

From the moment I took on the role of the Sun in a preschool theatrical performance, my fascination with the cosmos was ignited. As I observed my friends orbiting around me in a clumsy dance, a profound realization washed over me – the eternal rhythm of the universe. This rhythm predated my existence and will persist long after my final breath. To this day, I am awestruck by this, and it compels me to pursue a degree and career in astrophysics and aerospace engineering.

I have always worked on my academics with fervor, focusing on maths and science. As I consulted teachers about my passions, I was met with laughter. "A Saudi girl interested in space?!" my mentors exasperated, plainly baffled. Despite the skepticism I faced, I was wholeheartedly committed to my studies. I watched as scrutinizing eyes turned into bewildered smiles, a testament to my skyrocketing academic achievements. I delved into researching astronomical topics like black holes, space missions, microgravity, and more. I lost myself in the web of articles about space and began to link my reading to the fundamentals of physics. That marked the point where fascination and curiosity transformed into ambition and determination.

In the summer of 2023, I was accepted for the School of Humanity's summer school program with a full-ride scholarship. I took on the "Designing Space Habitats" challenge and was presented with opportunities to network, research, and learn. As I worked on my research paper regarding my chosen sub-challenge (which was Breathing on Venus), I comprehended the significance behind astrophysics. It's more than just an interesting topic – astrophysics can give humanity a chance to evolve into a multi-planetary species, and reach uncharted territories within the cosmos. Astrophysics is the driving force behind every mission outside of our planet and the backbone of our insight into the universe.

One of the assignments entailed designing a "space elevator" which eases the transportation of materials from Venus to the International Space Station. This was the first time I utilized my knowledge of aerospace engineering, and I learned how to use tools like Blender and CAD programs. This opened my eyes to the field of aerospace engineering, a wonder that bridges humans to outer space.

Near the end of the summer school program, I was one of the three people who secured an internship for Everest Innovation Labs, an organization that conducts Analog Astronaut Training Programs. We developed a 6-week curriculum that teaches students about the Moon. After presenting our work, the CEO was impressed, requesting an extension to our internship.

Upon graduating from the School of Humanity, I was certain that my future must be linked with astronomy – whether it be in astrophysics or aerospace engineering. I spoke with new connections from the program, like Rohith Muhundan (the executive director of the Humans2Venus Foundation) and I knew that my intellect was bright and noticeable. Yet, I was the only one capable of harnessing it and allowing it to evolve into its full potential. Thus, I began my final year of high school with determination. I founded my own astronomy club, Nojoom (meaning "stars" in Arabic) which currently has over 150 members. Weekly meetings are held to discuss topics in astronomy. It has been extremely fulfilling to create a community of

astronomy enthusiasts and to trade knowledge. All Nojoom members are invited to share their thoughts on interesting ideas and this sparks amazing conversations.

Currently, I am conducting lab experiments for my school's physics department which include representing gravity in space, estimating the age of the universe, and experimenting with propulsion. During my free time, I learn Python and C#, read about Venus, and study a course on orbital mechanics. Mostly, I dream of a chance to pursue studies in astrophysics or aerospace engineering. These are two topics that mean more than the universe to me.