



كلية طب وايل كورنيل في قطر

Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar

Member of Qatar Foundation

Press Release

The Challenge returns to test the fitness of Qatar's students

Doha – February 17, 2014: Excitement is mounting among middle school children with the approach of The Challenge, Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar's (WCMC-Q) physical fitness contest for schools.

The Challenge is part of WCMC-Q's Sahtak Awalan campaign, which aims to improve the health of the nation in line with Qatar National Vision 2030 and the National Health Strategy.

The inaugural event was held last year and was such a success that it was decided to make it an annual competition.

Students and teachers from the schools recently visited WCMC-Q to learn more about what The Challenge this year would entail. It was also a chance for them to deliver their students' research posters for the Poster Competition. Held in conjunction with The Challenge, the Poster Competition is a chance for students to exercise their brains rather than their muscles and design a health-related poster. In all, 22 schools will participate in The Challenge and Poster Competition.

Nesreen Al-Refai, Director of the Department of Government and Public Affairs at WCMC-Q, said she was delighted with the return of The Challenge and the Poster Competition as it was a way of engaging young people in health awareness and physical fitness in an enjoyable way.

Mrs. Al-Refai, who gave a presentation to the schools, added: "For the students taking part, The Challenge and Poster Competition are over in a day, but we hope that the lessons learned through their participation will last a lifetime. The knowledge will benefit those students, and Qatar, well into the future, helping to create a healthy population able to contribute to a knowledge-based economy."

Ahmed Hassan, aged 13, of Al Hekma International School, was one of those who created a poster. He said: "We have learnt from the posters that eating healthy food every day is important. You also need to play sport every day, something like basketball or football. Football

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is my favorite sport and I play most days. I did my poster about car accidents because there's no point being healthy if you get killed in an accident. Everyone should drive slowly and wear a seatbelt."

The posters that the children submitted were collected and have been judged by a panel of experts from WCMC-Q and the Supreme Council of Health. The winners will be announced during The Challenge where all the posters will be on display.

During the WCMC-Q briefing, the students and teachers were shown a film of last year's Challenge and promised that there would be some new games. They were also urged to bring as many family and friends along as possible to ensure there is plenty of support for their school.

Eric Bouchard, Vice Principal of Qatar Canadian School, said: "It's great for our students to take part in something that emphasizes a healthy, active lifestyle. We are also really keen to be involved in The Challenge because it's a great way for our students to interact with students from other schools and to take part in something competitive, which we find brings out their best qualities."

Boys and girls will compete separately to finish each game with the top three boys' teams and top three girls' teams being awarded gold, silver and bronze. The top school will also receive a trophy. The students involved are all from the middle school and each one will receive a certificate of appreciation.

The event has been organized by WCMC-Q and will be held over several hours at the Aspire Dome as part of the Sahtak Awalan: Your Health First campaign run by WCMC-Q in conjunction with the Supreme Council of Health and in partnership with Qatar Foundation, the Supreme Education Council, Qatar Petroleum, Occidental Petroleum of Qatar, ExxonMobil Qatar Inc., Qatar Olympic Committee and Vodafone Qatar.

Along with the action in the arena, there will also be interactive games and health professionals on hand to offer advice about healthy living and answer any questions.

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The schools taking part in both The Challenge and the Poster Competition are Al Hekma International School, Hammad School International, English Modern School, International School of Choueifat, Cambridge School, AbuBakr Assedeeq Boys Preparatory, Hamza Bin Abdul Muttalib School, Abu Obaida School, Omar Bin AlKhattab Boys Preparatory, Canadian School, German School, Iranian School for Girls, English Modern School (Al Khor), Ali Bin Abi Taleb for Boys, Osama Bin Zaid, Al Ahnaf Bin Qais Independent for Boys, Dukhan School for Boys and Amna Bint Wahab.

Those schools just taking part in the Poster Competition are Fatma Bint Waleed, Al Ghwayriya, and Um Saïid, while the Iranian School for Boys will take part in The Challenge only.

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About Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar

Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar is a partnership between Cornell University and Qatar Foundation. It offers pre-medical and medical courses leading to the Cornell University M.D. degree with teaching by Cornell and Weill Cornell faculty and by physicians at Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) and Aspetar Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Hospital who hold Weill Cornell appointments. Through its biomedical research program, WCMC-Q is building a sustainable research community in Qatar while advancing basic science and clinical research. Through its medical college, WCMC-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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