

Dear Anna Kelso:

I have known James Bethea for just over 30 years and as long as I've known him, he has been an avid and dedicated mountain bike rider. James and I met back in the late 80s/early 90s in Brooklyn, NYC, which at the time was ravaged by a drug epidemic and a palpable racial divide. Even then, James was more comfortable riding on wheels than standing on his own two feet. James' dedication to mountain biking was an anomaly in those days. Yet his passion for the sport and his dedication to elevating within it only grew over the decades, despite the fact that it is a predominantly white sport. As a mountain biker and professional racer of color, James is one of one, using his love of riding to bridge boundaries of color and finding common ground with others anywhere and everywhere he goes. For as long as I have known him, James has waved the flag of mounting biking, always encouraging others to ride, no matter where they are from or what their circumstances may be. I am amazed at his accomplishments within the sport, but mostly I am so grateful that he still finds joy and contentment whenever he is on his bike. I strongly recommend James Bethea's nomination for the Mountain Nike Hall of Fame. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind Regards,

Sam Lecca Partner & Creative Director, Polo Grounds Films