10,500 dives for ataxia lives

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PRESS RELEASE ASAP: Contact Leanna Coleman for more information or an interview.

10,500 dives for ataxia lives

Diving towards a cure for thousands affected by ataxia.

Leeds, UK

On Saturday 27th November, the City of Leeds Diving Club came together for an extraordinary fundraiser and awareness day in aid of the charity, Ataxia UK: they aimed to complete 10,500 dives for the 10,500 people in the UK affected by ataxia.

Divers ranged in age from 7 to 70 with a team of over 100 divers taking part including the Olympic and Commonwealth Gold medallist Jack Laugher MBE, Olympic and Commonwealth Games medallist Daniel Goodfellow, fellow Olympians Lois Toulson, Kat Torrance, current Junior GB diver Chloe Johnson, former junior GB divers Josh Dowd and James Milton, Oliver Crompton Junior European silver medallist, and retired Olympian Alicia Blagg who returned to the pool to help smash their target, together achieving 11,247 dives and raising £1,580 plus Gift Aid so far!

This ambitious fundraiser was created by Helen Dutton whose daughter is part of the Leeds Diving Team, who all came together to support those with ataxia and their families, as their Head Coach Marc Holdsworth, lives with Friedreich's ataxia (FA). Sheffield, Harrogate and Sunderland Diving Clubs also joined in the effort to show their support, adding their own dives on the day.

The ataxias are a group of rare, neurological conditions. They disrupt your ability to control your body; to walk, talk and balance. They are progressive and currently there are no cures for the majority of ataxias.

Marc Holdsworth said: "Coming to terms with my diagnosis was difficult. I was a former junior national champion representing Team GB on a junior and senior level in diving. I then retired and struggled on simple tasks; walking down the stairs and carrying a cup of coffee".

The event was one of real community spirit with divers, parents, friends and family all doing their part to support the event and Marc from the 10-metre board to the tombola.

Jack Laugher said: "The diving and ataxia communities are similar as they are both relatively small and close, and so we all know each another, and all really want to do what we can to support Marc and Ataxia UK".

You can find out more about the event and donate by visiting: www.justgiving.com/leeds-dive-for-ataxia or by contacting Ataxia UK on fundraising@ataxia.org.uk.

Ataxia UK is the only charity in the UK that funds research into all of the ataxias and supports those affected until they find a cure. By donating to a fundraiser, your money will help those affected by ataxia by providing support via a dedicated helpline, crucial research into cures, useful publications, a network of Branches and support groups across the UK and much more.

Sue Millman, CEO of Ataxia UK said: "We are ecstatic to see such enthusiasm from the Leeds Diving Team and their ambitious event. Fundraisers such as this help to keep Ataxia UK afloat to continue supporting the 10,500 people in the UK and fund research into ataxia."

Ataxia UK funds research to find treatments and cures. They offer support to families affected and look to improve treatment and care for patients.

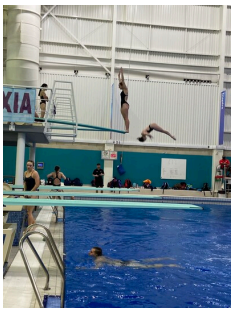
For more information visit **ataxia.org.uk** or **facebook.com/ataxiauk**

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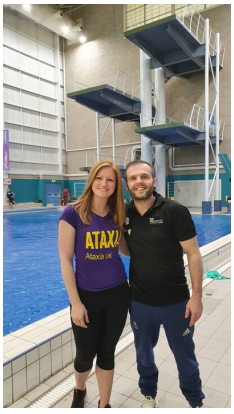




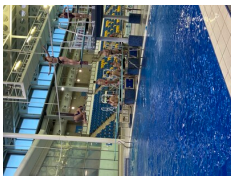














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