



ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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Patrik comes on board as our new CEO



In 2024 we welcomed our new chief executive officer, Patrik Ewe, who took on the role from founder and director Connie Henry.

Patrik’s journey to becoming the CEO of Track Academy started on the streets as an open-air fundraiser, working for charities like Mind, Shelter and Barnardo’s.

He says: “I had just finished my degree in engineering. I realised that field wasn’t for me and fell into the charity job. I stayed for eight months as a team leader where you’re a veteran if you last for eight weeks!

“Although it was a very tough job, it opened my eyes to charity work as a career. It made me realise what was really going on for other people, whether that’s someone trying to travel on the tube in a wheelchair or a 12-year-old having to care for his mum. It also taught me not to judge a book by its cover.

“I realised I’d found my niche in fundraising and that I wanted to play a small part in making things that bit better. It gave me perspective in a good way.”

Since Patrik’s early beginnings in charity work over 20 years ago, he has gone on to take roles in organisations such as Age UK, Barnardo’s, Possible and Laureus Sport for Good Foundation, where he first became aware of Track Academy.

“Laureus was one of Track Academy’s funders, so I got to know the charity and Connie through my role as UK manager,” he explains.

“When I left Laureus in 2018, I became a trustee of Track Academy. This was very useful for me, as I was able to learn about the governance, finances, best practice and the other behind-the-scenes needs of the charity.

“So, when the CEO job came up, I’d already worked with lots of the team and knew the programme here. In the past, I’d worked with big organisations which make a big impact, but I knew my niche lay in smaller charities where you’re much closer to the cause and the change you’re trying to support.

I wanted to be connected to the cause and community and get my hands dirty, so the job came at a fortuitous time.”

Keen runner Patrik, who grew up in Lambeth, has a passion for using sport as a hook for social change, along with its power to improve one’s mental health.

“I’ve been a running mentor for another youth charity for years and helped develop a refugee football session in my area. This is because exercising and moving keeps me sane,” says Patrik, who also enjoys tennis, football and pilates.

“I was diagnosed with ADHD a few years ago, and exercise keeps me on an even keel. I also love being outside and the social aspect of running and sport. It means a lot to me.”

For 2025, Patrik is turning his attention to embedding Track Academy more in the local community, securing grants and diversifying our income to improve services, and helping even more young people reach their goals.

“We have a very effective model here at Track Academy, but there are always areas for improvement,” he says.

He pays tribute to his predecessor Connie, and her tenacity in getting Track Academy off the ground and maintaining its success for over 15 years. “I’m benefitting from a very well-oiled machine,” he says.

“Connie left Track Academy in the most stable position it’s ever had financially, which is a massive credit to her. I’m also personally grateful to Connie for keeping me in the sport for development space and wish her the very best of luck in what she does next.”



A year of transition, resilience, impact



This past year has been one of significant change and steadfast commitment for Track Academy, writes Patrik Ewe, CEO, pictured left.

As the new CEO, I am deeply honoured to lead this unique charity, building on the strong foundations laid by our founder Connie Henry over 17 transformative years.

Connie’s vision of using athletics as a vehicle for social change remains at the heart of what we do, and I am proud to take up the baton she has passed to me.

Alongside Connie, we also said goodbye to Grace Veys, a valued member of our team. I want to acknowledge the professionalism of our staff, particularly Erick and Yvonne, who navigated these transitions with care.

Amidst these changes, our coaches, mentors, tutors and volunteers never wavered in their dedication. Together, we delivered 577 sessions to 331 young people, ensuring continuity and support.

More than numbers – the heart of Track Academy

While our Impact Report on page 6 quantifies our achievements, the true essence of Track Academy cannot be captured by statistics alone. Beyond improved grades or stronger mentor relationships, it’s the sense of family, belonging and opportunity that sets us apart.

We provide a launchpad; a space where young people break down barriers, unlock potential, and thrive. The need for our work has never been greater. The communities we serve face systemic challenges:

- **Educational inequality:** Disparities in school funding, teacher shortages and overcrowded classrooms hinder progress
- **Lack of youth spaces:** Only 28% of young

- people in Brent feel they have enough safe spaces to socialise (*Brent Youth Parliament, 2023*).
- **Mental health crisis:** One in three children in Brent are affected by bullying
 - **Social isolation and distrust:** Just 41% of young people believe they can influence local decisions (*Brent Youth Survey, 2023*).
 - **Gender inequality in sport:** By age 14, 64% of girls no longer meet recommended activity levels (*Women in Sport, 2022*)

Our holistic approach – five key outcomes

In response, Track Academy’s programmes are designed to deliver lasting, holistic change.

We ensure every young person we work with progresses in:

- **Educational attainment:** Improved literacy, numeracy and school engagement
- **Personal and social development:** confidence, resilience and leadership skills
- **Life skills:** Preparing for employment, further education and independence
- **Health and wellbeing:** Physical and mental health support
- **Community connection:** A sense of belonging and civic engagement

The results speak for themselves:

- 66% of participants **improved school performance**
- 87% gained **new skills for school and life**
- 94% now believe they can **achieve their goals**
- 89% feel more **connected to their community**

A standout achievement – empowering girls in sport

“Systemic inequality continues to limit girls’ and young women’s participation in exercise and sport. After leaving primary school, their activity levels decline twice as fast as boys”
(*Sport England, 2023*)



That’s why I’m especially proud of our work with 215 girls and young women this year, one of our largest cohorts yet.

A remarkable 47 of these were aged between 12 and 15, which is testament to our inclusive, female-staffed environment.

Athletics stands out as a sport with unique gender equity, and our young women thrive with in-house role models like our coach and former athlete Tayla Brade and alumni Annie Tagoe (*pictured above, front and centre*) as well as icons such as Dina Asher-Smith, Keely Hodgkinson and Katarina Johnson-Thompson.

Key developments in 2024

We took strategic steps to strengthen Track Academy for the future:

- **Expanded mentoring support:** More 1:1 guidance for young people
- **Leadership transition:** My appointment as CEO, bringing 20+ years of sector experience.
- **Board refresh:** We expanded from four to eight trustees, including current participants, parents and alumni as well as essential

outside expertise. A big thank you to Frederik, Marion, Romain, Rosie and Tayla for coming on board.

- **London Living Wage Employer:** Ensuring fair pay for all staff, coaches, and tutors

Looking ahead – Our 2025 priorities

- **Grow our athletics programme:** Recruit specialist coaches (jumps, throws, middle distance) and increase competitive opportunities
- **Deepen community ties:** Strengthen partnerships with schools and local organisations
- **Secure sustainable funding:** Diversify income streams to protect our programmes
- **Refresh our brand and website:** Ensuring our identity reflects our evolving mission


Final thoughts

None of this would be possible without the unwavering support of our staff, trustees, funders and community partners. Most importantly, it is the enthusiasm and determination of our young people that inspire us every day.




IMPACT REPORT 2024


Track Academy supports young people from some of the most under-resourced areas in London. We use sport, education and mentoring to increase their skills, confidence and networks. This helps them to realise their potential and achieve their goals.




577
sessions across
52 weeks




331
young people,
aged 5 to 21



64%
of participants
are girls

















85%
are from ethnic
minorities



200+
competition
entries

Everything we do is planned around five key holistic outcomes for our student-athletes:

Better educational outcomes	Increased personal & social development	Improved life skills	Improved health & wellbeing	Better connection with community
 <div>120 attended Saturday school sessions in English, maths and science</div>	 <div>250 attended 45 extra-curricular sessions, days out and workshops</div>	 <div>279 attended life skills sessions on topics like listening and leadership</div>	 <div>3 new mentors were recruited to work with our young people</div>	 <div>85% are from communities across the borough of Brent</div>
 <div>87% have developed new skills that help them in and out of school</div>	 <div>94% believe they can achieve most of the goals they set themselves</div>	 <div>88% believe that Track Academy provides activities that are useful to them</div>	 <div>52 sessions were held between mentors and 12 mentees</div>	 <div>89% have made new friends since joining Track Academy</div>
 <div>66% have noticed an improvement in their school performance</div>	 <div>76% agree that Track Academy has improved their confidence</div>	 <div>78% said they could manage stress and setbacks well</div>	 <div>83% feel supported by their teammates and coaches</div>	 <div>89% feel like they belong in their communities</div>

A wonderful year of athletics for our young people, in Brent and beyond



Track Academy Open Meet

Scores of athletes tested their mettle at the Willesden Sports Centre as part of Track Academy's popular annual competition, cheered on by spectators from the community.

With more than 150 entries, the event saw athletes of all ages compete in heats ranging from a 100m sprint to a mile-long run.

Among our own winners were under-11 Thierry who raced to victory in the 75m in a time of 11.94 seconds.

Meanwhile, under-13 Michelle was the fastest female in both rounds of the 100m, storming home in 12.70 seconds and 12.95 seconds.

The competition was a fantastic testament to the incredible sporting talent in Brent and beyond, and it was wonderful to see the number of entries surpass pre-Covid levels.

Community Athletics Festival

Our student athletes had a fantastic time at the Community Athletics Festival in August, hosted by the Rio Ferdinand Foundation and GMAX Trackstars.

Held at the Crystal Palace National Sports Centre, the event was designed by young people for young people and offered a day filled with track and field events.

Seventeen of our young people, aged between 12 and 18, had the chance to select the events in which they wanted to compete. These included races of 100m, 200m, 400m and the 100m relay, along with other challenges.

Each participant received a prestigious Rio Ferdinand gold decorative medal. This unforgettable day not only celebrated athleticism but also fostered a sense of community and inclusivity.

Special announcement

A heartfelt congratulations to our incredible individual athletes who have paved the way for excellence by competing at the highest levels.

Amongst our young people this year we had over 200 competition entries, showcasing their talent and dedication at open and closed athletics events, both indoors and outdoors.

From Southend to Middlesex, competing at prestigious platforms like English Schools and Nationals, these athletes have demonstrated unwavering persistence, hard work and resilience throughout the year.

Let's give them a huge round of applause for their remarkable achievements and for inspiring us all with their commitment to excellence in athletics.

Outstanding competing athletes

We are proud to highlight the outstanding athletes under the guidance of Coach Lumar, who continues to showcase exceptional skill, determination and dedication in their respective disciplines:

- Megan (60m, 100m and 200m)
- Demario (60m, 100m and 200m)
- Zoe (60m, 100m and 200m)
- Alexia (60m, 100m and 200m)
- Abigail (60m, 100m and 200m)
- Romain (60m and 100m)
- Beulah (60m, 100m, and 200m)
- Alice (60m, 100m and 200m)

These athletes have shown immense dedication and have proven to be strong contenders in their events. We look forward to their continued success and applaud their hard work throughout the year.

Lee Valley Indoor Minithon Event

In December, Track Academy proudly participated in the Lee Valley Minithon, a premier winter open indoor athletics meet held at the Lee Valley Athletics Centre.

With 300 athletes from across the region, the



event provided an inspiring stage for our young talents to showcase their skills.

Track Academy organised a dedicated minibus to transport our multi-skills athletes to this landmark event. For many of our younger participants, who are aged between five and ten, it marked their first timed races.

Guided by the experienced coaching of Nigel, ten of our budding athletes embraced the opportunity to compete as a team in a world-class venue.

In front of an enthusiastic and packed crowd, these young athletes rose to the challenge, experiencing firsthand the excitement and camaraderie of competitive athletics.

Their participation not only highlighted their determination and potential but also embodied Track Academy's mission to inspire and nurture the next generation of athletic talent.

The Lee Valley Minithon serves as a significant milestone for our younger athletes, fostering their confidence and love for the sport.

Track Academy remains committed to creating opportunities that encourage personal growth and teamwork while showcasing the joy of athletic achievement.



Education and mentoring sessions give our young people skills for life

Life skills

During the year the mentoring team focused on Track Academy's ten life skills, namely - listening, presenting, networking/social skills, problem solving, creativity, staying positive, aiming high, discipline, team working and leadership.

The purpose of life skills is to empower the student athletes and give them the tools to thrive in their day-to-day lives and in their future endeavours. In total, we had 279 young people attend at least one life skill session.

We focused on making the sessions interactive and challenging, allowing mentors to assess all of our young people and see how they can become more confident.

In December, our trustee Marion created a session on leadership, building a scenario around survival in Alaska. Participants were divided into teams and given six items to

choose from to survive. The teams who chose the right items won.

School holiday programme

Our work doesn't stop during the school holidays and, each year, we organise a varied programme to keep our student athletes busy, safe and always learning.

This gives our students invaluable skills for the future, as well as help them communicate through play and work as a team.

In 2024, we offered 45 workshops to more than 250 students. These included a CV writing and interview skills workshop hosted by ELEVATE Youth Mentoring Programme, as well as trips out to laser tag and an escape room.

One mentor said: "Some of our young people do not normally have the opportunity to attend such activities, so it was great to see them enjoying themselves."

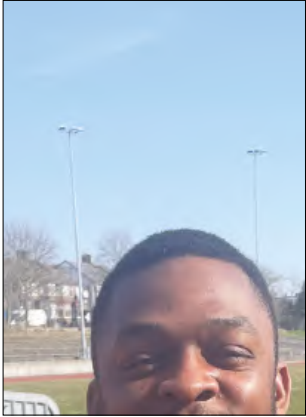
Mentoring

We recruited three new mentors over the summer - Plamedie, Ngozi and Manar (*pictured below right*). As they built a rapport with our student athletes, we identified some potential mentees who needed our support.

Each mentor has two or three young people they have sessions with each week. They might discuss topics like building confidence, understanding what constitutes a healthy relationship and understanding their emotions.

Homework club and Saturday school

Our homework club went from strength to strength in 2024. Around 120 student athletes attended our sessions, and we had reports from some that they did well in their exams because of that one-hour window each week.



Our young people told us they wanted support in science and maths, so we hired a new tutor, Babatunde (*pictured left*), who specialises in these areas.

Babatunde's sessions were extremely popular thanks to his engaging approach, and the student athletes suggested meeting socially as a group at the end of the year.

Our students also asked whether we could provide healthy breakfasts before our Saturday school sessions; they said food would help them focus on their school work and give them energy to train afterwards.

As a result, we secured a year-long grant from Tesco for £5,000 which helped provide these meals as well as other support.

During our Saturday school, we supported our student athletes with their maths by re-visiting past papers. We also gave extra support in English and science during the summer holidays, helping the young people catch up before the return to school in September.

Many of our student athletes benefit greatly with one-to-one sessions on a Saturday with our tutor Elizabeth who works closely with them on their homework.

Mentoring dinners

As part of our commitment to the wellbeing and mental health of our student athletes, we held mentoring dinners for both boys and girls in the winter. This was a new initiative for 2024, and we decided separate occasions would create safe spaces for our young people in relaxed environments.

Twenty two young women attended their dinner at Nando's with Yvonne and our mentors Ngozi and Plamedie. The young people talked about the challenges they were facing at school and in their personal lives.

Questions had been prepared in advance to make the girls think and gently challenge themselves about their futures. These included asking about their understanding of equality and diversity, along with questions about their goals and aspirations.

The feedback showed that the girls felt very encouraged and supported by their mentors, and that it had brought them closer together with their peers and also their mentors.

Eight male student athletes came along to the boys' mentoring dinner. Education & mentoring lead Erick, alongside Coach Lumar, led discussions with the group, helping the boys open up about their lives.



New chairman brings a wealth of experience, personal and professional



Our board of trustees has a new chairman at the helm, bringing a unique perspective to the role thanks to his personal relationship with the charity.

Frederik Reynaert has been a Track Academy dad for more than ten years, bringing his children Charlotte (*below right*), Jasper and Lucas along to the Willesden Sports Centre.

He and his wife An have also helped out on many occasions at our open meets, with An using her skills as a GP to help with first aid.

Frederik says: “I can see the effect that Track Academy has had on my kids. It has taught them resilience and the importance of practising hard.

“They’ve learned that success in athletics comes with hard work. It’s not just the ten seconds you see at the Olympics, it’s the years of training and getting back up when you’ve been knocked down.”

He adds: “It’s also been great on a social level, giving them the chance to meet boys and girls from different backgrounds.”

As well as his personal connection to Track Academy, Belgian-born Frederik will utilise his business skills as our chairman.

With an MBA from London Business School, his career has included roles such as chief financial officer for IT procurement firm Ooodles and financial controller at Amazon UK.

What’s more, he was chair of governors at St Mary Magdalen’s Catholic Junior School in Willesden for nearly four years.

He says: “My experience means that I know the commercial side and the financial side of business and can bring that to my role as chairman at Track Academy.

“My priority will be to look at our governance and ensure we are being as effective as we can.

“I’ll also be focusing on bringing more money into the charity so it is set for many more years of growth. Money is a means to an end – it enables you to do more, have more certainty and grow your effectiveness.

“I’d also like to get the parents more involved and make them more a part of the Track Academy community.”



A raft of worthy Jack Petchey winners



Track Academy is part of the Jack Petchey Foundation’s Achievement Award Scheme, which recognises the efforts of young people aged between 11 and 25. Every year, nine of our student-athletes are nominated to receive awards. We may choose someone who has faced a challenge, or an athlete who has stepped out of their comfort zone, or a real team player.

Our winners receive a grant of £300 to benefit the academy, and can attend a ceremony where they are presented with a medallion in front of their families, friends and VIPs.



January: Joyce, 15

Since joining in July 2023, Joyce has been a remarkable team member, displaying exceptional empathy towards her peers and staff members.

She is a beacon of positivity and a source of inspiration for everyone around her. She actively participates in all life skills workshops and demonstrates great leadership skills during the sessions.

Joyce’s £300 prize money was spent on our half-term holiday programme for February, April and May, which included room hire, a life skills workshop, a quiz and basic training in British Sign Language.

February: Ra’elle, 14

Before joining us in May 2023, Rae’elle was troubled and mixed with the wrong crowd. Since then, she has worked hard in her sessions, and her character and attitude have improved.

Rae’elle has started to attend our life skills workshops and always greets staff at the track desk with a big smile.

Her peers benefit from her positive presence.

Coach Chris says Rae’elle is very motivated and driven, always working to improve aspects of her runs and wanting feedback on how to get to the next level.

Her prize money was also spent on the half-term holiday programme.



March: J'Adore, 16

J'adore, who initially faced challenges as a troubled teenager, has shown remarkable improvement in her attendance and dedication to training since joining us in October 2023.

Her mature approach to feedback, both receiving it and implementing it positively, reflects true character growth. Her coach describes her as a joy to work with, noting significant positive changes in her attitude and personal development. Her respectful demeanour at the front desk is commendable.

J'adore's prize money was spent on training attire for ten children from low-income families.



April: Shante, 15

Shante has shown real dedication to the academy since joining in April 2022. She constantly strives for excellence and her willingness to go the extra mile in training is truly inspiring.

Moreover, Shante's welcoming nature towards new members and her caring attitude towards her peers make her a valuable asset. Her astute mind, sharp wit and ability to bring smiles to the staff at the front desk brighten our environment no end.

Shante's prize money was also spent on attire for children from low-income families.



May: Abigail, 17

Abigail's joined us in June 2022 as a shy student with no confidence.

She has unwavering determination in her training and has built strong relationships.

She embraces new members like family and has excelled both as an athlete and a student, maintaining excellent grades while upholding a stellar reputation in both school and track. She has also launched her own range of nail varnish and shown excellent marketing skills.

Abigail's prize covered some of the cost of our summer competition, including an electronic timer, official expenses and entertainment.



June: Kamden, 11

Kamden joined the academy in January 2024.

Since then, he has shown exceptional dedication and enthusiasm in his training since then.

He has a commendable sense of punctuality, politeness and eagerness to learn.

Kamden always greets the staff at the front desk with courtesy and actively participates in each session. He exemplifies the qualities deserving of the Jack Petchey Award.

Kamden's prize also covered some of the cost of our summer competition.



September: Robin, 11

Robin's award recognises her remarkable enthusiasm and perseverance during training sessions. She brings positive energy to every practice, motivating herself and her teammates.

Her passion shines through in the way she tackles every challenge, always giving her all. Even during the most difficult or tiring sessions, Robin never shies away from hard work. She approaches every task with a can-do attitude and a smile.

Robin's prize was spent on a minibus to Thorpe Park for 21 student-athletes.



October: Jainelle, 13

Janielle has shown consistent dedication and positive contributions since joining in June 2024. She has quickly become a valued member of the community, regularly participating in our half-term and summer holiday programmes and attending tuition every Saturday.

Janielle approaches her training sessions with a positive attitude, never complaining. Thoughtful and disciplined, she follows instructions exceptionally well in her training groups.

Jainelle's prize was spent on the Christmas half-term holiday programme.



November: Paradiou, 16

Paradiou joined Track Academy in March 2022 for a short period.

She returned in early 2024, drawn back by the supportive and inspiring atmosphere.

Paradiou consistently demonstrates high levels of motivation, determination and dedication.

Prioritising education over extracurricular activities, Paradiou is a shining example for others, serving as an outstanding role model for younger and new members of the group.

Paradiou's prize was spent on the Christmas half-term holiday programme.



Mia's thoughts on Black History Month



To mark Black History Month in October, our Mia Grey (left) shared her thoughts with Sport England in a blog for their website. She said: "Track Academy's entire approach celebrates and amplifies black history and culture.

Most of the staff, coaches, mentors, tutors and trustees reflect the demographic of people who attend.

"Many of our student athletes are of Afro-Caribbean descent. Due to that, students are able to experience and learn more about black history through the staff, workshops and visitor athletes.

"Food and music are the most basic ways that Track Academy integrates black culture and history into its events and workshops."

360-degree support

"Brent is historically known for housing many of the Windrush generation, and immigrating cultures, so we've had the opportunity to work with a diaspora of student athletes who represent their culture.

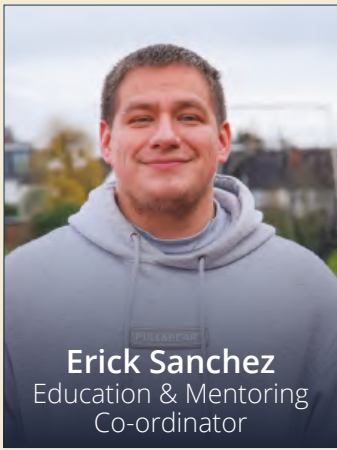
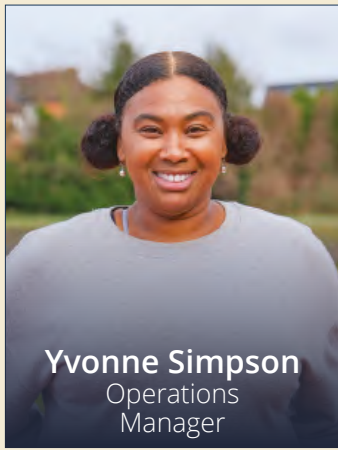
"Culture can be seen through the colloquial speech, traditions and norms in the community and weaving through the work.

"Track Academy does all it can to encourage its athletes to strive for the best, by running life-skills workshops on aiming high, being creative, staying disciplined and positivity.

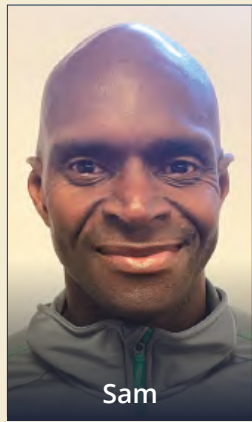
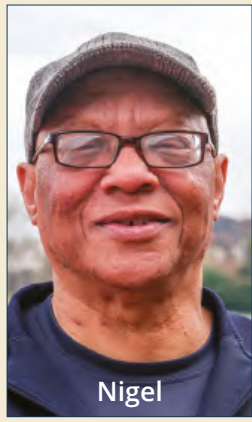
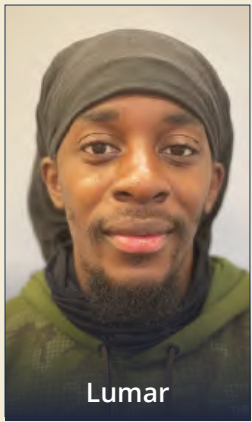
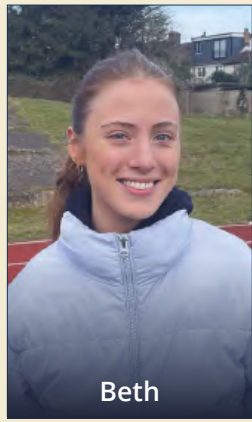
"Over the years I've made many friends and I've been able to see the lives of many of them change for the better.

"The staff have supported me in all areas, specifically the mentors, to whom I could talk about everything else going on in my life and have some sort of extra guidance."

TEAM



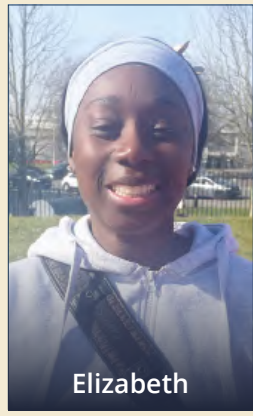
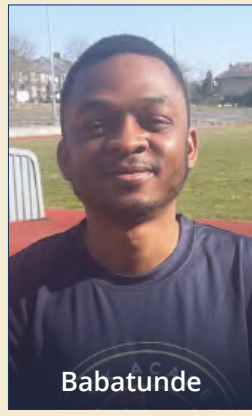
COACHES



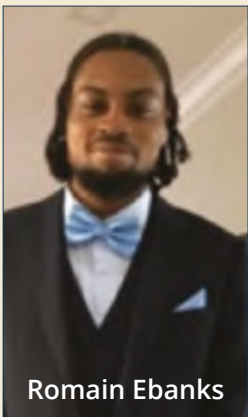
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