

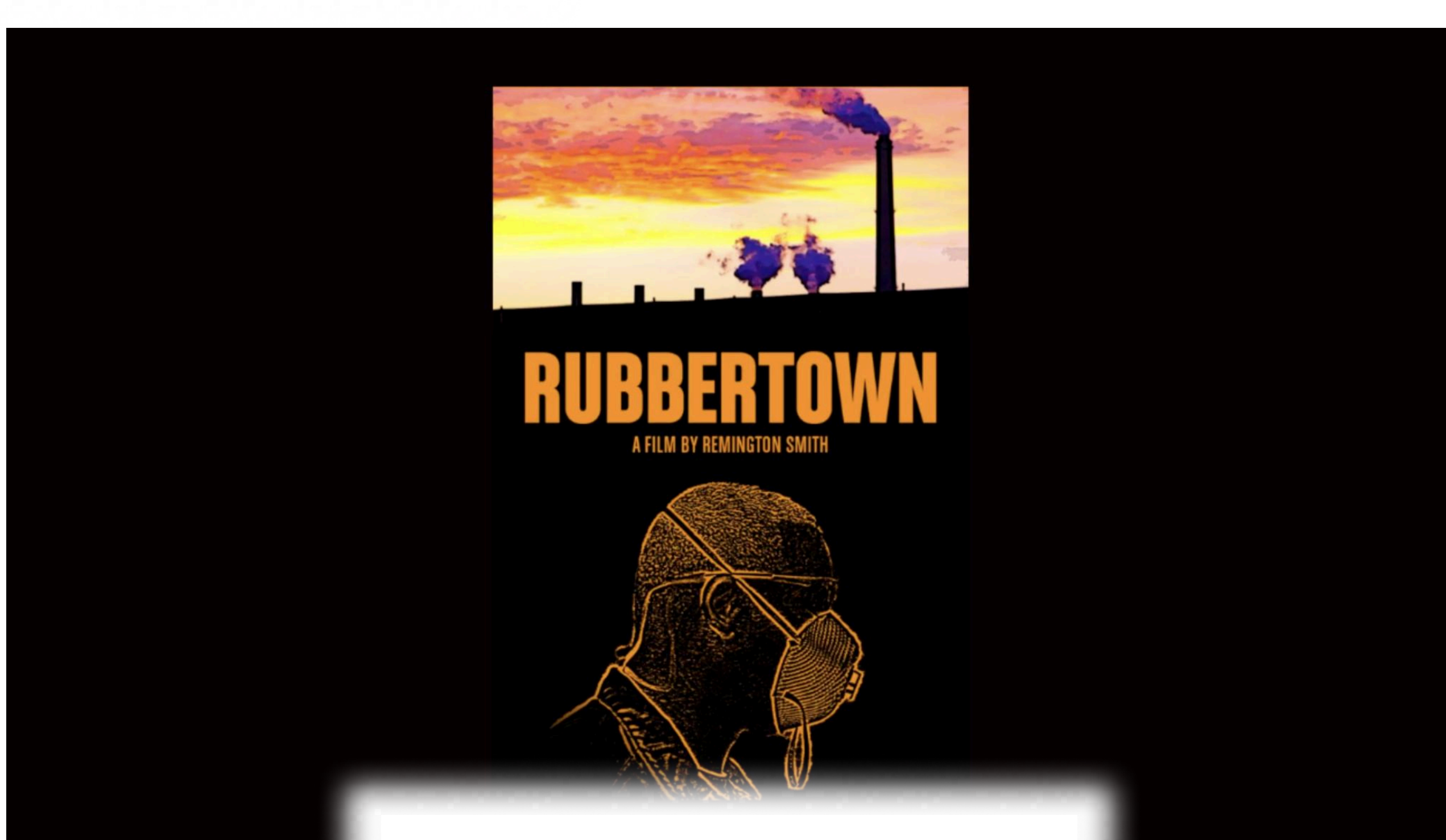


Photo via Foundation for Sarcoidosis Research.

# Documenting Rubbertown



**A local filmmaker on  
community efforts for  
accountability and  
environmental justice**



Watch the interview with Remington Smith [here](#).

Local filmmaker Remington Smith sees issues of race and class disparity boil over in nearly every story he tells, whether fictional or documentary. I sat down to speak with him about his 2016 documentary feature, *Rubbertown*, which **follows residents in West Louisville fighting issues of air quality and environmental justice**. One woman attempted to move her entire home to a new county to escape persistent and hazardous air quality issues. **"Why don't people move?"** is one of the most common questions people ask about those who live on the fenceline of Rubbertown—this film explains why moving is rarely an option.

Smith's dedication to seeking out local voices makes the film an important watch for anyone living in the Louisville area. Anyone who may have "blind spots" when it comes to understanding the health disparities caused by toxic chemicals in West Louisville must face this film.

In our conversation, Smith emphasized the **importance of listening to local figures**—such as Eboni Cochran of REACT—who have been leaders in the environmental justice movement to bring change to West Louisville communities.



What works so well in Smith's film is that these **human stories come first**. Viewers are not bombarded with statistical data or scientific jargon. Local residents speak freely instead, explaining how they feel about what is happening, who are the polluters, and how government continues to enable this poisoning.

Community is central to the story, as Smith believes the vibrant community in **West Louisville is too often underrepresented or painted in a negative light** in the media and in local discourse about different parts of the city. Smith hopes his film will encourage other people to understand that the West Louisville community is not what the news makes it out to be, that we should not draw conclusions about a place without having gone and experienced it firsthand.



Film is simply another means of communicating stories. The stories of residents and activists around Rubbertown deserve to be at **the forefront of any conversation about environmental issues** in the city of Louisville. Alongside the necessary data-driven reporting, and scientific breakdowns that value transparency and accessibility, the human stories at the center of Rubbertown must be heard, amplified, and responded to with action and empathy.

You can listen to our conversation about Rubbertown above, and [follow this link to learn more](#), as well as to view the trailer or see options for renting and buying the film.

[Remington Smith's website](#) can be reached [here](#) if you would like to learn more about his work.