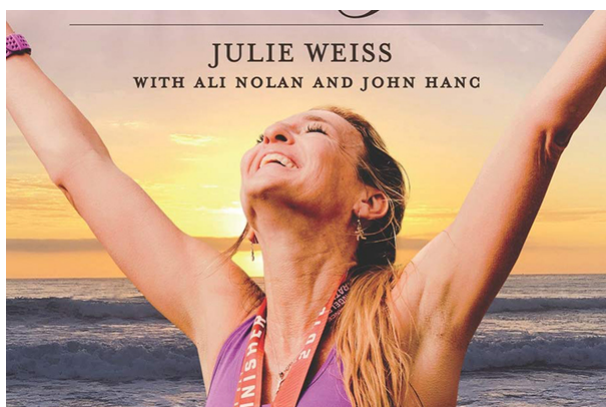


# Great Running Gear that Gives Back

Starting a new training program requires commitment, but also the right gear. To help you put your best foot forward, we've compiled a list of suggestions from our [Hirshberg Training Team](#) coaches who've been helping people accomplish their running goals for over 20 years. These items come endorsed from our coaches and experienced HTT alumni and are sure to help make your running, or walking, experience as memorable and enjoyable as possible.

One click and you'll be ready to hit the road and begin your training. When you purchase these items through our Amazon program, we get a small portion of the proceeds so shop knowing you're also giving back!

Here is list of items (after good running shoes, of course) that we recommend for everyone starting their running journey:



[The Miles and Trials of a Marathon Goddess: 52 Weeks, 52 Marathons](#) – Get inspired by HTT Alumnus Julie Weiss, who, after the loss of her father to pancreatic cancer, set out to run one marathon a week for a year and raise \$1 million for pancreatic cancer research.



[Body Glide Original Anti Chafing Stick Balm](#) – This stick prevents rubbing that can lead to chafing & raw skin. Safe for use on body parts ranging from arms and chest to butt and balls!



[EltaMD UV Sport Body Sunscreen, SPF 50](#) – Sweat resistant and water resistant up to 80 minutes, this oil free sunscreen will keep your skin protected while you are out there logging miles.



[GU Energy Original Sports Nutrition Energy Gel](#) and [Clif Bar – Energy Chews](#) – When you're on your long runs, you'll appreciate having a little snack to give you a quick energy boost. And these both taste great too.



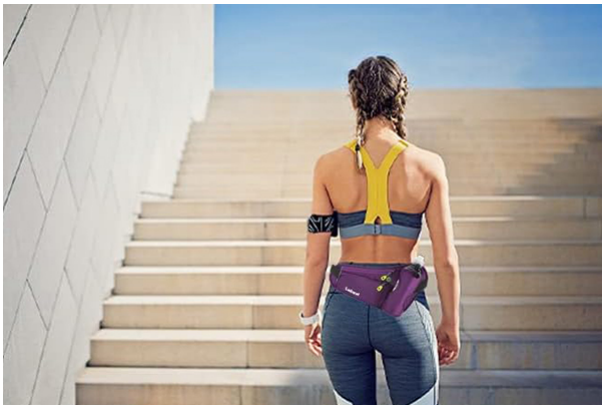
[Purple Rymora Leg Compression Sleeve](#) – Wear these on your legs for calf support and pain relief. They're comfy and provide pain relief.



[Apple Watch Series 8 \[GPS 41mm\] Smart Watch](#) – As a runner, technology is your friend. This Apple Watch has a fitness tracker, blood oxygen & ECG apps, always-on retina display and is water resistant. While you are at it, may as well get yourself a [Purple Band for your Apple Watch](#). After all, everything is better in purple!



[Women's Under Armour Purple Sports Bra](#) – This Crossback Mid Impact Sports Bra delivers strategic support, wicks away sweat, dries fast, and best of all comes in our favorite color.



[Purple Hydration Running Belt](#) – This water bottle hydration belt with reflective waist pack details will hold your water bottle, some snacks, a phone and any other small items you may need while you're out running. Plus, this design keeps your hands free.



Running shorts for [Men](#) and [Women](#) – You guessed it, we found great running shorts with moisture wicking and pockets – in purple, of course – for both men and women.

Happy running!

To learn more about the Hirshberg Training Team or to share your favorite running products, contact our HTT Program Manager, Martin Fung at [martin@pancreatic.org](mailto:martin@pancreatic.org).

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# More Easy Ways to Help You Fundraise

If you want a simple and easy way to fundraise, there are tons of national companies that want to partner with passionate people just like you. We've compiled a bunch of ideas, from dining to shopping, to help you fundraise for the Hirshberg Foundation, and we're here to help you along the way!

## Host a Restaurant Night

Many national restaurant chains support non-profit organizations via restaurant nights. It's simple – you pick the restaurant and the date then encourage friends and family to support you by dining in or ordering take-out. The restaurant then donates back a set percentage of sales to the non-profit. Typically, the process begins with the restaurant website to sign up and receive your custom flyer or unique code to help promote your event. Most restaurants will ask for a non-profit Tax ID (which we can provide for you), desired location, date and time and number of expected guests.

We've compiled a list of some great dining spots to consider with links directly to their fundraising program. And if you don't see your favorite restaurant below, just ask them!

- [California Pizza Kitchen](#)
- [BJ's Restaurants](#)
- [Chipotle](#)
- [Blaze Pizza](#)
- [Panda Express](#)
- [Raising Cane's](#)



# Organize a Sweet Fundraiser

[See's Candies](#), one of America's most iconic chocolate stores, also has a great fundraising program. Simply set up your online shop, spread the word, and let the sales roll in. All purchases are shipped directly to your supporters and the Hirshberg Foundation receives the proceeds. This can be done all year round or, even sweeter, for particular holidays like Valentine's Day, Easter, Halloween and Christmas.

[Krispy Kreme](#), the beloved doughnut shop, does some sweet fundraising too! Krispy Kreme Fundraising was created in 1955 to provide a way for qualifying community organizations to raise funds for their worthwhile causes. Choose from virtual or in-person sales of the classic doughnut and receive a portion of the proceeds. Krispy Kreme Fundraising is here to help you raise some dough!

# Plan a Shopping Party

[Kendra Scott Jewelry](#), with over 100 stores across the country, is committed to supporting non-profits like the Hirshberg Foundation. Their "[Kendra Gives Back](#)" community-giving program allows community members to host in-store events for causes including health and wellness, with 20% of the proceeds going directly to the benefitting cause. Sounds simply dazzling to us!

[Evereve](#), the company that delivers curated, contemporary women's fashion through 100+ retail stores nationwide is another charitable minded fashion business. You can host an Evereve "[Fashion Fundraiser](#)" where 15% of your guests purchases will be donated to the Hirshberg Foundation. It's perfect for large groups, plus your guests shop anytime on the fundraising day during store hours. It's the best type of retail therapy!

The businesses listed above are just a few of the many national companies with programs to help you fundraise for a cause you're passionate about. Once you have set your date, please let us know! We want to help you make a difference for the pancreatic cancer community – and who doesn't love a good reason to dine out, grab a sweet treat or hit the mall!

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## **A Superhuman Dad's Life & Legacy Live on Through his Son**

By: Scott Meller

I'll never forget the day, it was May 5, 2015, the day before my 39th birthday. I was at work at Feldmar Watch Company with my father, as had been the case 6 days a week for the past 22 years of my life. My father had been feeling ill with a stomachache for about a week. He had gone in for a gastroenterologist appointment but there was no reason to believe it was anything serious, it was a stomachache. His doctor called and requested that he come into the office at 3:00pm. When he returned to our store at around 5pm he asked me to join him in our private office.

We sat down and he proceeded to tell me that he had just been told he had pancreatic cancer. I sat there, stunned by the news, while he explained that he didn't know much yet, but that we'd learn more in the coming days as he began his battle with pancreatic cancer. He finished what he was telling me and left for home. I sat alone in our office, holding my head in my hands, tears running down my cheeks and a million thoughts

swirling through my mind. Nothing was clear other than the distinct feeling that the lifelong security blanket my dad created by always being there for me was suddenly yanked away. It wasn't the pain that he was gone, or that he had given up hope, it was the overwhelming sadness that nothing would be the same, ever again.

Over the following days, he had procedures to prepare him for his cancer treatments. He began his first round of chemotherapy, and after 8 weeks, we received news that the tumor had shrunk. The doctor tempered our enthusiasm about this news with the fact that shrinkage, while always good news in reference to tumors, is common during the first round of treatment, but not necessarily a sign of things to come. Sure enough, after completing the second round of chemotherapy, we received news that the tumor was no longer reacting positively to that treatment and that a more aggressive type of chemotherapy would be needed.

Looking back, I can see this was the beginning of the end. My father began his more aggressive treatment and really struggled. After each session he would become exceptionally sick and weak, requiring three to four days just to return to a mere shadow of himself. After a few sessions, he became so sick and weak that the cancer treatments were postponed until his "health" and strength improved. I remember one specific day when he asked me to join him and his wife for a doctor's visit. He needed extra help getting in and out of the car, and a strong hand to hold while walking for balance. During the chat with the doctor, he told my father that he needed to eat in order to build up his strength or he would die. The visit concluded and we returned to their house. I was helping my father out of his car, holding onto him with him holding onto me so he wouldn't fall. We were face to face so I took the opportunity to tell him, "dad, you need to eat." He replied, "I can't." He loved food! It wasn't



that he didn't want to eat, it was that eating made him so sick.

Over the next few weeks his condition continued to deteriorate. In just six short months after he was diagnosed, my dad, the superhuman, perfectly healthy and incredibly strong man, had been reduced to a mere shadow of himself by this horrific disease. In the early evening of November 30th, I played his favorite song for him, held my phone on the pillow close to his ear so he could hopefully hear, I held his hand, and I spoke the words, "dad, it's okay, go ahead and go." And he did, he took his last breath at 6:25pm.

After some time had passed, having spent many months thinking about him, remembering and recalling so many memories, there was one thought that came to mind and has stuck with me ever since. The day he uttered the words, *I can't* to me. It was the only time, in my entire life, that I ever heard him say those two words. Pancreatic cancer had broken the unbreakable, it had taken my superhuman dad.

Scott connected with the Hirshberg's Patient & Family Support Coordinator, sharing a story of heartbreak followed by steady resolve to help find a cure for pancreatic cancer in honor of his dad. Soon after, he gathered a team of employees and loved ones for the [LA Cancer Challenge](#) as Team Sol Meller, in honor of his superhuman father.

To-date, Scott's LACC team has fundraised over \$74,000 thanks to loved ones and employees from the [Feldmar Watch Company](#). Since joining the LACC, Team Sol Meller has consistently been a top fundraising team. Scott refuses to give up and continues to honor his dad's memory, by sharing Sol's story, through his LACC team, and by continuing to raise awareness.

[Read inspiring tributes >](#) [Share Your Story >](#)

*Stories from families & friends touched by pancreatic cancer often show the resilience and courage of the human spirit. Loved ones dedicate their time and effort every day to fight for a cancer-free future and every journey helps pave the way to a cure. Share your story, make a dedication and help raise awareness today.*

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## **Turning Pain Into Purpose**

In 2022, Whitney Goldin's mom, Karen, was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, a disease Whitney has become too familiar with but never imagined would touch the life of one parent, let alone two. The diagnosis came after the family's devastating losses of Whitney's father, grandfather, and great-grandfather to the same disease. "My dad passed away in 2021 and then it was a shock for my mom to be diagnosed in 2022. I decided I'm just going to turn my sadness into action." Today, Whitney is ready to end the cycle of pancreatic cancer in her family. She's already turning that sadness into action by raising awareness and rallying her entire community in the Chicago area with her Purple Ribbon Event, [Pushing Back Against Pancreatic Cancer](#).

Whitney, a loving mother, dedicated daughter, and attorney has generously shared her family's remarkable story to help raise awareness since her mom's diagnosis. "Getting to this path has been riddled with pain, seeing both of my parents go through what they've gone through," said Goldin. "This devastating disease is impacting too many of my loved ones. Enough is enough, I'm done." Whitney wouldn't sit idly by without taking their own action. By February of 2023, her mom was scheduled to have the Whipple surgery and Whitney was hosting a [Purple Ribbon Event](#) to

benefit the Hirshberg Foundation. *"I have never planned an event before other than my kids birthday parties so I have zero event planning experience but I started doing some research. I called the Hirshberg Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research and I said, 'Listen, I'm going to plan an event and it's going to be in three months and I have no idea if anyone will even come, any money will be raised, but anything I raise I'm going to send to you.'"*

Hosted at Temple Sholom of Chicago, *Pushing Back Against Pancreatic Cancer* featured yoga, brunch provided by a variety of Chicago eateries, tequila mimosas, and a silent auction with items from top Chicago businesses. Whether you live in Chicago or any other city or town across the country, Whitney has demonstrated the importance of sometimes going outside your comfort zone when it comes to helping raise funds for pancreatic cancer research and patient programs, "I went into the event planning process trying to be as open minded as possible with what I thought would attract the most people and raise the most awareness. The event evolved as more and more people registered and as more and more businesses donated. I took a deep breath of gratitude at every turn, and tried to remain as flexible as possible." By the end of the day on February 2nd, her community had helped raise over \$42,000! "The day of the event was more perfect than I could have ever imagined. The two-hour event passed by in the blink of an eye. But at the very end, I reminded myself to take a step back and to witness everything come to fruition. It was so touching to be surrounded by so many people- all with the communal goal of raising awareness." Whitney shared.

Throughout the planning process, Whitney continued raising awareness in her Chicago community through a televised segment with [Fox32 Chicago News](#), and an interview with [Chicago's Very Own WGN9](#). She has shown unwavering support throughout her mom's

journey and continues to connect with other families by sharing her family's story, including a recent [podcast interview](#) on *Living Hope: Your Journey with Pancreatic Cancer*. Today, with the help of a committed medical team her mom is thriving. She continues her journey back to health one day at a time. Whitney is ready to create a new cancer-free path for her mother and family, "One day, there will be a cure, and I want to do everything I can to help us get there," she shares. She has found a new purpose in her life – to eradicate pancreatic cancer. "We're going to get closer and closer to a cure and I will do everything I can throughout my life and devote myself to getting closer to that," she said. "I can tell you that that is my new goal. Forever."

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## **Marathon Goddess, Julie Weiss Raises One Million Dollars for Pancreatic Cancer Research**

Ten years ago, Julie Weiss finished her journey of 52 marathons in 52 weeks, in a quest to raise one million dollars for pancreatic cancer research and became known as the *Marathon Goddess*. On Sunday, March 19th, Weiss will be celebrated by pancreatic cancer survivors and supporters everywhere as she crosses the Los Angeles Marathon finish line yet again, and at the Hirshberg Foundation's Purple People Party Cheer Station near Mile 21. The celebration will commemorate Weiss raising more than one million dollars for pancreatic cancer research over the past decade, and helping raise awareness about the disease that has the highest mortality rate of all major

cancers.

## **MY BIGGEST FAN & INSPIRATION...**

In 2010, following the death of her father to pancreatic cancer, Julie remained determined to make a difference, and running gave her a purpose. Just one week after he passed, she fulfilled their dream for her to qualify and run the Boston Marathon. He was, after all, her biggest fan. "I know he was there with me. He was the wind at my back and had the best seat in the house my heart after I ran the Boston Marathon in 2011," Julie shared. From there, she decided to turn her passion into a purpose and embarked on an incredible endeavor to raise hope, money and awareness for pancreatic cancer. In time, Julie chose the name Marathon Goddess, but is quick to point out its true meaning that it is not about her, it's a name that allows her to encourage others to embrace their passion and let it shine.

## **A \$1 MILLION DOLLAR GOAL...**

Since 2010, Julie has made many ties in the pancreatic cancer community. She has witnessed the ups and downs of statistics and gotten to know the faces and journeys of countless survivors whom she has run in honor of. Through the ups and downs, her focus hasn't waivered: "When I began this journey, my objective was to raise a million dollars to find a cure for pancreatic cancer, the disease that took my father away from me, and to help others affected by this insidious disease," said Weiss. "Julie set out to achieve a lofty goal, at the grass roots level, and never wavered in her commitment to see it through," said Lisa Manheim, Executive Director of the Hirshberg Foundation. "In addition to being our partner in helping spotlight pancreatic cancer, the awareness and money she raised has helped fund much-needed research bringing us one step closer

to finding a cure.” Throughout the years, Weiss has received support and donations from corporate sponsors and running organizations, however, the majority of her fundraising has come from individuals and families that have been impacted by the disease and those she has inspired through her running.

## **PHILANTHROPIST & AMBASSADOR...**

As a marathon runner, author, philanthropist, ambassador and advocate, Weiss keeps busy by sharing enduring stories of hope, empowerment, loss and resilience from patients and families fighting for their lives and the lives of their loved ones. She has remained a fervent supporter of the Hirshberg Foundation throughout her journey, motivating fellow runners on the Hirshberg Training Team each year, running the LA Cancer Challenge 5K and receiving the Never Give Up Award, leading a team at Tour de Pier, and inspiring communities across the country to Never Give Up hope. She has been a spokesperson for the Hirshberg Foundation’s successful fundraising campaign, *52 Races for 52 Faces*, a year-long, philanthropic crusade in which she competitively ran in marathons, half marathons, 10Ks and 5Ks in 52 cities throughout the U.S., and across the Pacific Ocean to shine a light on pancreatic cancer. The campaign started and ended with Weiss running the Los Angeles Marathon which also included the foundation’s signature Halloween fundraiser, the L.A. Cancer Challenge.

Through running, Weiss hopes to show the world that pancreatic cancer is much more than devastating [statistics](#). There is a name and a face behind every survivor, and she is running for them. “Over a decade later, my mission to fight the good fight against pancreatic cancer has evolved to not only fundraise, but to be a voice for patients and to create awareness about the risks.” She added, “Although we have seen progress, more needs

to be done, and together, we can find a cure. We got this!”

## **AN EXTRAORDINARY FINISH...**

Throughout this extraordinary journey, Julie has shared enduring stories of hope, empowerment, loss and resilience from patients and families fighting for their lives and the lives of their loved ones. She has crossed over 1,000 finish lines, whether she was completing her 52 Races for 52 Faces campaign or her most recent 12 races in 12 months to raise awareness about the 5-year survival rate that has increased two years in a row. The stories she has helped share will never be forgotten and thanks to the one and only Marathon Goddess, we are \$1 million dollars closer to a cure through research funding and patient programs. *“Running with a purpose to fight the good fight against pancreatic cancer has become my mission; I will not stop until we have found a cure.”* We look forward to cheering her on as she leaps across her 116th marathon finish line!

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## **A Wedding to Celebrate Love and a Chance to Give Back**

*The Oksayans have been part of the Hirshberg Foundation family since Purmine “Mine” Oksayan was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2016. From attending our Symposium, sharing [their stories](#) and [being honored](#) at the LA Cancer Challenge, Mine and her daughter, Ani, have been fierce advocates and loyal supporters. We are happy to share another chapter in the Oksayans’ story, from newlywed Ani.*



My husband Greg and I were married on September 1, 2022 in a smallish ceremony in San Marcos, CA. We'd met three years prior and had been living together for a year before our wedding. Our little family was complete with my contribution of a 14 year old son and his of a 10 year old Chihuahua; my first pet ever, if you can believe it. As we started planning our wedding, we kept emphasizing to one another that we merely wanted a celebration; simply an opportunity for our friends and family to come together and share in our joy of finding love in one another.

The question of what we "wanted" as gifts kept coming up and it didn't take much consideration to realize that we only wanted our loved ones' presence without the expectation of any gift. We clearly communicated to our guests in the invitation to feel no obligation to gift us anything other than their support and love. However, we knew that there would be some level of insistence or discomfort with this request on the part of our close loved ones, so we decided to create a donation fund for a cause that was dear to us. Once this was decided, there was no doubt that our cause would be the Hirshberg Foundation.

For the last 6 years, the Foundation has been a constant source of information, support, camaraderie, and inspiration to my family. They were there for us during the horrors of the first days and weeks of my beautiful mother's pancreatic cancer diagnosis to the traumatic days of constant hospital visits, chemo and eventual Whipple surgery. And they are here for us today and every day, whether to give a huge hug at an event or to share tears of relief and congratulations as we celebrate year after year of her cancer being behind us.

We weren't sure whether anyone would actually act on the opportunity to donate but we quickly found that, indeed, many people were drawn to the idea of contributing to a cause that we held close to our hearts. This option allowed our guests to

honor Greg and I while learning that someone dear to us had experienced a deadly disease and been supported by an organization that made tremendous strides in research, care and support of those affected. The ability to use our event, our celebration, as a call to action towards a cause that is both emotionally special and globally relevant felt incredibly rewarding and added an additional sense of meaning to our union.

In all honesty, my mom was not surprised that we would have chosen to forgo gifts and request donations to the Hirshberg Foundation. As a family, we have always felt completely supported by them, so it felt natural and right that we would take every opportunity to offer that support in return. This was a small gesture towards championing a selfless and benevolent organization dedicated to advancing research and providing resources and support to patients and their families at a time when they need that light the most. The opportunity to advocate and exhibit support through the vehicle of a special personal event is a privilege that Greg and I are honored to have had.

## [Wedding Program](#)

Learn more about our Wedding Program and how you can dedicate your special day to a loved one

[continue →](#)