

Court of Appeals to hear cases on college campuses

August 31, 2010

The Mississippi Court of Appeals has announced its fall schedule of college campus visits to hear oral arguments. The court will convene special sessions at Mississippi Valley State University Sept. 16, at the University of Southern Mississippi Sept. 30, and at Mississippi State University Nov. 18.

A three-judge panel of the Court of Appeals will convene at 1 p.m. Sept. 16 in the MVSU Science and Technology Building Auditorium. It will be the first time for the court to hear cases on the Itta Bena campus. The court will visit the campus at the invitation of the MVSU Criminal Justice Department.

The Court of Appeals periodically schedules oral arguments on college campuses and occasionally at other locations as a teaching tool for students. It is known as the Court on the Road program. Court of Appeals judges answer questions from students after the oral arguments, but do not talk about the cases which are argued.

Court of Appeals Chief Judge Leslie D. King of Greenville said the program helps educate students and the public about how the judicial system operates. For students interested in careers in law, it gives them an opportunity to observe the court at work.

In discussions with students at earlier programs, Chief Judge King said, "Some of the questions seem to suggest they believe what they see on TV – *Judge Judy*, *Judge Mathis*, *Judge Joe Brown* – is representative of the judicial system. And you tell them, 'That's entertainment. That's not law.' These are actual cases, not theoretical things....These are people who are going to be impacted by what's done....The questions we ask of the lawyers are real questions that assist us in working toward a resolution of a case."

Giving students an opportunity to watch cases being argued helps them understand how the process works. People who understand how the process works will respect the judicial system, even if they don't like the outcome of a particular case, Chief Judge King said. "People may not agree with the decision, but they need to feel comfortable that the court reached a resolution through the right method."

Cases to be heard Sept. 16 are:

- Trent Dora v. State of Mississippi, Cause No. 2008-KA-01914-COA. The case is scheduled for 1 p.m. Dora is appealing a 15-year sentence without parole on a conviction of strong-arm robbery. He was convicted Sept. 17, 2008, in Noxubee County Circuit Court and was sentenced as an habitual offender. He was accused of having planned and participated in an Oct. 23, 2007, robbery of an employee outside Tem's Food Market in Brooksville. Attorney Lisa Ross of Jackson represents Dora. Special Assistant Attorney General Billy Gore will argue on behalf of the state.
- In the Matter of the Estate of Arlyn E. Darby, Deceased: Office of the Governor, Mississippi Division of Medicaid, and State of Mississippi v. Linda Darby Stinson, Executrix, Cause No. 2010-CA-00335-COA. The case is scheduled for 2:15 p.m. Medicaid paid for Arlyn E. Darby's nursing home care from August 2006 until his death on May 20, 2009. The Division of Medicaid sought to recover expenses for the nursing home care from his estate. The Desoto County Chancery Court denied the claim in a Jan. 28, 2010, summary judgment

order. The Division of Medicaid appealed. Special Assistant Attorney General William Mounger Jr. of Jackson will argue on behalf of the Division of Medicaid. Attorney J. Harland Webster of Clarksdale represents Stinson.

The Sept. 30 oral arguments at the University of Southern Mississippi will be conducted in Room 218 at the Thad Cochran Center on the Hattiesburg campus.

Cases to be heard Sept. 30 are:

- Randall Kimbrough and Ruth Kimbrough v. Delores Keenum, Individually and the Will Ray Keenum and Dolores Ferreres Keenum Revocable Inter Vivos Trust, Cause No. 2009-CA-02039-COA. The case is scheduled for 1 p.m. A pair of pit bulldogs attacked the Kimbroughs at their Moss Point home on April 15, 2007. The Kimbroughs sued Keenum and the trust as landlord of the nearby house where the dogs were kept. The Jackson County Circuit Court granted summary judgment for Keenum and the trust on Dec. 4, 2009. The Kimbroughs appealed. Attorney Patrick Buchanan of Biloxi represents the Kimbroughs. Attorney Kevin Melchi of Pascagoula represents Keenum and the trust.
- Edna Mae Sanders v. State of Mississippi, Cause No. 2009-KA-01925-COA. The case is scheduled for 2:15 p.m. Sanders is appealing a conviction of murder and sentence of life in prison in the hot oil scalding death of her husband. Sherman Sanders was burned in his Diamondhead home late on the evening of July 27, 2006, or early on the morning of July 28, 2006. He died Aug. 4, 2006. A Hancock County Circuit Court jury convicted Edna Mae Sanders of murder on April 9, 2008. Attorney Brian Alexander of Bay St. Louis represents Sanders. Special Assistant Attorney General LaDonna Holland will argue on behalf of the State of Mississippi.

Cases for the Nov. 18 sitting at Mississippi State University will be announced later.

Attorneys are allowed 30 minutes each to make their arguments.

The oral arguments will not be broadcast via the court's Internet web site, since the Court of Appeals is convening in special sessions away from its camera-equipped courtroom.

Any media organization which may wish to photograph or videotape the presentation must follow the Rules for Electronic and Photographic Coverage of Judicial Proceedings. Media must file a Camera Coverage Notice with Supreme Court Clerk Kathy Gillis and Assistant Court Administrator Amy R. Smith at least 48 hours prior to the commencement of the proceeding. The camera coverage notice is available at <http://www.mssc.state.ms.us/forms/camnotice.pdf>. The camera coverage rules are available on the Mississippi Supreme Court's web site at http://www.mssc.state.ms.us/rules/msrulesofcourt/rules_electronicphotographic_coverage.pdf.

#####