

College-bound students explore careers in medicine at WCM-Q

Doha – August 6, 2017: Around 70 high school students had the chance to sample life as a medical student at Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar (WCM-Q) when they took part in the college's two Summer Enrichment Programs organized by the Office of Student Recruitment and Outreach.

The 34 grade 10 and 11 students on the Qatar Medical Explorer Program (QMEP) and 35 grade 11 and 12 students on the Precollege Enrichment Program (PCEP) spent two weeks at WCM-Q taking a series of classes modeled on the real curriculum followed by WCM-Q students.

The students, aged 15-17, had the opportunity to take classes on infectious diseases, neurology, psychology, emergency medicine and cancer research, as well as lab safety, the history of medicine, DNA extraction techniques and human anatomy. They also had the chance to take a dissection class in the WCM-Q biology lab, learn about the human heart by working with Harvey – a hi-tech robotic humanoid learning aid – in the state-of-the-art Clinical Skills Center, and visit Hamad Medical Corporation, WCM-Q's clinical partner.

Overall, the students gained a comprehensive snapshot of what it is like to study medicine while also discovering some of the many career paths that a WCM-Q MD degree can lead to, which broadly include practice in a variety of medical specialties, biomedical research, and teaching, or a combination of all three.

Qatari student Fatma Essa Al-Kubaisi of the International School of London, Qatar, completed the PCEP program. She said: "My experience at WCM-Q's Summer Enrichment Program was beyond expectation. I got a taste of university life, made new friends, and developed and discovered my skills through different sessions. The two-week program provided me with a fantastic and unique opportunity that every prospective medicine student would wish to have."

Other highlights of the two-week programs included classes on animal care and use in research, an introduction to medical ethics, and a chance to meet current WCM-Q medical students and graduates for a Q&A session. The program culminated with the students giving presentations about a medicine-related topic and taking part in an academic debate.

Participating students were drawn from 34 schools in Qatar and across the wider region. Students were selected using an application system that mimics the admissions process for the WCM-Q six-year Medical Program. Selection is based on the candidate's English skills, demonstrated aptitude for the sciences, their interest in pursuing medicine as a career and their academic achievements. These two programs, QMEP and PCEP, are part of the Summer Enrichment series organized annually by the Office of Student Recruitment and Outreach at WCM-Q. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Summer Enrichment Programs.

Student Tariq Nasir visited from Jordan, where he attends King's Academy. Tariq, who completed the PCEP program, said: "This program is one of a kind - one that taught me how to think outside of the boundaries, one that gave me a unique taste of college, and one that totally locked in my interest for a medical career. I definitely recommend it for all students interested in pursuing medicine."



Dr. Clare McVeigh, Senior Lecturer in Biology, guided the visiting students through a dissection class, which was a completely new experience for most of group. Dr. McVeigh said: “Dissecting a frog for the first time is an excellent learning experience for prospective medical students, giving them an opportunity to develop their manual dexterity and also to apply what they know from textbooks to a real organism. The students responded extremely well and took full advantage of the learning experience.”

Qatari student Noor Faisal Alsayegh of Albayan Secondary School completed the QMEP program. She said: “QMEP is a valuable experience that does not only enlighten students with topics relevant to our scientific interests, but it is also a journey that helps answer all sorts of questions that can cross high school students’ minds and improve the qualities that make the best out of us, such as by boosting our self-esteem and appreciation of team work.”

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Photos captions:

Photo1: WCM-Q’s Dr. Mohamud Verjee introduces high school students from across Qatar to Harvey, the college’s robotic learning aid.

Photo2: Ahmed Salah Sami, a third-year medical student at WCM-Q and one of the tutors of the program, right, teaches high school students about anatomy using lifelike learning aids.

Photo3: Students who take part in one of WCM-Q’s two Summer Enrichment Programs spend two weeks at the college taking a series of classes modeled on the real curriculum followed by WCM-Q students.

Photo4: A high school student cleans up after a dissection class during his two weeks experiencing what it is like to study medicine at WCM-Q.

About Weill Cornell Medicine - Qatar

Weill Cornell Medicine - Qatar is a partnership between Cornell University and Qatar Foundation. It offers a comprehensive six-year medical program leading to the Cornell University M.D. degree with teaching by Cornell and Weill Cornell faculty and by physicians at Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), Aspetar Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Hospital, the Primary Health Care Corporation, the Feto Maternal Center, and the Sidra Medical and Research Center who hold Weill Cornell appointments. Through its biomedical research program, WCM-Q is building a sustainable research community in Qatar while advancing basic science and clinical research. Through its medical college, WCM-Q seeks to provide the finest education possible for medical students, to improve health care both now and for future generations, and to provide high quality health care to the Qatari population.

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