



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, September 30, 2008

For Information Contact Public Affairs
SANDY RAYNOR
Telephone: (602) 514-7625
Cell: (602) 525-2681

NORTHERN ARIZ. MAN SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR ASSAULT

PHOENIX – Joel Frank Upshaw, 24, of St. Michaels, Ariz. and a member of the Navajo Nation, was sentenced yesterday to 57 months in federal prison by U.S. District Judge Mary H. Murguia. Upshaw assaulted his cousin in February 2008 and pleaded guilty on July 15, 2008, to Assault with a Dangerous Weapon.

On February 10, 2008, Upshaw and his cousin were drinking whiskey in a bedroom area of the Upshaw residence located near Window Rock, Ariz. on the Navajo Nation. For no apparent reason, Upshaw became upset with his cousin and other family members. Upshaw took a .40 caliber semi-automatic handgun from a box inside the bedroom and intentionally struck his cousin in the head with it. The victim suffered a laceration to his forehead, but no other serious injury. There were no other injuries during the incident.

Family members who were threatened by Upshaw's conduct contacted the Window Rock Police Department. Navajo Police Officers, including the Window Rock Strategic Reaction Team, responded to the scene. The officers had to use a Taser stun gun to subdue Upshaw in order to place him under arrest.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the Navajo Nation Department of Law Enforcement and the Window Rock Police Department. The prosecution was handled by Thomas C. Simon, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-08-0183-PCT-MHM
RELEASE NUMBER: 2008-258(Upshaw)

###

For more information on the U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Arizona, visit <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/az/>