

Othman Armela, Student

Why have you decided to join the Purple Wave?

After bumping into several banners, I investigated further online and ended up watching the previous years' Manchester 10k; I felt the excitement, buzz and good vibes throughout the clip and without a second thought decided to join. I decided to join to experience the surreal feeling of running the route alongside thousands of participants, but also running together with fellow students/staff and alumni as one team and representing my University. More importantly I aim, through this initiative, to raise funds for a charitable cause, which is of great importance for me. Some parts of the world are in utmost need for all sorts of help, and I felt this is the slightest thing I could do whilst going about my daily life. I aspire to live by the prophetic narration "The most beloved people to Allah (god) are those who are most beneficial to the people" and joining the Purple Wave was one way I could this.

What did you have to overcome when deciding to run with us?

When I decided to run with the Purple Wave, I was still recovering from a family bereavement. Furthermore, despite being physically fit, I had never ran a continuous kilometre in my life, and this meant that I had to prepare rigorously and get into shape, physically and mentally. The second challenge was meeting my initial fundraising target of £1000. And, the third challenge was that the run coincided with Ramadhan (the Islamic month of fasting), so I decided to run whilst fasting for 18-19 hours. A final challenge was that the run coincides with my summer exams period and I have had to plan and organise my time carefully around this.

Are you raising money for an interesting or important cause?

I am raising money for the less fortunate in Syria. This cause was important to me, not only because my mother's family resides there, but because the situation there is beyond unbearable; millions of displaced refugees, cities wiped out, blockades inflicting besieged occupants with starvation, and many more heart-breaking occurrences. I chose to raise money for 3 causes that are dear to my heart; Education, Orphan support, and Medical aid. Each one is of great significance in bringing back hope and aspiration to a war-torn country.



How will it feel to run with hundreds of students and staff from the University?

Running with hundreds of students and staff last year was a remarkable experience. You must experience it at least once, it will undoubtedly enrich your Manchester experience. Not only do you feel empowered and feel a sense of belonging, but you run as one, starting together, and finishing together. With purple shirts all around, glimpsing ahead in the horizon you see dots of purple, overlooking your shoulder you see a fellow purple member. It was nice seeing the culture the Purple Wave created. We were one big team and we all made it to the end. Last year over 2000 participants ran with the Purple Wave and it was a brilliant experience.

What do you want to achieve?

By running the main thing I want to achieve is to raise awareness, to give back to those less fortunate than myself, by the means I am capable of with. By running I aim to challenge myself and become a better person in the process. Also, running has helped keep me healthy and well-balanced, helping me overcome moments of low wellbeing and imbalanced feelings, as it channels you with energy and boosts your dopamine levels, keeping you charged up and ready for any challenge the day has to offer. By running I want to become a healthier person physically and mentally. And, I want to lead a more meaningful lifestyle.

How important is running and physical activity to you and why?

Physical activity in general, is crucial for me as it helps stabilise my wellbeing and helps keep me on my toes. Moreover, it keeps me grounded, focused and clears my vision for a healthier mind-set.

Running is quite important, it engages the whole body, not only that, but also challenges everything you have to offer, your physique, your mentality, your character, everything. With running, it boosts your energy levels and helps nurture your character and mind-set; that's what I like about it the

most. It releases all the negative energy, replacing it with packets of positivity and energy.



Why should you join the Purple Wave?

Joining the purple wave has presented me with the opportunity to raise awareness, get people involved, and to stay active. I was able to surpass my initial fundraising target, and I was introduced to different running groups including, Parkrun and the 'Run Wild' running society at the university. Furthermore, following my run with the Purple Wave, I re-joined Run Wild as a Run Leader and this decision was very fruitful. So why not join this year's Purple Wave, and see where it takes you?