



Media Advisory

Alaska Court System, 303 K Street, 5th Floor Anchorage, AK 99501

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ALASKA SUPREME COURT TO HEAR CASE AT WEST HIGH SCHOOL

Fourth Anchorage “Supreme Court Live” Event Fosters Understanding of the Justice System

Anchorage, Alaska (February 14, 2014) – The Alaska Supreme Court will visit West High School on Friday February 21, from 10:20 AM –12:20 PM for the *Supreme Court LIVE* educational program. *Supreme Court LIVE* brings Supreme Court oral arguments in actual cases to student audiences at Alaskan high schools. Designed to help students better understand the justice system, this unique learning opportunity debuted in 2010.

The court will hear oral arguments in a pending case before an audience of several hundred high school students from across the Anchorage School District. The cases to be heard are two civil cases, *Janet Hudson, on behalf of herself and others, v. Citibank (South Dakota) NA, Alaska Law Offices, Inc., and Clayton Walker*, and *Cynthia Stewart, on behalf of herself and others, v. Midland Funding LLC, Alaska Law Offices, Inc., and Clayton Walker*. These consolidated cases arise from lawsuits to collect on past-due credit card debt. After receiving default judgments against two credit cardholders in superior court, attorneys were awarded attorney’s fees which became part of the judgments against the cardholders. Cardholders filed lawsuits against the credit card companies and their attorneys claiming that the attorney’s fees were excessive. The credit card companies asked an arbitrator to decide the cases, and the cardholders opposed the request. After the superior court sent the cases to an arbitrator, the cardholders sought the Alaska Supreme Court’s review of the decision. The Supreme Court will consider whether the credit card companies waived their right to arbitration by bringing court cases on the debts, and if they did waive their right to arbitrate, what the scope of the waiver is. The court will also consider whether a private arbiter can grant statewide injunctions under Alaska’s Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Act (UTPA).

Volunteer attorneys and staff from the court system will visit Anchorage High school classes in the days preceding the program to help students understand the appellate process and the cases

themselves, using case summaries and information from the court's website: <http://courts.alaska.gov/outreach-scl2014-anc.htm>; . The program will include question-and-answer sessions with the attorneys arguing the cases, and with members of the Supreme Court.

The program is open to the public. Attendees are encouraged to arrive at least 30 minutes early to allow time for security screening. Members of the media wishing to use cameras or other electronic equipment in the auditorium should file an Application for Court Approval of Media Coverage <http://courts.alaska.gov/forms/tf-945.pdf> with Appellate Clerk Marilyn May by February 19, 2014 at the email address or fax number noted above.

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