

For Immediate Release



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## **AUB: The Iconic Annual AUB Big Game and the unveiling of the mascot**

With much anticipation and great university spirit, the Big Game at the American University of Beirut (AUB) took place on the Greenfield, where the Faculty of Engineering and Architecture's team competed against a team formed of students from the Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences, the Olayan School of Business, and the Faculty of Health Sciences over a football game.

The Big Game this year was especially remarkable since it included the revealing of the University's new sports identity, the AUB mascot in the form of a Phoenix, symbolic for rising and perseverance. The game was attended by AUB President Dr. Fadlo R. Khuri, Provost Mohamad Harajli, Executive Vice President for Medicine Dr. Mohamed Sayegh, Vice President for Advancement Dr. Imad Baalbaki, and faculty deans.

Prior to the game, fans of both teams paraded their way to the Greenfield from the upper campus, chanting and cheering for their team.

All AUB varsity teams gathered on the Greenfield prior to the game, and the cheerleading team had a special performance. AUB students also performed a Dabke dance.

Dean of Student Affairs Dr. Talal Nezameddin welcomed the enthusiastic audience on, "this beautiful, wet spring day."

"Today the ongoing tradition of the Big Game will continue in resilience and in defiance of everything that goes on around us," said Nezameddin. "It is because of this strong and steady AUB community that we can do that."

President Khuri wished the players a safe and fair game, jokingly claiming that, “for today, great things mean not breaking anybody’s legs.”

“I want to thank the most important people in our University, the students,” said Khuri. “This is remarkable work from our young leaders. The expectation is that you will move on to do remarkable things for Lebanon, the Arab world, and beyond.”

President Khuri and Dean Nezameddin then unveiled the long-awaited AUB mascot, revealing the design of a Phoenix.

The special guest this year was Mr. Rabih Jammal, a trained lawyer who went blind at the age of 16. Recently, Jammal decided to give up smoking and start doing sports, and he has been running regularly ever since.

“Jammal can often be seen running on the Greenfield with the help of a guide who is attached to his hand,” said Ghaleb Halimi, Director of University Sports. “He has participated in a number of races already and has won the Internal Security Forces half marathon. He is a great example of the transformative power of sports.”

Jammal had the first kick of the game. Following, the teams started the first half with great enthusiasm in the midst of loud cheering from the audience despite the drizzly weather. During the halftime break, students competed in a relay race. Winners were awarded medals by President Khuri.

The match wrapped up with a victory for FEA, who scored one goal during the second half. The winning team received the commemorative trophy from the President and the members were awarded medals.

A series of Big Games preceded this one, in which FEA and the United Faculties competed in basketball, volleyball, handball, futsal, water polo, and rugby.

**ENDS**

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**Note to Editors**

### **About AUB**

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 700 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 8,500 students. AUB currently offers more than 130 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 420-bed hospital.

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