



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE of PENNSYLVANIA COURTS

MEDIA ADVISORY

CONTACT:

[Steve Schell](#), Communications Coordinator
717-231-3331

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WWW.PACOURTS.US

Supreme Court Holds Ceremony for Posthumous Admission to PA Bar
Lawyer George B. Vashon's Credentials Recognized after 160 Years

PITTSBURGH, October 18, 2010—On October 20 at 9:30 a.m., in the Supreme Court Courtroom, 801 City County Building, Pittsburgh, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania will hold a ceremony for the posthumous admission of George B. Vashon to the Pennsylvania Bar. **The ceremony is open to the public and media coverage is invited.**

Chief Justice Ronald D. Castille will sign and present a Certificate of Admission on behalf of the Court to the Vashon family, confirming Mr. Vashon's credentials, competency and good character to practice law in Pennsylvania. Vashon, an African-American lawyer who grew up in Pennsylvania, was originally refused admission by the Allegheny County Bar in 1847.

Chief Justice Castille said, "There is no question that denying George Vashon's admission to the Bar in 1847 and again in 1868 was blatantly discriminatory. By granting this petition, our Court recognizes, and is sensitive to the fact, that those prior practices in the Commonwealth's earlier history had a real effect on real people."

Chief Justice Castille and other members of the court will deliver remarks, along with Howard J. Schulberg, Esquire, President-elect of the Allegheny County Bar Association. Judge Kim Clark will deliver remarks on behalf of the Allegheny County Common Pleas Court.

The Supreme Court's May 4 order admitted Vashon to the Pennsylvania Bar, stating that, "George B. Vashon possessed the necessary credentials, competency, and good character to practice law in Pennsylvania in 1847 based upon his bachelor and masters degrees from Oberlin College, his mentorship with the Honorable Walter Forward of the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas and his subsequent admissions to practice law in the State of New York and before the U.S. Supreme Court." A copy of the court's [order](#), *In the Matter of George B. Vashon, Deceased, Petition of Nolan N. Atkinson and Paul N.D. Thornell, No. 5 WM 2010*, can be found on the Unified Judicial System's Web site at www.pacourts.us.

#