



ATA Winter Team 2025-2026. Photographed by Eron "Speedie" Phillips

## Coach Sho's Winter Season Journal Entry March 4th 2026

This season was one of **trust**. Those that trusted us saw progress and finished the season with "Ignite" on their chest.

We began with free, optional training in September. Over thirty kids participated — we saw many familiar faces from past seasons. How I long for those warm early fall evenings. We also saw new faces, curious about this ‘ATA thing’. Coach Aretha helped us set the tone with goal-setting exercises and mindset framing.



Preseason icebreaker.



The goal cards around a mirror in Panthera.

I created a "Good to Great" goal-setting exercise to drive the coach's point home. Every student-athlete wrote their goals and placed them on the mirror at the gym. They duplicated their goals to have as a reminder on their own mirror at home.

Lululemon at Keystone Mall gifted us five pairs of shoes from its Split Shift Collection. The recipients of the shoes were Summer '25 Awardees - Evan Williams, LeBraya Warren, Willinda Chapel, Rocky Duplessis, and Olivia Colbert. Later in the season, the store gifted me \$250 to pass on to someone in my community. ATA held a contest for the prize. Entrants were asked how ATA has impacted them. Edvion Morris (Lawrence North '28) was the selected recipient. Find his and other entries below.



Evan, Rocky, Willinda and LeBraya pose for a picture in the Lululemon store, 9/26/25.

Sidewalk drills turned to basketball court sprint sessions before UIndy opened its doors to us. We implemented the Activator Belt to improve max velocity mechanics. Endurance days consisted of a 270m grass and gravel loop proximal to the gym until daylight saving forced us inside on the dreaded curved treadmill (everyone's favorite). I was Mike Myers for Halloween.



Coach Sho (Mike Myers) welcomes the Warren twins to training.

During November, Lauren and I welcomed our healthy fraternal twin boys, Adanegbe and Adazee Obemeata. She is a rockstar. Noma loves being an older brother. I am probably more aware of those who have not checked in on Lauren and the twins than I should but that's a story for another day.



Adanegbe (L) and Adazee awaiting to be held.

Speaking of newborns - We are still in *our* infancy, finishing year four as a club. This summer 2026 will be our fifth season as a club. I have been doing better about not comparing the development of ATA to other clubs. Honestly, we're probably further ahead of where we are "supposed" to be at this stage. No time to dwell, though. I want more. Piecing together facilities has not stopped us from producing results. If anything, it has forced the programming to be more concise.

We have families traveling from Kokomo and Danville. Lauren made me aware of the gravity of their travels during a living room hangout watching *The Frontier*. I rarely watch TV, but it is quality time with my lady. She probably wishes it was less 'track talk', but she humors me. She had to show me on a map how far away they were coming from as it hadn't quite registered with me. I am not an Indy native, but no excuse. I sunk into

the couch a bit. I hope they feel appreciated. It is no small thing to travel in and around Indiana for anything, let alone a college prep track program. The Bumgardners, Daniels and Minors are amongst the best communicators, too. I reflected quietly on how much the program has grown. From then on, I tried to have more intentional dialogue with all the families. No matter what is going on. It is a people business at the end of the day.

We invited many colleges to our testing day in October. Marian University, Franklin College, and Huntington University attended. Coach Brown of Indiana University came to recruit in December. It is funny what happens when you just... ask. I do not like asking for help, but I think I am getting better. I am grateful for those coaches more than they realize.



Coach Brown (right-center) poses with ATA juniors and seniors in UIndy's bubble.

Our roster consisted of 38 scholar-athletes from 19 different schools across four counties. 55% are seniors. 68% are male. 63% are Black/African-American, 27% are White (our highest percentage to date), 10% are two or more races, and 0.02% (one person) identifies as Asian.

We had some scholar-athletes join late. Freshman William Howard of Brebeuf was one. A recommendation from classmate, Ibrahim Breaux. His mom, Dr. Danette Howard, is a juggernaut in the education space. We share a New York and UMBC connection. Colton Spears (Southport '26) called me asking to come back and jump even though he missed all preseason. I could tell in his voice it took a lot for him to call. We had spoken a few times since last winter, but not like this. I welcomed him back with open arms. After what he did for his teammates at Nike Nationals last season in the 4x400m relay, that kid is good with me forever. I tried to make him a multi last season but it did not quite work out. He leaves as the club record holder in the high jump (6'5").



Colton Spears eyes the high jump bar.

We began competing in Louisville on January 2nd. This was our first season not opening up in December. The main reason being the twins, and how prepared the team would be to compete with whatever time off I needed. Honestly, I would consider doing it again next winter. We came out on fire, for the most part.

Braya opened up in 25.8. Ayana was sick but still PRed. Giyanna opened up in sub 8 and 9.1. Rocky was injured in the 200m. You could see something was wrong. Enoch surprised the heck out of me with his 60m. He made the final with Collin with a PR of 7.08. I made a TikTok about it, he thought I didn't believe in him. Maybe he was right. I think it's time for me to raise my expectations of him now. I pray he realizes this life is

one for the taking. Things do not just come to you. It's a hard lesson, I know it all too well. He locked himself out of his car after bitterly cold UIndy practice. An accident, no doubt. Alex Crosby, Giyanna's dad, Derrick, and I stuck around to get him sorted out. Derrick had the magic touch to get the car open. Enoch, you got a lot going on but please focus.



Enoch Obisesan cruises to victory in a boys 200m heat.

Next was Chicago, a Sunday meet but not on MLK weekend as normal. I like supporting Morolake. Brady opened up in a class best shot put throw. Omar handled business. Deji made the final. Fort Wayne followed. We treated the meet like practice. The kids were happy to run the 300m or the 600m. Ibrahim took off like I had never seen before for a massive personal best. We all were hype for him. Elton ran an indoor personal best.



Collin and Brady bite their first place medals at the 2026 Akinosun Invitational.

Louisville was supposed to follow but we were rescheduled to Superbowl Sunday which allowed us to add the Brownsburg meet on the calendar. Brownsburg has a really nice facility. I invited Coach Davidson, Ben Davis' boys head coach, to watch his guys run. He hadn't seen the track yet either. Blake opened up for us in a 2XL singlet. Good thing he's buff. Four of the ladies PRed in the 60m dash. I made a YouTube video about it. Dr. Hudson came to assess and treat the kids. I know they felt special having a Team USA physio treating them before they raced. Xavier was our athlete of the meet for the boys at the Brownsburg meet. He does not get enough credit for the work he puts in. He eased up in the weight room to be his best in the 400m. It's hard to run fast as muscular as he was in November/December. I hope he gets his just due this outdoor. He should be running collegiately, wherever his books take him. Lauren came with the kids. I was so happy she came. I miss when she attended the meets. The new kids barely know her like the earlier classes do.



Xavier Wilson shuttles the baton around the track for the 4x200m relay.



ATA poses with my kids at Brownsburg.

Nobody missed the rescheduled Louisville meet on Superbowl Sunday. Like any meet, there was good and bad. The 60m dash times were not desirable, but we won the 4x2 relays. Onna PRed in the hurdles. Alana ran a big personal best in the 200m. Brady threw his current personal best. The latter were athletes of the meet. We got back home in time for kickoff.



We won the 4x200m relay by over six seconds at the 2026 Louisville Indoor Games.

It feels like tradition to end the season at Wabash. So many memories at this meet in such a short time. Uriah White (Perry Meridian '27) and Soul China (Ben Davis '26) called to ask if they could wear their ATA uniform to the meet, even though they were not registered with us this season. I was equal parts shocked and impressed. I had no issues with it. If you do things the right way, you are always family.

We got our uniforms from the Wolkoff Foundation. An adidas collab. The kids were excited for them. Not a traditional colorway but that's what makes it fun. We saw a slew of personal bests and event wins. Kaylah PRed in front of her mom sitting in the front row in the 60m and 200m. She ran a good 4x4 leg too. Rocky won the 400m in a meet record. We showed up and showed out. Goodbyes were emotional. More emotional than

I have seen before. In a good way though. This season bonded the kids more than I realized, I guess. Based on years passed, we won't be together like this again. At least we have social media.



Class of 2028 scholar-athletes pose for a picture (Thornton, Jones, Duplessis, Morris and Norwood).

Four club records fell (Antre'Onna Osby, girls 60m hurdles; LeBraya Warren, girls 200m; Rocky Duplessis, boys 400m; Addison Hunley, girls 800m), while 25 different athletes rose to the top 10 all time in club history. I was shocked when I did the tally. See the list at the end.

By our metrics, a top-10 finish in the sprints and hurdles indicates you will at least be an NCAA collegiate walk-on. Top 5 guarantees you are on scholarship, male or female. If you belong with us, you belong in college.

Two performers are nationally ranked in their class: Matthew "Brady" Shrum and Rocky Duplessis. Brady is second in the class of 2029, while Duplessis — 2025 Junior Olympic 15–16 400m Champion — is third in the class of 2028.

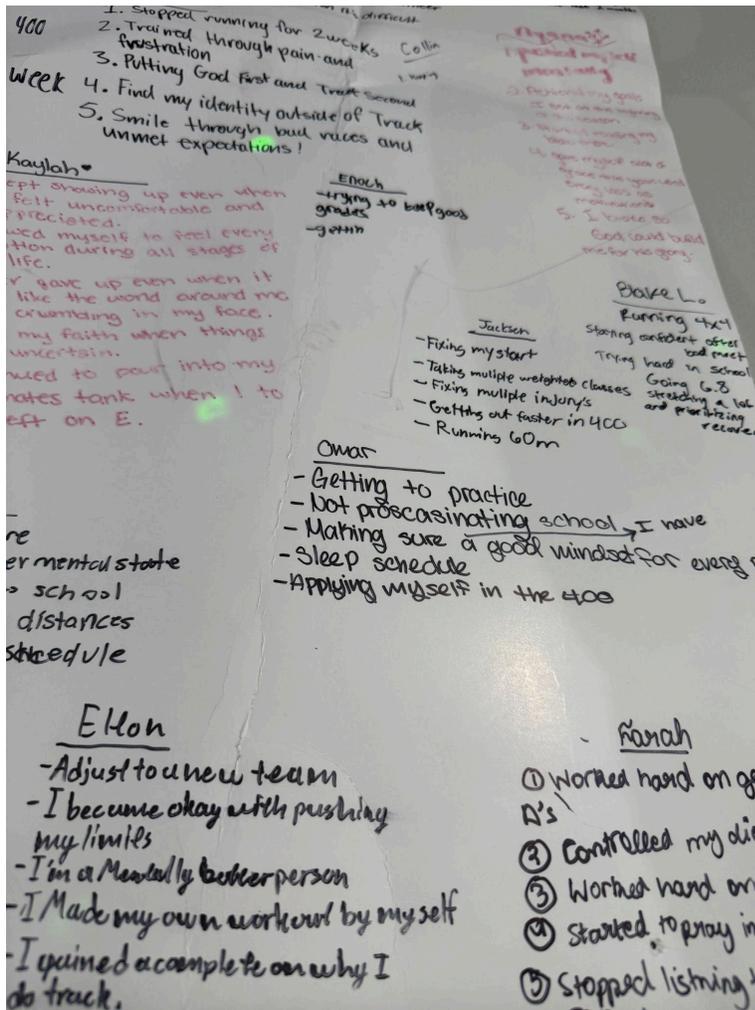
Two athletes signed NCAA college scholarships: Evan Williams (Indiana University) and Kaylah Flowers (Seton Hill). Nine more seniors have expressed interest in competing and/or finalizing terms with a school.

We read the book *Do Hard Things: A Teenage Rebellion Against Low Expectations* (2008), selected by Osby. The book preaches that mediocrity is a place many people live, but you — an ATA scholar-athlete — will not, because you know better. We ended the season with "Five Hard Things" we have done since October, related to track, life, or academics.





ATA boys and girls discuss the book with Coach Sho.



Some entries included "dropping negative surroundings," "studying 30 minutes a day consistently," and "good self-talk." The poster hangs in the gym.



ATA volunteering at Gleaners L to R: Osby, Hunley, Flowers, Wilson, Duplessis, Warren sisters.

Twelve scholar-athletes and their families volunteered their time this season. We volunteered at Gleaners on New Year's Eve and then with Overdose Life on February 17th. At Gleaners, we saw Nayyir Newash-Campbell (Plainfield '23/UPenn '27). Both of his schools are the "Quakers" interestingly enough. I have coached athletes against him but this was our first time interacting.



Nayyir Newash-Campbell and Ronald "Rocky" Duplessis pose for a picture.

He has a great spirit. He told me volunteers with his family every holiday. This year, he came alone, likely due to having to be back at school soon after the New Year. Before enrolling Ivy League, Nayyir set the 400m state record mark running 46.67 during the 2023 sectional round. The young man that is gunning for it, was at the same place volunteering. You cannot make this stuff up. Rocky is still a man of few words, but the two spoke briefly. Nayyir was great with Rocky.



ATA volunteering with Overdose Lifeline: Coach Sho, Coach Aretha, Erron and Jahleel Lewis, Grace and Zack Fisher.

I was impressed with many scholar-athletes this winter season. Ayana Wortham (Lawrence Central HS '26) improved her overall personal bests in the 200m and 400m this indoor season. Running faster indoor than you have outdoor is quite the feat. I was speaking about her to a former ATA athlete who was almost astounded at her progress. I told the athlete, "Ayana is stubborn. She has a beautiful smile that makes it seem like she's a go-with-the-flow person, but she wants to win more than anything. She's dedicated to the process of doing whatever it takes to be her best." Before her 59.99 race, I asked her, "Are we going out at 27?" — regarding the pace for the first 200m. She cheerfully replied, "Of course!" Lo and behold, she did just that.



Ayana Wortham blasts out of the blocks for the 400m.

Brady trusted the process and transformed as a thrower within the span of four months. I was worried at first because he's the type of kid to take initiative — he moves while doing his research and doesn't wait for anyone unless he trusts them. It's a great quality to have, but he saw the vision working with Coach Aretha. Speaking of Coach Aretha, I believe Brady has been her best coaching job so far. It has been a pleasure to observe her dedication to making him a better athlete overall.



Coach Aretha and Brady pose outside of Panthera in their new ATA shirts.

Jackson Jones (Lawrence Central '28) became a new person. I believe he is starting to see his abilities. Collin is getting more confident, but I need more out of him. He is a much faster 200m runner than he's shown this indoor season. I need him to be hungry. He cares too much about this sport to not leave it all out there. Farah Azeez (Carmel '26) broke through mentally this season. Be excellent in everything, Farah. No corners cut.



Farah Azeez awaits her 200m heat (above) while Jackson (below) runs the first 100m of the boys 400m dash.



I was probably the hardest on Alex Beard. He is as polite as they come. I want the kid to run fast. I want him to get opportunities. He's had the longest journey to change his technique in the group, so the coaching had to be aggressive — not demeaning or disrespectful, but aggressive. We don't have time to waste. Alex, like most kids, found ATA in the last inning of high school (senior year). With a cramped timeline, we must make moves. I truly believe he can be in the 60m final at HSR and the 100m final at state come spring. Each week we broke things down. My coaching was stern — maybe confusing at times. I wish he had pushed back a little more. Coaches respect that. At least I do. It wasn't until I asked him whether the teaching progression was helping him grasp the concepts around acceleration that he told me, "Not really. I feel like we are bouncing around concepts too much." We streamlined things and he got a 60m personal best at the last meet. I am wishing him well.



Alex Beard and Xavier shake hands after a victorious relay race.

Onna holds a special place with me. I met her during her freshman year in 2022. She was not easy to miss, but she could easily blend in with her glasses. I remember her as one of the taller girls with glasses. She was inconsistent at practice because of fighting. Sticking up for a friend that did not have her same interest. The coaches agreed she was one to keep an eye on. We bonded gradually. I knew I wanted her to run for ATA. I don't

know why, but she was a kid I wanted to keep close. I saw potential in her as an athlete. She stepped to the hurdle her first day of practice. I was floored.

I reached out to her mom, Ebony, about joining. Ebony was slow to get back to me, which made me impatient. We had a meet coming up in Louisville and I wanted Onna to run. When we spoke, she told me she was working multiple jobs and long hours. I read between the lines. I assured Ebony I would take care of things — I just needed her to get to Panthera for us to depart for the meet. Ebony agreed, and so the ATA relationship began. Onna's first meet was far from a fairytale. She hit a hurdle, finishing in 11.17s. She wore our uniform but ran for LC. It was a weird time. That first race was probably a microcosm of how life would go for Onna during high school — persevering through life's obstacles, but still getting things done, no matter how long it took or what she had to overcome.



Antre'Onna Osby waits for her exchange on the relay.

When parent alum Victoria Wilburn called me saying she had found a donor looking to support someone in the club, Onna was the first name out of my mouth. Steve Wolkoff and the Wolkoff Foundation have been a lifeline to ATA. Without their help, I don't know where we would be. Steve and Coley have been massive supporters of the program, especially for Onna.

Nothing stings me more to this day than when Coach Shana called me in 2023. "Did you hear Onna's dad passed away?" When I got that call, I diverted my route from going home to her sister's apartment on the east side of town. I called Onna, not knowing how to open the dialogue, so I just got to the point: "Coach Shana told me the news. Where are you?" She was where I suspected. I went inside and the three of us spoke — well, I did more listening than talking. The living room was dimly lit as they both told me how things happened and what had been happening since. She apologized for not attending practice and mentioned how she had tried to go to school the day after the accident, but her mom came to get her. Life did not stop for her mom or sister. They still had work. Bills are still due. That's life, I guess. Looking back, I wonder how much time Onna had to process things. Not enough, I reckon. My heart was breaking for her, but she was handling things remarkably. "Everything happens for a reason," she said after a sigh. My goodness. I couldn't help but think about what other loss she's experienced to have that perspective. Rest in peace, Anthony. He was friendly to me in our interactions at meets. Onna is making you proud and honoring your name.

In the aftermath of Anthony's death, there was a possibility that Onna would leave for Ben Davis. I told Coach Shana that Onna was a large part of why I was even at Lawrence Central. When I applied for Lawrence Central's head track and field coaching position, the bond with the kids I coached was a big motivator. About a third of the kids were from Lawrence Central. I did not want to be the coach that leaves just because. The kids at LC say, "Coaches come and go here," but I am not just a coach. The mission has always been bigger. Kids have told me how different life would be if I weren't around for them in high school. That's humbling to hear, genuinely, but I hope there are other people in their corner who will ride for them the way I do — especially for a kid like Onna. You never know.

I am thankful to ATA for maintaining our coach-athlete dynamic. I named Onna team captain, along with Qor'Ron Wilson (Ben Davis '26) and Addison Hunley (Shortridge '27). She leaves ATA as the record holder in the 60m hurdles, 100m hurdles, 4x100m, 4x200m, and 4x400m. She maintained a 4.6 GPA, took every book and reading assignment seriously, and attended at least one volunteer opportunity every season. She earned a McDonalds scholarship and was featured on Wish-8...?



Onna and I with Chanel at Marion County Championships in 2023.

I did not know. She's too humble. Nike Indoor Nationals will be our last time together as coach and athlete at the high school level. I'll give her my best, as she has done for me from day one.

Many thanks to the coaching staff this indoor season in any and all capacities — Coach Aretha Thurmond, Amber Williams, Jacob Aldrich, Micah Williams, and Giles Davis. Your time is valued.

Thank you to the Wolkoff Foundation for sponsoring two athletes and providing us with new uniforms from Adidas. Thank you to Brittany Crone and Pete Vayo of Indy Parks, and UIndy for access to train.

I am looking forward to a great national meet and preparing for the summer season.

Best,

Coach Sho



## How ATA Has Helped Me

ATA has helped me in many ways but the most notable to me is through my very supportive team, my very intentional and intelligent coach, and the success that they have brought me off and on the track. I love track and field, but I couldn't have imagined I'd still be doing it without a team like ATA, I would be underdeveloped and have no training to improve what I'm passionate about, I also wouldn't have my amazing coaches and teammates who believe in me. I've gotten a lot stronger, significantly faster, and have a better mental attitude all from being apart of ATA. ATA has done a lot for me this season and hopefully for seasons to come. - Edvion Morris

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Since joining ATA Ive become more confident in my event, I also feel more motivated training because I have the support and a great atmosphere to work in. My mental has become way better too and I try and push myself way harder now that I know I can achieve whatever I put my mind to. Ive also become faster in the open 300 because I was stuck at 45 for a while but now I run 43, just from that I know that ive become stronger and faster, also I've been getting a little better and staying off my heels and my trail leg has improved so much just from a few practices where ive focused on it. Without ATA I don't know if I'd ever know I could reach these accomplishments so quickly. That's why I love showing up. - Giyanna Thornton

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I'm so grateful for ATA and everything it has taught up until this point in my life. I've learned so much mentally if anything. Having a coach that only pushed me to be great and a coach who believes in me is everything I could ask for in a coach ! Even the friends and great teammates that ATA has brought me . I've learned that if you want to be the best , you have to work harder than everybody else. Because of ATA, my times have gotten better. My biggest achievements was my 400 time drop, 1:06 to a 1:02. My 100 time was 13.3 to a 12.9. and 200 time 28.3 to a 26.8. I have been with ATA since my freshman summer and I wouldn't trade my experience for anything. Thank you ATA! - Ayana

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Hey Coach Sho 🙌,

I have changed a lot in the four months I've been with ATA. At the end of the first couple of hard practices, I could be found laying on the corner of the loop next to a pile of puke; thankfully, that's not how it goes anymore. My speed and endurance have increased greatly as I've improved my 30m flies, 30m starts, and 300m dash. However, the greatest change has not been in my fitness, but in my mindset. My confidence has grown and I'm more willing to take on challenges. ATA has also instilled in me a great sense of discipline. You've taught me when it's time to line up for a race I need to know I am the most prepared. I've grown a lot with ATA, and I am excited to see how I will continue to grow throughout the rest of the season.

Take care,

Alex Beard

## Top 10 Indoor Performers (2026 Only)

### 60m Women:

- #2 Giyanna Thornton 7.95
- #4 LeBraya Warren
- #6 Antre'Onna Osby
- #7 Kaylah Flowers
- #9 Ayana Wortham
- #10 Farah Azeez

### 60m Men:

- #3 Blake Larrison 6.89
- #4 Collin Bumgardner
- #8 Deji Adesoji
- #10 Enoch Obisesan

### 200m Women:

- #1 Warren 25.87
- #3 Thornton
- #4 Wortham
- #5 Alana Hawkins
- #6 Flowers
- #8 LeAsia Warren
- #9 Osby

### 200m Men:

- #4 Bumgardner 22.31
- #5 Larrison
- #6 Alex Beard
- #9 Xavier Wilson

### 400m Women:

- #2 LeB. Warren 59.70
- #3 Wortham
- #4 LeA. Warren
- #5 Hunley
- #8 Flowers

#9 Thornton

#10 Azeez

400m Men:

#1 Ronald "Rocky" Duplessis 49.07

#6 Omar Daniels

#7 Jahleel Lewis

#8 Qor'Ron Wilson

#9 Jackson Jones

800m Women:

#1 Hunley 2:33.12

800m Men:

#2 Elton Amos III 2:07.27

#3 Breaux

60mH Women:

#1 Osby 9.04

#2 Thornton

60mH Men:

#3 Daniels Jr. 8.24

#8 Kortez Foster

LJ Women:

#3 LeAsia Warren 15'0"

#4 Grace Fisher

LJ Men:

#3 Crosby 20'10.75"

SP Men:

#2 Matthew "Brady" Shrum 51'9.75"