

High school students head to the laboratory for a summer of research

Doha – August 27, 2017: High school students with a passion for science have experienced life as a researcher as part of a program initiated by Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar.

The Research Internship for National High School Students is now in its third year, and offers Qatari students who are considering a science-based career, or those with a passion for the subject, the chance to undertake work experience in WCM-Q's state-of-the-art laboratories.

Working side-by-side with scientists conducting biomedical research, the students learn about WCM-Q and research theories, but most importantly get hands-on experience.

Mashaël Al Naemi, who attends American School Doha, was one of this year's nine students to participate in the program. She interned in the laboratory of Dr. Karsten Suhre, professor of physiology and biophysics and director of the bioinformatics core.

The 17-year-old, who plans to apply to WCM-Q to study medicine, said: "I've done other research programs in the past in Boston but this was one that was at home and something I could do during the summer vacation before school starts again.

I want to apply to Cornell in the future so being able to come and work in the laboratories before my decision was really useful.

In the future, I want to be a physician specializing in sports medicine and taking these internship programs will also help me to pursue research interests on the side as well."

While at WCM-Q, Mashaël was taught the Western blot pipetting technique, which is used to detect specific proteins in a cell.

Mashaël said: "I have really enjoyed the experience. The program is a good balance between classroom and laboratory work and I really liked how I got to have hands-on experience and that the researchers trusted me to perform tasks myself."

As part of the program, which is administered by WCM-Q's Research Division, the interns also take classes on time-management techniques, self-directed study skills and how to prepare strong college applications.

Christy Poppe, senior research training specialist at WCM-Q, said the aim of the internship scheme was to encourage potential scientists and biomedical researchers to pursue the subject as a career, and so ultimately increase research capacity within Qatar, fulfilling one of the goals of Qatar national Vision 2030.



She added: “The aim of the course is to also provide interns with a genuine insight into what a career as a biomedical researcher is really like. By working alongside professional researchers, they get the chance to discuss the day-to-day work and ask questions in a professional environment.

“The students also receive guidance on preparation for undergraduate courses and insights into what college programs are looking for in their application processes.”

The Research Internship for National High School Students program targets Qatari nationals who are 16 years old and above. The program also counts towards students’ voluntary community service hours, with students who complete the course logging between 50 and 100 hours of service, depending on whether they take the two-week or four-week option.

For more information about internships and training programs that are available at WCM-Q, visit: <https://qatar-weill.cornell.edu/research/research-training-programs/overview>.

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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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