



**TANEY COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**

**JEFFREY M. MERRELL, PROSECUTING ATTORNEY**

P.O. Box 849

FORSYTH, MO 65653

[www.taneycountyprosecutor.com](http://www.taneycountyprosecutor.com)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: JEFF MERRELL  
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY  
(417) 546-7260**

**DATE: NOVEMBER 21, 2008**

**DRUG TRAFFICKING YIELDS TEN (10) YEARS**

FORSYTH, MO - Taney County Prosecuting Attorney, Jeffrey M. Merrell announced today that VICTOR ARELLANO, dob: 09/17/1984 of El Paso, Texas was sentenced Thursday by Taney County Circuit Judge Mark Orr to a ten (10) year sentence for his role in the class A felony of trafficking in the first degree. Probation was denied.

On December 7, 2007 officers of the Branson Police Department responded to a hit and run accident at the Best Western on MO Highway 76 involving a rented U-Haul truck. Officers later found the truck and its occupants. Based on conflicting stories by the driver of the U-Haul, VICTOR ARELLANO and a passenger, officers became suspicious, and requested a K-9 drug dog to the scene. The K-9 gave a positive hit on the U-Haul for the presence of contraband. After obtaining a search warrant, officers from the Branson Police Department and the DEA recovered approximately 125 pounds of marijuana from the vehicle.

In response to the sentence Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Chris Lebeck was satisfied stating, "Without the heads-up police work of the Branson Police Department and their officers when they investigated this hit and run accident, we would not have been able to remove over one hundred and twenty five pounds of marijuana from our streets. Hopefully this sentence will send a message that you will go to prison if you try to traffic drugs in our County."

For more information visit [www.taneycountyprosecutor.com](http://www.taneycountyprosecutor.com)

**MAIN OFFICE: (417) 546-7260 | FAX: (417) 546-2376**

**BAD CHECKS: (417) 546-7261 | VICTIM/WITNESS: (417) 546-7263 | CHILD SUPPORT: (417) 546-7262**