



## **QATAR FOUNDATION'S ACADEMIC BRIDGE PROGRAM CELEBRATES 15 YEARS OF SUCCESS**

*Centre Serves As A Gateway To The Future*

**Doha, Qatar, 23 November 2015:** This year, the Academic Bridge Program (ABP), a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), is celebrating 15 years of success. Established in 2001, the pre-university program is designed to provide students with a comprehensive, holistic education that prepares them for a future of success.

Through the provision of a rigorous two-semester syllabus, which focuses on developing English language skills, maths, science, and computer skills, combined with a plethora of extra-curricular activities, the ABP aims to build skills for life, serving as a bridge to higher education and a gateway to the future. It encourages the unlocking of human potential in order help young men and women succeed, personally and academically.

Dr Bryan Lewallen , Director of the Academic Bridge Program , , explains how the centre is designed to make a meaningful impact: "The Academic Bridge Program is all about opportunities. We believe that it is our mission to prepare some of the brightest young men and women in Qatar for success at the university level and beyond."

"We want to open our students' minds to explore the many opportunities that they have been given, in order to make a long-lasting contribution to a country that has provided them with so much. In fact, many ABP alumni currently work in Qatar, in fields such as medicine, engineering, foreign affairs, business, computer science, design, and journalism. Some of our alumni even occupy important positions within Qatar Foundation."

Abeer Al-Hammadi is an example of a former ABP student that is currently employed within QF Research & Development. She has been with QF since 2008 and is the IP Commercialisation Manager in the office of Intellectual Property & Technology Transfer. She was part of the first class in 2001, and, following graduation, went on to join the pre-medical programme at Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar. Two years later, she moved to Wales to study biotechnology at Cardiff University.

"For me, academically, the Academic Bridge Program served as a foundation," Abeer explains. "When I was at school, my education was primarily in Arabic, so the ABP helped in the transition of my learning in Arabic to my learning in English. It represented a small, but significant step in my career. It directed my academic future, and it paved the way for me to be where I am today."

The ABP faculty and staff come from all over the globe and represent over 20 different nationalities, including Qatar. With such a variety of diverse and interesting backgrounds, the programme enables the

students to be exposed to a range of cultures. “I think that the ABP is an important platform to help people to become accustomed to a different language, and to different cultures. It also helps the transition from being a student at school to a student at university, and it helps those who have not yet decided what they want to do,” Abeer explains. “It equips you with confidence, the confidence to handle university, life, and travel.”

The ABP aims to provide students with a well-rounded experience, and gives them the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of extracurricular clubs and activities, including Model United Nations (MUN) in association with Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar, Community Service Club, Creative Writing Club, Debate Club, Music Club, Newsletter Club, Photography Club, and Robotics Club, as well as a range of sporting activities, events, and teams. Additionally, the Social Services & Volunteering Club helps to develop students’ social and leadership skills, while giving back to the community.

“We work a great deal on a variety of additional skills that our students will need to develop, or continue developing, in order to be successful at the university level. At the ABP, we work very hard to stress the importance of responsibility, punctuality, respect, honesty, integrity, and hard work. We help them to develop goals for themselves and provide the assistance and support they need to achieve those goals.”

“Increasing a student’s level of self-confidence is of vital importance to his or her success at university level; therefore, all of our faculty and staff members at the ABP strive to help each student to reach their maximum potential,” Dr Lewallen says, describing how the academic institute is committed to building a dynamic and all-encompassing community of students.

Over the last few years, the ABP has gone from strength to strength, and is now recognised as one of the most successful and well-recognised foundation programmes in the region. In May of 2002, 135 students graduated from the ABP, and, since that time, over 2,500 students have graduated.

Moza Al Boainain has been Assistant Director for Student Services at the ABP since 2010. “One of our biggest achievements is the steady increase of the ABP graduate acceptance to the Education City universities,” she proudly explains. “Last academic year, the Education City universities accepted 57 per cent of the ABP students who applied to them, which was 70 per cent of our students. This was the highest percentage in the history of the Academic Bridge Program.”

ABP students also attend non-QF universities in Qatar, the UK, the US, and other countries around the world. Last year, universities in the UK made 116 offers of admission to ABP students, and 10 students were admitted to universities in the US and other countries. Each year, approximately 90 per cent of all ABP graduates receive offers of admission to universities, locally and internationally.

Furthermore, the ABP currently has over 20 MOUs with universities around world that will enable ABP graduates, who meet the universities’ specific requirements, to enter directly into the first year of

specific programmes, as opposed to repeating a foundation year. The ABP is in the process of negotiating additional partnerships with a number of world-class academic institutions around the world.

The overarching aim of the ABP is to unlock human potential in order prepare students to be successful at university level and beyond. It is clear that the centre is well on its way to achieving this goal, and, as it enters the next 15 years, is looking forward to many more successes in the future.

### **Images Caption**

Image 1: Dr Bryan Lewallen is the Director of the Academic Bridge Program, Qatar Foundation's premier pre-university program.

Image 2: The Academic Bridge Program is housed inside Qatar Foundation's Liberal Arts and Sciences building in Education City.

Image 3: Two students from Qatar Foundation's Academic Bridge Program

Image 4: An Academic Bridge Program student studies alongside a tutor.

Image 5: Academy Bridge Program students during a group study session.

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### **Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential**

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) is a private, non-profit organisation that is supporting Qatar on its journey from carbon economy to knowledge economy by unlocking human potential, for the benefit of not only Qatar, but the world.

Founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Amir, QF is chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser.

QF's work encompasses education, research and community development. World-class universities are brought to Qatar to help create an education sector in which young people can develop the attitudes and skills required for a knowledge economy. At the same time, QF builds Qatar's innovation and



technology capacity by developing and commercialising solutions through key sciences. The Foundation also works to foster a progressive society while enhancing cultural life, protecting Qatar's heritage and addressing immediate social needs in the community.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, visit <http://www.qf.org.qa>