

# Chief Justice Award recipients announced

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Mississippi Supreme Court Chief Justice James W. Smith Jr. named as recipients of this year's Chief Justice Awards Justice Jess H. Dickinson, Circuit Judge Robert B. Helfrich and District Attorney Jon Mark Weathers.

Chief Justice Smith announced the awards during the Mississippi Bar Convention on Saturday, July 10, in Destin, Fla.

The annual awards recognize the contributions of people whose work helped improve the judicial system.

Justice Dickinson, Judge Helfrich and Weathers were recognized for their work in resolving a backlog of cases in the 12<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court District, which includes Forrest and Perry counties.

Justice Dickinson sat as a special circuit judge in Forrest and Perry counties from January through December 2003 while he was waiting to take office as a justice of the Supreme Court.

Chief Justice Smith presented plaques commending the three for their services. The plaques read, in part: "Your service to the people through timely and efficient case and docket management improved the administration of justice."

Chief Justice Smith said, "On April 1, 2004, when I became Chief Justice, one of the five initial goals that I submitted and I intended to pursue was to address the problem of case and docket management by this court first, and then all other courts. A recent bar survey indicated that this subject was the number one concern among the lawyers. This Court is already considering the issue and has a three-hour program ready for the fall judicial seminar."

"In keeping with this goal, I considered the various districts and was delighted with the achievements of this distinguished threesome from the 12th Circuit Court District in addressing that district's backlog," he said.

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