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AIR FORCE SERGEANT SENTENCED TO 25 YEARS IN PRISON FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

SHREVEPORT, La.: JOHN P. NICHOLS, age 31, of Haughton, Louisiana, was sentenced to 25 years in federal prison for sexual exploitation of children, United States Attorney Donald W. Washington announced. NICHOLS was sentenced Wednesday by United States District Judge S. Maurice Hicks, Jr., in Shreveport. In addition to the 25-year prison sentence, NICHOLS will be on Supervised Release for 15 years following release from prison.

At the time of the offense, NICHOLS was an Air Force Sergeant at Barksdale Air Force Base in Bossier City, La. He lived at an off-base residence in Haughton, La. NICHOLS pleaded guilty in December 2008 to inducing or coercing a female under the age of 18 to engage in sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing visual depictions which would be transported in interstate and foreign commerce.

United States Attorney Washington stated: “This office is completely dedicated to using the full force of federal law to bring to justice those who sexually exploit our children. The blunt force of child exploitation must be met by vigorous investigations and prosecutions seeking maximum punishment.”

This 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 United States 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.

This case was investigated by the Office of Special Investigations (Barksdale Air Force Base), U.S. Dept. of Defense, Bossier Parish Sheriff’s Department, Federal Bureau of Investigations (Shreveport), and the Northwest Louisiana Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force and was prosecuted by Assistant U. S. Attorney Earl M. Campbell.

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