

For Immediate Release
December 16, 2011

**GALLUP MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL
CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE OFFENSE**

ALBUQUERQUE – This morning in federal Court, **Vernon Parker**, 39, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation from Gallup, N.M., pled guilty to an indictment charging him with abusive sexual contact with a child under the age of 12. The plea was entered under a plea agreement with the U.S. Attorney’s Office that requires the imposition of a prison sentence of not less than 33 to 41 months to be followed by at least five years of supervised release. Parker also will be required to register as a sex offender.

Parker was indicted on July 27, 2011 and was arrested on September 5, 2011. He has been in federal custody since that time and remains detained pending his sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

During today’s plea hearing, Parker admitted that on April 4, 2010, he intentionally touched the breast and genitals of a girl under the age of 12 over her clothing in order to gratify his sexual desire. Parker also admitted that this unlawful conduct occurred in Indian Country in McKinley County.

U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that the case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Shana B. Long.

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