

THE ROUNDUP

BY AND FOR THE STUDENTS OF HALF HOLLOW HILLS HIGH SCHOOL WEST

Strides Toward Victory: Talent and Teamwork Ensure Success

Written by Maya Khanat & Designed by Lexi Gevisenheit and Roundup Staff

You might see this Track and Field All-Star athlete all over school, but you may not have seen her incredible athleticism on the field. Leeyan Redwood, however, is one of the best athletes to step foot in High School West.

Redwood is a runner, as well as a shot-put, discus, and weight thrower. "My bread and butter are the throwing events," she claimed, and she's not lying. Leeyan has broken a tremendous amount of school records and won the senior superlative, *Most Likely To Become a Professional Athlete*.

Ever since 7th grade, Redwood was known for her speed, strength, and throwing ability. Starting in middle school, she broke a shot-put school record by an insane 30 feet. She has been working constantly to become stronger, allowing her to throw farther each time she competes in meets.

Before Redwood competes during her meets, she makes sure that she lotions her body, applies chapstick to her lips, and always stays sweat free to start and end fresh. "Ya never know when someone is gonna snap a photo," she claimed, "You need to look good at all times wherever you are."

As a meet ritual, listening to music is a great preparation for Redwood to be ready to show off her excellence on the track field. Her cup of tea is old school R&B and hip-hop music from artists such as Alicia Keys, Beyoncé, LL Cool J, Celine Dion, and Whitney Houston. In case you did not know, in addition to being a track star, Leeyan is called "Leeyoncé" because of her incredible vocal talents (and because she is the biggest Beyoncé fan).

Redwood is ranked #1 in Long Island in shot-put and she reached her best throwing marks at States. She achieved a rank of 4th best thrower in New York, and, not surprisingly, she is marked as one of the top 20 best throwers in the nation.

a name for herself. Redwood is highly dedicated to all of her efforts in Track and believes that, with her hard-work, she can accomplish her dreams of becoming a professional Track athlete.

"Track for me was all about trying something new and finding your own path," said Redwood, "I did so, and it has done me well. It can happen to anyone."

With the winter season over and the spring season moving along, Redwood's biggest challenge is for her to stand out as the competition level increases.

Coach Toles and Braun had Redwood's back and support since the beginning of her track career. Coach Braun, who is the throwing coach of both the girls' and boys' track team, was impressed with Leeyan's talents.

"She has gotten stronger, more dedicated, and more driven to succeed at a high-level," he said, "In addition, her leadership qualities have really shown and she has been able to help with many of the younger athletes as well." Mr. Toles could not have been more proud of how great of an athlete Leeyan has become. He has followed her astounding im-

provement throughout the years and says it truly emphasizes how hard work pays off.

"An athlete like Leeyan comes around once in a coach's career," said Toles, "Her leadership, humbleness great attitude, and sportsmanship are what makes Leeyan our MVP." Both coaches will truly miss Redwood, who they say is one of the best athletes that they have worked

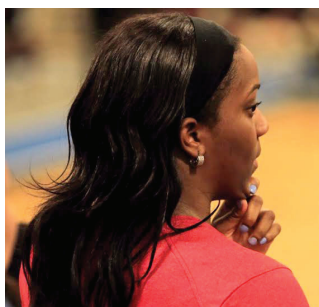
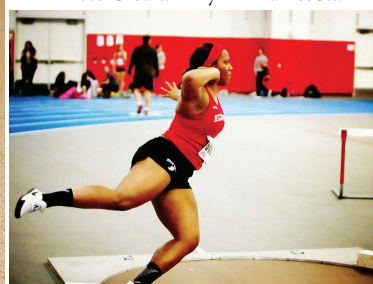


Photo Credit: Lilly Milman & Staff



Leeyan Redwood wins Suffolk County Outstanding Athlete for Winter Track.

Leeyan is also a three-time Suffolk County Champion for shot-put, a County Champion for weight throwing, and hopes to be the County Champion for discus.

During the State meet, Leeyan was not impressed with her overall performance. However, it did not stop her from working harder for the spring season. Her main goal in life is to make

with. For her future, Redwood has decided to commit to run and throw at Northeastern University for Track and Field.

Leeyan is best known for being a huge role model to others. She provides the support and care for her teammates that is highly regarded.

"Leeyan is such a role model and a huge part in my life," said sophomore track star Mia Abulencia, "She inspires me to do the impossible and to always work hard in whatever I do. Her achievements are my goals and is the one person I aspire to be. Her determination and work ethic is incredible. I can only hope I can be somewhat like her in the future. I've never met an athlete and a person like her, and I'm so lucky to have her as my best friend and role model."

Under Leeyan's wings, there are two current track participants that will take the lead and strive for success for their upcoming years ahead. Mia Abulencia and Julia Nomberg plan to succeed their goal of receiving an All-American title and placing first in States and Nationals. Although both athletes have very similar goals, they compete in different styles of events.

Julia Nomberg is a junior pole vaulter who has set several records for High School West. She came into track in tenth grade, not knowing what event she wanted to participate in. Due to her background in gymnastics, Nomberg had the idea to try and compete in the pole vault event. Within a year in pole vault, Julia is ranked the 3rd best pole-vaulter in Suffolk County. Going into

States, she jumped 9 feet and 9 inches and in State qualifiers, she placed 2nd with a jump of 10 feet and 6 inches. Before going into the meets, Julia makes sure that she does not tire herself and does some drills to set her up for the official jump.

With the help of Coach Troise, he put Julia in a position to work harder and fulfill workout requirements and training. Throughout the way, Coach Troise has supported Julia building her stability and focus. "I will definitely miss Coach Troise after the track season ends," said Julia. "He has helped me train since last year running a couple of summer sessions with me. He taught me how to pole vault." Her plans and goals are to receive a track scholarship and jump at least 11 feet and reach 12 feet at most before her high school career comes to an end. With her reputation on the line, she believes that her confidence will lead her to place first in Counties and, from there, go all the way with to State win.

Mia Abulencia is a sophomore long jumper, triple jumper, and 4x400 me-

more difficult and stiff competition, Mia has been striving to beat records, hopes to place 1st in states, and win a National title. As of now, Abulencia is ranked 4th in State and 21st in the Nation for long jump. In Counties, she placed 2nd jumping with a height of 18 feet and 10 inches allowing her to qualify for both States and Nationals.

Abulencia went to Nationals suffering with aching shin splints, but she has been fighting and working harder than she has ever been to do well. With five months of intense work and training, you can't blame an insane sprinter and jumper like her to deal with irritating pain.

"My shins have been under a lot of stress and seemed to break down," she said. Although Mia's injury affected her work ethic, she still had an astonishing performance to show off her talents. With that, she maintains a healthy diet and before meets, listens to music while running for six minutes, and stretches out all of her muscles to prepare herself. Mr. Toles and Mr. Christian provide that boost of confidence and support that Mia needs allowing her to do better meet after meet.

The future depends on their upcoming performances in the spring. If they keep up their efforts, there's no stopping them from fulfilling their dreams.

Mia's goals are to go to the University of Pennsylvania to participate in their track program and team. She plans to become an All-American athlete before she graduates high school. Julia hopes to receive a scholarship from amazing track schools that have interest in her. These two girls are the future of the High School West Girls Track Team.

Julia Nomberg had the idea to try and compete in the pole vault event. Within a year in pole vault, Julia is ranked the 3rd best pole-vaulter in Suffolk County. Going into



Leeyan Redwood and Mia Abulencia at Nationals.

ter runner who successfully accomplishes greatness in her events. Since starting track in 7th grade, Mia has become greater, faster, and stronger. Leading up to a

athlete before she graduates high school. Julia hopes to receive a scholarship from amazing track schools that have interest in her. These two girls are the future of the High School West Girls Track Team.