



## BULLETIN

10 February 2008

### Conference and exhibition round-up

#### **8<sup>th</sup> Pan Arab Society Rheumatology Conference**

**Dr. Stephen Paget** gave a presentation on his special area of interest, the vasculitides, and participated in case discussions with Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) physicians during the 8<sup>th</sup> Pan Arab Rheumatology Society Conference, Doha, January 21-24.

Dr. Paget, who is Joseph P. Roth Professor of Rheumatic Diseases in Medicine, professor of medicine and attending physician at New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center, and attending at the Hospital for Special Surgery, said his visit had been highly beneficial, and further cooperation between the Hospital for Special Surgery and HMC was under discussion.

After visiting WCMC-Q and meeting medical students, Dr. Paget said that, as a member of the Committee on Admissions in New York – which selects all Weill Cornell medical students including those applying to WCMC-Q – it was a particular pleasure to encounter the Qatar-based students in person.

“It has been extraordinary to meet them. They are energetic, earnest, bright, focused and caring people,” he commented. “They are clearly equal to the medical students in New York.”

#### **Arab Health Exhibition**

**WCMC-Q** joined its health-care partners in flying the flag of Qatar at the Arab Health Exhibition and Congress, 28-31 January, at the Dubai World Trade Center.

Arab Health is the second largest health-care event in the world, attracting over 50,000 sector professionals from across the Middle East and beyond, 2,200 exhibitors from 65 countries.

For the first time, seven health-care and educational organizations in Qatar gathered under the umbrella of a country pavilion with the theme of "Quality Care in Qatar" to showcase the strides that have been made in improving health care and related education. Alongside WCMC-Q were its affiliate partner Hamad Medical Corporation; the National Health Authority; Sidra Medical and Research Center; Qatar Science and Technology Park; College of the North Atlantic-Qatar and the University of Calgary.

### Cornell award for pre-med student

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First year pre-med **Maen Abou Ziki** has carried off an Adelpic Award from Cornell University's John S. Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines, the first time a WCMC-Q student has won a prize from the University.

In his essay *Consanguinity and Genetic Disorders in the Gulf: Medical Response to a Recently Discovered Problem*, Abou Ziki discusses the practice of consanguinity (interfamily marriage) in the region and its implications for health, in the context of religion, culture and tradition. Concluding that the practice is largely a matter of passive tradition, he underlines the need to raise public awareness and offer genetic counseling.

The paper was one in a sequence of assignments in the First Year Writing Seminars course "Beyond the Bones," taught by **Dr. Alan Weber**, assistant professor of English, in the fall semester.

"I am very excited about Maen's success," said Dr. Weber. "His essay was chosen because it exemplifies the goals and vision of the Knight Institute and the writing seminars delivered in Qatar. It demonstrates an important principle emphasized by the Knight Institute – 'discovery through writing'. Our courses emphasize that students can create new knowledge through writing, not just assemble and communicate already known ideas and facts to a reader."

With his sights set on pursuing a career in clinical care and biomedical research, Abou Ziki reacted to his success with as much modesty as equanimity: "It is important to know that what you have done is good, that this is the right way to work, and to carry on in the same manner; but there's still a lot to learn," he said.

*[The \$300 Adelpic Award is presented by Cornell's John S. Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines to selected students whose native language is not English, and who have had no more than 50 percent of their previous education in the English language. It is sponsored by the Adelpic Cornell Educational Fund, with support from Susan A. and Robert N. Cunjak '96.]*

## **Events**

### **WCMC-Q hosts science journalists**

The cut and thrust of a televised debate came to WCMC-Q February 5, when a panel of experts met to discuss science journalism, with particular reference to the Middle East and Africa.

The discussion, moderated by prominent science journalist Sherine El Feki, who contributes to *The Economist* and Aljazeera International, was part of a week-long workshop organized by Qatar Foundation in collaboration with the World Federation of Science Journalists (WFSJ). Among the panelists was **Dr. Khaled Machaca**, associate professor of physiology and biophysics at WCMC-Q. The audience of journalists was from across the African and Middle Eastern region.

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Topics included the low priority accorded to science-based stories in the newsroom; problems of obtaining access to scientists and to reliable information; dealing with controversial issues; and the challenges of communicating science in an attractive way to the general public.

Earlier, WCMC-Q's Lecture Hall 4 was also the venue for the opening session of the WFSJ workshop. Welcoming the visitors, Vice Dean for Research, **Dr. Javaid Sheikh** said the meeting was "perfectly timed" – Qatar is now embarking on a 'Decade of Science' and there is a "palpable sense of excitement" about science and research in the country.

## **Faculty News**

**1. Professor of physics, Dr. Roger Hinrichs**, helped to present a workshop at the American Association of Physics Teachers' winter meeting in Baltimore, January. Entitled: *Laboratories with biomedical applications*, it focused on laboratory projects done by WCMC-Q's Physics 208 pre-med students over the last several years, such as the mechanics of the biceps muscle, nerve action potential simulation and measurement in an earthworm, and measurement of the electrical stimulation of the muscle in a frog's leg.

**2. Dr. Powers Peterson**, associate professor of pathology and laboratory medicine, has been appointed to the Area Committee on Hematology for the Clinical Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI) for 2008.

The CLSI is an international organization dedicated to setting voluntary global consensus standards and guidelines, and achieving best practices for laboratories in industry, academia, medicine and research. Its committees cover areas such as microbiology, hematology, evaluation protocols, and quality systems and lab practices.

Regulatory and advisory agencies, including the Food and Drug Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and the Bureau of Biologics in the U.S., are integral members of the organization.

**3. Dr. Marina Dodigovic** (visiting assistant professor) and **Dr. Krystyna Golkowska** (senior lecturer), members of faculty teaching in the Foundation Program, presented at a Qatar TESOL Conference held at Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar, January 19.

Dr. Dodigovic's presentation covered acting, drama and role-play in the EFL/ESL classroom, while Dr. Golkowska explored the role of affect in teaching ESL reading and writing.

Meanwhile, Dr. Golkowska is organizing a videoconference, planned for March 3, with Cornell's Ithaca campus on the topic: *Cornell and diversity*. Organized with the International TA Development Program on the main campus, the conference will allow WCMC-Q's Foundation Program students to interact with a group of undergraduates and international graduates in Ithaca.

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## **Forthcoming events: February**

### **1. Medical Education Day**

Hosted by HMC, Medical Education Day is an occasion for celebrating and recognizing achievement and dedication. For the first time, WCMC-Q is joining in the event, February 20, in the HMC Education Center's Hajar Auditorium.

Young physicians will receive certificates of completion of residency training, while specialists and consultants who have made an outstanding contribution to the education of WCMC-Q's medical students, as well as residents, will be recognized.

Dean of WCMC-Q, **Dr. Daniel R. Alonso**, said: "More than 100 HMC physicians now have appointments as Weill Cornell faculty and they make a huge contribution to the clinical education of the doctors-in-training. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our colleagues at HMC for their commitment to sharing their knowledge, skills and expertise with the next generation."

**2. Dr. Chris Triggle**, professor of pharmacology, is to give a presentation at the 9<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Resistance Arteries, Hamilton Island, Australia, February 16-22.

Dr. Triggle has played a key role in organizing the meeting, which focuses on the biochemistry, physiology and biophysics of the blood vessels that make up the microcirculation.

His presentation *Endothelial dysfunction and diabetic microvascular disease: the demise of nitric oxide alone or does the endothelium-dependent hyperpolarization pathway also change?* is part of a session that he will also co-chair on type 2 diabetes/insulin resistance/obesity and resistance vessel dysfunction.

Experts from across the world will cover a range of topics at the Symposium, including changes in microcirculation function in pregnancy and the pathophysiology of the microcirculation, notably with respect to the impact of obesity and diabetes on the vasculature.

<http://medicallsciences.med.unsw.edu.au/somswweb.nsf/page/9thISRA2008>

### **3. Science Symposium at Qatar University**

WCMC-Q is working with Qatar University (QU) on preparations for the third Qatar Symposium on Science Teaching and Learning, February 21.

The meeting, which is to be hosted by QU, will focus on developing problem-solving skills in science with the aim of equipping young people for life and work ahead.

Keynote speakers from the U.S. will cover topics from teaching research skills to pre-college students, to the effective use of software for presentations.

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Initiated by WCMC-Q and QU and now an established part of the outreach effort among science educators in the region, the Symposia have proved a popular platform for the exchange of ideas and experience among teachers at high school and college levels.

[http://www.qu.edu.qa/conferences/3rd\\_symp/3rdSymp\\_index.php](http://www.qu.edu.qa/conferences/3rd_symp/3rdSymp_index.php)

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