



Fall 11-10-2015

PESH's Seth Jenny Takes His Love of Running International

Winthrop University

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Recommended Citation

Winthrop University, "PESH's Seth Jenny Takes His Love of Running International" (2015). *Winthrop News 2015*. 211.

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PESH's Seth Jenny Takes His Love of Running International

Quick Facts

- Jenny has run at least 29,301 miles since 1996.
- He's run in places such as Anchorage, Alaska; Scotland; and Athens, Greece.



Seth Jenny

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA — Like most people, **Seth Jenny**, an assistant professor in [Winthrop University's Department of Physical Education, Sport and Human Performance \(PESH\)](#), keeps his driver's license, credit cards, cash, etc. in his wallet.

However, Jenny's wallet also contains one special addition: a pace calculator – a small, printed piece of paper that helps runners determine their pace per mile.

Jenny has carried this pace calculator with him for the past decade and has found multiple reasons to use it. After all, **he's run at least 29,301 miles** since 1996 in locations such as Anchorage, Alaska; the Netherlands; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Yellowstone National Park; Incirlik Air Base in Turkey; and Athens, Greece, just to name a few.

If reading about his accomplishments makes you want to start running or do something physically active, then that's fine with Jenny.

"That's something I try to be: a role model for people," he said. "When somebody sees me, I hope it reminds them that they need to get in their work out for the day."

'Just like anything else, it needs to be a priority'

Jenny first started running cross-country in high school. He played several sports and added cross-country just to have a sport for the fall. The competition and success he found there made him want to pursue it more. He attended Grove City College before transferring to Slippery Rock University on a cross-country scholarship.

He met his wife Angie at Grove City. Angie is also an avid runner.

"I wouldn't have been able to maintain my running without a supportive spouse who understands running and the time requirement," Jenny said.

Balancing running with teaching and parenting is a priority in the Jenny household. He and Angie make sure to get at least 30 minutes of running during the week days and up to two hours on Saturdays and Sundays. On Sundays at 7:30 a.m., it's not unusual to find the pair at the Winthrop Coliseum meeting up with the Rock Hill Striders for a seven to 10 mile trek.

"My strategy is to do it first and don't put it off until later," Jenny said.

"Just like anything else, it needs to be a priority."

Oftentimes, Jenny will run on the Winthrop track or by the Winthrop Lake before his class load even begins.

'I want them to see how much their parents enjoy it'

The couple has two children—Miles, 5, and Calvin, 3. In case you're wondering, yes, the name 'Miles' was deliberately selected.

"My wife didn't like the name Steeplechase," Jenny joked.

When Miles was born, they bought a jogging stroller and car seat attachment so that he could go along with them on runs. Later, they added a double stroller to accommodate Calvin. Jenny even ran the Kings Mountain half-marathon pushing the double stroller; it grew so heavy he had to walk some of the uphill portions.

They like to run races throughout the year, including a bigger one every season. They keep it fair by taking turns running and watching the children. For example, in the Hit the Brixx 10k/5k race in Charlotte, Jenny ran the 10k. After the break in between, he took over watching the kids while Angie ran the 5k.

They also like to participate in the Run For Your Life track series in Charlotte, which incorporates 50 meter to 400 meter track races for the kids.

"The kids are enjoying it. My big philosophy on our kids about coaching is I don't force them to do it. I want them to see how much their parents enjoy it and how much it has enriched our lives."

And each four-year Olympic cycle, he and Angie travel to the Olympic track and field trials in Eugene, Oregon. Their tickets to the 2016 bid are already purchased.

"That's a tradition we're trying to continue," he said. "It's fun because everyone in the stands is enthusiastic about track and field like both of us."

Ideas come while running

Jenny discussed some races and marathons that have stood out to him over the years.

While running for the University of Edinburgh during graduate school, Jenny recalled experiencing Roger Bannister being the starter for the British Universities Cross Country Championships in Oxford. Bannister was the first man to break the 4-minute mile.

"That was just amazing because that's probably the most significant running achievement in modern history," he said. "To be over there and see him, that was unique."

Another stand-out was the Carnethy 5 Hills Race in Scotland. Bagpipes were played, and the start of the race was signaled by dropping a Claymore Sword. Some of the participants ran in kilts—with nothing underneath—and other medieval garb.

Jenny raced in the Pumpkin Run on Halloween and will perhaps run in the Raleigh Half-Marathon on Nov. 15.

"People might perceive me as, 'Oh, this guy runs all the time.' But I'm processing while I run, thinking about things. There's a strong correlation between cardiovascular fitness levels and academic achievement. I get a lot of ideas for teaching strategies, for research, for publications while running."

FAST FACTS:

Personal best mile: 4:30 in college

Best race: Steeplechase, a 3,000-meter race with barriers and a water jump

Best marathon time: 2 hours, 48 minutes (6:25 per mile for 26.2 miles)

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