

كلية طب وايل كورنيل في قطر Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar

Member of Qatar Foundation

Press Release

School students awarded for health research

Doha – April 29, 2015: The ten winners have been announced in an innovative annual competition to encourage young people to think about their health.

The Challenge Poster Competition is now in its third year and is organized by Weill Cornell Medical College (WCMC-Q) in Qatar as part of its Sahtak Awalan: Your Health First campaign. As well as promoting good health, the competition also aims to inspire students to become the doctors and scientists of the future.

Students from 30 middle schools across Qatar were invited to undertake a research project on a health topic and approximately 300 posters were submitted in total. The posters were judged by doctors from WCMC-Q and the top ten posters – from nine schools - were awarded prizes. The nine schools to win trophies were Audio Education Complex, Qatar Leadership Academy, English Modern School Al Khor, Al Hammad International School, Ossama Bin Zaid Independent School, Qatar Canadian School, Mesaieed Independent School for Girls, Al Ahnaf International School, and Al Hikma International School, which had two separate winners.

Dr. Javaid Sheikh, Dean of WCMC-Q, said the standard of the competition had been very high. Dr. Sheikh said: “The judges were very impressed with the academic work that all of the students had put in to their posters.

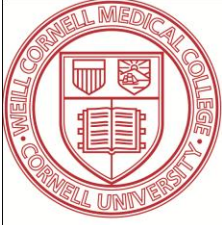
“Health is one of the most valuable gifts that we have and it is so important that we take the time to make a conscious effort to live healthy lives, not just for our sakes but also the sakes of our families and friends. The Your Health First campaign encourages people to do just that – think about their health and then make the right choices.”

Each school was awarded a trophy while every student received an individual prize presented by Dr. Marco Ameduri, WCMC-Q’s Associate Dean for Pre-Medical Education.

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Topics chosen by the students included obesity, car accidents and nutrition. Some of the students will now be chosen as ambassadors for the Your Health First campaign, promoting healthy lifestyle choices to others.

Sixteen-year-olds Saeed Al-Merri and Mohammed Al-Marghi, from the Audio Education Complex, chose smoking as their topic, creating a 3D poster that used models of cigarettes as a funeral pyre.

“Smoking has a negative effect on health,” they explained, “but before our research we didn’t know that smoking can affect the heart and can discolor the eyes.

Art teacher Nourelhadi Osman said that the poster competition had been a valuable educational tool and had come at the right time as it coincided with National Stop Smoking Week so Saeed and Mohammed took their message to the rest of the school.

The students then joined a discussion led by Nesreen Al-Rifai, WCMC-Q’s Chief Communications Officer, in which they explained their posters and their reasons for choosing their particular topic.

Qatar Leadership Academy cadet Mohammed Al-Fadli, 13, chose sunlight as the topic of his poster. He said: “If you get too much sunlight you can get burnt but if you don’t get enough your body won’t make enough vitamin D, so you have to be careful and make sure you get just the right amount.”

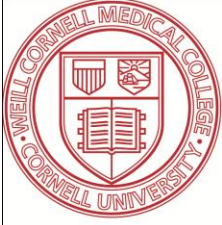
Mohammed Saeed of Ossama Bin Zaid Independent School worked with a group of friends to create a poster about obesity.

He said: “We chose obesity because it’s a major issue for Qatar that affects a lot of people here. The problem is that people are eating too much fast food and not enough people have an exercise program that they follow. But we say in the poster that the most important thing is to have the self-motivation to eat healthy food and to exercise regularly.”

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Sahtak Awalan: Your Health First is a five-year educational public health program launched by WCMC-Q in 2012 in association with the Supreme Council of Health and the campaign's strategic partners, Qatar Foundation, the Supreme Education Council, Occidental Petroleum Qatar, ExxonMobil and Qatar Olympic Committee. The campaign is aimed at all ages groups but has a special focus on encouraging young people to make healthy lifestyle choices so that they develop good habits at an early age that will stay with them into adulthood.

- Ends -

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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