

NEWS

Scarritt Bennett Honors Black Women Who Integrated the All-White College 70 Years Ago



DeLaris Johnson Risher



Lelia Robinson Dabbs

Center and the whole of Nashville to witness this historic occasion by dedicating this house on campus named in their honor for service to humanity and acknowledging they risked their lives in crossing the color line," she added.

The 92 years young Johnson Risher will be at the dedication as the Center salutes both women Ms. Robinson died in 2002 at the age of 72. Family members of Ms. Dabbs are scheduled to attend. The Johnson Robinson House was renovated by Kyle Blue Development a female minority construction company.

Both Mrs. DeLaris Johnson Risher and Mrs. Lelia Robinson Dabbs went on to become Deaconesses in their respective Methodist conferences. Mrs. Delaris Johnson Risher was licensed in 1955 as the first African American deaconess at the Navajo New Mexico Conference. Mrs. Lelia Robinson Dabbs was president of the Central Jurisdiction Deaconess Association for 15 years.

The Center staff, along with its national Board of Directors are pleased to honor these brave women. Furthermore, The Johnson Robinson House dedication will kick off a year-long celebration of the 70th Anniversary of Scarritt College's Integration. There will be a multiplicity of activities to keep their legacy in the forefront of the College's history and as well as the city of Nashville, and a campaign to raise funds for continued work by Scarritt Bennett Center in the areas of women's empowerment and racial justice.

The brave act of these women had its foundation, in part by a professor at the College, who also taught at Fisk University, Dr. Ina Corrine Brown. In her letter to the Board, she stated, it is time, "In the light of these considerations the

faculty of Scarritt College believes that the time as come when it is not only appropriate but obligatory that we actively seek a solution to the problem posed by State laws which now make mandatory on our campus a practice which is out of harmony with the mission entrusted to us by the church. The mandate of Christian conscience no longer permits us to say that we can do nothing about racial exclusion on our campus until the State amends the Constitution. It is our conviction that we should either seek a new interpretation of the law as it affects church-related institutions or act through educational and legal channels to change the law."

The era of the Scarritt College integration, was ahead of the non-violent movement of the Civil Rights area of the 1960s and the Jim Crow laws were in effect. Scarritt was admitting students of color that were foreign and leaders from Africa, Latin America, and Asian sent from the Methodist mission fields to prepare for lives of service. Their presence tested the limits of the local power structure's forbearance; however, admitting Black Americans went over the edge! Segregation was being heavily enforced to the extent of not just imprisonment, but the lynching of African Americans had occurred in Tennessee only a decade before. It had not been very long since the KKK had a public office on what is now Music Row near today's Musica Statue in the Buddy Killen Roundabout.

For more information, contact Jeanne Davis, Development and Marketing Director, at jdavis@scarrittbennett.org or 615.340.742

It's Always a Time for Radical Change

The educational training for women to lead as Christian workers began over 90 years ago at the Scarritt Bible and Training School in Kansas City, Missouri and then moved to Nashville in 1924 as Scarritt College for Christian Workers.

The Scarritt Bennet Center makes yet another bold step in its history. The Center will honor the two Black women who integrated the predominantly white institution Scarritt College for Christian Workers, that at the time was admitting international students, but not African Americans – in 1952. The recognition takes place as part of the naming of the DeLaris Johnson Risher and Lelia Robinson Dabbs house, to be officially named, The Johnson Robinson House.

The theme for this significant occasion is "It's Always a Time for Radical Change" which brings this historic act to life.

The event will take place Saturday, April 2, 2022, at 12 noon, on the campus of the Scarritt Bennett Center at 1003 18th Avenue South, Nashville, TN. The official ribbon cutting will be led by Ms. Johnson Risher, and the public is invited to attend.

"It was 70 years ago these two young Black women together made history. Ms. Risher, from Orangeburg South Carolina and Ms. Dabbs, from Austin, TX quietly and boldly made a radical change in Methodism and higher education throughout the nation," said Rev. Sondrea Tolbert, executive director of the Scarritt Bennet Center. "This is a time in the history of the Scarritt Bennet

Jada Pinkett Smith on Alopecia, Hair Loss & the Slap Heard Around the World

Jada Pinkett Smith and Will Smith have been in the spotlight a lot lately, and it's not always been in a good way. The latest news involves Will storming the Oscars stage at the 2022 94th Oscar Awards and slapping Chris Rock making a joke about his wife. That moment is the one everyone is talking about from Sunday's Oscars, and not the winners.

Rock made a comment about Jada's bald head referencing the movie G.I. Jane, where actress Demi Moore shaved her head for the role.

It all went down when Rock came out to present an award for Best Documentary. On stage, the comedian laughed and said, "Jada, I love ya. G.I. Jane 2 — can't wait to see it, all right?" At that point Will walked on stage and proceeded to slap Chris and then calmly walk back to his seat.

He then shouted back to Chris saying, "Keep my wife's name out your mutha— mouth!"

No matter how you feel about the joke, many did not know that Jada has had issues with losing her hair for years.

Back in 2018, Jada Pinkett Smith had been wearing headwraps and not showing her hair for months at a time. It turns out the beautiful Girl's Trip star has been struggling with the hair loss condition, possibly linked to alopecia. She took to social media to explain it.

"I've been getting a lot of questions about why I've been wearing this turban," said the beautiful 50-year-old actress.

"Well, I've been having issues with hair loss. And it was terrifying when it first started."

She also says she's currently receiving steroid injections to help with her loss.

"I'm getting steroid injections, which seem to be helping but not cur-

ing. But I'm open to other ideas," she posted on her Instagram.

One type of steroid injection Pinkett Smith may be using is called Corticosteroid Injections. This method of treatment — the most common form of treatment for alopecia areata — uses corticosteroids that are injected into bare patches of skin with a tiny needle. These injections are repeated about every four to six weeks and are usually given by a dermatologist.

If new hair growth occurs from corticosteroid injections it is usually visible within four weeks. There are few known side effects related to this kind of treatment. But a drawback of corticosteroid injections, like all treatments for alopecia areata, is that they do not prevent new hair loss from developing.

Alopecia is defined as loss of hair from the body. Hair loss is often a cause of great concern to the patient for cosmetic and psychological reasons, but it can also be an important sign of systemic disease.

Alopecia areata, also known as spot baldness, is a condition in which hair is lost from some or all areas of the body. Often it results in a few bald spots on the scalp, each about the size of a coin. Psychological stress may result. People are generally otherwise healthy. In some, all the hair on the scalp or all body hair is lost and loss can be permanent.

Alopecia areata is believed to be an autoimmune disease. Risk factors include a family history of the condition. The underlying mechanism involves failure by the body to recognize its own cells with subsequent immune-mediated destruction of the hair follicle.

The actress recalled the "terrifying" moment she first noticed she was losing



"handfuls of hair" in the shower.

"It was one of those times in my life where I was literally shaking with fear," she said. "That's why I cut my hair and continued to cut it."

This revelation was featured in the third episode of her Facebook mini-series, Red Table Talk, co-hosted by her mother Adrienne Canfield Norris, and teenage daughter Willow Smith.

Other topics discussed have included coping with loss, motherhood and body image — with Willow previously disclosing she self-harmed as a child following the release of her debut single Whip My Hair.

Despite having many medical tests, Pinkett Smith said she has not been able to find the cause of her alopecia. She suspects it might be stress.

Other main factors for alopecia are:

1. Thyroid Problems

The thyroid is a butterfly-shaped gland at the front of the neck.

It produces hormones that regulate many processes throughout the body. If the gland makes too much or too little thyroid hormone, the hair growth cycle

may falter. But hair loss is rarely the only sign of a thyroid problem.

Other symptoms include weight gain or loss, sensitivity to cold or heat, and changes in heart rate.

2. Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS)

Women with polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) have a chronic hormonal imbalance.

The body makes higher levels of androgens than expected. This often causes extra hair to sprout on the face and body, while hair on the scalp grows thinner. PCOS can also lead to ovulation problems, acne, and weight gain. But sometimes thinning hair is the only obvious sign.

These days, Pinkett Smith said she enjoys using turbans, as they help conceal her condition and are an empowering fashion choice.

"When my hair is wrapped, I feel like a queen," she said. (Source: Black-Doctor.org by Aria Ellise, BDO Special Contributor)

Statement on UTC Men's Basketball Program from Vice Chancellor and Director of Athletics Mark Wharton

Vice Chancellor and Director of Athletics Mark Wharton last Wednesday provided a statement regarding the Chattanooga Mocs men's basketball program and head coach Lamont Paris, who has recently accepted the head coaching role at the University of South Carolina.

"We congratulate Lamont on this move. He built our program into a consistent winner again, and we appreciate those efforts. He will be missed in Chattanooga, but we look forward to challenge ahead and immediately begin our nationwide search," said Wharton.

"Our program's history and future will draw another talented coach to our program which has seen three of the last four win SoCon Championships and take it to the NCAA Tournament."

Paris guided Chattanooga to a 27-8 overall record this season and notched the Southern Confer-

ence regular season and tournament titles, thus earning a spot in the 2022 NCAA Tournament. The 2022 SoCon Coach of the Year among the coaches vote, Paris has led the Mocs to a 65-28 (.699) record over the past three seasons which included 20, 18 and 27-win seasons.

Tanner Bronson will take over interim head coach duties. A national search for the next head men's basketball coach will begin immediately.

Chattanooga Mocs men's basketball program and head coach Lamont Paris (standing) has recently accepted the head coaching role at the University of South Carolina.

