



## Rod Underhill, District Attorney

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### **FORMER TENNIS COACH RECEIVES 48 MONTH PRISON SENTENCE FOR ENCOURAGING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill announced a 48 month prison sentence for Thomas Zachary Rouse, 44, the former tennis director for the City of Portland who was convicted of being in possession of child pornography.

Rouse appeared before Multnomah County Circuit Court Judge Karin J. Immergut on April 26, 2018 and pleaded guilty to two counts each of encouraging child sexual abuse in the second degree and attempted encouraging child sexual abuse in the second degree. Each count the defendant pleaded guilty to represents a separate, minor female victim.

"This sentencing marks the culmination of a multiyear investigation led by Portland Police Bureau Sex Crimes Unit Detective Cory Stenzel. The investigation spanned Oregon, crossed the United States and into Canada," said Multnomah County Deputy District Attorney Melissa Marrero, who prosecuted this case. "Not only were the defendant's actions illegal, the conversations he had with these children were among the most disturbing and reprehensible that we as law enforcement see."

No evidence was developed during this investigation that indicated the defendant used his position with the City of Portland to physically abuse any local children.

The investigation began on September 19, 2015 when the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children received a cyber-tip from an online dating website.

The tip was forwarded to the Portland Police Bureau and an extensive investigation was launched, which revealed the defendant engaged in abhorrent and sexually explicit conversations with minors. Additionally, the defendant sent images of his genitals to children, asked for and received nude images of girls as young as 12. At the time of the investigation, the female victims were living on the west coast, east coast and in the Midwest.

"This investigation revealed the defendant had a propensity for underage females and that he was encouraged to continue these appalling conversations and exchange of images even after he learned of their ages," Marrero said. "Each of these young girls and their families were tremendously brave and showed great strength to come forward and to be participants in this criminal investigation."

The Multnomah County District Attorney's Office encourages parents to appropriately discuss the dangers of online sexual predators with their children.

"Child pornography is among the most disturbing cases the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office prosecutes," Marrero said. "Any time someone solicits, views, shares, or downloads child pornography they add to the demand of

illegal content and contribute to the victimization of children. These graphic images can exist online indefinitely and may leave victims left wondering when these compromising photos and videos may resurface.”

As part of the defendant’s sentence, he will be on five years of formal probation with conditions of supervision specifically tailored to sex offenders. Upon his release from the Oregon Department of Corrections, he will also be under three years of post-prison supervision. Rouse will also have to register as a sex offender for life and will be required to attend sex offender treatment.

“This investigation could not have happened without the support of the victims and their families, the Portland Police Bureau, the Department of Justice, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and the many law enforcement partners in multiple jurisdictions across the United State and in Canada that provided assistance,” Marrero said.

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