

## Points of Pride: Muhammad Ali

On June 3, 2016 the world mourned the loss of Muhammad Ali aka "The Greatest". Ali is considered the greatest athlete of all time, due to his achievements inside and outside the boxing ring. The world first became aware of Ali as a young olympic fighter who would become the world champ at the early age 22. Over 21 years, Ali would collect 56 victories, 5 losses and 37 knockouts. Ali remains the only Heavyweight champion to regain the world title three times. Outside of the ring Ali exhibited a different type of greatness. Through his message of peace and acceptance he captured the hearts and minds of not only the nation, but the world. In 1964,



Ali, then known as Cassius Clay converted to Islam. He was first introduced to the Nation of Islam through a mosque right here in Avondale on Reading Road! Ali was drawn to the faith for its belief in manhood, self sufficiency and racial pride. In 1966 Ali was drafted into the Vietnam War. He refused to serve stating that his faith as Muslim prohibited him from killing a man who had done nothing to him. In exchange for his devotion to his religion Ali was banned from boxing for 5 years and threatened with imprisonment. Ali never backed down, he continued to peacefully fight for the right to practice his religion and eventually his conviction was overturned. In 1979, Ali brought national attention to Avondale when reporter John Popovitch interviewed the champ at Stag's Barbershop on Burnet Avenue (right).



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De'Angelo Boynton, rear right, helps mentor neighborhood youths. The father of five owns Stag's Barber Shop and Beauty Salon on Burnet Avenue and is opening a day spa in April. THE HOODER/AMANDA DAVISON