

Father-Daughter Duo Pen a Book and Make a Big Bang of Their Own

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Jewish Exponent Feature

A little more than a year ago, David Prutchi, a biomedical engineer, approached his daughter with an unusual proposal — to write a book together.

At first, 16-year-old Shanni, who will be a senior this year at Jack M. Barrack Hebrew Academy, was skeptical. But it was only a moment's hesitation, she says, and now she's the proud co-author of a newly published work that focuses on a subject that might make many people scratch their heads in bewilderment.

The book, *Exploring Quantum Physics Through Hands-On Projects*, published by Wiley, was a true collaboration, according to the high schooler:

"We would sit down together and write together," she says, insisting she was generally able to manage both her homework and helping to compose the book.

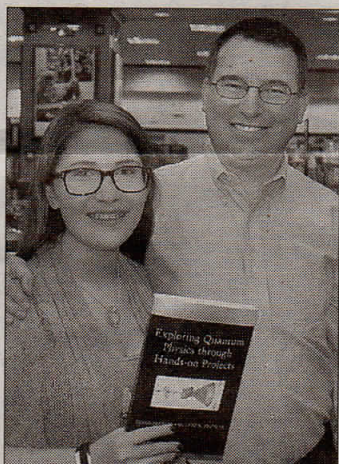
"I consider myself to be a motivated student. But sometimes there was this time issue." Shanni says she's elated to have a supportive family and a dad who understood that when schoolwork was hectic they didn't have to work on the book.

Having been raised in a science-oriented household, Shanni showed an interest in the subject from a young age.

"I remember my dad building a lab in our house, and then I realized that this was not in everyone's home," recalls the avid fan of *The Big Bang Theory*, the popular TV show that features a quirky group of scientists.

"When I was about 6 or 7, I began to help with whatever he was doing or observe him and then it evolved into me doing projects by myself."

Being young, she says, never impeded her from her science ambitions. By the time she was 10, she had published a report on hydrogen line radio astronomy for the Society of Amateur Radio Astronomers. At meetings of the National Radio Astronomy Observatory, she was by far the youngest speaker, she recalls.



SHANNI AND DAVID PRUTCHI

Her father, 48, vice president of product development at Impulse Dynamics in Mount Laurel, N.J. (the family resides in Cherry Hill), remembers that he, too, cultivated a love for science at a young age.

Before he was 7, he started working on science projects and "I was doing them with *my* dad."

Shanni is excited about her upcoming AP chemistry class at Barrack. However, she says, she's most interested in electrical engineering.

"God willing, that will be the path I follow in university," she adds, noting that she is looking to apply to top-level science-oriented colleges.

She hopes that the book she and her father recently produced will inspire "other kids and adults interested in the do-it-yourself culture of science."

As for the writing pair's future, Shanni says, "I have always worked with my dad on projects. He has really guided me along the way. Hopefully, this isn't the last project we will work on because we work well together." ♦

