

Department of Justice

United States Attorney James A. Lewis
Central District of Illinois

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 22, 2012
www.usdoj.gov/usao/ilc/

CONTACT: SHARON PAUL
PHONE: (217) 492-4450

Grad Student Charged with Child Pornography Offenses

Urbana, Ill. – A federal grand jury today charged a Taiwanese national graduate student, Mu-Tsun Tsai, 27, of Champaign, Ill., with distribution, receipt, and possession of child pornography. Tsai, of the 500 block of S. First Street, was previously arrested and charged in a criminal complaint on July 24, 2012. U.S. Magistrate Judge David G. Bernthal ordered that Tsai remain detained in the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service.

The indictment alleges that Tsai distributed images of child pornography via the Internet from about Mar. 21, 2012 to on or about Apr. 30, 2012. Tsai is also charged with two counts of receiving images of child pornography and with one count of possession of child pornography. The indictment seeks forfeiture of a computer and related items allegedly used to commit or promote the offenses.

The charges were investigated by the Champaign Police Department; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Homeland Security Investigations; and the East Central Illinois Cyber Crimes Working Group.

If convicted, the statutory penalty for both distribution (one count) of child pornography and receipt (two counts) of child pornography, is a mandatory minimum five years to 20 years in prison and a term of supervised release of up to life following any term of imprisonment. If a defendant has a prior child sex abuse or child pornography conviction, the statutory penalty is not less than 15 years and up to 40 years in prison. For possession of child pornography, the penalty is up to 10 years in prison.

Members of the public are reminded that an indictment is merely an accusation; the defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

The case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by U.S. 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.

###