

10-22-2015

District Judge to Lead UM Forum on Race and Moral Leadership

Nathan Weber

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Recommended Citation

Weber, Nathan, "District Judge to Lead UM Forum on Race and Moral Leadership" (2015). *University of Mississippi News*. 1389.

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District Judge to Lead UM Forum on Race and Moral Leadership

Carlton Reeves to share insights with students and lead a public discussion on campus

OCTOBER 22, 2015 BY [NATHAN WEBER](#)



U.S. District Court Judge Carlton Reeves will speak at the university about race and moral leadership. Photo courtesy of Jackson State University

OXFORD, Miss. – The University of Mississippi will bring U.S. District Judge Carlton Reeves, who serves the Southern District of Mississippi, to Oxford for an open forum on “Race and Moral Leadership in the U.S. Judicial System.”

The open discussion will convene at 4 p.m. Tuesday (Oct. 27) in Bryant Hall, Room 207. The event is free and open to the public.

Eric Weber, UM associate professor of public policy leadership, contacted Reeves about speaking to his PPL 370: Philosophy of Leadership class, but decided to also create a discussion forum for Reeves to address a larger audience on campus.

“He stood out as a leader and garnered attention for good reason,” Weber said. “I began informally reaching out to Judge Reeves to speak to my class. The Mississippi Humanities Council’s grant program and its wonderful and regular support of our work here made it possible for Judge Reeves to stay for an open forum discussion at the university.”

Weber decided to ask Reeves to speak after the judge presided over a high-profile racially motivated murder trial in Jackson in 2011. Reeves’ 2,500-word speech at the sentencing hearing for three white males found guilty of committing a hate crime against a single black man has received more than a million downloads and garnered major attention. National Public Radio did multiple stories on the court proceedings.

“His work is relevant to political science, public policy leadership, philosophy, law, Southern studies, the Winter Institute and the Office of Inclusion,” Weber said. “This judge presided over a deeply troubling murder in the state.”

When Weber contacted Reeves, the judge replied the same day.

“I would be more than happy to visit you and your class,” Reeves said. “It would be my great honor.”

Weber said he hopes the discussion will be as open and conversational as possible between Reeves and audience members.

“I expect a good turnout because he is an impressive leader of interest to a lot of different groups in the university and Oxford communities,” Weber said. “I plan to introduce some questions for Judge Reeves and then open the floor for the audience to ask questions and establish a conversational meeting. I want people to be able to get to know him, to see what he has done and to consider what we can all do moving forward.”

With racial topics continuing to be prevalent in the U.S. media landscape, states such as Mississippi hold a unique perspective, Weber said. Mississippi has an ability to interact with its officials that larger, more populous states lack, he explained.

“Opportunities for open discussions with judicial officials are not feasible in places like California and New York,” Weber said. “This opportunity for hosting this forum is one of the benefits of living in Mississippi, where we are able to converse with and get answers from our leading officials. My hope for the event is that people can learn from Judge Reeves’s insights as a uniquely situated moral leader.”

For more information about the event, visit <http://erictomasweber.org>. For assistant related to a

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