

To whom it may concern,

I am writing today to offer my support for the nomination of James Bethea to be inducted into the Mountain Bike Hall of Fame.

I write you today as a 50 years old man who still looks to find time to enjoy the wonderful hobby of bicycling in all of its varieties, but mountain biking is my happy-place. I know that my enthusiasm for cycling began in my youth but it was not until I was a young, college-aged adult that it developed into a passion. Growing up, living and attending college in Laramie, WY in the early 90's - I soon became addicted to the fledgling sport of mountain biking. I rode on my local trails ... I went to local, regional and national races and I followed the sport through various cycling publications. To be perfectly frank – Representation Matters and I found myself wondering where my place was in this sport that appeared to be (and still is) homogeneous in term of diversity. I soon discovered my “heroes’ in the sport - David ‘Tinker’ Juarez and James Bethea – both by coming across their ads in Mountain Bike Action magazine – I believe for Klein and NukeProof Bikes respectfully.

Very few individuals get a chance to meet the folks they look up to – I can say I have been lucky enough to meet both of these men. When I saw James at one of the local (Laramie Mountain Bike Series) races a few years ago, I knew I had to talk with him and introduce myself. Because we were both warming up for our respective races and I worried that I might come across weird AF – I elected to just introduce myself and let James know that I remember watching him race and that I considered him one of my heroes in the sport (yep – weird AF). James, in his true humble-self, thanked me for my words and I believe understood the ‘writing between the lines’. I can honestly say that James’ presence in the mountain bike ‘world’ influenced, motivated and reassured cyclists from ‘diverse’ backgrounds in ways that would be hard to capture in words. Again, and in closing, to be perfectly frank – Representation Matters.

I thank you for your time and look forward to the outcome of James’ nomination. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions on this letter.

Con Safos,  
Miguel