

Coach O Keeps Students on Track

*Added by **Sadie Abbitt** on February 14, 2023.*

Writer Sadie Abbitt ran cross country for Coach O in 2022.

Cross Country coach for Talawanda High School and Talawanda Middle School, track coach for Talawanda Middle School, 8th grade science teacher for Talawanda Middle School, and 2022 Coach of the Year recipient.

Amelia Oberschlake/Coach O/Mrs.O is a dedicated and wonderful teacher and coach. She started coaching Girls on the Run in 2018. She says this about her experience with Girls on the Run. Coach O said:

“This was a very easy way to start coaching because the workouts and activities were pre planned. I enjoyed this program because it focused on building self-esteem, and building character, along with making running fun. The season ended with a 5K race in which the girls got to choose one other person who was a positive influence on them to run as well.”

After she discovered her love for coaching she moved on to start coaching as an assistant cross country coach and loved it. She fell in love with the team and its dynamic. This past year she became head coach of the cross country team and helped them climb the ladder of success.

Coach O started running track in high school but struggled to find her place on the team. She started running independently and ran various 5ks and 10ks. She ran throughout college and still runs now. She explains in an interview how much she loves coaching and teaching.

“I love running for myself and I love being a teacher and seeing my students succeed. Coaching is the best of both worlds. I get to see my students succeed in something they love outside of school.”

She strives to make every person on the team feel important no matter the skill level. Although there are struggles managing time, she has learned a lot throughout her coaching experience. She explains how it was difficult to stay present in both the middle school and high school teams, as she coached both at once. This past year she had to be in many places at once, but still managed to be a great coach and be there for everyone. One of her runners Molly Vangorden said in an interview that one of her favorite things about Coach O is “How much she genuinely cares about her runners. During practices and meets she is constantly running around, constantly checking up on everyone, and is always so positive about everyone on the roster top to bottom.”

Coach O says her favorite part of the team is how much it truly feels like a family. Everyone supports each other no matter what, the team spends so much time together and she loves that although there are serious times, the runners still find fun in it. She explains how she believes the runners have a “very strong connection with each other.” She has been so influential to all of her runners and one of her runners Garrison Franks says this about how she had influenced him. “Definitely has helped me fall in love with running”. She has helped all of her runners to love their sport and help them reach their goals while still making it fun.

As you can tell, Coach O is a very motivating coach and respected teacher among students and runners. She believes everyone is a student first and athlete second. She never passes up an opportunity to help a student or athlete and will do anything to make sure you stay safe, healthy, and on track to success in school and extracurriculars.

Fun Facts about Coach O :

- She loves plants
- She ran a half-marathon in 2020
- Her favorite conversations with runners are about food
-