

A few words from Wings alumni...

Tamara Lementino (Zuni Pueblo)- 2015 Wings National Team Women's Coach:

“My name is Tamara Lementino, former Wings National Team Member and summer Running & Fitness Camp Facilitator. As a high school athlete I attended Rio Rancho High School and had the privilege of representing Wings of America in 2010 and 2011 in Spokane, WA and San Diego, CA. I am currently an assistant cross country coach for Rio Rancho High School as well as a track coach for Lincoln Middle School in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. My passion for running has opened so many doors for me that I never thought possible. It allowed me to compete at the collegiate level for New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, NM. While I relished my time as a competitive athlete, I find more joy in giving back to the school and community that helped me realize that running was going to forever be a part of me. Sharing my love for running and watching young peoples' passion for the lifestyle grow is by far the most rewarding thing I've ever experienced. As a full time college student, coaching has created an opportunity for me to take my mind off of studies while directing my professional goals after graduation next May. I think Oprah Winfrey said it best, "Running is the greatest metaphor for life, because you get out of it what you put into it.”

So thank you running for continuing to open many doors for me. And thank you Wings of America for encouraging me to help represent Native America. It is a great honor to have been selected as a coach for the 2015 Wings National Team.”

Ryan Dodson (Diné)- 2015 Wings National Team Men's Coach:

“In 1998, I attended my first Wings of America running camp at Churchrock Chapter house. The facilitators were Brian Chee, Brandon Leslie, Alvina Begay, Kelly Concho, CR Davis and Irwin Touchine. Throughout high school I attended Wings of America Running Camps and slowly gained more interest and knowledge in running.

In high school one of my dreams was to run in a Wings Jersey! I had teammates that represented Wings of America and I was determined to join that elite group. Finally, when I was a senior at Gallup HS, I was selected to represent Wings at the 2002 Footlocker West Regionals in Walnut, California! The goal did not come so easily!

When I graduated high school, I opted to focus on my college degree and not run in college. However, my ties to running remained strong. I was hired for the summers of 2004 and 2005 to serve as a Wings of America Running & Fitness Camp Facilitator. Little did I know this opportunity would kick start my career as an educator. Coordinating running clinics across the Navajo Nation provided me valuable experience in public speaking, classroom management, and teaching strategies. It also supplemented my ever-growing knowledge and interest in running and fitness. A highlight for me was meeting Jeff Galloway and Geoff Hollister at a Wings Coaches' Clinic in 2005.

In 2008 I graduated from the University of Arizona with a degree in History and Secondary education. Right away I was hired by the Window Rock Unified School District in Fort Defiance, Arizona. I've been fortunate to coach cross country, track and field, and wrestling at both the mid school and high school levels through that time. Over the last six years I have begun to see the change I am making in my community.

I am 29 years old and for the last eighteen years Wings of America's programs have offered me so much. The organization has helped me make and foster lifelong friendships and continually motivates me to keep building my network of runners and coaches. It is truly blessing to be a part of such an initiative. This full circle experience has been a highlight of my life. I will continue to motivate and inspire young Native American athletes to pursue their dreams, like Wings of America first encouraged me to do all those years ago.”