

# CoB News, 28 September 2009

## Is USM a Cesspool?

*The Hattiesburg American* has published another story involving a lawsuit against USM. This time the story was written by *THA*'s managing editor Dan Davis (entitled [Eagle Walk incident prompts suit against USM](#)), and this time the plaintiff is former USM assistant athletics director Greg Herring, who claims that he was faced with the choice of resigning or being fired by USM president Martha Saunders back in the fall of 2008. According to Herring, the choice resulted from his decision to commence USM's "Eagle Walk" against East Carolina despite the fact that Saunders had not arrived at the proper location at M.M. Roberts Stadium at the time.

Herring is represented by attorney Kim Chaze, who successfully represented CoB economist Trellis Green in a 1994 lawsuit against George Carter and other USM officials who denied Green's 1994 application for promotion to associate professor of economics. As reported numerous times, USM settled with Green in 1997, awarding him (1) promotion to associate, (2) the promotion raise, and (3) an undisclosed financial settlement. Chaze has also successfully represented other plaintiffs against USM. According to *THA*, Herring is now assistant AD at Radford University. Finally, the *THA* article also reminded readers that USM lost a 2008 sexual harassment lawsuit filed by three former soccer coaches. The coaches – all male – were awarded \$1.2 million in the Forrest County Circuit Court in June of 2008. The USM defendant in the case, senior women's AD Sonya Varnell, was recently praised for efficiently managing budget cuts in the athletics department.

## Will Yosef Bonaparte File a Lawsuit?

The report above reminds USMNEWS.net readers of George Carter's claim (in *Inside Higher Ed*) that CoB economist Yosef Bonaparte was fired without cause during the 2008-09 academic year. Bonaparte, who was hired by the CoB just before the 2008-09 academic year, was reportedly brought on board in a tenure-track capacity, but had his status changed (and his salary lowered) to visiting within weeks after the beginning of that same academic year. The firing reportedly occurred during the 2009 spring semester. If reports are accurate, Bonaparte is currently serving out a terminal contract in 2009-10. This would explain why he was not discussed as part of the proposal to

save the CoB's economics majors and 9 tenured/tenure-track economists. Carter, on the other hand, was part of that discussion, having been named as one of the five mostly senior economists who will retire after 2009-10 so that the four mostly junior economists can continue their USM careers over in the CoAL. USMNEWS.net is still awaiting word as to whether or not Carter was sanctioned or censured by USM for violating confidentiality with regard to his comments to *IHE* about Bonaparte's situation.