

For Immediate Release
June 17, 2011

DULCE MAN SENTENCED TO 84-MONTHS IN PRISON
FOR FEDERAL FIREARMS CONVICTION

ALBUQUERQUE – On June 17, 2011 in federal court in Santa Fe, **Leonardo Valentino Gonzales**, a 35-year-old resident of Dulce, New Mexico, was sentenced to 84-months' imprisonment to be followed by two years of supervised release based on his conviction for being a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition. Gonzales has been in federal custody since his arrest on April 28, 2010.

United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Gonzales was federally charged in April 28, 2010 based on his possession of firearms and ammunition in Rio Arriba County on December 21, 2008 and April 2010. According to the criminal complaint filed in the case, on December 21, 2008, officers of the Jicarilla Apache Police Department (JAPD) received reports that Gonzales physically assaulted a man and brandished a shotgun at him. Based on those reports, JAPD officers executed a vehicle stop of Gonzales and observed that he had a shotgun and two boxes of ammunition lying beside him on the driver's side of the truck cab. The JAPD arrested Gonzales on tribal DUI charges after determining that he was intoxicated. In April of 2010, when a Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) agent researched Gonzales's criminal history, and he learned that, before December 21, 2008, Gonzales had been convicted of the felony offense of aggravated assault against a household member in the First Judicial District Court for the State of New Mexico, and thus was prohibited from possessing firearms and ammunition. Based on that information, ATF obtained a warrant for Gonzales's arrest based on a criminal complaint alleging that Gonzales unlawfully possessed a firearm and ammunition on December 21, 2008.

On May 26, 2010, Gonzales was indicted on the following charges: (1) assault with a dangerous weapon on April 11, 2010; (2) using a firearm in relation to a crime of violence on April 11, 2010; (3) being a felon in possession of a firearm on April 11, 2010, and (4) being a felon in possession of ammunition on December 21, 2008. On December 23, 2010, Gonzales entered a guilty plea to counts three and four of the indictment under a plea agreement with the United States Attorney's Office. In his plea agreement, Gonzales admitted that he unlawfully possessed a firearm and ammunition on those two dates. Counts one and two of the indictment were dismissed after Gonzales was sentenced.

The case was investigated by ATF and the JAPD, and was being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Louis E. Valencia.

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