

For Immediate Release



AUB runs for its causes at the Beirut International Marathon

Beirut, Lebanon- 09/11/2012 -The American University of Beirut is coming out in full force this year at the 2012 Beirut International Marathon, participating with 600 students and staff, under the slogan “Run AUB Run” to promote well-being for the individual and the community.

For AUB, marathon day will be more than a race or a healthy way to spend a Sunday morning. It will also be an opportunity for community members and charitable donors to support two worthwhile causes, while also joining in a fun activity.

Participating in the marathon will allow AUB to showcase two of its charitable initiatives, helping raise funds for them: the Brave Heart Fund, which helps support the medical treatment of underprivileged children with congenital heart failure and the Nature Conservation Center, which promotes biodiversity and a sustainable environment. Additionally, other University initiatives and sections that have an impact on society will also run under the AUB banner. These “community partners” include the AUB Medical Center, the AUBMC Multiple Sclerosis Center, the Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service, the AUB Wellness Program and University Sports and the Office of Student Affairs.

“AUB aspires to promote ‘complete citizens’ - individuals who are accomplished in their chosen fields, who utilize their knowledge to live healthy, well-rounded lives, and who contribute in meaningful ways to their communities,” said Professor Patrick McGreevy, dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at AUB.

Since 2011, the Beirut International Marathon has introduced the “Run for a Cause” program, to encourage participants to fundraise for a charity via the marathon.

“AUB ‘walks the walk’ when it comes to our support for the marathon’s objectives,” said McGreevy. “We are answering the call to action, bringing together people from all corners of our diverse society to support community nonprofit organizations -- like the Nature Conservation Center and Brave Heart -- that are making an enormous impact in the quality of life in Lebanon.”

For those participating in favor of the charities, the benefits are multiple.

“It’s really fun to be part of the Beirut Marathon,” said Reem Chaarani, Brave Heart Fund administrative director. “It’s healthy, and most importantly, participation can help save the life of a child by raising funds and awareness about the many children with congenital heart disease in need of urgent medical care but who cannot afford to pay for it.”

Associate Professor Lina Choueiri, member of the Nature Conservation Center executive committee, agreed. “By participating in the Beirut Marathon, we are not only bringing the

Nature Conservation Center staff and friends together to have fun, we also hope to increase awareness of our nature conservation initiatives among the community,” she said.

In order to make its impact bigger, this year AUB has mobilized four times more participants than the previous year via a month-long on-campus campaign to recruit participants. Banners, sign-up booths, posters and e-communications (website, Facebook and Twitter) all helped boost participation and excitement for the big event.

Also, University Sports helped make training easier by offering weekly coaching sessions and a one-month training program for those interested in running on behalf of AUB; it also organized two 6K cross-campus races in preparation of the marathon.

Most of the 600 strong runners under the AUB banner will participate in the 10K run, while eight members of the AUB community, including one representing University Sports, will compete in the 42K. Additionally 24 students from the AUB varsity track and field teams will compete in the 42K relay race.

AUB participants will use each kilometer of the 10K or “FUN RUN” to highlight the mottos of each of the various community and charity partners. Additionally, a special cheering station will be set up on the Corniche side, facing AUB, complete with a stage, live entertainment and colorful banners.

More than 30,000 contestants will be participating in the 2012 Beirut International Marathon, which was established in 2003 to promote unity among Lebanese. The event also includes a mother and child run and a 3K race for MPs of any allegiance, as well as the United Nations peacekeeping personnel stationed in the country.

Ghaleb Halimi, AUB director of university sports, described how, in view of this event’s international high profile and exposure, AUB President Peter Dorman this year had signed a memorandum of understanding with BIM association for closer cooperation, and in order to enjoy a maximum number of participants from the University.

“This is a major international event aired by the local, regional and international audiovisual media,” said Halimi “Our participants hail both from AUB and AUBMC, with students constituting around 65 percent and the rest being faculty and staff.”

He added: “Through this race day, we are fulfilling our mission by propagating a message of wellbeing through exercise and proper nutrition.”

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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 600 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 8,000 students. AUB currently offers more than 100 programs leading to the 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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