexual offender and keep that registration current wherever he lives or works."

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov.

Lockhart commended the investigation by Task Force members which, in addition to the FBI, includes officers and agents from the police departments in Westerville, Powell, and Dublin, and the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation, as well as Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Hunter, who prosecuted the case.

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