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Meet Weill Cornell in Qatar’s Students

Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar opened the Pre-medical Program more than 18 months ago. Now, as the opening of the Medical Program approaches, we turn the spotlight on our students and find out what life at WCMC-Q is like.

Read more inside
Students entering the Medical Program at WCMC-Q will follow the same innovative curriculum taught at Weill Cornell in New York.

Medical Program to Open in September

Preparing students for the “complexity of modern medical practice”

Students entering the Medical Program at WCMC-Q, which opens in September, will follow the same innovative curriculum taught at Weill Cornell Medical College in New York: with a stimulating variety of learning experiences, it introduces students to clinical practice from the first week.

The Program is also regularly evaluated and constantly evolving – reflecting the reality of the biomedical sciences in the twenty-first century.

“It is a fundamental principle that we do everything as closely as possible to the way it is done in New York,” says Dean of WCMC-Q, Daniel R. Alonso, M.D. When adaptations are made to take account of the fact that the Medical College is outside the United States, they will be in response to the needs of medical practice in the region: there may, for example, be more emphasis on the study of certain diseases, such as diabetes mellitus.

Formerly Senior Associate Dean for Education at Weill Cornell in New York, Dr. Alonso talks about the Medical Program with animation. This is an area very close to his heart: he supervised the introduction of the new curriculum at the Medical College in New York from 1996, and followed closely the medical students – 101 every year – as they went on to achieve success in both medical licensing examinations and obtaining residencies after graduation.

Breaking with the past

While the traditional practice in medical schools had been to teach the basic sciences in separate subject blocks, requiring the digestion of huge quantities of information in the first two years, the curriculum introduced in 1996 at WCMC-NY reduced the number of basic science courses, and completely Overhauled the way they are taught.

Courses are now presented in a progressive and integrated way, focusing on one system of the body at a time (for example, the respiratory system, the cardiovascular system, and many others), with contributions from seven or eight members of the faculty. “The students have one topic to deal with, and because it is presented to them by several faculty members, they see it from different perspectives,” explains Dr. Alonso.

In each case, a course design group, led by a course director, oversees the seamless integration of all the parts into the whole.

A “hybrid” program

There was also a move to make the learning experience more varied and challenging than before, with a significant amount of time devoted to self-learning and working in small groups. This was a controversial aspect of the curriculum at first, Dr. Alonso says: it takes “a leap of faith” to believe that students will put in the necessary hours of study away from teacher-controlled instruction – but experience has shown that the approach is sound.

Although lectures retain an important place in the curriculum, the construction of lecture courses has been entirely re-thought. Rather than trying to cover a single subject ‘from A through Z’, the practice now is for experts in each field to illuminate areas that are particularly complex, or where biomedical science is advancing so rapidly that the lectures are moving beyond the textbooks.

However, the daily schedule normally begins with a totally different kind of activity: problem-based learning (PBL) in small groups. With up to 30% of the time devoted to PBL, the new curriculum departs radically from the earlier model of medical education.

“It is a fundamental principle that we do everything as closely as possible to the way it is done in New York,”
— Daniel R. Alonso, M.D.
Dean of WCMC-Q
Every week, students working in groups of ten are given a clinical case to study. They must decide what information they should seek, allocate the tasks among the members, go and research the case, and meet again to discuss their findings. There are three sessions in the week, with supervision by a faculty member who acts as facilitator rather than deliverer of information.

As Dr. Alonso explains: “Students are responsible for their learning, they acquire the skills of problem-solving, and they learn to work with others. This is very important for the complexity of modern medical practice in teams.”

PBL sessions are supplemented by other forms of learning in groups, such as seminar discussions; at weekly journal clubs, students also learn to analyze research papers and make presentations to their group.

Early exposure to clinical practice

In another break with tradition, students begin to acquire the clinical (patient care) skills they will need as medical practitioners from the moment they enter the Medical College. This contrasts with medical education in the past, where there was no formal contact with clinical practice until the third year.

Fundamental to this purpose are the Medicine, Patients & Society (MPS) courses, which take place once a week during the first two years. Morning lectures and seminars at the Medical College are followed by office-based preceptorships in the evening.

Dr. Alonso is working closely with the Hamad Medical Corporation’s Department of Family Medicine to set up the preceptorships in selected clinics at Primary Health Centers in Doha. Not only will students observe how clinicians work – they will also have the opportunity to interact on a regular basis with doctors, other health care professionals and patients.

From the middle of the second year, the MPS course becomes even more clinically focussed. This way – and with the addition of several short courses, including a three week introduction to the clinical clerkship – the Medical College prepares its students for the hospital-based clerkships of the third year.

Describing the MPS courses as “hugely motivational,” Dr. Alonso explains: “they address principally issues of the relationship between the doctor and the patient: professionalism, communication with the patient and his family, and ethical issues. In addition, (we look at) how the young medical student gradually becomes a physician and understands what it is to be a doctor, and how to behave, as well as acquiring clinical skills. We now do this in a very gradual and comfortable way, starting in the first week of medical school.”

From finals to triple jump

Students are continuously assessed as they move through the system, and there are regular quizzes (tests) to monitor their progress. The old format final exams have been swept away, and replaced with the two-day “triple jump” at the end of each course – a problem-based test in three steps that is designed to assess both analytical capacity and the knowledge acquired while researching a problem.

In the final analysis, how well a student performs is the sum of many different parts over an extended period of time, an excellent preparation for the lifelong learning that is an integral part of medical practice.

A “dynamic curriculum”

Far from being a static program of studies, the Weill Cornell curriculum is constantly evolving, through a process of consultation and evaluation. Dr. Alonso explains that this was built into the system when the new curriculum was introduced:

“We decided collectively that the curriculum was a dynamic instrument which would not just settle down and not be changed. If change was required, we would change it.”

Each course is evaluated by the students, and then, at the end of the academic year, faculty, members of staff and student representatives meet at an academic retreat to discuss their concerns: “it’s a very healthy thing that people criticize openly what didn’t work, and discuss what went well – we are always trying to improve the curriculum.”

As a result, it may not be necessary to introduce drastic reforms in the future: just as biomedical sciences are changing, so too is the curriculum that medical students at Weill Cornell in New York and Qatar will follow.

For more information on the Medical Program, please visit our Website at www.med.cornell.edu/qatar
To the outside observer it might seem that replicating in another institution an educational program that is already well-established elsewhere would be quite straightforward. After all, it might be reasoned, if the program is running smoothly, there shouldn’t be too many challenges.

In practice, however, the challenges can be significant. In the case of implementing at WCMC-Q the program taught at Weill Cornell in New York, there is – just to start with – a distance of some 7,000 miles between ‘mother ship’ and newcomer.

A key figure in the team charged with ensuring a smooth launch for the Medical Program at WCMC-Q in September, Director of Planning Laurie Summers explains that a cornerstone of the project is that it will offer a replication of the program, quality and standards of Weill Cornell in New York.

“It’s critical, in order for Cornell to feel comfortable in awarding a Cornell degree, which has a long reputation of excellence, to ensure that any graduate who holds that degree has met certain standards. Maintenance of standards goes from the time of admission all the way through the Program to graduation.”

Many factors are taken into account in this; the net result will be that the M.D. degree to be awarded by WCMC-Q will “mirror” that awarded by Weill Cornell in New York: “you wouldn’t be able to tell the difference between a graduate of Weill Cornell in New York and a graduate from WCMC-Q.”

With a Masters degree in modern history, Summers comes to Weill Cornell in Qatar from Simon Fraser University in Canada, where she was Director for Academic Planning.

Describing herself cheerfully as a “Jill of all trades,” she says of her role at WCMC-Q: “I have to help make the Program happen. I deal with all the elements of the academic program that have to come together.”

Among the most challenging aspects of her task, supporting the process of planning the schedule of classes perhaps heads the list. The integrated, progressive curriculum has to be taught sequentially – you can’t just pick and choose which course, or parts of a course, you are going to offer as and when convenient. Yet how to ensure that sufficient faculty members are in the right place at the right time, given the huge geographical distance between the two Medical Colleges?

Then there is the slightly different working week (weekends are Friday and Saturday at WCMC-Q); and a time difference of 7 or 8 hours between New York and Doha.

One solution is to introduce a staggered schedule, with the Medical Program in Qatar beginning some two weeks later than that in New York. Another is to supplement teaching by faculty resident in Doha with visits from ‘episodic’ faculty based in the U.S. Once they finish teaching in New York, they will take the plane for Doha to teach the same module at WCMC-Q.

Yet other sessions will be taught by distance learning. Activities will be recorded for broadcast later (to allow for the time difference), and supplemented by interactive videoconferences between students in Qatar and faculty in the U.S. The system has been shown to work well for the Psychology 101 course in the Pre-medical Program.

Facilities at WCMC-Q are well prepared for the opening of the Medical Program. Seminar rooms (above) provide flexible spaces for group work, and clinical skills assessment suites (below) are fully equipped.
**A Revolution in Progress: Information Services at the Cutting Edge**

As you walk through the building of Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar, you cannot fail to notice clusters of tables with computers, particularly along the main corridor and on the upper floors of the North Hall. More than just work stations, these “pods” are an integral part of the library.

As Cornell University president, Jeffrey S. Lehman observed during his visit to the Medical College last October: “everywhere one looks, one sees these “pods” of computer terminals. It evokes a sense of the future; one sees vividly, not just in a corner of the library, that one is part of an educational institution where the most modern tools of telecommunications technology are ubiquitous.”

There are presently twelve “pods” in the building, with a total of sixty computers, and more are planned for the future. However, as this is a distributed electronic library, or eLibrary, it is not confined to these “pods.” It is available almost everywhere in the building – in hallways and lounges, seminar rooms and classrooms, labs and offices.

Wherever you see a computer, there you see the library.

A central part of the vision of Dean of WCMC-Q, Daniel R. Alonso, M.D., the library is truly innovative because it is ‘distributed.’ It is not uncommon for a library to offer access to electronic resources – but it is most unusual for it to be spread throughout a building.

“We chose to have a ‘library without walls,’” he explains, “because we wanted to bring the library to the user as opposed to have the user come to the library in the traditional way.”

It should be remembered, however, that the Medical College does have a reading room and a stock of print materials; some resources, particularly in the medical field, are only available in print form.

Dr. Alonso points out that you can take a laptop into any of the lecture halls, plug it in and access the electronic library from there. Once the wireless network comes on stream in the summer, it will also be possible to access its resources from anywhere in the building, by means of laptops.

(Continued on page 6)
Library Services
(Continued from page 5)

or personal digital assistants (PDAs). This way, WCMC-Q students will be familiar with using PDAs well before they begin the third-year clinical clerkships for which such equipment will be invaluable.

Director of the Distributed eLibrary, Jane Lindley says that this is just the latest in a whole series of revolutions that have transformed librarianship since she entered the profession in the 1960s. Talk to a librarian now, and you hear about portals and search engines, Internet connectivity and suites of applications, the librarian as “information manager.”

The library currently gives users at WCMC-Q on-line access to almost 3,000 journals and several hundred electronic books, Lindley adds.

From the WCMC-Q library Web page, users may pass through a portal to access the libraries of Cornell University in Ithaca and Weill Cornell in New York; by extension – using the interlibrary loan service – they can also use the resources of partner institutions, including Rockefeller University and Sloan-Kettering Research Institute.

If the item requested is only available in print, it can be scanned and sent electronically to WCMC-Q, although Lindley cautions that this is subject to limits in accordance with copyright law.

She emphasizes the ease of using the system: “it is transparent to the user and very rapid, because we have very fast Internet connectivity here. So it is easy to get from the library’s portal to any number of other relevant portals, taking people to the broadest possible universe for information.”

Such a resource will support not only the Pre-medical and Medical Programs, but also future research.

A sample of first and second-year pre-medical students at WCMC-Q seems generally positive about the distributed eLibrary. Some major issues of equipment have been sorted out: for example, printers are now positioned at every “pod.” Other issues remain unresolved – for second year student Amila Husic, the powerful air-conditioning in the building renders the metal seating quite uncomfortable: “the chairs are so cold that you have to bring some cushions with you, otherwise you are thinking about the cold all the time.”

Having a distributed library is considered a ‘plus’ in some ways: it provides a convenient service anywhere in the building, says first year Alia Al-Barwani. There is also general agreement that Internet access is excellent.

The “pods” that are situated in wide open spaces are complemented by seminar rooms equipped with Apple G5s, which are preferred by some students for quiet study, and provide a useful supplement to the reading room.

The “pods” are most useful for last-minute work just before a lab or lecture consultation, Amila says. First year Saad Thara finds them good for teamwork: “the areas are spacious, so you can collaborate with other people nearby. The setting is convenient and effective.”

One problem with using electronic resources is that some students lack good searching skills. The good news here is that WCMC-Q librarians offer training in techniques of Internet searching.

While researching his presentation on prion diseases for the clinical correlates course, second year Mohammed Al-Rayahi found the textbooks were already out of date. However, searching the Internet for papers on recent advances in the field proved a challenge too far: “it was difficult, because I lack the ability to search for specific information.”

Against this, both Amila and first year student Fouad Otaki are positive. Fouad comments: “the possibilities are endless. We’re not limited to the fact that we only have a certain number of books – we can access the New York library, the journals and all that stuff.”

Amila successfully used both PubMed and Mesh while researching topics for the ethics course last semester. Although she did not access full texts, she went to the abstracts and then searched for related materials.

One area of fairly general agreement is that in order to read or study a text, they need to have a hard copy – something they can pick up and leaf through. As Amila says: “I cannot imagine studying or reading anything on the computer. I have to print it out.”

What the Students Say:

Reference librarian Dianne Cmor uses her PowerBook to bring information to first year pre-med students Manisha Deb Roy, Omar Shams and Jinan Al-Shaarani in the student lounge.

Printers are now positioned at every “pod.”
Lecture hall three is rapidly filling, and there’s a real buzz of anticipation in the air. Faculty, teaching assistants and students are joined by librarians and other support staff. As the IT technician readies the computer on the lectern, we note that the auditorium has rarely seemed so full.

Something unusual must be afoot and, indeed, one or two students are hovering surprisingly close to the podium. Welcome to clinical correlates – part of BIOG 400 – and a presentation by members of the Class of 2008.

Powerpoint presentation ready to roll, document camera set up, laser pointer in one hand and a sheaf of notes in the other, student Lama Oreibi takes the floor. With Michelle Al-Khulaifi, she proceeds to illuminate a relatively common disease of the eye: glaucoma. They present the subject with confidence and not a little humor, battle with animations that won’t work, and end by fielding questions from faculty and students that provoke a discussion across the auditorium lasting until well after the class has finished.

Exciting classes are “clinically relevant”

Designed to complement the biochemistry lecture course for second year pre-medical students, this series is the brainchild of Dr. Suresh Tate, professor of biochemistry at WCMC-Q. He explains that the idea is to reveal to students how the science they study in the biochemistry course is related to disease, while at the same time introducing them gently to the demands of the Medical Program.

“We are trying to ease them into the medical school courses, steering them into the next stage and making their lives easier there,” says Dr. Tate, who also teaches in ‘Molecules to Cells’, one of four basic science courses in the first year of the Medical Program.

He is enormously encouraged by the success of the present series. Of this session he comments: “I’m very proud of the students. They have put together a marvelous presentation, and they’ve worked really hard on this. And since it’s clinically relevant, it’s more exciting for them because it brings everything together and makes them see the relevance of basic science in medicine, right there.”

Clinical correlates is one of several tailor-made courses in the second year of the specially designed two-year Pre-medical Program that is offered by WCMC-Q as a preparation for the four-year Medical Program. Among others are medical ethics (see page 13), immunology, and neuroscience.

Associate Dean for Pre-medical Education and professor of physiology, Dr. David Robertshaw says that the purpose is to give students a good grounding in areas that are important in modern medicine, such as molecular biology and genetics, before they enter the Medical Program.

He worked closely with colleagues at Weill Cornell in New York to design the Pre-medical Program. Their aim was not only to ensure integration with the Medical Program, but also to avoid duplication of subject matter.

In addition, pre-medical students enjoy a variety of learning experiences, including seminars and small group work (such as these presentations), so they have a foretaste of the group work and self-learning that are fundamentals of life at medical school.

Researching the topic

Back in the auditorium, Lama and Michelle share their thoughts: the biochemistry lecture on enzymes the previous week made it much easier to understand the topic, which focused on glaucoma and the use of enzyme inhibitors in its treatment.

For the additional research, they went to the course textbook and the Internet. Searching through electronic resources was fast and straightforward, says Michelle; even so, they estimate it took “four continuous, full days” to complete the presentation.

Although finding information was (Continued on page 13)
Faculty News

WCMC-Q appoints new Senior Associate Dean for Research

Gary B. Schneider, Ph.D., has been appointed Senior Associate Dean for Research at WCMC-Q. Dr. Schneider, pictured right, is an expert in musculoskeletal disorders with, in addition, extensive experience in developing research projects in numerous other areas of the biomedical sciences.

Dr. Schneider comes to WCMC-Q from Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine (Neoucom), where he was Associate Dean for Research and Basic Sciences. Most of his career has been in academic medicine; he has held appointments at a number of leading universities in the United States.

The primary research programs carried out by Dr. Schneider involve drug discovery and gene therapy as potential treatments for a number of bone diseases and skeletal disorders. He is an inventor on multiple patents related to musculoskeletal diseases, and he has worked with a range of businesses on the development of new technologies in the fields of human stem cells, drug discovery and medical devices.

Dr. Schneider will divide his time between the Weill Cornell campuses in New York and Doha.

Visiting WCMC-Q during the spring semester 2004 are Antonie Blackler, Ph.D. and Syed Naqi, Ph.D.

Professor Emeritus of developmental biology in the department of molecular biology and genetics at Cornell University in Ithaca, Dr. Blackler taught the inaugural class in the spring semester 2003. He has made a welcome return to Doha to teach introductory biology to first year students, and human genetics and society to the inaugural class, now in their second year.

The first year course is designed to introduce basic principles and concepts of biological science, says Dr. Blackler. In the second year course, he looks at the science of genetics, and discusses some of the ethical dilemmas that this rapidly advancing field presents.

Teaching in the new building of WCMC-Q is very different from his experience last year. Then, the Medical College was housed in the intimate setting of a wing of Qatar Academy. Now, in the new building, the sense of vast interior space is accentuated by the small number of people working there at this early stage, Dr. Blackler comments.

He describes the lab facilities as “great.” He explains: “biology and genetics are practical subjects, so the more labs we have, the better we are as teachers of the disciplines. It goes beyond chalk and talk.”

Professor Emeritus in the department of microbiology and immunology at the College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University, Dr. Naqi is visiting WCMC-Q for the first time.

The second-year pre-medical immunology course that he teaches has been specially designed for the Pre-medical Program at WCMC-Q at the request of faculty at Weill Cornell Medical College in New York.

The aim is to give students a general introduction to the subject: “we are talking in generic terms – how autoimmune diseases occur and so on, and we are giving the students the vocabulary, the basic concepts, and the terminology.” He believes that a background in veterinary science enables him to take a very broad view, giving the students the foundation they need for their future studies in the Medical Program.

Indian by birth, Dr. Naqi also introduces a global perspective into the discussion of the topics he covers, such as vaccination.

(Continued on page12)
“Marhaba—Welcome”

So much has been going on at WCMC-Q this year—the opening of the new building and the inauguration of President Jeffrey S. Lehman in October, the Pre-medical Program moving into the second year, preparations to open the Medical Program in September—that now we are taking time to catch up with our students.

In many ways, student life at WCMC-Q is much the same as anywhere else: the talk is of lectures and labs, assignments and prelims, dorms and food, basketball and bowling, and—let’s be frank—stress. This is far from being the whole story, however: for a start, our students are pioneers.

Student Council Formed

Meet Ibrahim Sultan, president of the Medical Student Executive Council (MSEC), founded last November. Notwithstanding his relaxed appearance, Ibrahim says the MSEC has a serious role: “we are there for the students. As soon as the new first years came in last September, we realized that we needed a unified voice—students have a lot of requests and demands, and we guide them through the process of presenting these to the Office of Student Affairs.”

The MSEC also represents students’ views to faculty, and works with the teaching assistants (TAs) on identifying academic needs within each department.

Enhancing facilities for students has been one area for immediate action—new cushions quickly appeared in the student lounge, and work is ongoing to set up a recreation room, with pool table and TV/DVD player.

Then there are social activities, such as bowling events and end-of-semester (or year) celebrations, and plans—under discussion—to enhance links with students at other institutions in Education City. Inter-college games are on the agenda, though Ibrahim can’t say when for sure.

Pioneers they may be, but if WCMC-Q students need to discuss how the MSEC should work, they are lucky to have help, if not at hand, then certainly within calling distance. Using the latest in videoconferencing technology, they can tap into the expertise of their colleagues from the MSEC at Weill Cornell in New York.

Of course, for more everyday enquiries, e-mail enables them to keep open the lines of communication. Has this been helpful? Definitely, says Ibrahim: the experience of students in New York is invaluable in such areas as forming clubs and managing the budget.

Clubs Swing into Action

Hot on the heels of the launch of the MSEC, several clubs have swung into action. Last month, the community services club opened a health education campaign to nip smoking in the bud, targeting young people across Education City. This was complemented by a blood donation session organized in cooperation with the Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC).

The anti-smoking campaign is spearheaded by pre-medical students Kunali Dalal and Heba Haddad. Says Heba: “smoking in our society is becoming a really big issue, especially with teenagers. They know it’s wrong, but they still smoke.”

The students are focusing on prevention at this stage. “This is just the beginning—we would like to present students in Education City with the facts to prevent them from smoking. Then we’ll move on to the smokers,” explains Kunali.

Armed with a leaflet prepared by the club’s pamphlet group, fortified by lectures from HMC experts followed by a thoughtful question and answer session, an invited audience in lecture hall one watched as the community services club joined forces with members of the drama club to stage a light-hearted skit looking at one man’s physical and emotional struggle with tobacco.

With a trio of dancing cigarettes, and a somewhat staccato script, the play—“Hazy Dreams”—was packed with surprises. Written and directed by Ali Saad, who also had a starring role opposite Ayobami Omosola, it was intended to be both thought provoking and entertaining. Ironically, the cigarettes stole the show.

Kicking the habit: Ali Saad, Ayobami Omosola—and the dancing cigarettes.
The second day was surgery, and the doctor gave me permission to change into scrubs and go into the operating room. I was very lucky. He taught me a lot – when I walked out, I remembered the points he told me – the first deep principles.

— Mohammed Al-Rayahi

Winter work experience

Apparently blessed with boundless energy, some of our pre-medical students have taken up the opportunity for work experience offered by Qatar Foundation (QF).

It’s a thoroughly enjoyable break from studying, says Maryam Shafae, who joined the PR team at the Foundation during the winter break – and got so involved, that she stayed.

The hours are very flexible, from about 5 hours a week during the holiday to perhaps just 2 hours a week during the semester. Her duties have ranged from clerical work to joining in meetings leading up to the opening of the Liberal Arts and Science building in February (see pages 16-17).

What started as a hobby for Mohammed Al-Rayahi (left), building Websites for fun, has now turned into a very useful skill. Having worked on the WCMC-Q student Website, he is now assisting QF staff to update the Foundation’s site, and working on ideas for a new design.

An incredibly talented bunch!
It probably comes as no surprise to know that a sports club was among the first to be formed by students at WCMC-Q. Ably assisted by several TAs, who are truly exemplars of the sporting spirit, Weill Cornell in Qatar looks set to establish a formidable reputation.

Maybe the cricket match held recently on the east court isn’t quite what we had in mind. Even with the best efforts of some dedicated faculty members, and well-known devotee of the sport Charles Paragg (director of student affairs), this was no test match – despite the ‘Oval’ shapes of the nearby lecture halls. No, what we mean is the kind of prowess observed by first-year pre-medical student Faizah Siddique, who reports below on a memorable match.

**Cornell Spirit**

This was the main chant of the vociferous Cornell supporters who appeared at the Qatar Academy gym to watch an official basketball match between our very own WCMC-Q Boys Basketball Team and the Qatar Academy (QA) Boys Basketball Team. After months of waiting, the WCMC-Q Team was formed with TA Robert Cronin as coach and first year Fouad Otaki as captain. Other members of the team were TAs Fahad Hassan and Caleb Kovell, second years Mohammed Al-Rayahi and Subhi Al-Aref, and first years Imran Farooq, Muhamed Baljevic, Saad Thara, Omar Shams, and Amin Saad.

The game began with the starting line-up attempting to defend against the agile QA team. Unfortunately, the Cornell boys were lagging thirteen points behind their opponents at the end of the first quarter. The tables, however, were to turn dramatically after this period. A group of Cornell supporters appeared on the scene, shouting, stomping, clapping and cheering the team on. The results of this were immediate. Not only did the atmosphere become more adrenaline-pumped, but the Cornell team also ended the second quarter with an eight-point lead.

The remainder of the game was filled with superb offensive and defensive tactics that displayed the true meaning of teamwork by both sides. As the Cornell team scored basket after basket, it was soon evident who would be champions. With a final score of 59 to 50, the Cornell team had earned the thunderous applause from their supporters as the referee blew the final whistle.

In essence, this game revealed the spirit of the WCMC-Q students in general. They formed their own team and organized the first official match with another school, while the match itself demonstrated the ability of the students and faculty to work together as a team and overcome all the obstacles to come out on top.

Special thanks to the student media group for their help with photography for these pages.

Team spirit: the winning WCMC-Q basketball team. Back row l to r TA Fahad Hassan, TA Caleb Kovell, Muhamed Baljevic, Fouad Otaki (captain), Imran Farooq, Saad Thara; front row l to r Omar Shams, Subhi Al-Aref, TA Robert Cronin (coach), Mohammed Al-Rayahi, Amin Saad

On the cover: time out for second year pre-med students Maryam Shafaee and Ayobami Omosola at the WCMC-Q cricket match.
them a chance to learn about the theory and practice of basic life support (BLS) skills.

The aim is to equip participants with the skills to handle an emergency situation without panicking, effectively “buying time” until the ambulance arrives, said Dr. Dina Zak, one of the training team. While it is certainly highly appropriate for WCMC-Q students to take it, the course is designed for the general public – and everyone should sign up for it, she added.

Lectures, instruction sessions and practice on mannequins allowed students both to grasp the principles behind what they were learning, and to develop their skills in putting the techniques into practice. The response was upbeat:

Sara Hassan commented: “we are used to seeing BLS on television, but we didn’t know anything of why or how they are doing it. Here, when talking about cardiac arrest, the doctors explained the anatomy of the heart first, then the physiology, and then how to deal with a cardiac arrest.”

Haeefa Al-Malki, already certified in First Aid, summarized “it’s intensive, and so cool to be able to do this!”

**Faculty news**

(continued from page 8)

Returning to take up an appointment as director of the introductory biology labs is Chris Ogden, Ph.D. He has been involved in running these labs at Cornell University since 1987, and he assisted with them at WCMC-Q in the spring semester last year.

A keen road cyclist, Dr. Ogden now plans to acquire a mountain bike and explore Qatar. As a biologist, he notes that there is plenty to discover: “I’m not accustomed to the deserts in the U.S., so being in an arid environment here means that there’s a lot of interesting stuff for me to look at – the geology and the biology. All the native plants are adapted for water stress, for example.”

**Notes from Faculty**

Marco Ameduri, Ph.D., senior lecturer in physics at WCMC-Q, is coauthor with Richard A. Klemm, Ph.D., visiting professor at the University of North Dakota, U.S.A., of a paper published in the January 2004 edition of the Journal of Physics A from the British Institute of Physics. Here he introduces his area of research, and summarizes the paper entitled “Exact time correlation functions for N classical Heisenberg spins in the ‘squashed’ equivalent neighbour model.”

The general area of my recent papers is the study of the so-called magnetic molecules. These molecules are characterized by a small number of magnetic atoms at their core, surrounded by a larger non-magnetic structure. This geometry makes them quite unique, in that the strength of the magnetic interaction among the magnetic atoms in one molecule is much larger than the strength of the magnetic interaction between atoms sitting at the core of two different molecules. These materials could therefore lead to improved memory devices, or one day be useful in the design of quantum computers.

In our paper, my coauthor and I focused on a type of models describing these magnetic materials. The models we study are exactly solvable: it is possible to compute physically relevant quantities without introducing mathematical approximations. Even though the models are rather too simple to capture all the complexity of the real molecules, the existence of exact results will provide us with a powerful guide to construct and solve more realistic models, as well as to understand some of the qualitative features associated with the complex structure of the real molecules.

Accessible at stacks.iop.org/JPhysA/37/1095
**INSIGHT:**

From Hippocrates to Kafka: Medical Ethics in the Modern World

Pablo Rodríguez del Pozo, M.D., Ph.D., J.D.

The Metamorphosis, Franz Kafka’s grim tale of a traveling salesman-turned-cockroach, isn’t an obvious reading choice for second-year pre-medical students accustomed to a steady diet of biology, chemistry and physics. But students last semester sank their teeth into this and other classics, along with introductory bioethics pieces, in WCMC-Q’s first course on medical ethics and humanities (S&TD 505 – Medical Ethics). In the process they explored broader truths about what it means, today, to be a doctor and a patient.

WCMC-Q is giving its students this early dose of medical ethics in order to prepare them for the higher-level ethics courses they will encounter later in their educational career with Cornell. The course was designed specifically for the Doha campus, in conjunction with the College’s Division of Medical Ethics in New York.

S&TD 505 was intended to get students thinking about a wide range of philosophical and ethical issues related to medicine. The questions were to be approached from a perspective that highlighted universal values yet acknowledged local cultural variations, making the field of bioethics as meaningful to a doctor practicing in the Middle East as it is to the physician in New York. Issues discussed ranged from scientific constructs for understanding the human body, to the enduring relevance of Hippocrates’ teachings; from the toll illness takes on families to the allocation of ever-scarce healthcare resources; from the complex life of doctors-in-training to the even more intricate world of the patient.

Identifying these and other issues from the texts we read was only one part of the course. It was also aimed at getting students used to discussion-oriented classes, in which forming an intelligent opinion about a text is as important as understanding its content. In addition, the course gave students extensive practice in writing academic essays.

These skills, along with the new philosophical awareness, will come in handy later when as full-fledged medical students the group will be required to study in-depth the specifics of ethical quandaries in the earliest and latest stages of life, in the doctor-patient relationship, and in medical research. The medical curriculum contemplates two half-semester courses in the field, one in the fundamentals of medical ethics and the other in ethical problems at the end of life. Both courses cover institutional and regulatory aspects of medical practice.

These courses, from pre-med through medical school, seek to sow among students the seeds of what we hope will be a life-long interest in some of the more human and social aspects of medicine. Beyond that, we intend to train doctors who are sensitive to the ethical problems arising from modern medicine, and who can tackle them in a way that is consistent with their own traditions and with those of their patients.

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**Clinical correlates (continued from page 7)**

quite easy, deciding how much detail to include was not, and they needed guidance on how to construct their talk. Here, teaching assistant (TA) Rob Cronin gave them his advice.

Cronin is impressed by the amount of effort put in by all the students who have made presentations. The week before, Rana Biary and Yasir Tarabichi looked at sickle cell anemia; topics to come include cholera and hypercholesterolemia.

“The credit goes to the students. They have really researched their topics well,” comments Cronin.

He notes that the question and answer sessions are a test of how much work they have done, and he is very positive: “you could tell from how they were able to field the questions that they really knew what they were talking about. It really is the students presenting that makes this class what it is.”

Facing questions from members of faculty who are experts in their field could be a daunting experience. How do the students prepare themselves? Lama says that they read around the subject extensively, again guided by Cronin.

This point was taken up earlier by Mohammed Al-Rayahi, whose presentation on prion diseases, with Khaled Al-Khelaifi, kicked off the series: “the question session was interesting. It really tests you, shows if you know the material. I could answer most of the questions, and if I couldn’t, then I said so.”

In this situation, a member of faculty usually steps in; it is noteworthy that, on occasion, the response has to be that scientists do not yet have the answer.

And the audience reaction? After the applause, and as they left the lecture hall, there were comments about having learned something new. Among the older members of the community, there was also perhaps a new resolve to have their eyes tested on a regular basis.
Library Services
(continued from page 6)

programs at the Medical College. Dr. Alonso believes that this is crucial:
“This is an absolutely essential component for the research program. It is a resource that cannot be underestimated. Although designed primarily for our students and faculty, a library like ours, with combined assets of electronic access to current biomedical information and also electronic access to our libraries in New York for older materials, is a unique resource for the country and the region.”

Entry to the library resources is via a unique WCMC-Q eLibrary portal, through which users move into the most recent version of the Millennium suite of software. A flexible, integrated library management system, it comprises a range of modules designed to streamline the searching process and provide links to both abstracts and full-text resources.

The WCMC-Q Intranet will allow users to customize the ‘My eLibrary’ section to carry the information and references that are most important to them. Associate Director of the eLibrary, Carole Thompson, explains the value of the facility: “‘My eLibrary’ is configurable – it can be customized to each person’s needs – and it can be accessed from anywhere in the world. It also allows for constant updates in the area that the user is interested in, through software-initiated searches.”

One major function of the electronic library is to provide tailor-made course support, and the reference librarians are already working on this, by attending classes, selecting appropriate resources and posting targeted information for students on the Website.

Victoria Marshall, Manager of Information Resources, is enthusiastic: “I think we are doing something really original and exciting with the course-based focus – we have an opportunity here to give the students a real package so they don’t have to go here, there and everywhere to try and find information.” She envisages that librarians will be able to actively push relevant new information to the students, something that is beyond the resources of most libraries.

Librarians at WCMC-Q say that, down the line, the support pages they provide could be integrated with course pages set up by faculty, creating a tailor-made package for each course.

All this suggests that, even when a library is both predominantly electronic and widely distributed throughout a building, librarians are still at the heart of its operations. You might argue, however, that of course they would say that, wouldn’t they?

The reality seems to be that their role is still very important – and it continues to change fast. Librarians are becoming roaming “information managers” who move around the sector of the building allocated to them, equipped with a laptop, and play an active role in helping students and faculty find the information they need quickly and efficiently.

More generally, as Dr Alonso observes, the role of the librarian is also changing in the hospital setting, where they are beginning to join medical teams on the wards to provide assistance in accessing vital medical information as and where it is needed.

Far from rendering librarians obsolete, the latest revolution in information technology seems to be bringing them even closer to the heart of the academic institution.
**Web Watch**

In each issue of the Weill Cornell Qatar Chronicle, we take a look at Useful Websites. This month, we feature two sites of particular relevance to second-year pre-medical students taking the clinical correlates course.

**MD Consult Core Collection**, at [http://home.mdconsult.com/groups/cornell1042.html](http://home.mdconsult.com/groups/cornell1042.html) includes the full text of 40 medical reference texts, 78 journals, more than 1000 practice guidelines, 3500 patient education handouts, and prescribing information for over 30,000 medications. Additional features include: Today in Medicine, What Patients Are Reading, In This Week’s Journals, Clinical Topic Tours, Drug Updates, CME and Student Union (with practice case studies).

Choose the basic or advanced search, enter a keyword (your topic) and the results will be shown in each linked category (e.g. reference books, MEDLINE journal search, etc.) The latest addition to this resource is MDC Mobile to record searches on your PDA and then automatically retrieve results.

**Contributor:** Tracy Havlin, reference librarian

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**One Library, One Community**

A four-member team from the Samuel J. Wood Library and the C.V. Starr Biomedical Information Center at Weill Cornell Medical College in New York visited Doha in February to explore ways of cooperating with colleagues at WCMC-Q. The aim is to provide optimal services to the academic community at both institutions, including – eventually - a 24-hour interactive ‘virtual reference’ service.

“This is a grand opportunity for all of us to work together and build a digital electronic library that would truly be a library of the future,” commented Carolyn Anne Reid, Acting Director of the Library and Information Center in New York.

Among the areas under discussion were sharing the bibliographic records already built up at WCMC-NY, ensuring a “seamless transfer” of information between the institutions in New York and WCMC-Q.

“What we really want to have is one library serving one community as much as physically possible, ignoring the fact that we are almost halfway around the world,” said Danny Cleary, Head of Information and Access at the New York facilities.

The visiting librarians were also interested to understand more of the latest version of Millennium software acquired by Weill Cornell in Qatar, since the Medical College in New York will be moving to the system.

Systems Coordinator, Octavio Morales, commented: “we are going to be upgrading to that version soon, and we want to know what the pitfalls are when we go to that new system. It’s a mutual learning experience.”

In one important way, the geographical distance between the two Medical Colleges can be harnessed to work in everyone’s favor. There are plans to provide a 24-hour ‘virtual reference’ service for users at both institutions, with librarians on duty in Qatar able to provide information to users in New York when it is night-time there, and librarians in New York assisting users in Doha when it is night-time here.

Faculty, students or staff will be guided to the resources they need through a form of online chat-room – “between the two of us, I think we should be able to cover 24/7 in the not too distant future,” Cleary said.

This heralds the start of another revolution, in terms of the assistance that will be available to users, said Mark E. Funk, Head of Collection Development at the New York facilities; as he quipped, “it negates the stereotype of libraries and librarians being stodgy and stuck in their ways.”

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**Contributor:** Paula Craig, coordinator for e-learning and continuing education.
The Vision of Education City: Intellectual Polis of the Future

Dynamic and still expanding, the Qatar Foundation’s Education City is set to become a self-contained community in an environment designed to the highest standards – an extraordinary place in which to live and work, a kind of intellectual polis for the twenty-first century.

The third master plan for the City, unveiled early in 2004, envisages major new developments with completion targeted for 2009.

WCMC-Q is strategically located at the heart of the campus, just south of the main east-west highway. With a 350-bed specialty hospital to the north, to be accessed by a purpose-built underpass, and a range of central facilities intended for use by the whole campus just a stone’s throw to the west, the Medical College will be at the center of activity.

Remarkably, Al-Jazeera satellite channel will also have a home within the City; its new children’s channel will go out from here, starting in late 2004.

The plans for Education City have undergone several changes since work began in the mid-1990s. The brainchild of His Highness the Emir of Qatar, and of Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned, chairperson of the Qatar Foundation, the project is being implemented with extraordinary speed and attention to detail, thanks to their interest and dedication, says engineer Saad Al-Muhannadi, capital project manager at Qatar Foundation.

It has grown from the original 500,000 square meters to some 10 million square meters (2,500 acres) according to current plans. Allowing for expansion of the Science and Technology Park, this could well increase in the future.

Such an ambitious project could not be achieved without the contribution of key players working with the Qatar Foundation (QF), says Al-Muhannadi, notably Qatar Petroleum and KEO International.

He explains that the QF aims to set up a “triangle of excellence” – attracting some of the world’s leading universities to establish branch campuses on the site; developing research and applied technology in the Park; and providing a superb physical environment that will match the quality of the programs that are offered.

Universities already present are Cornell, Virginia Commonwealth University College of Design Arts, and Texas A&M; last month, it was formally announced that Carnegie Mellon University is to offer computer science and business administration courses from September 2004.

The university zone will be hugely expanded over the coming years, since QF has acquired more land to the east of WCMC-Q, where programs will be established for everything from international studies to music.

Amid the flurry of activity last October, when the new building of WCMC-Q was opened and Education City was officially launched, the new Science and Technology Park took a major leap forward as commercial grants such as ExxonMobil and European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company (EADS) signed memorandums of understanding with QF.

The design of the whole campus is influenced by the idea of an oasis. A “green spine” of lawns and palm trees runs north-south through the City, culminating with a planned auditorium and conference center seating up to 7,500 to the north, and an open air ceremonial courtyard balancing this to the south.

The renowned Japanese architect Arata Isozaki, who drew up the plan, also designed the new home of WCMC-Q, and the recently opened Liberal Arts & Science building (seen opposite); other structures are the work of leading architects from across the world, including Ricardo Legorreta of Mexico. Buildings are designed with the environment in mind – for example, the double skin of WCMC-Q reduces solar impact, and the wind towers of the Liberal Arts building are not purely for decoration – they actually cool the underground garage.

The central facilities, just across the “green spine” from WCMC-Q, will include a main library, its
The Qatar Foundation aims to set up a “triangle of excellence”—attracting some of the world’s leading universities to establish branch campuses on the site; developing research and applied technology in the Park; and providing a superb physical environment that will match the quality of the programs that are offered.

A striking shape inspired by the asymmetrical ‘quasi-crystal’; QF headquarters; a main students’ center with recreational facilities; and a faculty center.

A key aim is to create a vibrant community atmosphere, says Al-Muhannadi. The faculty center will be one way to achieve this: “we would like to have more interaction between all the university faculty. We want them to meet and mingle with each other, to exchange ideas, so we create the idea of one university on this campus.”

For the students, there are significant plans to transform both housing, and sports and recreation facilities. New or upgraded accommodations will be provided, maintaining the principle of separate blocks for male and female students. Indoor and outdoor arenas, and an 18-hole golf course designed to international standards are planned, while the existing Al-Shaqab riding school, with its beautiful Arabian horses, is now within the Education City boundary.

There is much more: a whole new compound of housing for faculty to the northwest, (outside the present boundary of the City); a commercial development with five-star hotel and selected retail outlets; and new headquarters for the Social Development Center and Qatar Diabetes Association, close to the Specialty Hospital.

Despite the scale and speed of development, Al-Muhannadi is keen to point out that the past will not be forgotten. Small areas, marked red on the diagram (see page 16) to designate heritage sites where traditional structures survive, will be preserved and converted into museums and cafeterias.

“It is very important to the founder of the Education City that we preserve the past of this country within the City. Even with all the development and technology being introduced into the country, still you have roots and customs that you are respecting.”

Adjusting to university life can be difficult for students, wherever they are. An emphasis on independent study and critical thinking, and new social challenges, mean that there’s a lot to handle; changing from an Arabic medium school to university programs in English makes the learning curve that much steeper.

This is where the Academic Bridge Program (ABP) can help.

The science courses are designed primarily to equip students with the language skills they will need, rather than to upgrade their knowledge of science.

The focus is also on developing powers of analysis, and logical and creative thinking.

As a coeducational program, the ABP readies students for the social reality of the university environment. Most come from single-sex high schools, and find the change challenging: “it’s a very big step for them,” says Dr. Davis, Director of admissions at WCMC-Q. Lee Askin, regularly visits the ABP to talk to students, answer their questions and explain the admissions process.

“The ABP is the most important single source of applicants for the Pre-medical Program,” says Askin, “each year, over a third of our students have come in from there.”
Former President Clinton Visits WCMC-Q

WCMC-Q has welcomed numerous visitors since the turn of the year, notably former U.S. President Bill Clinton.

Mr. Clinton, who was in Doha to attend a conference on relations between the U.S. and the Islamic world, came to the Medical College in January at the invitation of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development. He spoke to students from across Education City, who gathered with senior staff in a lecture hall at WCMC-Q to hear the charismatic former leader speak and put their questions to him.

In his speech, Mr. Clinton urged the young generation to rise to the challenges of the twenty-first century, which he termed “the age of interdependence.” He identified economic development, health, the environment and education as key areas for action.

Mr. Clinton encouraged the students to “accentuate the positive” aspects of the current world order for the future. “The great challenge of your time is to convert the world from simple interdependence to an integrated global community,” he said.

He expressed great interest in the Education City project: “a university like this can change the face of a whole country and region, and will certainly change the futures of the people who come into it,” he said, citing evidence from the U.S. of a direct link between duration of university education and higher standards of living.

During the meeting, he also fielded questions from students on the Middle East peace process, relations between the U.S. and Iran, the situation in Iraq, inequalities in wealth among nations, and other topics.

Other visitors to WCMC-Q included former U.S. Vice President Al Gore; President Maaouya Ould Sidi Ahmad Al-Taya of Mauritania; Egyptian Minister of Culture, Farouq Hosni; Dr. Istvan Hiller, Hungarian Minister of National Cultural Heritage; Jean Obeid, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates in Lebanon; Blaise Godet Head of Switzerland’s Directorate of Political Affairs; and a group of Members of Parliament from Germany.

A party comprising Mr. John Jumper, wife of the Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force, Mrs. Walter Buchanan, wife of the Commander of the 9th Air Force and U.S. Central Command Forces, Major Higgins of the U.S. Air Force and U.S Embassy officials visited the Medical College in December.

Later that month, a delegation led by Bishop of the Indian Orthodox Church, His Grace Geevarghese Mar Coorilos, toured the building.

Among visitors from the field of education, WCMC-Q welcomed Cornell University Trustee Mr. Nelson Schaenen and his family; a group of more than 30 experts who were in Doha for the second International Conference on Chemistry and its Applications, held at Qatar University in December 2003; a party of Deans of universities in the Gulf region; and members of a Swiss delegation, in Doha for an education fair.

Surgeon-in-Chief of the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, Canada, John Wedge, M.D., FRCSC, came to WCMC-Q in February accompanied by Cathy Seguin, RN, MBA, Vice President of Child Health Services at the hospital.

Prominent figure in the voluntary field in Kuwait, Her Highness Sheikha Amthal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, President of the Kuwait Volunteer Work Committee, also visited the Medical College.
The artist behind the painting featured on the WCMC-Q greeting card for the festival of Eid Al-Adha in February, Amal Al-Athem, is well known in Qatar for her large canvases, glowing with colors and touched with echoes of the past. With its central image, part of the trunk of a palm tree, “The Peak” is typical of her work, which often features this immensely hardy desert tree. Here, the trunk sweeps across the canvas from lower right up to top left, growing lighter and brighter as it nears the sun. “For me, the palm tree means strength: with its strong roots, it is a tree that can survive in dry conditions without food or rainwater. Nothing can move it,” she commented. Beside the tree – and in a sense, emerging from it – is a community of buildings, encircled by a delicate line. The structures have the distinctive forms of the traditional buildings of the Gulf region, with their wind towers and warm earth colors. It is an eloquent image that communicates both the contemporary drive in the region to move forward – towards the peak – and the importance of remaining true to the traditions and culture of the area. Where the painting has departed from many of her more recent works is in the use of darker tones. Amal chose the rich colors of the peacock for the background, giving an unusual intensity to the work. A full time teacher of art, and an active member of Qatar Fine Arts Society, the mother of three was born in Bahrain, and trained in both theatre design in Kuwait and art education in Qatar. She is a regular participant in exhibitions in Doha, where she has held three solo shows. Amal has also shown her work in Bahrain, and, most recently, took part in the Cairo Biennale in December 2003 – one of the foremost art events in the Middle East.

Congressional Resolution in Honor of the Official Opening of WCMC-Q

Some 20 members of staff from the U.S. Congress, who were in Qatar at the invitation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, came to WCMC-Q in January, where they met Dean of the Medical College, Daniel R. Alonso, M.D., and presented him with a Resolution from the Congressional Record and a United States flag. The Resolution was introduced in the House by Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney following her visit to Qatar for the official opening of the new building of WCMC-Q on October 12, 2003. Recognizing the importance of the partnership between Cornell University and the Qatar Foundation, the Resolution states that the opening of the Medical College is “the beginning of an important exchange between the West and the East.” It concludes: “you have built a bridge that will have far-reaching impact into the future and will serve as a model of achievement for many to follow.”

The flag was flown over the Capitol, on October 24, in honor of WCMC-Q and the Qatar Foundation. Congresswoman Maloney, who represents the district of New York, played an important role in opening the way for the agreement between Cornell University and the Qatar Foundation to set up a branch of Weill Cornell Medical College in New York, in the State of Qatar.
Campus Connections

At the invitation of Dr. Antonio M. Gotto Jr., Dean of WCMC-NY, a gathering at the Medical College in New York early in March heard more about recent developments and future plans at WCMC-Q. Joe Habboushe, Student Overseer and a visitor to Weill Cornell in Qatar last summer, where he assisted with the MCAT preparation and student Website design, kindly sent us a report of the meeting.

T he Qatar Information Session, held in Weill Auditorium, went very well! It was attended by about 70 faculty, administrators, physicians, and students. Dr. Bernice Graefe, who organized the event, introduced the speakers. Dean Gotto was first, speaking on the background and history of the school. Dean Alonso followed him, explaining how it has grown and where we are headed, including the new building and facilities and an overview of both the Pre-medical and Medical Programs. I was next, giving my perspective as a visitor to Qatar, and what we’re doing now to connect our campuses, including the summer exchange program and joint

WCMC-Q Campus Notes

Senior AAMC Official Visits WCMC-Q

At the time of going to press, Dr. Ellen Julian, assistant vice president of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), and director of the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), was due to visit WCMC-Q. Among the events scheduled during the five-day visit were a meeting to answer questions from WCMC-Q students, and a public lecture given to an invited audience.

Success in the MCAT is one of the pre-requisites for admission to almost all medical schools in North America. WCMC-Q is the only MCAT examination center in the Gulf region; the next exam takes place at the Medical College on April 17th.

Welcome to WCMC-Q

Since the Weill Cornell Qatar Chronicle was last published in December 2003, many new members of staff have joined the team; at a recent town hall meeting, Vice Dean Havva Idriss reported that there are now over 100 faculty and staff at WCMC-Q.

A warm welcome to the following regular staff members:

- Laurie Summers, director of planning; Thomas Doyle, director of environmental health and safety; Robert Howat, director of facilities management; Lancelot D’Souza, senior support technician (IT); Charles Bondaruk, senior lab coordinator – anatomy (Medical Program); Mandy Msuya, senior lab assistant – chemistry; Tracy Havlin, reference librarian; Janette Treanor, information and reference technician; Robeen Al-Nounu, library technical assistant; Heather Chapple, student services assistant; Karen Rothermel, housing coordinator; Sarita Jithin, administrative secretary (public affairs); and Kokila Dani, receptionist/secretary (human resources.)

New Arrivals at WCMC-Q

We are pleased to announce the following births:

- Lara Elenor Hydeman, born on November 26, 2003 in London to senior IT support technician Ismet Hajdarovic and Jasmina Mandic.
- Rhea Jasmine Alvares, born on January 6, 2004 in Doha to Joyce and Vinay Alvares. Joyce is administrative secretary for the Pre-medical Program.

and finally...

Wherever you are in the world, whatever the time of day or night—remember you can visit our Website and check out the latest news from WCMC-Q:

www.med.cornell.edu/qatar