

PBS Books, USA TODAY and the Muhammad Ali Center Present a Live Virtual Event Honoring Muhammad Ali's 80th Birthday

'Champion of Service: Celebrating Muhammad Ali' to feature reflections from individuals close to the late world heavyweight champion and an opportunity for viewers across the country to participate in The Greatest Give Back

[December 2021] – Although Muhammad Ali is universally revered as The Greatest of All Time (or G.O.A.T.) for his exploits in the boxing ring, he also became a champion for humanity through his commitment to service outside the ring.

The full life and legacy of this global icon will be celebrated in a national virtual event at 8 p.m. ET on Wednesday, Jan. 12, 2022, on the [PBS Books Facebook page](#).

Through a partnership led by PBS Books, USA TODAY and the Muhammad Ali Center in Louisville, the evening's program will highlight the dedication to courage, generosity, kindness and compassion embodied by Muhammad Ali in recognition of his 80th birthday on January 17. Additional partners include the Louisville Courier Journal, part of the USA TODAY Network, Metro Louisville United Way, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) and Kentucky Educational Television (KET).

His widow, and vice chair and co-founder of the Ali Center, Lonnie Ali, will introduce the one-hour event. Guest speakers will include PBS filmmaker Ken Burns; Hana Ali, Muhammad Ali's daughter; John Ramsey, a personal friend; David Chaudoir, longtime employee; and Dr. Richard Lapchick, who is a human rights activist, author, scholar and the 2021 Muhammad Ali Humanitarian of the Year Award recipient. Each participant will draw upon their personal experiences with Muhammad and share their own unique perspectives on his life and legacy as a humanitarian.

Along with learning more about the unique contributions Muhammad Ali made in sports and society, this national virtual program will also encourage others to participate in [The Greatest Give Back](#) through service projects across the country, which are organized each year on January 17, Ali's birthday. In 2022, this date coincides with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, offering another opportunity to give back to those in our own communities who are suffering racial or social injustices.

The virtual program will include a short video about the Ali Center and Ken Burns sharing some inspirational comments and a segment from his PBS documentary, "Muhammad Ali." In addition, inspirational authors and celebrities will explain what Ali's legacy means to them and reveal their personal Red Bike Moment® – a defining moment in their lives, much like the one that changed the future of then 12-year-old Cassius Clay when his red Schwinn bike was stolen, an incident that led him to a Louisville boxing gym and which became a catalyst for his athletic career and life's purpose.

About PBS Books

PBS Books is a multi-platform initiative celebrating the love of reading. Through social and digital engagement and live coverage of important literary events across the country, PBS Books celebrates books and writers and works to foster a passion for reading among public media viewers and listeners. In 2019, PBS Books launched a free Library Engagement Program, which currently has more than 1,800 library partners that share its content and programming. Visit [PBSBooks.org](https://www.pbsbooks.org)

About USA TODAY

Founded in 1982, USA TODAY reflects the pulse of the nation, serving as host of the American conversation by delivering high-quality, engaging content through unique visual storytelling across all platforms. A media innovator, USA TODAY reaches more than 90 million unique visitors each month across digital platforms, with more than 25 million downloads of our award-winning app. USA TODAY is owned by Gannett Co., Inc. (NYSE: GCI).

About the Muhammad Ali Center

The Muhammad Ali Center, a 501(c)3 corporation, was cofounded by Muhammad Ali and his wife Lonnie in their hometown of Louisville, Kentucky. The international cultural center promotes the Six Core Principles of Muhammad Ali (Confidence, Conviction, Dedication, Giving, Respect, and Spirituality) in ways that inspire personal and global greatness and provides programming and events around the focus areas of education, racial and gender equity, and global citizenship. The Ali Center is formally associated with the United Nations Department of Global Communications, and in 2020, became one of the newest stops on the U.S. Civil Rights Trail. The Center's headquarters also contains an award-winning museum experience. For more information, please visit www.alicenter.org