



UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

ALEXANDRIA NEWPORT NEWS NORFOLK RICHMOND

CHUCK ROSENBERG, UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 19, 2007

Jim Rybicki
Public Information Officer
Phone: (703) 842-4050 Fax: (703) 549-5202
E-Mail: usavae.press@usdoj.gov
Website: www.usdoj.gov/usao/vae

Further Information Contact:
Deanna Warren
Phone: (757) 441-6331

Hampton Teacher Sentenced on Child Pornography Charges

(Newport News, VA) - Robert Michael Hatcher, age 44, of Hampton, Virginia, a physical education teacher at Kecoughtan High School at the time of his arrest, was sentenced to 17 years in federal prison for the distribution and receipt of child pornography. Chuck Rosenberg, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, made the announcement after Hatcher was sentenced by United States District Judge Jerome B. Friedman. Hatcher previously pled guilty to these charges on July 27, 2006.

According to court documents, around July 2005, Hatcher received and distributed three movies containing child pornography with an individual under investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), New York Office, which executed a search warrant on that individual's computer. Investigators with the FBI in New York identified Hatcher at that time. FBI agents in Hampton, Virginia, obtained a search warrant, and seized Hatcher's computer. An analysis was conducted by the Hampton Police Department and hundreds of images containing child pornography were found. Upon being questioned by agents with the FBI, Hatcher admitted that he had been trading images of child pornography since 1996.

United States Attorney Rosenberg stated, "We will continue to protect the children of our community through all the tools at our disposal, including the vigorous prosecution of child predators."

In February 2006, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys Offices, 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 identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit <http://www.projectsafchildhood.gov>.

The investigation was conducted by the Hampton Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Assistant United States Attorney Lisa R. McKeel prosecuted this case on behalf of the United States.

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