

## **Court of Appeals to visit Mississippi Valley State, Alcorn and University of Mississippi**

March 8, 2017

The Mississippi Court of Appeals will convene on the campus of Mississippi Valley State University on March 30 at 10 a.m. to hear oral arguments, and will visit Alcorn State University at 10 a.m. April 6.

The Court of Appeals will conclude its spring campus visits with oral arguments scheduled for April 18 at the University of Mississippi School of Law.

A three-judge panel will convene and hear oral arguments in appeals as part of its Court on the Road educational program for students and the public. Throughout the year, the Jackson-based court hears a few cases on college campuses around the state.

Presiding Judge Tyree Irving said, “The Court on the Road program helps educate students and the public about appellate court proceedings and gives appellate judges an opportunity to answer questions about how the court operates.”

Circuit Judge Lillie Blackmon Sanders of Natchez said, “We look forward to this event being held at Alcorn’s campus, and it is my hope that students and local citizens take advantage of this unique opportunity to observe the Mississippi Court of Appeals in action. We appreciate the efforts of Alcorn staff and administration in bringing this educational program to Alcorn State University.”

Judges will talk with students after the oral arguments, although they won’t talk about the pending cases. Having an opportunity to see the court at work provides a valuable learning experience for students who may have an interest in careers in law as well as those who simply want to better understand how each branch of government functions.

The court conducted an oral argument on the Mississippi Valley State campus on Nov. 10. Students and faculty enjoyed the opportunity to observe the court at work and asked for the court to convene on campus again this semester, said Assistant Court Administrator Camille Henick Evans.

The March 30 proceeding at Mississippi Valley State will be held in the auditorium in the W. A. Butts Social Science Building. The address of the university is 14000 Highway 82 West, Itta Bena.

The April 6 oral arguments at Alcorn State will be held on the second floor of the Clinton Bristow Jr. Dining Hall. Alcorn State is located at 1000 ASU Drive in Lorman.

The case to be heard at Mississippi Valley State on March 30 is the criminal appeal of Marcus Shelby v. State of Mississippi, cause number 2016-KA-0312-COA. The appellant is also known as Marcus Shelby Demond.

A Hinds County Circuit Court jury convicted Shelby in December 2013 of depraved heart murder in the death of Duan Penn. Shelby was sentenced as a habitual offender to life without parole. Penn’s burning body was found April 11, 2012, in Jackson. He had been beaten and strangled.

Attorney Benjamin A. Suber of the Indigent Appeals Division of the Mississippi Office of State Public Defender represents Shelby. Special Assistant Attorney General Laura Hogan Tedder represents the state.

Cases to be heard at Alcorn State on April 6 are the appeals of Melvin Hare v. State of Mississippi, cause number 2016-KA-0046-COA, and Timothy Scott Beasley v. State of Mississippi, cause number 2016-KA-0685-COA. The case of Hare v. State is scheduled for oral arguments at 10 a.m., and Beasley’s appeal is scheduled to be heard at 11:45 a.m.

A Warren County Circuit Court jury convicted Hare in December 2015 of depraved heart

murder in the Aug. 26, 2013, stabbing of Roy Clark in Vicksburg. Hare was sentenced to 30 years in prison with five years suspended and 25 years to serve.

Hare is represented by attorney W. Daniel Hinchcliff of the Indigent Appeals Division of the Mississippi Office of State Public Defender. Tedder represents the state.

A Harrison County Circuit Court jury in April 2016 convicted Beasley of one count of burglary of a dwelling, one count of aggravated stalking and one count of aggravated assault. Beasley was convicted of attacking his ex-girlfriend and her parents in their Gulfport home on May 9, 2015. Beasley was sentenced as a habitual offender to 20 years for burglary, five years for aggravated stalking and 15 years for aggravated assault, with the sentences running concurrently and without the possibility of parole.

Beasley is represented by attorney Benjamin A. Suber of the Indigent Appeals Division of the Mississippi Office of State Public Defender. The state is represented by Special Assistant Attorneys General Joseph S. Hemleben and Jason L. Davis.

The April 18 oral arguments at the University of Mississippi will be heard at 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. in Moot Court 1, Room 2078, at the Robert C. Khayat Law Center, 481 Coliseum Drive in Oxford. Cases to be heard are the civil appeal of Edith Davis Elmore v. Dixie Pipeline Company, cause number 2015-CA-1499-COA, scheduled for 1:30 p.m., and the criminal appeal of Nicholas Demorst v. State of Mississippi, cause number 2015-KA- 1900-COA, scheduled for 3 p.m.

The case of Elmore v. Dixie Pipeline Company involves a lawsuit over a Nov. 1, 2007, liquid propane pipeline rupture and explosion near Carmichael in Clarke County. The trial court granted summary judgment for Dixie Pipeline Company. Elmore appealed. Elmore is represented by attorneys John Christopher of Flowood and James W. Nobles Jr. of Clinton. Dixie Pipeline Company is represented by attorneys James G. House III and Laura D. Goodson of Jackson.

A Harrison County Circuit Court jury convicted Demorst in June 2015 of capital murder in the Jan. 14, 2014, robbery slaying of Hunter Miller in Gautier. Demorst is serving a sentence of life in prison. Law students from the university's Criminal Appeals Clinic represent Demorst. The state is represented by Special Assistant Attorney General Barbara Byrd.

People wishing to watch any of the oral arguments are asked to be in their seats 15 minutes before a proceeding is scheduled to begin.

The oral arguments will not be broadcast via the court's Internet web site, since the Court of Appeals is convening special sessions 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 Henick 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](http://courts.ms.gov/rules/msrulesofcourt/rules_electronicphotographic_coverage.pdf).

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