

SolomonSimmonsSharrock & Associates PLLC

Damario Solomon-Simmons
Susan R. Sharrock

Attorneys and Counselors at Law
601 S. Boulder Ste. 704
Tulsa, OK 74119

Phone: (918) 582-4224
Facsimile: (918) 599-8919

Law Offices of Valerie Evans
Of Counsel

www.solomonsimmons.com

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“Muskogee (Creek) Nation’s Supreme Court Upholds Discrimination Against Creek Freedmen”

Tulsa, Oklahoma — In an unusually short decision, the Muskogee (Creek) Nation’s Supreme Court (“Supreme Court”) reversed a decision that would have granted two men of Creek and African descent (a/k/a Creek Freedmen) citizenship. Today’s decision comes almost two (2) years after the Creek Nation’s (“Nation”) District Court Judge Patrick J. Moore found that the Nation’s Citizenship Board (“Board”) acted “contrary to law and in an arbitrary and capricious manner” when processing Plaintiffs’ citizenship applications.

While today’s scant ruling states there was “no evidence that the Citizenship Board acted arbitrarily and capriciously,” to the contrary -- after a three (3) week trial, hundreds of exhibits, and a dozen witnesses -- Judge Moore wrote in his eight (8) page decision, “The most disturbing revelation during trial was the admission on the witness stand by the Nation’s Citizenship Board Chairman and Manager that they just did not follow the law” that made Plaintiffs and other Creek Freedmen eligible for citizenship. Furthermore, Judge Moore found that the Board denied Plaintiffs “fair consideration based on the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Law then governing an Application for Enrollment.” In addition to reversing the decision of Judge Moore, the Supreme Court ordered Plaintiffs, **Mr. Ron Graham** and **Mr. Fred Johnson**, case dismissed.

“Extremely disappointing” states plaintiffs’ co-counsel **Susan R. Sharrock**, “It’s unbelievable that in 2007, an admitted violation of legal rights because of race can occur and that violation be sanctioned by a Court.” Moreover, “it is especially disheartening that, after my clients have spent the last ten (10) years going through all the proper administrative and legal procedures the Nation required, spent thousands of dollars, and proved that they were indeed Creek, the door to citizenship is slammed in their face by three, shallow sentences. Unbelievable!” states Plaintiffs’ co-counsel **Damario Solomon-Simmons**. Yet, both attorneys vow that the fight for citizenship and justice is not over. “Since it is clear the Nation is not interested in the rule of law, we plan to pursue every avenue available to obtain justice for our clients and those similarly situated, including federal litigation and legislation,” **Solomon-Simmons** proclaimed. Indeed the fight is not over states **Oklahoma State Rep. Jabar Shumate (D)** adding “today’s set-back only increases my commitment to utilize my office and influence to find a resolution for this un-American and un-Oklahoman treatment Creek Freedmen have unjustly endured.”

Contact Information:

Damario Solomon-Simmons, Managing Partner, SolomonSimmonsSharrock & Associates
Cell: 918-810-7253 Email: dsolo@solomonsimmons.com