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Media Release



Roberto A. Villaseñor

Chief of Police

Date: September 29, 2011

Contact: Sgt. Matt Ronstadt

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IMAGES ARREST

On September 26, 2011, personnel from the Tucson Police Department, with assistance from the U.S. Marshall's AZ WANTED Violent Offender Task Force, responded to the international border with Mexico and took custody of the suspect in an investigation that began in 2007. Initial information about this case was obtained through the Tucson Police Department's participation in an FBI task force, known as the Sexual Assault Felony Enforcement, or SAFE Team. The task force primarily investigated crimes against children, and has since been disbanded.

The investigation began in 2007, with information that a subject in the Tucson area was in possession of and possibly sharing images depicting child sexual abuse. **27-year old Carolina Portugal**, of Tucson, was identified as the suspect. The investigation culminated in the service of a search warrant at her residence, during which images that depicted sexual abuse of children were recovered. This is the first incidence in which a female suspect has been identified by the Tucson Police Department for such an offense.

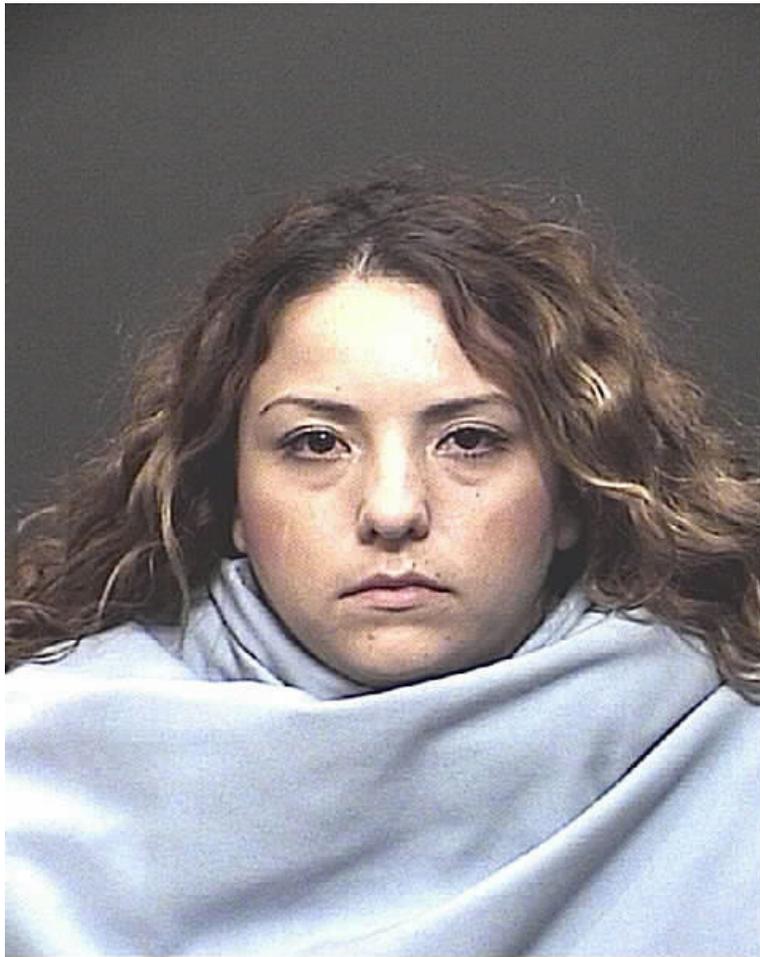
Portugal was indicted within a few months of the initiation of the investigation, and an arrest warrant charging Portugal with multiple felony counts obtained. Through her attorney, Portugal made arrangements to surrender to authorities. Portugal instead fled to Mexico to escape prosecution, and has remained at large for approximately four years. Throughout that time, the U.S. Marshall's Service has worked diligently with Mexican authorities to locate her in Mexico and arrange for her detention and transfer to U.S. authorities.

Earlier this week, investigators were able to negotiate her surrender through her attorney. On Monday, September 26, 2011, personnel from the Tucson Police Department and the U.S. Marshall's AZ WANTED group met Portugal at the Port of Entry and took her into custody without incident. She was transported to Tucson and booked into the Pima County Adult Detention Center on **five counts of Sexual Exploitation of a Minor**, a Class 2 Felony.

On the morning of Tuesday, September 27, 2011, Portugal had an initial appearance in Pima County Justice Court. Portugal was subsequently released after the posting of a \$25,000 bond.

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For accommodations; materials in accessible formats; foreign language interpreters; and/or materials in a language other than English, please contact the Tucson Police Department Public Information Office at (520) 791-4852 or (520) 791-2639 for TDD at least five (5) business days in advance. Para arreglos; materiales en formatos accesibles; interpretes de idioma extranjero; y/o materiales en otro idioma que no sea inglés, por favor comunicarse al Departamento de la Policía de Tucson a la sección de Información Pública al (520) 791-4852 o (520) 791-2639 para TDD por lo menos con cinco (5) días hábiles de anticipación.



Carolina Portugal

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