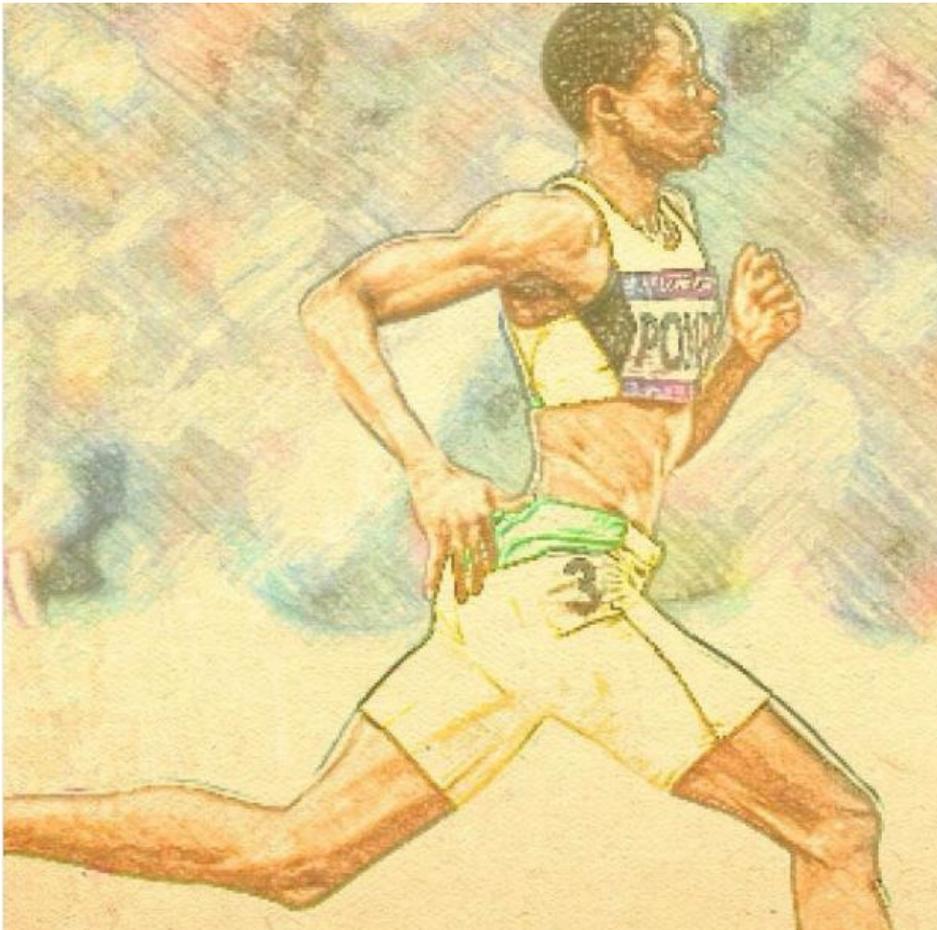


SOGNANDO

Olympia



In mezzo a tutta 'sta cagnara che sta accompagnando da mesi il nostro sport e i conseguenti

riflessi devastanti sui Giochi Olimpici che incombono (oggi si è appreso che i russi non potranno partecipare ai Giochi di Rio, ma state sicuri che non sono solo loro che dovrebbero stare a casa...), sembra anacronistico continuare a credere in ideali "olimpici". Molto difficile. Noi siamo testardi e andremo fino in fondo al nostro progetto "*Sognando Olympia*" anche se ci costa profonde amarezze. Diciamolo, gridiamolo:

questononèilnostrosport, thisisnotoursport, wetrustinadifferentsport.

E non lo è stato e non lo è per i campioni che hanno raccontato per noi la loro avventura olimpica: Franco Fava e Maurizio Damilano. Oggi aggiungiamo la testimonianza di una donna straordinaria che viene da molto lontano, davvero lontano, dalla costa atlantica del Sudamerica. Il suo Paese si chiama Guyana, è incastrato fra Venezuela, Brasile e Suriname, è la terra del cricket e del calypso. Il suo nome? Aliann Pompey. La sua gara preferita? I 400 metri (il suo miglior tempo 50.71). Le sue Olimpiadi? Quattro: Sydney 2000, Atene 2004, Pechino 2008, Londra 2012, tre volte semifinalista. Per una amicizia personale che dura da tempo, ha accettato di scrivere per il nostro sito il suo amore per i Giochi Olimpici. Aliann Tabitha Omalara Pompey - il nome completo - conta nella sua carriera anche cinque Campionati del mondo all'aperto e quattro al coperto, Giochi del Commonwealth, Giochi Panamericani. Converrete che è un bel personaggio. L'intreccio si allarga perchè Aliann ha frequentato e si è laureata al Manhattan College di Riverdale (New York), università con cui l'A.S.A.I. ha instaurato un rapporto di collaborazione nel 2014. Abbiamo chiesto a Dan Mecca, Head Coach del Manhattan che la ebbe in squadra fin dal 1996, di scrivere qualche riga su di lei. Ecco il contributo di Dante - antenati italici - che abbiamo incontrato a Bydgoszcz, Polonia, dove sono in corso i Campionati mondiali juniores, di cui il coach americano è un assiduo frequentatore. Scrive Dan:

"Aliann Pompey was recruited to Manhattan College as the New York State 400 Meter outdoor champion out of Cohoes High School in Cohoes, New York. After breaking her leg her junior year in college at the Husker Invitational she received an extra year of eligibility. In her extra year at Manhattan College, Aliann set the school and NCAA record for 500 meters, school records for the indoor and outdoor 200 & 400 meters, as well she was the NCAA Champion at 400 meters. Aliann declared for Guyana (where she was born) for international competition in 2000. She then went on to set the Guyana National 400 meter records both indoor and outdoor. She qualified for and competed in the 2000, 2004, 2008 & 2012 Olympics. Aliann was also a Commonwealth Games 400 meter Silver Medalist. Throughout her career from her start as a freshman at Manhattan College till her retirement from competition after the 2012 Olympics she has been trained by Joe Ryan, Manhattan College Sprints Coach (& alum). Coach Ryan was the Irish National Champion in the 100 & 200 while competing for Manhattan College. He has been the Guyana National Team Olympic Coach in 2008, 2012 & 2016. She has now gone on to become a very successful sprints coach for St. John's University in New York City. As well as a meet promoter/director for an international meet in Guyana. And remains a very active alum and supporter of Manhattan College".

E adesso la parola ad Aliann. Thanks for your contribution to our web site, Aliann, we hope to

meet you in Rio in few weeks to say "thanks" personally, and all the best for your future career. Let us say to the users of our web site: read this contribution, in which is reflected our sport, the idea of sport for which we are ready to fight. The last lines gave us a great emotion, it seems the end of a movie. Who wants to know more about the sport career and the life of Aliann can enter in her personal site www.aliannpompey.com



My name is Aliann Pompey and I've competed in 4 Olympics under the Golden Arrowhead - the flag of Guyana. I didn't grow up dreaming of being in the Olympics, and while I was always impressed with the unifying element in sports - I fantasized about being a librarian when I grew up. It was during my college career at Manhattan College, sometime after winning the Indoor NCAA 400m title that I really felt in my heart that my next move was to chase the Olympic dream. After dedicating over a decade of my life to living and loving sports - track and field in particular, I couldn't get it out of my system. Currently, I am the Assistant Coach (sprints and hurdles) and Recruiting Coordinator at St. John's University in Queens, NY. My career now combines the things I have grown most passionate about: Athletics, young people and education. If that manages to allow me any free time, I am the founder and meet director for the Aliann Pompey Invitational - Guyana's first international track and field competition - which will now be an annual event. The upcoming Olympics in Rio will be the first time since Atlanta in

1996 that I will be watching the Games as a spectator. I'm asked a lot how I feel now, or how I think I'll feel "just watching". I gave it my everything, every time. And I did so clean. I don't know if I'll cry, be too busy to miss it or stare wistfully into space at the firing of every gun. Right now, though, I have minimal regrets and am grateful for the destination to which my journey has brought me.

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