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## THE PRIOR FAMILY: RUNNING AFTER THE TIME OF THEIR LIVES

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# THE PRIOR FAMILY: RUNNING AFTER THE TIME OF THEIR LIVES

By Hillel Bromberg



Photo courtesy of David Parnes

The thread that connects the Prior family's activities – indeed, their whole life – has to be running. Running marathons, running track and field, running businesses, running around in other countries. If there is a way to run, the Priors will find it.

But let's start at the beginning, where Jack and Lisa have one of the best meet-cute stories you'll ever hear. They were born in the same hospital four days apart and grew up in the same factory town of Naugatuck, Connecticut. The company, Uniroyal, hired employees' children for summer jobs. Lisa says that when the summer supervisor introduced them, Lisa was wearing steel-toed boots, a lab coat and goggles. A few weeks later, Jack mailed a birthday card to Lisa, who took the opportunity to suggest celebrating birthdays together. They were off and running, and married in August 1987, just as they moved to Cambridge and Jack started a doctoral program at MIT.

Both Jack and Lisa have worked in the fields they studied in college. Jack has both a BS and ScD in chemical engineering and has worked at Sanofi-Genzyme to support the scale-up and manufacturing of treatments for rare diseases (Gaucher's disease, Fabry Disease and Pompe Disease) and now for atopic dermatitis. Lisa holds a BA in psychology and Spanish and an MEd in organizational development. So it makes sense that she founded Prior Consulting, a coaching and consulting practice that "helps leaders create great culture that achieves results." Her office is located in the old church on Newtonville

Ave. Lisa is also a public speaker and wrote *Take Charge of Your VIEW: Career Advice You Won't Get from Your Boss*.

Perhaps their move to Newton in 2003 was fated. A year after they moved in, Lisa found an oil burner permit in the basement and discovered that Kurt Lewin, the founder of the field of organizational/social psychology, which Lisa has focused on her whole career, lived in the home from 1945 to 1947. Permits at city hall show that Lewin took down a wall on the first floor to make the living room a better gathering place. It's a good thing he did. Between the boys and girls track, swim and soccer teams, the Priors hosted 24 team dinners while their kids were in high school.

The younger Priors do their own share of running. Kayla, 25, graduated from Newton North in 2012 and Elon University in 2016. Athletic both personally and professionally, she worked summers at City Sports, Janji, and Saucony. After graduation, Kayla was Brooks Running's social media coordinator and is now at T-Mobile in executive communications. Jared, 22, was in the Newton North class of 2016 and expects to graduate from Bowdoin College next year with a degree in computer science. Both children were active in track & field at Newton North. Kayla competed in college and Jared is now a senior captain of Bowdoin College's track team.

Outside of work, Jack's abiding passions are sports photography and running. When Kayla and Jared were in





Photo courtesy of Jack Prior

high school, Jack spent most of his weekends photographing swimming, soccer and track meets. You can see his good eye and impressive timing at [newtonsportsphotography.com](http://newtonsportsphotography.com).

Jack was a decathlete in college and started in long distance running as a way to get back into shape. He also combined personal, family and professional interests by running to raise awareness of a rare disease afflicting his niece and funds for the National Organization for Rare Diseases. He ran the Boston Marathon in 2013 (stopped just before finish line due to the bombing) and in 2014. In April 2018, Jack started marathon training again. Over the next year, he dropped 44 minutes from his best time to hit the qualifying standard for the 2020 Boston Marathon. He'll be running to raise funds for Newton Rotary Foundation. Follow his journey at [run4newtonrotary.org](http://run4newtonrotary.org).

Not to be outdone by her family, Lisa has biked up Mt. Washington and completed the Marine Corps Marathon with Jack. In addition to being CEO of her consulting firm, Lisa was appointed by Governor Baker to serve on the Massachusetts Economic Assistance Coordinating Council, and just finished up her role as a research coach on a two-year study of physician burnout. For fun, Lisa starts her day walking their rescue dog Allie in a local park and was just scuba certified. As if that weren't enough, Lisa recently acquired an electric guitar to get back to her roots when she played and sang in her college coffee house.



Photo courtesy of Jack Prior

With all their running around you'd think the Priors would be run ragged, but stop any of them on the street. They promise not to give you the run-around. ■

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