



Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office
Southern District of Texas

José Angel Moreno • United States Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2011
<http://www.justice.gov/usao/txs/>

CONTACT: ANGELA DODGE
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER
PHONE: (713) 567-9388

DANCE INSTRUCTOR SENT TO PRISON FOR POSSESSING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

(HOUSTON) – A Houston area dance instructor has been sentenced to five years in federal prison without parole and ordered to register as a sex offender for possessing child pornography, United States Attorney José Angel Moreno announced today.

Lonny Aaron Lovelady, 47, of Houston, was sentenced this afternoon by United States District Judge Nancy F. Atlas to 60 months in federal prison to be followed by a 10-year-term of supervised release. Lovelady must also register as a sex offender. Lovelady pleaded guilty to the felony charge in March 2010 and has been permitted to remain on bond pending an order to surrender to a Bureau of Prisons facility to be designated in the near future.

The charges against Lovelady resulting in his indictment in February 2010 are the result of an investigation conducted by the Houston office of the FBI initiated in September 2009 after an FBI agent logged onto a Peer-to-Peer file sharing program and found a computer offering child pornography images to share. The computer was traced to a Houston dance studio. Lovelady, an employee of the dance studio, admitted to agents to having downloaded and possessed child pornography on his laptop computer.

A forensic examination of the laptop lead to the discovery of 917 images and 21 videos containing child pornography, including depictions of penetration of a minor by an adult male and one involving bondage.

The case against Lovelady, prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert Stabe, 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 United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, 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.projectsafefchildhood.gov

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