



PRESS RELEASE

Inaugural class celebrates ‘extraordinary’ match day

Doha, March 31, 2008: For WCMC-Q’s inaugural class, six years of pre-medical and medical school came down to the click of a mouse recently when they learned via email where they would be doing their postgraduate residency training.

Their reactions? “I’m ecstatic,” said Mashaël Al Khulaifi, who matched to an anesthesiology residency at New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center. “I’m glad I got my first choice – Cornell. It’s all good.”

As it was too for Rana Biary, Subhi Al Aref and Kunali Dalal – all of whom will be joining Al Khulaifi next year at Weill Cornell. And for their classmates, who matched to residencies at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore; Rush University Medical Center in Chicago; the University of Minnesota; and Hamad Medical Corporation in Qatar.

The students, all grinning, accepted congratulations from faculty and underclassmen who joined them in a reception in their honor.

Dean Daniel Alonso sent his congratulations from New York, where he was on a business trip. “Your credentials, commitment, motivation, and perseverance have resulted in extraordinary success,” he told the students. “Yours is a very impressive achievement, one that is admired by all of us at WCMC-Q, at Weill Cornell Medical College and at Cornell University.”

The newly matched students are a diverse group, with chosen specialties that include family medicine, internal medicine, surgery, radiology, obstetrics and gynecology, emergency medicine, neurosurgery and anesthesiology.

Sharon King, who plans to practice rural family medicine, matched to the University of Wyoming-Cheyenne. In honor of the occasion, she came to the reception in a traditional Qatari abaya – which she promptly shed to reveal jeans, boots and cowboy hat. “I’m very excited,” she said.

They were also relieved. Match day, when medical students across the U.S. and the world learn where they will go for postgraduate training for the next several years, is an anxiety-fraught day for any medical student. For the WCMC-Q inaugural class – the first to graduate from a program located outside the U.S. – the uncertainties were daunting.

Physiology professor Dr. David Robertshaw was thrilled by his students’ success. But he wasn’t surprised. “To see them match so well – I knew they would,” he said. “They are all very strong individuals. I’m very pleased.”

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Dr. Maya Hammoud, Senior Associate Dean for Education at WCMC-Q, added her congratulations to the students – and the faculty and staff who supported them over the last six years: “This is all teamwork. We all have to work together to accomplish what we accomplished today.”

Addressing the inaugural class Dr. Hammoud added: “You deserve a lot of credit for embarking on this great adventure. There were a lot of challenges, like with any new program . . . but you've proven that you can make it anywhere you want. You all did amazingly well in your matches, and we are very proud of you.”

Ends

Established by Cornell University in partnership with Qatar Foundation, WCMC-Q is part of Weill Cornell Medical College. A member of the Ivy League, Cornell is the first American university 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 is a separate admissions process for each Program, guided by the standards of admission in use at Cornell University in Ithaca and its Medical College in New York City.

Website: www.qatar-med.cornell.edu

About Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development

Founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of Qatar, and chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al Missned, Qatar Foundation is a private, non-profit organization committed to the principle that a nation's greatest natural resource is its people.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

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