



# Department of Justice

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## **TWO FORMER CITY OF ROCKMART POLICE OFFICERS INDICTED, MAKE FIRST APPEARANCE BEFORE A FEDERAL MAGISTRATE**

Atlanta, GA--JEDSON LEIST, 36, of Acworth, Georgia and CAREY HIGGINS, 29, of Cartersville, Georgia, have been indicted by a federal grand jury, and today made their initial appearance before a federal magistrate. LEIST was charged with possessing firearms after having being previously convicted crimes making it illegal for him to possess guns. HIGGINS was charged with providing LEIST with a firearm knowing that LEIST could not lawfully possess guns. The indictment further charges LEIST and HIGGINS with knowingly using a document that contained materially false statements, as well as mail and wire fraud.

"This case involves two persons with law enforcement experience who allegedly joined together to lie to the Rockmart Police Department and the FBI so that one of them, Leist, could again become a police officer and carry weapons despite his criminal history," said David E. Nahmias, United States Attorney. "Dishonesty like this undermines the foundation of good law enforcement and exposed the Rockmart community to unnecessary risk by placing firearms--and a badge--in the hands of a convicted felon."

"Violating federal firearms laws is unacceptable in and of itself. However, this case is particularly disturbing," said Special Agent in Charge Vanessa L. McLemore of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). "The acts alleged in today's indictment suggest a betrayal of public trust and are an affront to the integrity of police officers everywhere."

According to the indictment and other documents and information submitted in court: LEIST was arrested by the City of Rockmart Police Department on June 2, 2006, for making a false statement and submitting a false employment application. At the time of his arrest, LEIST was allegedly carrying on his person three firearms: a Glock .40 caliber pistol; a Smith & Wesson .38 revolver; and a Bushmaster M4 carbine rifle with a laser site. In his car, law enforcement officers recovered another Glock .40 caliber pistol. In his residence, law enforcement officers recovered two SIG pistols, a Smith & Wesson pistol, and a 12-gauge shotgun.

Prior to his June 2, 2006 arrest, LEIST had been a police officer with the City of Rockmart, Georgia in Polk County for approximately one year. As a part of his duties as a police officer for the City of Rockmart, LEIST carried a firearm. LEIST had declined the firearm routinely issued by the City and instead chose to carry his own personal firearm.

Unbeknownst to the City of Rockmart, and prior to his hiring as a police officer, LEIST had previously been convicted of a felony, as well as misdemeanor crimes of domestic violence, both of which made it illegal for him to possess firearms. The federal indictment alleges that HIGGINS, a former sergeant with the City of Rockmart Police Department, aided LEIST with the submission of a fingerprint card in conjunction with LEIST's employment application. The fingerprint card was used to determine LEIST's criminal history. The indictment alleges that HIGGINS and LEIST submitted the fingerprint card knowing that the card contained materially false statements, namely that the fingerprints on the card belonged to someone other than LEIST. The Chief of Police of the City of Rockmart, Larry Harris, contacted federal authorities after the local arrest and requested a federal investigation.

LEIST was previously charged in July 2006, in an indictment which was dismissed without prejudice on a technical violation.

This case is being investigated by the ATF and FBI.

Assistant United States Attorney William McKinnon is prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is [www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan).