

For Immediate Release

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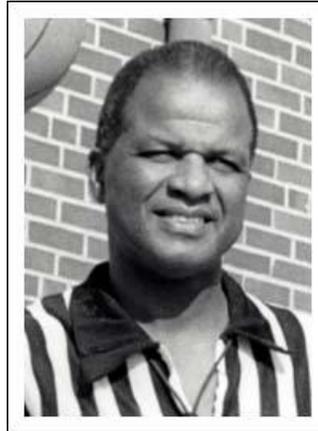
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Modie Risher

Media Release

Legendary Burke Educator and Coach Modie Risher Passes Away

Charleston, SC — Charleston County School District (CCSD) and the greater Charleston community mourn the passing of former Burke High School coach, Modie Risher.

Modie Risher, Sr., an exemplary educator and coach at Burke High School for over three decades, passed away this morning, Monday, October 17, 2016.

Risher was born on September 6, 1928 and graduated from Burke High School in 1946. During his time at Burke, Risher was a popular student-athlete playing football, basketball, and baseball. Risher went on to attend Allen University where he earned a Bachelor's degree, and later Columbia University where he earned a Master's degree. After college, Risher played professional baseball for the Jacksonville Eagles of the Negro Leagues where he faced legends such as Jackie Robinson, Josh Gibson, and Satchel Paige.

Following his professional athletic career, Risher served as an educator at Burke High School where he taught health, physical education (P.E.), creative dance, and gymnastics. During his time at Burke, Risher became one of the most successful multi-sport coaches in school history; he led the

Bulldogs to the 1955 South Carolina AAA state championship in football. He also served as athletic director, department chair, consultant and school evaluator for the South Carolina Department of Education, and health and P.E. curriculum writer for CCSD.

"Coach Risher had a profound impact on my life," said Earl Brown, Sr., former Athletic Director and career leader in wins for basketball at Burke High School. "He was my ninth grade P.E. teacher. He was strict, and made sure everything was done right; very meticulous. I took that approach to life and coaching with me when I started my career as a coach. He instilled in me a desire to execute the finest detail in everything I did. Modie was one of the few guys who played all the main sports- football, basketball, and baseball, and played them at a high level. His influence didn't stop off the court. Coach Risher was a great speaker and a poet. He was great in all that he did. Coach Risher will be missed because he stayed involved with the Burke community until the very end of his life. There wasn't a game I can remember when he wasn't in the stands. He was one of my biggest supporters. He was the greatest."

Risher also served as an official in the South Carolina High School League, Dixie Professional Football League, Southern College Conference, and more over the course of 32 years.

Risher was an active member in the Charleston community, serving as president and executive committeeman for Charleston County Precinct #13, and volunteering his services to a number community organizations including Jack and Jill of America and the Charleston Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind. Risher also was a member of Morris Brown AME Church, where he served as junior trustee, director of recreation, and a school mentor at Mitchell Elementary throughout the years.

Risher received several awards and honors during his lifetime including the South Carolina Palmetto Patriot Award, the 2007 Charleston Metro Sports Council Lifetime Achievement Award, the Burke High School Gym Facility Name, the Burke High School Holiday Basketball Tournament, a House Resolution, and many more for his outstanding achievement and contributions to sports and the Charleston community.

"Modie Risher is a true Charleston sports legend. People outside of our area don't understand the difficulty he faced in serving as a bridge for Burke as the school district transitioned from segregation to integration," said retired CCSD Director of Athletics, Dave Spurlock. "I enjoyed facing him as an athlete, then as a coach. Being the amazing individual he was, he was not only able to serve the needs of his student-athletes, but helped them succeed in competition, and led his teams to prominence. Modie truly was one of the greatest high school coaches ever in our state. His physical presence will be missed in the stands and on the sidelines, but I am confident his memory will always live on at Burke and in Charleston."

Risher was married to DeLaris with whom he had two children, Modie, Jr. and Devonne R. Smalls, and two grandchildren, James II and De Ana Smalls.

Modie Risher touched many lives and will be greatly missed by all.

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is the second largest school system in South Carolina representing a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools that span 1,000 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves more than 50,000 students in 86 schools and several specialized programs. With approximately 6,100 employees district-wide, CCSD is the fourth largest employer in the region.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, charter, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), and Montessori schools, and is divided into three Learning Communities led by associate superintendents. Options include specialized programs in science, engineering and mathematics; liberal arts; music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military and other public service enterprises.