



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Northern District of New York*

April 20, 2011

NEWS RELEASE

United States Attorney Richard S. Hartunian announced that MICHA S. BROWN, age 31, pled guilty today in federal court to a one-count Information charging him with using a facility of interstate commerce to persuade, induce, entice, and coerce and attempt to persuade, induce, entice and coerce minors to engage in unlawful sexual activity.

In a written plea agreement filed in federal court today, BROWN, a former RIT graduate student originally from Oregon, admitted that he met a Marcellus teenager on the Internet in 2009, when she was 15 years old, that he engaged her in sexually explicit chat, and that in December 2009 he traveled to Marcellus where he engaged in unlawful sexual activity with the child. BROWN further admitted that he thereafter continued his relationship with the minor both through on-line chats and text messaging, not knowing that her account had been signed over to the New York State Police by the child and her parents, and that in that correspondence he made arrangements to return to Onondaga County in April, 2010 to again have a sexual encounter with the minor, as well as with a fictitious 14-year-old friend introduced into the relationship after the police became involved.

BROWN was arrested in April, 2010 as he was checking in to a hotel in the Town of Dewitt where he believed he was to meet the girls. As a part of his plea agreement, BROWN also admitted that he possessed child pornography on the laptop computer he had brought with him to the hotel, including explicit images of a another minor female child, who was 14 years old when BROWN also engaged her in a sexually explicit on-line relationship. The images of this child were discovered by a forensic analyst from the Wallie Howard Jr. Center for Forensic Sciences during an examination of BROWN'S laptop, and the child was thereafter identified through investigation conducted by the New York State Police, Computer Crimes Unit, as a minor from Virginia.

As a result of his guilty plea, BROWN faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years, a maximum sentence of Life, a fine of up to \$250,000, a term of supervised release of at least 5 years and up to life, and as a result of his conviction in this matter, he must register as a sex offender. Sentencing is scheduled for August 26, 2011 in Syracuse before Hon. Glenn T. Suddaby.

BROWN'S arrest is the result of an investigation by the New York State Police, with the assistance of the Wallie Howard, Jr. Center for Forensic Sciences, the Virginia Beach Police Department, the Connecticut State Police, and the United States Secret Service, as part of 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 www.projectsafechildhood.gov.

BROWN is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Lisa Fletcher, who can be reached at 448-0672.