



PRESS RELEASE

H.H. SHEIKHA MOZAH AND CORNELL'S PRESIDENT LEHMAN TO OPEN NEW BUILDING OF WEILL CORNELL MEDICAL COLLEGE IN QATAR

Doha, Qatar

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History will be made at Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar (WCMC-Q) on Sunday, October 12, 2003, with the official opening of the new building by Her Highness Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser Al-Missned, consort of the Emir of the State of Qatar and chairperson of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, and the first stage in the installation of the eleventh president of Cornell University, Jeffrey S. Lehman.

This is the first time in the history of Cornell University that an inauguration ceremony for its president takes place outside the United States. President Lehman succeeded Hunter R. Rawlings III to the post on July 1, 2003.

Leading figures from Cornell University in Ithaca and its Weill Medical College in New York, and from the Board of Directors of the Qatar Foundation will join guests from Qatar and across the world as they gather for the celebrations.

The ceremonies take place in the wider context of the official opening of Education City, the multi-institutional campus established as a regional center of educational excellence by the Qatar Foundation.

President Lehman said: "The wisdom and foresight shown by His Highness the Emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, and Her Highness Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser Al-Missned, in the founding of Education City herald a new era of progress and wellbeing for the State of Qatar. We are proud of Cornell's role in the development of their vision."

The opening of the new WCMC-Q building comes two and a half years after the signing of an agreement between Cornell University and the Qatar Foundation in New York in April 2001. Through this agreement, Cornell became the first American University ever to offer its M.D. degree overseas.

Her Highness Sheikha Mozah said: "As we celebrate the opening of Education City, I would like to recognize Cornell's position in the educational network as one of the central players in promoting research and development which responds directly to the needs of our society."

The magnificent new building, designed by world-famous architect Arata Isozaki, was completed in time for the beginning of the 2003-2004 academic year. It combines a bold, contemporary outline with geometric forms and decorative detail inspired by traditional Arab-Islamic architecture and decorative arts. The educational facilities are superb.

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Dean of WCMC-Q, Daniel R. Alonso, M.D. highlighted the achievement of the Qatar Foundation in commissioning and overseeing the construction of the new home for WCMC-Q: "The new building, commissioned by the Qatar Foundation, is an extraordinary achievement. It bears witness to the dedication and commitment of all those who have worked on the project since its inception."

Among the outstanding facilities are extensive laboratory space, lecture halls designed to optimize the teaching and learning experience, and an innovative distributed electronic library.

They are supported by state-of-the-art technology throughout the structure, which places the most advanced solutions at the disposal of faculty and students, enabling them to use a wide variety of educational tools and to access information 24 hours a day.

"Because of the revolutionary design of this stunning campus, which harnesses the latest telecommunications technology in the service of education, we are not limited by distance or time in advancing the knowledge generated in our classrooms and research laboratories," said President Lehman.

The official opening will be followed by a second ceremony unique in the annals of Cornell University, as Lehman begins a week of celebrations culminating in his installation as the University's eleventh president.

Antonio M. Gotto Jr., M.D., D.Phil, Provost for Medical Affairs and Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean at Weill Cornell Medical College in New York, commented: "This is a truly historic occasion: it is the first time in the history of Cornell University that we welcome a new president in a branch of the University established outside the U.S., in the Gulf State of Qatar."

The distinguished guests who will attend the ceremonies include, among others, Peter C. Meinig, chairman of the Cornell University Board of Trustees; Sanford I. Weill, chairman of the Board of Overseers of Weill Cornell Medical College; Jordan J. Cohen, M.D., President of the Association of American Medical Colleges; Vartan Gregorian, Ph.D., President of the Carnegie Corporation of New York; and Their Excellencies the Ministers of Public Health, Education and Finance of the State of Qatar.

On his return to the United States, President Lehman will have a second inauguration ceremony at Weill Cornell Medical College in New York on October 15, leading up to the official installation at Cornell University's main campus in Ithaca on October 16 – the culmination of the week's inauguration celebrations.

Jeffrey S. Lehman is the first Cornell University alumnus to serve as president: he graduated in 1977 with a bachelor's degree in mathematics, before going on to earn two higher degrees at the university of Michigan, a J.D. from the Law School and a master's degree in public policy from the Institute of Public Policy Studies. When appointed Dean of the University of Michigan Law School in 1994, Lehman was the youngest dean of any law school in the United States.