

Center for Legal and Court Technology Media Center

Immersive Virtual Reality to Be Used in Groundbreaking Experimental Trial

(Williamsburg, VA.) The Courtroom 21 Project announced today that its 2002 trial of *United States v. NewLife MedTech* will use technologies formerly thought of as appearing only in science fiction. *United States v. NewLife MedTech* is a federal manslaughter prosecution of New Life MedTech, a new high technology medical start-up company that invented a small “stint” that, once implanted properly in an artery, would cleanse the body of cholesterol. Subsequent to initial FDA approval, the company, without further approval, modified the device to cut its cost to patients. Unfortunately, when implanted in its first patient, the stent allegedly caused his death.

United States District Judge Nancy Gertner, District of Massachusetts, will preside over this jury trial to be heard in the world-renowned Courtroom 21 Project's McGlothlin Courtroom. Jointly sponsored by William & Mary Law School and the National Center for State Courts, the Courtroom 21 Project includes the world's most technologically advanced trial and appellate courtroom. The Project is the international center for experimental work seeking to determine the effects of courtroom technology on the world's legal systems.

Part of the Courtroom 21 Project's ongoing experimental efforts, *United States v. NewLife MedTech* will push the use of legal technology to its frontiers and, perhaps, beyond. As currently planned, *United States v. NewLife MedTech* will include remote judicial and attorney appearances by remote video-conferencing while evidence is presented via the Internet. A key witness will testify live from the United Kingdom and other international testimony is expected. Holographic medical evidence may be presented, and the jury is expected to make the first use of immersive virtual reality. Wearing special goggles, jurors will be able to be in a virtual operating theater to view the location of key participants and to see what they can see. Counsel will use wireless instant messaging to communicate with the court and assistants working outside the courtroom while the court will publish the most comprehensive court record now available contemporaneously to the public via the web. After viewing the evidence electronically, the jury will determine its verdict while using deliberation room technology. The Courtroom 21 Project, the model for the Michigan Cyber Court, will use all of its storied cutting edge technology to test the desirability of its use in the day-to-day search for justice.

***United States v. NewLife MedTech* will be tried Saturday, April 6, 2002, in Williamsburg, Virginia, at William & Mary Law School's McGlothlin Courtroom, South Henry Street, beginning at 9 a.m. The trial will last one day.**

Journalists are invited to observe *United States v. NewLife MedTech* . Space is limited and those interested in attending should reserve seats as early as possible by calling

(757) 221-2494. Media contact: Ann Gaudreaux, 757-221-2626, <acgaudlatlwm.edu>.

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