

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

Member of Qatar Foundation

Press Release

WCMC-Q students present research at elite neurology conference

Doha – June 9, 2015: Three ambitious graduate doctors from Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar (WCMC-Q) have presented their research at one of the world's foremost international neurology conferences.

New graduates Dr. Mais Alkawaz, Dr. Ayman Al Jurdi and Dr. Mujahed Laswi presented their research posters at the 2015 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Neurology in Washington DC. The newly qualified physicians were still students when they presented their research at the conference, which took place shortly before their graduation ceremony.

It is highly unusual for medical students to have the opportunity to present research at such a prestigious event while they are still in college, but Dr. Naim Haddad, Associate Professor of Clinical Neurology at WCMC-Q, was confident that their projects were of sufficient quality to merit participation in the conference.

Dr. Haddad said: "This is one of the largest and most important events for the field of neurology and it is attended by many of the world's most highly regarded neurologists, so this was an incredible opportunity for the students.

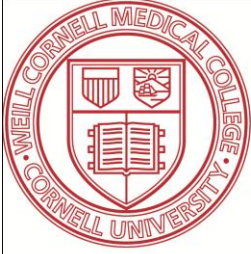
"Presenting their projects in Washington DC marked the culmination of a year of very hard work carrying out clinical research at Hamad Medical Corporation, which delivered very interesting and worthwhile results. They showed great confidence and displayed excellent knowledge of their research when discussing their posters with the neurologists at the conference, and they served as excellent ambassadors for Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar."

The Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Neurology took place at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington DC and attracted more than 2,500 abstracts submitted by neurology researchers from across the globe.

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Dr. Mais Alkawaz presented a research poster on her project about idiopathic intracranial hypertension in Qatar, a rare and serious disease characterized by increased pressure around the brain that causes headaches and nausea and can lead to loss of vision if not treated. The project was supervised by Dr. Marc Dinkin, Director of Neuro-Ophthalmology at NewYork–Presbyterian Hospital – Weill Cornell Medical Center, and Dr. Fatima Al Mannei, Specialist Ophthalmologist at Hamad Medical Corporation.

Now that she has completed her studies at WCMC-Q, Dr. Alkawaz is going to the United States to join the Neurology residency program at NewYork–Presbyterian Hospital – Weill Cornell Medical Center.

Dr. Alkawaz said: “The conference was extremely beneficial for me, especially since Neurology is the specialty I’m going into. I was very impressed by the educational lectures and groundbreaking research projects presented from all over the world by internationally renowned neurologists. I’m very fortunate to have been a part of this experience, which really motivated me to follow through with my projects and reinforced my passion for research and innovation.”

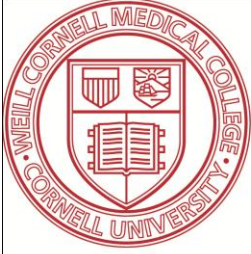
Dr. Ayman Al Jurdi and Dr. Mujahed Laswi worked together on a project that mapped the incidence of epilepsy in Qatar and made useful discoveries about the most likely causes of the disease among different nationalities. By studying the charts of several hundred HMC patients the project found that those of South East Asian origin were more likely to have developed epilepsy due to infectious diseases affecting the brain, while among the Qatari population stroke was more commonly the cause.

Dr. Al Jurdi said: “Our research looks at the epidemiology of epilepsy in Qatar in terms of the patients’ geographical background, seizure types, epilepsy syndromes, causes and treatment. It is the first of its kind not only in Qatar but also in the region. It was great sharing our research with neurologists from all around the world at the conference and hearing what they thought about it. We also got the chance to attend many sessions at the conference and learn about the

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groundbreaking research happening elsewhere in the world. Overall, it was an amazing experience.”

Dr. Al Jurdi and Dr. Laswi’s project titled: Mapping Epilepsy in Qatar was made possible by UREP grant number UREP 15-012-3-003 from the Qatar National Research Fund (a member of Qatar Foundation) under Dr. Haddad’ s supervision.

Dr. Laswi will now join the General Surgery residency program at Cleveland Clinic, Ohio and Dr. Al Jurdi is joining the Internal Medicine residency program at NewYork–Presbyterian Hospital – Weill Cornell Medical Center.

Dr. Khaled Machaca, Associate Dean for Research at WCMC-Q, said: “Successfully presenting research at such a prestigious event was both a remarkable achievement and opportunity for our students. We are very proud of the way they applied themselves to their research while still achieving excellent grades in their studies, and we are extremely grateful to the support that our research efforts receive from QF and QNRF to make successes like this possible.”

- Ends -

Photo Caption:

From left to right: Dr. Mujahed Laswi, Dr. Mais Alkawaz and Dr. Ayman Al Jurdi

About Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar

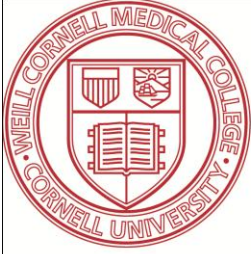
Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar is a partnership between Cornell University and Qatar Foundation. It offers pre-medical and medical courses leading to the Cornell University M.D. degree with teaching by Cornell and Weill Cornell faculty and by physicians at Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) and 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

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improve health care both now and for future generations, and to provide high quality health care to the Qatari population.

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