First, let me say thank you all so much for having me Ali Sen participate in this wonderful and very historic and knowledgeable event. Knowing Muhammad's history is exactly what we do at the LD center, the LE Center was established to preserve the legacy of Muhammad. And this is exactly what he would have wanted is for his history to be brought on and for the public to know. So one of our speakers is Sam Watkins. I'm Sam Watkins has been the president and chief executive officer of the local Central Community Center for relatively 27 years. He's responsible for overseeing the old Walnut Street development. It's a 130,000 square foot town square, and commercial enterprise. Mr. Watkins has worked tirelessly in advancing a vision and mission of self reliance and economic vitality among the residents who reside in low income neighborhoods and in particularly the Russell neighborhood. In his spare time, Mr. Watkins serves as a local historian exploring and explaining mobile's unique and forgotten history. Mr. Watkins will paint for us what Louisville was like for African Americans in the 1940s, the 1950s and the 1960s. Rudy Davidson, who's with us, actually, this time, has served as a civil servant for over 20 years. Mr. Davidson oversaw solid waste management for the Metro City government, and was a cabinet secretary from 2003 until 2006. Since retirement Mr. Davidson has been involved in the Shawnee Neighborhood Association, and the Fontaine home Association, Mr. Davidson will take us down a memory lane as he shares unique stories about the Parkland neighborhood. And what it was like growing up with Muhammad before he became the greatest should probably start with Mr. Davidson. Some of the things that I think that we'll explore today, and the things that I've learned throughout my time at the YALI center and studying Muhammad are, you know, what was the neighborhood like Muhammad grew up in the Parkland neighborhood, which is in the West End, Parkland is I would say, just a few blocks away from Chickasaw Park, and was in an area on 28th. Street Mohamed grew up on 34th in grant so we're gonna be exploring what the neighborhood was like, what kids did in the neighborhood for fun, what was what we can simply do in this neighborhood. And then describe his your experiences in Chickasaw Park. And what it was like, you know, visiting around the city and how you got there and things like that.
First of all, I have lived in the West 75 years, I was born in beach chairs, moved to 3614, West Kentucky, my parents, mother and father, and an uncle bought a house. Back then, when it was very uncommon for black folk buy houses as a way to do it, mostly because they combined incomes. Mobile was a teacher. A father had a long working history at the Kroger bakery, which used to be on 12 and Kentucky. Some of us may remember that. He worked there for 40 years. We moved to 3614, Kentucky when I was about eight years old, as best as I can recollect. But my first experience of needing Muhammad Ali, his mother used to meet my mother at the corner of 36 in grain to walk us to school in Virginia Avenue. First with Virginia Avenue School, which is now the West End school. It was Virginia Avenue Elementary School. Bob Coleman, who I'm told supposed to be speaking today, called me this morning, he had some emergency health problems. And he and I grew up together. We graduated from kindergarten, cap and gown at Virginia Avenue School is how far back we go. And that's the reason I'm here is because he's a free and otherwise I would be at home with my feet propped up. But he's a friend and I told him I would come do the best I could. But that was the first it's my first experience with Muhammad Ali and his family. And I recall them both both his mother and my mother walking and we went front and walked on over to 36 in Virginia, which was about a three four block walk. As we got older, they would meet at the corner and watch us go to school. They didn't take the walk after a year or two as I can recall. But I was growing up with Ollie just about my entire youth 1718 until he went to the Olympics. We went to parties together. We called him Gigi was our nickname for Ali. He would be in the corner shadowboxing while we would be dancing with the girl that a lot of parties he would be running behind the bus and you heard the stories when we would be going to Madison junior high at the time to school and he would run behind the bus all the way from 34th Street to 18th and Muhammad Ali. The hand the bus every morning. combat boots on I'll never forget. And we will be hanging out to win the Holonet. GG is crazy. This was exactly what we will holla he's just lost his man. But you see where he is and where it but we had a lot of memorable occasions with Ali, to talk a little bit about the West End when I grew up. I have seen a lot of changes. I'm the past president of the Shawnee Neighborhood Association, which we organized in 2007. And I think we did a lot of good work organization is still there. It's a 501 C three organization. We were able to open a health center in the Cheyenne neighborhood when everybody told us we were crazy in terms of trying to do it. I'm also president of the Fontaine states homeowners association is where I live for the past 18 years, moving from 46th Street to show you how to migrate into Shawnee neighborhood. I moved from 36 and Kentucky 46 In Duncan, and 46 and ducking down to 800 bucks, a flaunting landing port, which is adjacent to the golf course subdivision. So I can say what honestly, I've been in the west and all my life and I've seen a lot of changes. When I was younger, I can recall, most homeowners, most home owners of a home owners had very few rental properties. It was an emerging black middle class, during my time that people were allowed to buy homes move into the West End. And I mean that in many instances the whites were moving out. So you had opportunities to buy a home, buy homes and resettle in the West End. So classically, what you had was a very broad base, African American middle class, I consider myself coming from a middle class background because my father worked. Then the llama mama the work. But he worked at Kroger bakery, as I previously mentioned all those years and he made a living for us. But I always consider myself somewhat middle class. We didn't have a whole lot but we as far from not having anything, but it's a lot of single family homes. Virginia Avenue doing, Neil, a lot of teachers willing homes, a lot of postal workers who were working at the post office, which was a cherished occupation back then, for blacks, a cherished occupation, working at the post office. And believe it or not, a lot of them were waiters, who worked at the Pendennis club, who worked at the club out here on bread on Bardstown road, I can't think of the name of it now. And they made good incomes, tax free ideas, they made good incomes and were able to have enough money to buy a home and
I wanted to ask you what kinds of things were there for kids your age to do when you were growing up back then? You know, sports clubs or things like that. And maybe specifically Chickasaw Park, what role did that play in your youth?
Could you talk about Chickasaw Park to what role did that play in your youth?

Sam Watkins 11:59
Very interesting question. When I was a kid, we used to call we called it play street. The street from grain to Hill is about one block would be closed every day from four to six and turned into a playground with the roller skate and all in the kids can be several blocks away to play and there was a play area. It's called Play Street is I can recall they call it called the police street. There was one thing we did. Another benefit we had were the the social clubs, the yearlings club, if you've heard of them, the Cavaliers Club was a group of men who were similar to the Union Scalai the Epicurean club. There was social clubs there that sponsored different activities for young people, as the Shawnee is to kick us off Park, the only park that we could go to every holiday was a race to see who could get the best spot. And we'd go down and my mom and him sent me down at six o'clock in the morning to camp out a spot to where later on, they would come with the picnic baskets and all and that park would be so crowded, you couldn't move on a holiday. That was where we spent our holidays was at Chickasaw Park, because there was nowhere else. But they had a very good tennis organization. And for those who entertainers can Apogee Chickasaw was one of the few Clay courts or something I don't know. But they always had a big tennis tournament during those holiday periods, and they still continue to have big tennis tournaments at that point. But Chickasaw Park was a lifeline for the holiday season. And it was a race to get to get the best spot and keep your spot that day. And we'd all bring the bring food in. We didn't have burritos and stuff at home, we bought food to the park nominee and cook stuff up and bring it in the flowers get to eat and but this is how we did it. And it's how the park played a part in my life. Of course, it was the part that we go down to and we play basketball on which was underdeveloped court, which we used to call the stamp. It was about 10 or 12 or 12 or 14 spotted out a basket. And that's where we had most competitive games. I can recall as a kid that we played basketball but we had to go to the park every day to walk down to the park from 36 and Greenwood 36 and Kentucky. If you can imagine the distance are we now in the cell so what's the part we play in the park three or four, four or five hours in walk back home? As the park was very important to me.

14:17
I have a quick follow up question with that. Geographically we know that Louisville was segregated with real estate when you watch from Parkland to Chickasaw Park What was that walk like? Did you have to go through any white neighborhoods or any any persons that that you know had certain had a certain idea of of who you were or or that you shouldn't be in their neighborhood it was there anything like that when you went it went came to go into the park?

Sam Watkins 14:44
Okay, walk through the neighborhood safely. I didn't have my first encounter, who was my parents always taught me to watch out for the bullies be able to recognize racism when you see it? look in his eyes. That's what my mother used to tell me. And I really didn't experience that until I was with a group. I integrated SHINee High School First of all for blacks to go to Shawnee high school one day walking home through in the white neighborhood, this police officer was off duty with his family in the car stopped, get out of the car, hollering and said,
What are you all doing in this neighborhood? And I was with four or five friends. And he said, Get out of here. Well, I was always a list of stuff. So they all ran, walked away fast. And I stood there and looked at him. And he said, You are slowing. I'm not running. And he made his wife get out of the car, go up and knock on the front. And this is the true knock on the front door of the people who lived at that house and call the police department have a unit come pick me up. And I went to jail was I didn't stay because once I get down here to detectives all say What are you doing here? And I told him what happened? Get out of here is exactly what they see as so and so whoever he is, but if he's if he walked in his room, and I can see his face, how old were you when that happened? That was in 10th grade. And that's the only encounter not well as some of the subtle things to happen. But the most significant incident that I can remember that sticks with me I can recall it now was that when he told us to get out of this and get out of this neighborhood, and it was all white neighborhood we were back kids walking through we walk from shiny High School, everyday read the news, I bust tokens over to 36 and Kentucky and we stopped at the malt shop every day is the routine. Those of us who went to Shawnee was about 14 was about seven and a group to live in the same neighborhood.

**Question 16:17**

And she was very young at the time, lived in numerous places around the West End, my dad lived here 3036 Thanh Market near St. Columba. I had an interest in the West End, good friend of mines father had Roberts grocery you probably remember Roberts grocery at 30th and River Park. His family but I used to play tennis with Chickasaw Park, okay with some friends and on the clay I grew up playing on clay. But so when it dawned on me from having gone down to Muhammad Ali's home a number of times driving back that my mother had grown up for a short time, even though she's older, you know, like three blocks away from where he lived. So I kind of wondered where the color line was. And also, there was interaction. There may have been, if much or any, between the neighborhoods. I also did did Muhammad Ali's neighborhood and many people say work at Reynolds or some of these other big companies that used to be in town. I mean, it was in a more prosperous neighborhood. Back when you all were going out when I

**Sam Watkins 17:21**

was a kid, I think I think can you think of it in terms of a working class, neighborhood working class family neighborhood? Go back to the other question in terms of is there a land between white and black. It was such a blend to me, of white families that lived in my neighborhood that had moved out that there was no clear land, it was some mix of black families, new black families moving in, and the old white families hadn't had chance to move out. So there was a transition period, that they all blended together. But they all seem to get along. From my perspective, they all seem to get along being young at the time. Always remember, those who worked at the post office were cherished jobs. Those who taught there were quite a few male teachers at that time. I also recall, as I mentioned earlier, those who were waiters, which was the abundance of those people who worked in different restaurants around the city with me good money helper tips, stop and think that my father, who was quite fortunate to have a job at Kroger bakery that he got years before, when he came and he worked at Kroger bakery, which was free members of my family worked there also. So there was an opportunity for employment there. As a matter of fact, my brother would go during the summer he could get him hired during the summer. So that was an employment resource. But Kroger bakery had
quite a few blacks at that time beyond that, in terms of my recollection of being young, what jobs were available. I didn't see any The only change in jobs is when the harvest is the foods, those companies start hiring black people. And then you could say that the economy changed the middle class base broaden because they were good paying jobs, and a lot of my friends got jobs there and to change their lifestyle. I think we have one question in the back when I was growing up. Yes, sir. I don't ever remember a play a class that I took the top black history, none other than that, let me take that back during the Black History Month, it was a mansion, but to have a class that actually taught black history. I don't recall having

Question 19:18
Sam Watkins, glad to be here with you this evening. This is very important even for me because I really honor the legacy of Muhammad Ali I knew in his caches class. And when I think about black history teaching, for me, it was in high school, where lambda t Johnson, who was a very important instructor back then didn't know how important it was until much, much later, really tried to engage with us within legal means. Now he still worked for the local school system, really suddenly taught like history as part of his social status class. And I was forced to be a student with him for two years in my junior and senior year, where he really worked hard to share with us So some aspirational goals around black history and what it was and what great people that were at that time. And I remember that very, quite clearly that that was the only descriptor that I experienced in my primary, secondary and high school years of even thinking about teaching black history as far as I can recall.

Sam Watkins 20:17
And I think it's important to note, Sam, you were at Central High School. I was at Shawnee.

Rudy Davidson 20:22
Okay. Okay. Well, that

Sam Watkins 20:24
explains. Yeah, you know, the only only mention we had a black history was Black History Month. And that explains it. No one would have had that commitment to teach us the historical significance of black history. At Shawnee High School, not when it first just integrated. That was an own the written

Rudy Davidson 20:45
task, of course, was a black school. It was a African American School buy from date, day one. And so obviously, that was quite a different environment than shopping high school than male high school where a lot of fellow students attended there, as well.
Yeah, Central High School was the only African American high school in the city of Louisville. And I believe that the city schools integrated, I believe in the mid to late 1950s 1956. Yes, so which is why manual, Shani. And I think we have another question right here.

Question 21:17

Well, mostly, it's comments that I hope that you will respond to, since your mother was a teacher.

Sam Watkins 21:24

There was a mother she was a housewife. My uncle was a teacher.

Question 21:29

Oh, your uncle was a teacher? Well, there was a difference in PayScale between men and women, and between white and black. And that must have been difficult to live with, but I don't know how you respond to it. Did you have any interaction with the fountain fairy? Did you interact in any way with the kids at flash AR Loretto or? or anything like that,

Sam Watkins 21:55

Yeah, had interaction with with the fountain fairy. One day I decided against my parents wishes they didn't know how far I'd ride on my bike and go beyond certain boundaries that they had established, I decided to ride over to Shawnee coming to a mountain fair. Not really knowing where it was. But what did I find out? Going up to it. A white person told me you can't go in here. I said when I hopped on my bicycle and rode away and looked at it just say boy, I sure would like to ride the Ferris wheel, but could not get him to do it. So that was my first recollection of fun fountain theory that I couldn't get into.

What year was that? How old were you? Oh, you're really taxing my boys. I had to be 15 14 so we can do the math. And I think he go back and your fan I found fair was still segregated at that time. If I'm doing man right here. Yeah. So and it's not only found favorite shiny part. Didn't get 58 fits in here at a time. And not only fountain fair, it was Johnny Park.
The Chickasaw Park was the only black park that we put a 10. But people like Cassius Clay, then Muhammad Ali, now. A person like Sam Watkins, we were athletes. So we really were not allowed to take risks, like get involved with the police and get in trouble because athletes didn't do that. And so we were kind of a protected class at that time. And when you talk about those kinds of community issues, people like Cassius Clay, even though he had not evolved, it's really an outstanding athlete. Caches are two years ahead of me and my sister, he was much closer than it was but he was quite of a character. So he's a personality, you see in terms of playing around and, and kid around is really the kid I knew. I didn't know him as a great athlete. He really did. Yeah, he I mean, he was a character he was he was a comedian. And even we tend to cherish in fact, Muhammad Ali during his time, he talked about the the parks and like, we were both at Centennial Baptist Church. And I was baptized there, but I don't remember Cassius Clay being baptized there but his mother and father and as a tough man was devout Christians, with tenants Centennial all the time, and I was going to be the church. We were about eight 910 12 Yo range. And it was it was cast who led all the problem issues and the church but all those boys, because he was quite a personality. He's a fun loving guy. He got me laugh, he saw everything as being funny. He was quite a comedian. And we had a real signal that when just before collection started, we would ease out of church and go into the bathroom as long as we did it quietly. That's because church last two, two and a half years and anybody around at age 10 our attention span was very limited. So we were fallen in five or six eight boys together, no girls, catches made sure that And we've have a time until caches act up, start laughing too loud. And here comes adults, we had to go back into church and we got mad at him, but never did do anything about it. I remember that we owed him a couple of beatings for that. But it was a fun loving person. And so with that kind of environment, we didn't experience those kinds of racial things that you think about now, in an overt way. It was really subtle. When you talked about the workers. You know, I'm a family with eight children. We never thought of being poor or anything like that. I mean, we just didn't. He did that after 21. If he wanted to hit a championship with the world, he converted. I think he'd been playing around with that. But I didn't know him. When I went to college, he went separate paths. He course became professional fighter. I went on to college, and as so many other fellow students did was quite a quite a group of people who really turned out to be outstanding citizens during that era. But we didn't know Muhammad Ali, like you think of him now. He was, you know, in high school. He was just a kind of a odd guy. He didn't play the major sports, which were football and basketball. So he wasn't cool. You know, he wasn't, he just wasn't cool. You had to pay those sports to be cool back then. But he was doing his own thing I remember so vividly. You may have seen this crash or not. But we we didn't have busing, as you think of it now for us to go to school. You either walk to school, or called the public transit transit system. So two options, parents can drop you off, and we walk literally miles to school, but it was no issue. I mean, that's what we did. We grew up doing that. But Muhammad Ali didn't catch his claim. He would run to school every morning in high school, and we laughed at him. We thought he was not believable. And of course, it's being youngsters there. And we didn't think much about that. Exactly. I knew he had to work out. But we didn't run the school every morning rain, snow, it didn't matter. Every morning. He raced the bus, and we pass him up. Then we've stopped, he passes up. We make fun of it. He did not break his training. He would not hit the bus. He just kept jogging, ignored us on the back. Unbelievable. Now we didn't make fun of him in his face because he was pretty tough guy. But boy, we had a good time laughing at him. While he's on the bus. I remember so vividly. It it made me shameful as I grew up as a peer appeared how hard he worked at his craft. And a good example of
Question 27:34
kids who went to flashbay or to Loretta with any in any way with with you kids?

Rudy Davidson 27:40
Well, by then we operate in gangs, gangs by territory. And so kids who live in the California neighborhood, that's me, kids who live in Parkland. That's fascist people who live in Shawnee. Hey, those were kind of clicks that you didn't integrate too much. It was territorial, so we protected our girls, they protected their girls, if you took a risk to go across the line, you were subject to get ran out of there. So you had that kind of environment. Even when we went to school together, we kind of protected those kinds of little cliques, those kinds of territorial kinds of things. I mean, not like violence against a date. It just was a territorial protected class of people who operated in recognition of each other, but not really tightly wind together. So that was involved without being in there to talk about the work. My father was a construction worker was actually a general contractor in Alabama. When he migrated his family to Louisville, you're talking about reduction in and the capacity to provide for the family, he became what we call the hard carrier, which is a toughest job carrying concrete on your shoulder, up ladders, never get that in inches back and I never forget that. But he was a general contractor in Alabama who became a mobile he couldn't reach that class. And so we remember vividly that kind of experience for which he was very proud of was very disappointed though that he had to do that. My partner forgot to turn his phone off when it came. So we talked about that kind of work environment. Mother and father had eight children, value for us. And we simply enjoyed life. We talked about caches. His father was a businessman. He was known as an artist, but he also did a lot of commercial printing on glass fronts for businesses. And he really the vast majority of black businesses in West Louisville was actually painted his advertisement signs were painted by cash his father, his mother was a sweet lady, who cooked all the time, then remembered, I guess, sweet, pleasant lady, and was held in high regard. Most of the people you'd mentioned beyond the As educators and teacher was people worked on the railroad, often, I mean, that was the job because they traveled with different cities got tremendous tips, you still have a second class citizenship on the railroad. But that was a very important job back then. We had those kinds of opportunities economically, even though we will celebrate it, you really could provide for your family, and it was a cash economy back then. No credit cards, so you couldn't get bank credit. Anyway, blacks could not. So it was a cash economy. So with a much easier time, it seems compared to what we talk about Now historically, looking back, as it was when when I was growing up back then.

Question 30:43
I've heard it referred to as the Walnut Street, entertainment, business area, but I think of it as what I've read about or seen on is actually more on Chestnut Street, but top hat, the nightclubs and the businesses and things like, did you go to

Rudy Davidson 30:59
the monastery, if it was on Walnut Street, YMCA, Central High School, not really commercial. One Street was heavily commercial from Sixth Street to 15th Street with Wall Street. And we were born who at times in that environment, including caches, you're talking about my team
55, it’s fixed the seven day for us. But from the 40s to the 60s, that era was really a high engaged area for black entrepreneurship, black commerce, banks, grocery stores, theaters, all the attributes you think of for any community having it was there on Wall Street for blacks, some whites participated in it. But all blacks were limited to that particularly

**Question 31:46**
now with with segregation. I knew a guy that years ago, he had one of the on some Sheriff’s Badge or something. You know, I don’t know why I had one we did. But he said he used to go when some of the clubs now with this with segregation. Could could white people go in black clubs? Oh, absolutely. Okay. So it was it was, so it was a one way deal.

**Rudy Davidson 32:08**
Now many of the clothes are owned by whites, okay, that a large number to close on my wife and also haven't been Jewish. Who owned those clothes operated by blacks. Yet there's a number of blacks who owned and operate their own businesses, their own ones.

**Question 32:22**
What about what about for streaming? No, how want to be places, Unfortunately, a third vote out that no movie theaters and whatnot once passed,

**Rudy Davidson 32:32**
sixth grade was dead in six? Because then it was not it was the legal. Legal by law,

**Question 32:41**
who could have made it legal? Could the city have changed the the ordinance? So they did eventually? So it could have been I mean, it wasn't like a statewide thing, or I mean, oh, yeah. I mean, no, it was statewide. But the city could have just could have changed the law vote

**Rudy Davidson 32:56**
for the city, in city installed alone and made it illegal outbreaks and also eventually, over time, installed a new law that made it legal make it illegal to be together.

**Question 33:07**
But what about what about resentment from people your age and that kind of thing? It wasn't up to me that the resentment?
Rudy Davidson  33:16
Well, my age or our generation is really who transformed this community. The young people who primarily attend a Central High School, and we have huge rural displays of that history on our wall and I build that over Wall Street at 1300. With Muhammad Ali is a pop community please you're welcome to come down and visit that but that that era was little led by our fellow students, I guess athlete where he was not allowed to participate in the boycotts and the the antagonistic kinds of strategies that Lama T Johnson lay it. So you're talking about intensive work doing this kind of work in 1959 6061 llama T Johnson really got fed up and began to fight back. He also was the first black who was integrating Kentucky University, llama T Johnson. So he has a teacher Central High School, galvanize and mobilized students. And he did have students with because adults could not afford to be arrested for economic reasons, and to avoid being isolated from community opportunities. So children were recruited. And many parents did not allow their children participate for fear of harm for their children. But a lot of parents did, thank goodness. And so my fellow students actually led to boycott and under leadership aligned to Johnson. To close out what Dan was historical businesses in downtown Fourth Street that have changed our community, we think for the better, but that was led by lamptey Johnson,

Sam Watkins  34:50
I would add that the change was a result of our generation of young fellow students.

Rudy Davidson  34:56

Sam Watkins  35:00
I think Raoul Cunningham as president of the NAACP was very active, as well as a lot of other friends. Were willing to go to jail willing to march, they were all in I think they can be held responsible. They created for being a bank on its own.

35:14

35:23
When Ali started his training in boxing was boxing competition integrated here and global at that time.

Rudy Davidson  35:31
Yeah, they worked out in jam together. And they actually had back to had fights against blacks and whites in various marketplaces. But it was at the amateur level, back then. And at that time, again, because he wasn't playing football or basketball, no one respected that as much until he won the national Golden Gloves, and then got selected to go to the Olympics. That's when his fellow student says, Wow, this guy really is something not have any idea that he would rise to the occasion of what we refer to him as to be in today. But really, we didn't see what was forecasted by Cassius Clay. But he was really just the guy who was doing all the things I've never really used to go into bathrooms, there was no fact when he was senior and Central, that boys you don't go into restaurant when cash is playing there. Because he he's always fighting. And so He will use you as a punching bag when you went in there. So we I mean, I'm telling you, we avoid that he was when he actually came into the bathroom, you never seen so many people scatter. So you get out there, because he was constantly boxing it when he walked through the hallways. Looking back there was one at a time, but we're afraid of him because he really was a big guy now. And when it took took for granted, he could punch anybody. So we got out of his way but but he became really a celebrity. Only if he got national recognition that he was just boxing and really letting him go see his boxing matches at all.

Sam Watkins  37:03

I think he mentioned the fact that Tomorrow's Champions, Tomorrow's Champions, which used to come on TV, it featured young boxes. And it's where you first saw cashes at that time boxing and he pretty much dominated that show. He won every fight he had, even against the Western bully, a guy named khaki Baker, you remember his name? Khaki Baker was about six Ford weighed about 260 At that time, and he got in the ring with Ollie. And it was like a championship fight. We were all watching it. And then we said, Man, this guy, he's really not only is he's crazy, but he's got some more. But it was Tomorrow's Champions that he was featured on and he just about one every bout where he did win every belt where he was featured on tomorrow's champion.

Question  37:58

What was the impact for the community when he returned from the Olympics in 1960, after winning that gold medal? I mean, here's a kid from Louisville, Kentucky that, you know, made it on the big world stage did that change the perception in the neighborhood about how you all saw things, how you all saw your community after that.

Rudy Davidson  38:18

Nothing was community but how we really respected him because I remember when he came back to Central High School and after he won the championship, I'm still there in high school. He was really now celebrity. And he was in awe. I mean, because he's been on a national TV. We saw him on TV. You know, he wasn't it wrong. I think it was we we saw it, hey, he's actually wrong. You know, that was a foreign country to us. I mean, that's far, far, far away. And we want that golden that that Olympic medal, and we just thought it was world it turned over. So when he came back, I mean, we actually were just looking at him, like, wow, he is a star now. He's not a professional fighter yet. But he really was the best that we knew all that existed. And we've been community recognized as such, as was nationally recognized. So it was really a
celebration. I remember the parades that we had around the around the school building. I remember going out into the onto the outside playground area and just 1000s of people there from community and from the school. They're just gathering and all. As we saw he showed us his gold medal. I remember that I never seen a gold medal before in my life. So we use it's kind of like God, if he can do that, man. Maybe there are some things that we can do as well not sure know what that was, but we really was enamored by what he had done. And that's really the first time I think, my fellow students I really showed our appreciation for Cassius Clay when he came back with a gold medal.

39:42

I think that might be all the time that we have and I would await to end it but by to say that Muhammad really inspired his fellow students and the city of Louisville during that time. Just let you all know this is a four part series. So we will be back next Monday. I promise all of the kinks will be worked out Next Monday, but we're going to be looking at and exploring Muhammad consciousness objection. And so those speakers will be the president and CEO of the Muhammad Ali center done on this year, and then retired courier journal writer, Mervyn Osman. So we're also hoping to get a professor from the University of Louisville. He hasn't called me back yet. So we're gonna wait on announcing that, but expect those two speakers here. Same time, same place with kinks worked out. So thank you all so much for doing this for us.