

Court of Appeals to visit Mississippi University for Women on Oct. 3

September 23, 2016

The Mississippi Court of Appeals will convene on the campus of Mississippi University for Women for the first time on Oct. 3 to hear oral arguments.

A three-judge panel will hold court in the Limbert Assembly Ballroom in Cochran Hall at 11 a.m. to hear a civil case appeal and at 2 p.m. to hear an appeal in a criminal case. People wishing to watch the oral arguments are asked to be in their seats 15 minutes before proceedings are scheduled to begin. Each proceeding is expected to last about an hour.

The Court of Appeals ordinarily meets in Jackson, but each year the court hears a few cases on college campuses. On Nov. 16, the court will convene on the campus of Mississippi State University.

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 Judge Jack Wilson of Madison arranged the visit to Columbus. "I think it's a good opportunity for college students and high school students as well as the general public to see how the court works and how oral argument at the appellate level is different from what you see in the trial court," he said. "I hope that we will have the opportunity to answer questions during the break."

Students in MUW's legal studies and political science programs and high school students from the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science have been invited to attend.

University Counsel Karen Clay said, "We are very grateful for the opportunity to be able to host the court here on campus. I hope this provides an opportunity for our students to experience this part of the court process and to gain a better understanding of how our judicial system works....It will enhance their understanding of the importance of the appellate process."

The civil case scheduled for oral argument at 11 a.m. is a will contest from Tallahatchie County Chancery Court. The case is styled In the Matter of the Estate of Richard L. Gardner, Deceased: Linda Gardner Callington, Andrew Gardner and Larry Ross v. Mae Otha Gardner, cause number 2015-CA-01447-COA.

In the criminal case scheduled for oral argument at 2 p.m., Randall Cooper appeals his May 15, 2015, Lowndes County Circuit Court conviction of first degree murder. He is serving a sentence of life in prison for the Dec. 19, 2013, shooting death of Virgil Harris in Columbus. The case is styled Randall Cooper, Jr. v. State of Mississippi, cause number 2015-KA-00846-COA.

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 Camille Evans, fax 601-576-4708. The Camera Coverage Notice form is at <https://courts.ms.gov/forms/camnotice.pdf>.

Photographers and videographers must be familiar with and follow the Rules for Electronic and Photographic Coverage of Judicial Proceedings. The camera coverage rules are available at http://courts.ms.gov/rules/msrulesofcourt/rules_electronicphotographic_coverage.pdf.

#####