

أرى فيكم آفاقاً مدهشة فيكم آفاق مستقبل جديد
نعيش الحاضر بما ولاء المستقبل
نعمل لخيرنا ونعمل لخيركم
تعلّموا لهذا اليوم ولغدكم
نحلم بآفاق أفضل

Graduates Go Beyond The Call Of Academic Studies By Making A Positive Difference In The Community

Doha, 6 May 2014 – Graduates across Education City are determined to use their knowledge as a force for positive change, both locally and internationally. By inspiring and enabling youth in Qatar to develop their potential through a world-class education system, university students from various disciplines are embracing their role as global citizens and showcasing a deep commitment to making a difference.

The young graduates have been nurtured for a rewarding career after studying at various universities within the campus of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development.

Fatima Yousuf Al-Obaidan Fakhro, 22, is one such example. The Qatari graduate holds a Bachelor of Science in Information Systems degree from Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar (CMU-Q), and has pledged to make a difference by actively engaging in community service initiatives. She is eager to give back and develop a culture of service that can improve the lives of others.

Fatima's transformative experience came about during a university service learning trip to South Africa. One of the life lessons she brought back with her was the importance of not taking things for granted and empowering others to make a meaningful impact.

"The service learning trip proved to be a phenomenal experience. You know that you are doing something good and giving back to the community, and what I liked the most was that it brought out the best in all of us," says Fatima. "We built a shelter for underprivileged children, whose parents worked in other cities. Although it was a small house, it helped protect them from harsh elements, like wind and rain."

Upon their return, Fatima and a friend felt it necessary to create something constructive and tangible out of this experience. This resulted in an on-campus club called 'The Big Movement,' which aims to benefit others and engage people in acts of kindness.

"Some of our plans were for students to visit the elderly and join hands for a beach clean-up. We also started a campaign called 'Spread the Love' and it's basically for the university

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community to send roses to someone they appreciate on campus – it was a big success and everyone loved it,” explains Fatima.

And although the club’s founders are graduating this week, The Big Movement will continue to have a positive influence on students. “We have a vice president, who will be taking on the role of president. As for us, we are members of Educate A Child, which we joined after our trip to South Africa, and we will continue to visit the elderly.”

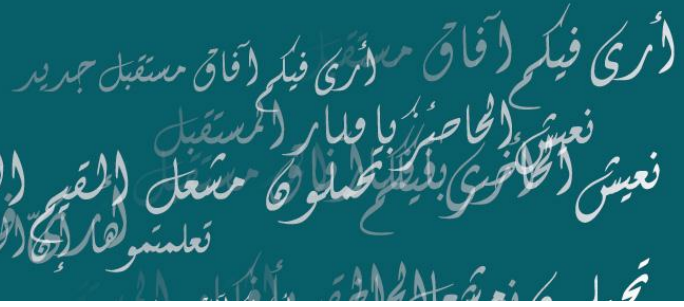
As Fatima moves on to new ventures, she hopes that students will enjoy their university experience and take advantage of the opportunities available for growth. “I would encourage all students to get involved in extracurricular activities, because that’s something you will never forget and those experiences will shape you up to be a better person.”

Alexander M. Wegner, 23, is another exemplary graduate who shares the same sentiments when it comes to the importance of learning outside the classroom. He moved from Germany to Qatar in 2010, and enrolled at Georgetown University – School of Foreign Service (SFS-Qatar). Over the past four years, he immersed himself in activities that have led to a highly productive and valuable educational experience.

Alexander will be receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in Foreign Service, with a major in International Politics, from SFS-Qatar. During the course of his study, he succeeded at channelling his time and energy towards a host of beneficial internships, projects and initiatives, both on and off campus. This includes founding in September 2011 a student-run club for non-profit work called the ‘Center for Awakened Policy’. In his capacity as the center’s director, he raised over 30kg of school supplies for donation to a Georgetown alumna at Teach For India, and educated a class of special needs students about sustainability, as part of a Rio+20 initiative.

“I think one of the important lessons you learn when you study and which goes along with the idea of academic freedom, is that you shouldn’t hesitate to think, to question and if need be, to differ,” reflects Alexander. “Not because you want to be the exception but I think because it’s important for improving and further enhancing the communities that we are all a part of and the institutions that we’re a part of. Other than that, we need to keep a good degree of curiosity because there’s so much we can learn.”

While maintaining a commendable Grade Point Average, the proactive student also took part in a Habitat for Humanity Community Engagement Program in Bangladesh in 2011, where he engaged with international development experts and helped build two homes for low-income households. Moreover, in 2012, Alexander joined a Zones of Conflict, Zones of



Peace Service Learning Program to Cambodia and created a photojournalistic narrative of the experience.

"I always look ahead and think what might be useful and what kind of skills I may need, but most of it is really intuitive and I think the classroom can only teach you so much. I think it's essential that you get into the so-called real world and try to make a difference with the knowledge you gain," says Alexander.

Another graduate who has been recognised for being a model student and a very active member of the community is Syrian-born Nour Barakat, 22. She has earned a Doctor of Medicine degree with honours from Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar (WCMC-Q), and been accepted for a residency in Hamad Medical Corporation's ophthalmology department.

During her time as a student, Nour published research in a number of scientific journals that span the field of ophthalmology, organic chemistry, medical ethics and alternative medicine. The diligent student has also served as the national consultant for the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), collaborating with health care officials in Qatar to collect data that can help achieve the vision of UNAIDS.

"I was the kind of student who was involved in a lot of initiatives and committees at WCMC-Q and in Qatar Foundation as a whole. I personally love education and working with other students, so I was involved in activities and recruitment events for high school students, as well as workshops to prepare them for college. I also took part in the student council at university," says Nour.

"I believe in volunteer work, so I participated in many campaigns and relief efforts for different countries. I like an education which blends with research, and that led me to undertake as much research as I could and publish my work in scientific journals."

Being an outstanding student, Nour earned the 'Abdullah Al Darwish Scholarship' during her second year, and this was renewed for the duration of her study at WCMC-Q. One of the highlights of Nour's university experience has been completing an internship at the prestigious Wills Eye Hospital in the United States, since it allowed her to see first-hand the similarities and differences of practicing in different countries. She says that even though cultures differ, human nature is the same.

"My long-term goal is to be a professor at Weill Cornell – I think that would be my ultimate dream because it blends my passion for medicine and for education. I really want to give back to the medical community and to education as a whole," says Nour. "Qatar gives you



that nourishing environment where you're able to really do and accomplish a lot if you put in the hard work. It's really all about people achieving their potential."

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