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9-14-2016

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Recommended Citation

Thomas, Jordan, "Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals Visits UM Law School" (2016). *University of Mississippi News*. 1810.

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Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals Visits UM Law School

Students get opportunities to view proceedings, visit with judges

SEPTEMBER 14, 2016 BY JORDAN THOMAS

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Judge Rhesa Barksdale, Judge Grady Jolly, and Judge Lesley Southwick made up the panel of Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals Judges that heard cases at the University of Mississippi School of Law.

OXFORD, Miss. – The U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals recently conducted a session at the **University of Mississippi School of Law**, hearing cases and spending time with students in more informal settings.

Judges Grady Jolly, Rhesa Barksdale and Leslie Southwick made up the panel that heard cases at the school. UM is the only law school that the Fifth Circuit, which includes Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas, visits on a regular basis.

“A big component of us visiting **Ole Miss** is to Judge Jolly’s credit,” Barksdale said. “He’s been

on our court for 34 years, and he is the senior judge on our court. He wants to make sure that we sit here if we can at least once every three years so that while you’re here in law school, at least one time, you’ll see our court.”

Students got to sit in on cases throughout the day to experience how a federal appellate court works.

“So much of what the students get in law school is through classwork, through instruction, and actually seeing what they’re being taught, seeing how an appellate court actually operates at least in a courtroom environment, is a practical side to what they’re hearing in their classrooms that I think adds a fair amount to the experience and a benefit of law school,” Southwick said.

Besides seeing the judges, “they see people they more readily can identify with, and that’s the advocates, very good lawyers in most of these cases,” he said. “I think they can place themselves in that role and maybe get more comfortable with what it will be like in a few years trying to do what these lawyers are doing.”

While this is an experience that not all law students get, Ole Miss law students were able not only to view the process, but also to visit with the judges.

“I am thrilled that our students had the opportunity to visit with the judges in addition to observing the oral arguments,” said Deborah Bell, dean of the law school. “I appreciate how generous the judges were with their time, meeting with our students for lunches and question-and-answer sessions and in informal receptions.”

The court has been visiting UM since 1983 and is a popular destination among the judges, Jolly said.

“When it comes to Oxford, everybody wants to come,” Jolly said. “It’s a pleasant little respite from the ordinary routine of our court, and it’s a lovely little town to come to. We all feel very welcome here, and this law school runs the Fifth Circuit’s operational requirements with great efficiency.”

Both Jolly (LL.B. 1962) and Barksdale (JD 1972) graduated from the school and continue to have a close relationship with it. Barksdale, who graduated first in his class, attributes his successes to both his time at the school and his professors.

“I received a clerkship with Justice Byron White on the Supreme Court of the United States, in large part due to it being suggested to me by three of my law school professors and their encouragement and assistance, so I owe a great deal to the law school,” he said. “I loved law school from the moment I started, and those three people changed my life.

“Professors here have an interest in their students. I’m not saying they don’t in other law schools, but they particularly do here. That’s always been a trait of the Ole Miss law school, so I’m extremely indebted to them, one of them being Robert Khayat.”

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Campus Briefs

Civil Engineering Professor Receives Most-Cited Paper Award

OXFORD, Miss. – Peer recognition is a rewarding experience for anyone, but University of Mississippi researcher Amir Mehrara Molan was elated when an article he co-authored recently received the Most Cited Paper Award at the 102nd Transportation Research Board meeting in the nation’s capital. The International Journal of Transportation Science and Technology presented the civil engineering

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Young Alumna Gives Back to School of Accountancy

OXFORD, Miss. – Stephanie Jennings Teague, of Chicago, sees her commitment of \$100,000 to the Patterson School of Accountancy’s new building at the University of Mississippi as a means of saying “thank you.” “It is a way to show a small token of my appreciation to Ole Miss, the faculty and staff, and the accounting

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Ole Miss In the News

Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to

Barksdale also praised Bell's leadership of the school.

"You've got a wonderful facility, a very dedicated faculty and very interested students I've observed in these past few years," Barksdale added. "I think there's a happy feel about the Ole Miss law school, one of interest, and one of faculty and students that really mesh well. I think it's got a lot of really good things going for it."

The school was recently ranked 24th nationally in securing federal judicial clerkships. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals has several UM graduates as law clerks, Barksdale said.

"We have a close relationship with the law school who furnishes us the applications of the top students," Jolly added. "We usually hire someone from Ole Miss because they encourage their students to clerk on a court of appeals and because they are fully capable of performing the work."

Both Jolly and Barksdale noted that several of their former clerks have become Ole Miss faculty members.

Aside from hearing cases, the panel of judges met with several student groups.

"The Q&A session was a wonderful educational opportunity for our students," said moderator Jack Wade Nowlin, senior associate dean at the school. "The judges shared their insights on a variety of topics, including the clerkship application process, what makes for good legal writing, common mistakes lawyers make in appellate advocacy and the role of the courts in the separation of powers."

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, often referred to as the Fifth Circuit, is one of 13 federal appellate courts. The court's home is the John Minor Wisdom United States Court of Appeals Building in New Orleans. The Fifth Circuit is authorized 17 active judges, but has 15 active judges and nine senior judges.

For more information about the UM School of Law, go to <http://law.olemiss.edu/>.



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