

6th District Drug Court celebrates graduation

July 16, 2007

Mississippi Supreme Court Justice Michael K. Randolph will be the keynote speaker Tuesday, July 17, in Natchez at a graduation ceremony for the Sixth Judicial Circuit Adult Drug Court. The ceremony is scheduled for 3 p.m. at the Natchez Convention Center at 211 Main Street.

Nine graduates are expected to be recognized, said Drug Court Coordinator Flaviv Wiley.

Circuit Judge Lillie Blackmon Sanders, who presides over the Drug Court, said, "The premise of Drug Court is to help those with nonviolent drug crimes to overcome their addictions. The Sixth Judicial Adult Drug Court Program is dedicated to reducing the number of crimes committed by substance abusing offenders through a highly intensive court-supervised treatment program, thereby creating a safer community and improving the quality of life of our participants."

Drug Courts seek to rehabilitate drug-using offenders through drug treatment and intense supervision with drug testing and frequent court appearances. Drug courts offer the incentive of a chance to remain out of jail, and the sanction of a jail sentence if participants fail to remain drug-free and in compliance with all program requirements.

Nineteen drug court programs are in operation in Mississippi. There are 14 adult programs and five juvenile programs.

Justice Randolph, a resident of Hattiesburg, has served on the Mississippi Supreme Court since April 2004. Before serving on the Court, he practiced law for 28 years, first on the Gulf Coast, then in Hattiesburg.

He was decorated for heroism in Vietnam, where he served as an air traffic controller with the U.S. Army 1st Infantry Division. During law school he joined the U.S. Naval Reserve, Judge Advocate General Corps. He is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Justice School.

He graduated from Rollins College in Winter Park, Fla., with a B.S. degree in business administration in 1972. He earned his Juris Doctorate from the University of Mississippi School of Law in 1974.

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