



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE
***NAVAJO NATION MAN PLEADS
GUILTY TO AGGRAVATED SEXUAL ABUSE;
SENTENCED TO 7 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON***

SALT LAKE CITY – Jason Lamour Keith, age 33, of Aneth, Utah, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation, pleaded guilty in federal court Monday to aggravated sexual abuse. Keith admitted that between August 2004 and June 2010 he forced a woman to engage in sexual acts with him.

U.S. District Judge Dee Benson sentenced Keith to seven years in federal prison following the guilty plea.

Keith was charged with one count of aggravated sexual abuse of a child while within Indian Country and two counts of aggravated sexual abuse while within Indian Country in an indictment returned in July 2010. All three counts involved the same victim.

The first count of the indictment alleged that between Aug. 19, 2001, and Aug. 19, 2004, Keith used force to engage in a sexual act with a minor between the ages of 12 and 16 who was at least four years younger than he was.

Count 2 of the indictment alleged Keith used force to engage in a sexual act with the same victim between Aug. 19, 2004, and June 4, 2010. Count 3 of the indictment alleged that on June 5, 2010, Keith used force to engage in a sexual act with the victim. Keith pleaded guilty to Count 2 of the indictment.

The conduct came to the attention of law enforcement officers in June 2010 when the victim went to a hospital and reported the June 5, 2010, assault. The Blanding Police Department responded to the hospital and then notified FBI special agents who continued the investigation.

The prosecution of Keith is a part of continuing efforts in the Utah U.S. Attorney's Office to expand its focus on the exploitation of children and sexual abuse of women on Native American reservations.

“One of the most challenging problems we face in our work with Native American tribes is sexual abuse of children and women,” Christensen said. “There are several risk factors that combine to magnify the impact and occurrence of sexual abuse in tribal communities, such as geographical isolation, unemployment, substance abuse, and poverty. While we can't solve all of these issues, we are working with tribal leaders to identify steps that can be taken to reduce the incidences of child exploitation and sexual abuse.”

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