

An Editorial

By Marc DePree

Does Evil Lurk In Our Community?

I make life-altering decisions and I'm so divinary I don't need to be the least burdened by facts, evidence, or reason.



Martha Saunders, former president, University of Southern Mississippi

A recent [breaking news report](#), “Another (Dangerous?) USM Professor Steps Forward,” published at usmnews.net, reminded me of the [apparent ease](#) with which University of Southern Mississippi faculty are accused of being dangerous. Apparently, there’s an epidemic at USM of “dangerous people.”

All too often hidden in the background are the mobbers, the "colleagues" who lurk behind the scenes, looking for or making opportunities to bushwhack colleagues and destroy their lives and careers. The crime? Patty Munn made public in her deposition their mantra: they must go because they are not **“persons who view the world in the correct manner.”**

Hidden intolerance should be revealed. Why should those who are mobbed get all the attention and the horrendous publicity that inevitably accompanies accusations of "dangerous" behaviors? Those who mob deserve to be pulled from the darkness where they lurk and be seen in the bright

light of sunshine for the societal affliction they are.

And you have an opportunity—a front row seat—that is available so infrequently, you may never get another opportunity to read details of well-documented misconduct of mob behavior of a small group of faculty and administrators. The reason why I can provide details and documentation is that I won the litigation against the mobbers and am still a full professor at USM and paid my full salary and benefits. Their primary goal was to shut down this website and to silence me. That will be all too obvious from the sworn depositions in this series, “Does Evil Lurk in Our Community.”

Martha Saunders, like the other mobbers, has a special personal reason for joining the mobbing. This seems to be her *modus operandi* -- to curry favor early in her leadership positions. In other words, she has done before what you are about to witness and will do it again, if given the chance. Also keep in mind, she communicates via public relations blather. Any source of information that is factually accurate is irrelevant, perhaps even to the point of being her enemy.

Martha Saunders

I did not personally know then-President Martha Saunders, currently Professor at the University of Southern Mississippi, Gulf Coast. Nevertheless, without ever talking to me, Saunders began termination proceedings to fire me without the slightest concern that mobbers had no evidence whatsoever to terminate my employment, except that they refused to tolerate anyone “who does not “view the world in the correct manner,” as testified by Patty Munn.

I did get to know Martha Saunders professionally as we deposed her. You can get to know her, too. Read on.

The following is the actual sworn testimony of Martha Saunders, taken on **April 12-13, 2010** in the case, *DePree v. University of Southern Mississippi* (Q. is my attorney's questions directed to Saunders; A. is Saunders' responses.):

Q. I believe you previously testified you relied on each and every allegation in a group of letters [from Anderson, Posey, Munn, Jackson, Jordan, Pate and Williams] that were delivered to you by Dr. Williams?

A. I may have.

Q. What did you rely on?

A. The letters [from Anderson, Posey, Munn, Jackson, Jordan, Pate and Williams] that in their totality which of course included each an every allegation...

Q. Anyone else?

A. Not that I recall.

Q. You indicated you had not reviewed the depositions of the other defendants [from

Anderson, Posey, Munn, Jackson, Jordan, Pate and Williams]?

A. That's correct.

Q. Do you think those would be helpful to you in your understanding of this matter?

A. They maybe.

Q. And when did you plan to review them?

A. I don't know.

Q. And you've had what, a year and a half to review them?

A. Probably more than that.

Q. What investigation of the facts and circumstances of this matter have you undertaken since your deposition in May of 2008?

A. Would you repeat the question?

Q. Surely. What investigation of the facts and circumstances of this case have you undertaken since your deposition in **May 2008**?

A. None.

Q. None at all?

A. None at all.

Here is what Saunders said in her sworn deposition on May 15, 2008:

Q. Is it fair to say that you have better than a layman's knowledge of the concepts of due process as they relate to the employment rights of a tenured professor?

A. Yes...

Q. Had the letters [from Anderson, Posey, Munn, Jackson, Jordan, Pate and Williams] been written at that point [August 2007]?

A. They [Williams and Lee Gore, then-USM Counsel] had letters they brought me letters...

Q. So you reviewed those and then you wrote your own letter [advising DePree that termination process had begun] I suppose?

A. I did...

Q. Did you ask any questions?

A. No.

Q. Did you make any investigation into the matters that were presented by these letters [from Anderson, Posey, Munn, Jackson, Jordan, Pate and Williams]?

A. No.

No questions. No investigation. Several years passed and Saunders still couldn't be bothered to ask questions or investigate. So what did she do? She acted and continued to act on unsupported accusations in the letters from Anderson, Posey, Munn, Jackson, Jordan, Pate and Williams. Keep in mind that the letters are not sworn testimony. Saunders knew that. The depositions of Anderson, Posey, Munn, Jackson, Jordan, Pate and Williams that she refused to review, are sworn testimony. (See previous reports in this series.) And be clear, their [Anderson's, Posey's, Munn's, Jackson's, Jordan's, Pate's and Williams'] sworn testimony discredited and recanted the accusations they made in their letters. Furthermore, Saunders' attorneys witnessed each and every deposition and they reported to and were accountable to Saunders.

As of the date of her April 12-13, 2010 deposition, Saunders knowingly relied on the discredited and recanted accusations to attempt to fire me. How do we know she knew the accusations were recanted or discredited by the accusers themselves? My lawyers walked her through the accusers' letters and their testimony at her deposition. She knew, because my attorneys made her read documents she refused to read for her divinatory "due process" to fire me.

Saunders raises deliberate ignorance to the level of a virtue. And, given her level of education and history as an administrator, she should have known better. That is, she should have been educated to understand a principle that is so fundamental it seems redundant to say: reliable evidence is essential to support important decisions. But she clearly doesn't understand the need to support important decisions with reliable evidence. She seems disconnected from ethics, conscience, or reason.

Saunders' testimony can now be understood in context. Anyone who deals with Martha Saunders needs to clearly understand what she is capable of.