

## Exclusive Photo: Happy 74th Birthday to Kareem Abdul-Jabbar

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on April 16, 2021 - 11:18pm

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CHICAGO – The legendary Kareem Abdul-Jabbar is 74 years young on April 16th, 2021, and the athlete/activist is more in demand than ever. With a commitment to social justice his entire basketball career, his achievements in that pursuit shine as bright as his record-breaking days on the b-ball court. Photographer Joe Arce publishes an Exclusive Photo of Jabbar from 2016, when he appeared at North Central College in Naperville, Illinois, through Anderson's Bookshop.

Born Ferdinand Lewis Alcindor in New York City, and topping out at 7-ft-2-in., Jabbar began dominating the roundball scene early with three straight high school championships in the 1960s. At UCLA, he helped Coach John Wooden win three straight NCAA championships from 1967-69. He began his commitment to social justice during his college years, boycotting the 1968 Olympic team due to the treatment of blacks, converted to Islam during the same period and changed his named to Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.



A Lanky Legacy: Kareem Abdul-Jabbar in 2016

*Photo credit: Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com*

He was the first pick in the 1969 NBA draft and played for the Milwaukee Bucks, taking them from the cellar to the NBA Championship by 1971. By 1975 he requested a trade from Milwaukee, and moved to the Los Angeles Lakers, where he played until his retirement in 1989. He cemented his legend with five more NBA championships, and finished his career with NBA records for most points, fields goals made, most minutes and six MVP awards.

During his life, he has been front and center as an athlete representative for race and social justice, and served as a cultural ambassador for the United States during the Obama administration. He commented on the history he lived through by saying, “When I was a kid, no one would believe anything positive that you could say about black people. And that’s a terrible burden ... because they don’t have an accurate idea of their history, which has been either suppressed or distorted.” He was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2016.

He was also an actor and author of note, having written or co-written 16 books, including “Writings on the Wall: Searching for a New Equality Beyond Black and White” (with Raymond Obstfeld). Among his TV and film appearances, he famously appeared with Bruce Lee in the film “Game of Death” (1972) and made one of the greatest cameos ever as “Roger Murdock” in the classic comedy “Airplane’ (1980).

*“Writings on the Wall: Searching for a New Equality Beyond Black and White,” by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (with Raymond Obstfeld) is available at Anderson’s Book Shop of Naperville (Illinois) or wherever books are sold. Source for this article is from wikipedia.com.*

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