



**WEILL CORNELL**  
MEDICAL COLLEGE IN QATAR



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Inaugural White Coat Ceremony at WCMC-Q Marks New Phase in Six-Year Education Program**

**Doha, Qatar**

**October 12, 2004**

Members of the Inaugural Class – the Class of 2008 – at Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar (WCMC-Q) took a significant and symbolic step on the road to becoming doctors, as they donned white coats at a special ceremony held at the Medical College last night.

This first-ever white coat ceremony in Qatar was held in the presence of Minister of Finance, H.E. Yousuf Hussein Kamal, representing Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned, wife of the Emir and Chairperson of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development.

There was a real air of excitement as the ceremony began in the largest Lecture Hall at WCMC-Q, filled to capacity for the occasion with students, parents, faculty, staff and guests from Qatar and around the world.

Members of the Inaugural Class were assisted in putting on their coats by WCMC-Q medical faculty, including senior physicians at the Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC.)

The symbolic gesture showed that the students, who entered the four-year Medical Program last month, had “crossed a threshold” in their education and career, said Dean of WCMC-NY, Dr. Antonio M. Gotto, Jr.

He went on to say that it was the aim of the Medical College to train them to the highest standards in biomedical sciences and humanistic principles, giving equal weight to both, and he invited them to listen carefully to the Hippocratic Oath as it was read out to them by Dean of WCMC-Q, Dr. Daniel R. Alonso.

In his keynote address to the assembly, Dr. Jordan J. Cohen, President of the Association of American Medical Colleges, noted that the inaugural medical students were privileged to be entering the medical profession at a truly unique point in history, “at the confluence of three paths of scientific and technological advancement.”

He identified these as: major developments in information technology, giving the medical profession unprecedented access to information; the revolution in genetics, with the prospect that risk of a disease may be identified before it is manifest – leading the way to the practice of truly preventive medicine; and the development of stem cell research, “that promises to usher in an unimaginable era of regenerative medicine.....offering real help in cases of hopeless degeneration.”

---

**Office of Public Affairs**  
**WCMC-Q**  
**Education City**  
P.O. Box 24144  
Doha, Qatar

**Michael Vertigans**  
Director  
Phone: +974 492 8650  
Fax: +974 492 8444  
Email: [miv2008@med.cornell.edu](mailto:miv2008@med.cornell.edu)

**Sylvia Ismail**  
Associate Editor / Writer  
Phone: +974 492 8651  
Fax: +974 492 8444  
Email:  
[smi2001@med.cornell.edu](mailto:smi2001@med.cornell.edu)



**WEILL CORNELL**  
**MEDICAL COLLEGE IN QATAR**



Dr. Cohen went on to urge the students to honour the principles of the Hippocratic Oath, and to respect its values: "Medicine is not just a business, but a moral enterprise," he said.

Following the speeches, the sixteen young men and women in the Class of 2008 presented themselves to medical faculty members, who then helped them to put on their white coats with the distinctive WCMC-Q patch on one sleeve. Shorter than the full-length coats worn by fully qualified physicians, the coats show that the students are doctors-in-training.

Dr. Cohen also presented the medical students with pins from the Arnold P. Gold Foundation, established in the U.S. in 1988 to promote humanism in medicine.

Yesterday's ceremony came a little more than two years after WCMC-Q admitted the Class to the two-year Pre-medical Program. Of the students who entered the Medical Program as it opened this year, fourteen successfully completed their pre-medical education at the Medical College, while two are graduates from universities in the U.S.

Leaders from Cornell University in Ithaca, WCMC-NY, the Qatar Foundation and the Hamad Medical Corporation were present at the ceremony, which took place in one of the lecture halls housed within a geometric structure at the new building of WCMC-Q in Education City.

## NOTES TO EDITORS

**Established in partnership with the Qatar Foundation, WCMC-Q** is a branch campus of Weill Cornell Medical College in New York, the first American institution to offer its M.D. degree overseas. WCMC-Q offers a complete and integrated educational program, comprising the two-year Pre-medical Program, followed by the four-year Medical Program, with teaching by Cornell faculty. There are separate admission processes for each Program, guided by the standards of admission in use at Cornell University in Ithaca, and its Medical College in New York.

Website: [www.qatar-med.cornell.edu](http://www.qatar-med.cornell.edu)

**The Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development** is a private, nonprofit, chartered organization founded in 1995 aiming to develop and utilize human potential through a network of centers and campuses. In 1997 the foundation set out on a strategic plan to create an Education City that is composed of a number of research centers, branch campuses of world-class educational institutions and a Science Park that acts as an incubator for research, responds to the immediate needs of industry and anticipates future necessities for development. In October 2003, Education City was officially inaugurated and it is now home to branches of some of the world's leading universities and research centers.

Website: [www.qf.edu.qa/](http://www.qf.edu.qa/)

---

**Office of Public Affairs**  
**WCMC-Q**  
**Education City**  
P.O. Box 24144  
Doha, Qatar

**Michael Vertigans**  
Director  
Phone: +974 492 8650  
Fax: +974 492 8444  
Email: [miv2008@med.cornell.edu](mailto:miv2008@med.cornell.edu)

**Sylvia Ismail**  
Associate Editor / Writer  
Phone: +974 492 8651  
Fax: +974 492 8444  
Email:  
[smi2001@med.cornell.edu](mailto:smi2001@med.cornell.edu)