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## **Olympic Gold Medalist Kicks off Penn Relays with Announcement of His New Foundation Geared to Support Educational Efforts in His Hometown**

Penn Relays attracts thousands of athletes from around the world and it's also a homecoming to many of the top collegiate, world and Olympic athletes of our time. This year, one of Delaware Valley's own Olympic Gold Medalists is not only returning to Penn Relays to meet up with fellow Olympians and college friends; he's coming home to Willingboro, New Jersey with a mission and a plan.

LaMont Smith, 1996 Olympic Gold Medalist in the men's 4x400meter relay, is launching The LaMont Smith Foundation on April 23, 2015 at the Willingboro Senior Center at 4:30pm. His foundation's mission is to support youth by providing resources to enrich their educational experience, maximize their learning potential and prepare them for a successful life.

In the past few years, the Willingboro educational system has faced challenges and is now heading in a more positive direction. And like most school districts across the country, there is still a need for additional resources, funding and ideas to support administrators in their quest to give students a well-rounded education. Smith stated, *"I am a product of the Willingboro educational system and that experience has helped my success on and off the track. One thing I learned is the importance of team work. When everyone has the same level of dedication and passion, we all win. It's important for those of us whom have benefitted from the rich educational history of the Willingboro community to give back. We can lend a hand to the current administration as they take a new approach to restore the overall educational experience for students. When this happens, the students of Willingboro will definitely win."*

The LaMont Smith Foundation has formed creative partnerships with key organizations to support Willingboro's school district students. The foundation has several plans to work directly with the Superintendent, the teachers' association, high school administrators and other key stakeholders to support some of the programs currently in progress. An outline of the foundation's efforts and upcoming fundraiser will be presented at the press conference. Smith will also award some of Willingboro's top educators, administrators and students who are making a difference in the educational system and the community. Next year, an award ceremony will be held at the newly renovated Kennedy Center in Willingboro.

Before heading to the Penn Relays, Smith will visit with students and staff of Garfield Park Academy in Willingboro. *"I'm looking forward to spending time with the students and staff. I attended Willingboro High School with some of the teachers and counselors at this school. The staff at Garfield Park Academy is a prime example of what happens when you invest back in to your community."*

Smith further stated, *"Above all education is the key to success. Once a child is armed with education they have no boundaries in life. It is our responsibility as parents, educators and mentors to not only provide them with resources to succeed but show them via example how to use them once they are obtained."*

For more information about The LaMont Smith Foundation, visit [www.LaMontSmithFoundation.org](http://www.LaMontSmithFoundation.org). For press inquiries or coverage of press conference e-mail: [media@LaMontSmithFoundation.org](mailto:media@LaMontSmithFoundation.org). Thanks to the fiscal sponsorship of Small Expeditions, Inc., The LaMont Smith Foundation can sustain programs and continue to serve youth while awaiting government 501(c3) status.