

## **Court of Appeals to visit Mississippi State University Nov. 12**

November 2, 2015

The Mississippi Court of Appeals will hear oral arguments on the campus of Mississippi State University at 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. Nov. 12. A three-member panel of the court will convene at the Hunter Henry Center on the Starkville campus to hear two criminal appeals.

Oral arguments will be heard at 1:30 p.m. in the case of Antwain D. Thomas v. State of Mississippi, case number 2014-KA-01078-COA.

Oral arguments are scheduled at 3 p.m. in the case of David W. Parvin v. State of Mississippi, case number 2014-KA-00466.

The Court of Appeals hears oral arguments each year on the MSU campus as part of its Court on the Road program. The court periodically schedules oral arguments on college campuses and occasionally at other locations as a teaching tool for students. The Court on the Road program helps educate students and the public about appeals court proceedings and gives appellate judges an opportunity to talk about how the court operates. Judges talk with students and answer questions after the oral arguments, although they don't talk about the pending cases.

Court of Appeals Presiding Judge T. Kenneth Griffis of Ridgeland said, "The Court of Appeals is committed to bringing the court to the people. It's important for the citizens, especially our college students, to witness how the court system works."

Law students from the University of Mississippi School of Law Criminal Appeals Clinic researched and briefed Thomas' case and will present oral arguments on his behalf. The students work under the supervision of attorney Phil Broadhead, clinical professor and director of the Criminal Appeals Clinic. The cases are referred by the state Office of Indigent Appeals.

Professor Broadhead said, "The opportunity for students to appear before the Court of Appeals of Mississippi is an invaluable capstone experience for their law school education, and holding court at Mississippi State University also gives undergraduate students the chance to observe first-hand what it means to plan a career in law. The MSU Pre-Law Society, guided by pre-law advisor Whit Waide Jr., sponsors the annual event in Starkville, and the Criminal Appeals Clinic is proud to participate with our students arguing actual appeal cases before the Court."

Students Kye Handy of Jackson and Brantley Pierce of New Hope wrote the appeal brief for Thomas. Students Paul Pritchard of Mobile, Ala., and Haley Wright of Tulsa, Okla., will make the oral arguments for Thomas. Special Assistant Attorney General Scott Stuart represents the Attorney General.

Here is background about the cases, from court records:

### ***Parvin v. State***

Parvin, a retired professor of agricultural economics at Mississippi State University, appeals his second conviction of murder in the Oct. 15, 2007, shooting death of his wife, Joyce Parvin, at their home in Monroe County. The Mississippi Supreme Court reversed

Parvin's first conviction in a decision issued April 11, 2013, and ordered a new trial. On March 10, 2014, a second jury convicted Parvin of murder. Circuit Judge Paul S. Funderburk sentenced him to life in prison.

Parvin is represented by former Mississippi Supreme Court Justice James L. Robertson of Jackson and attorneys Jim Waide and Rachel Pierce Waide of Tupelo. The brief on behalf of Parvin is at this link: [http://courts.ms.gov/Images/Orders/dc00001\\_live.COA.14.KA.466.26121.0.pdf](http://courts.ms.gov/Images/Orders/dc00001_live.COA.14.KA.466.26121.0.pdf). The Attorney General's office is represented by Special Assistant Attorney General LaDonna C. Holland. The Attorney General's brief is at this link: [http://courts.ms.gov/Images/Orders/dc00001\\_live.COA.14.KA.466.31425.0.pdf](http://courts.ms.gov/Images/Orders/dc00001_live.COA.14.KA.466.31425.0.pdf).

***Thomas v. State***

Court records show that Thomas was convicted on July 19, 2012, in Clarke County Circuit Court of a charge of sale of cocaine. He was charged with selling 0.8 gram of cocaine to an undercover informant on Nov. 9, 2010. Circuit Judge Robert W. Bailey sentenced Thomas to serve 60 years day-for-day as an habitual offender. At the time of his arrest, Thomas was on post-release supervision for a 2008 conviction of possession of cocaine with intent to distribute. He was originally sentenced to 20 years with 18 years suspended on that earlier charge. Judge Bailey revoked the suspended sentence and ordered Thomas to serve 18 years consecutive to the 60-year sentence.

Thomas' appeal brief is at this link: [http://courts.ms.gov/Images/Orders/dc00001\\_live.COA.14.KA.1078.31014.0.pdf](http://courts.ms.gov/Images/Orders/dc00001_live.COA.14.KA.1078.31014.0.pdf). The reply brief of the Attorney General's office is at this link: [http://courts.ms.gov/Images/Orders/dc00001\\_live.COA.14.KA.1078.37593.0.pdf](http://courts.ms.gov/Images/Orders/dc00001_live.COA.14.KA.1078.37593.0.pdf).

***Arrival, seating and camera coverage***

People wishing to watch the oral arguments are asked to be in their seats 15 minutes before the oral arguments are scheduled to begin.

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

Any media organization which may wish to photograph or videotape the arguments must file a Camera Coverage Notice. Camera Coverage Notices should be directed to Clerk of the Court Muriel Ellis, fax 601-359-2407, and to Assistant Court Administrator Katie Cassady, fax 601-576-4708. The Camera Coverage Notice form is at <http://www.mssc.state.ms.us/forms/camnotice.pdf> <http://courts.ms.gov/forms/camnotice.pdf>.

Photographers and videographers should be familiar with and follow the Rules for Electronic and Photographic Coverage of Judicial Proceedings. The camera coverage rules are available on the Mississippi Judiciary web site at [http://courts.ms.gov/rules/msrulesofcourt/rules\\_electronicphotographic\\_coverage.pdf](http://courts.ms.gov/rules/msrulesofcourt/rules_electronicphotographic_coverage.pdf).

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