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## Team Sports Are Vital to Academic Excellence and a Sense of Community at Georgetown Qatar

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With National Sport Day approaching, students at Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q) reflected on the importance of campus sports in creating community and helping them to achieve goals on and off the field as part of their holistic academic experience.

For Shahd Al-Qassabi (GU-Q '25), a proud Qatari student and Women's Basketball team captain, playing basketball offers a chance to develop camaraderie, teamwork, and mutual support for personal and academic endeavors.

“The basketball court becomes a meeting ground, erasing boundaries and fostering connections that transcend disciplines. It's a testament to the unifying power of sport, creating bonds with individuals whose paths we might not have crossed otherwise,” she says.

The shared victories and lasting friendships embody the Georgetown spirit, adds Shahd. “We evolved into a cohesive unit, connected through the shared pursuit of excellence. It’s been amazing to witness the evolution, the growth, and the bonds that have formed – a testament to the joy found in the shared journey of becoming not just teammates, but a family on and off the court.”

Jemimah Golo (GU-Q’26), co-captain of the Women’s Basketball team, played the sport competitively in high school and it also helped her find her place at GU-Q. Being part of a team motivates her to stay active and healthy helping her to deal with the pressures of academic life. “I play to de-stress. It’s very nice that, one, I don’t have to do this alone, and two, I do have this avenue to de-stress if I’m having a bad day.” Having a social outlet and wider sports community is an added benefit. As part of the Qatar Collegiate Sports Federation, the team actively competes in university basketball league tournaments against institutions from across the country.

For Abdul Hannan (GU-Q’25), captain of the Track and Field Club, running adds a dynamic and fulfilling dimension to his academic life. “Our group runs are open to everyone, regardless of individual skill level, creating a sense of camaraderie among peers,” he noted. “We motivate one another to push our boundaries and be the best version of ourselves.”

According to Hannan, the Track and Field Club welcomes members of the public to join their program of activities, a unique opportunity to forge new relationships. It also enables GU-Q to

spread awareness of the physical and social benefits of sport, within Education City and the wider community, and contribute to Qatar's national vision to promote participation in sport.

Encouraging participation in team sports is part of GU-Q's year-round commitment to educating the whole person. Active clubs include badminton, cricket, and football, with plans to start a women's swimming club.

For more information on student activities and achievements at GU-Q, please visit the website at:

<https://www.qatar.georgetown.edu/news/>.