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Carnegie Mellon students volunteer in Nepal and Thailand

Service learning trips support holistic growth of students

DOHA, QATAR – After final exams, most students are enjoying their summer breaks away from university. However, 19 Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar students have chosen to spend time volunteering in Nepal and Thailand this summer as part of the university’s global service learning program.

Partnering with Habitat for Humanity Nepal, a non-profit organization that helps build and renovate houses for those in need, Carnegie Mellon Qatar students spent 10 days building a house in Central Nepal for a struggling family.

Habitat for Humanity Nepal worked in partnership with the women-led cooperative partner “Amardeep Mahila Utthan Bachat Tatha Rin Sahakari Sanstha,” in Bharatpur.

Homelessness is one of the major problems in Nepal with over 3 million people still in need of housing assistance. Habitat for Humanity International has contributed to tackling this issue by providing basic housing for families living in extreme poverty.

By the end of year 2016, Habitat for Humanity Nepal aims to provide housing for 100,000 Nepalese families.

Habitat for Humanity Nepal country representative Aruna Paul said: “The houses of the Nepalese here are made up of mud floor, thatch, tin roofs and stone walls without any ventilation. There isn’t any proper sanitation or clean drinking water facilities. The students from Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar worked hard, teaming up with locals, to build a shelter for Mohan Maya Rimal, the single breadwinner in her family, who had been staying at her daughter’s place and was in desperate need of her own house. The contribution that the students made has dramatically improved the quality of life for this family.”

“It is great to see Carnegie Mellon promoting community service in an international setting. These activities allow students to not only help others, but also gives them the chance to experience a different culture and get a glimpse of how others live. Their work has also helped strengthen relations between Nepal and Qatar,” added Paul.

The students were accompanied by Amy Walker, director of career development, and Kevin D’Arco, student development coordinator from the office of student activities and first year programs.

Mounir Sheikh, a sophomore at Carnegie Mellon Qatar was one of the volunteers: “Participating in my first service learning trip exceeded my expectations. We had an amazing group of student leaders and acquired an entirely new skillset that I would have never been able to learn elsewhere.”

Carnegie Mellon University Qatar

“Carnegie Mellon Qatar’s service learning trips are well-respected and I can only hope to one day be chosen to lead my own team,” Sheikh added.

A second group of Carnegie Mellon Qatar students traveled to Chiang Rai, the northernmost province of Thailand, where they spent two weeks working in rice fields, building foundations and exploring the Thai culture.

The student-led trip required students to pitch their ideas to a judging panel, with the team lead chosen based on their ideas and leadership skills. The winning student this year was Amalan Roshan a junior in business administration,

Service learning is at the core of the university’s mission towards the holistic development of students who are prepared to make a difference in their communities. Students are encouraged to incorporate community service into their educational experience by joining student clubs, volunteering for service trips and participating in sustained commitment programs.

Student service learning trips take place throughout the year. For more information on upcoming opportunities, please visit: <https://www.qatar.cmu.edu/student-activities>

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About Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar

As a global leader in education, Carnegie Mellon University is known for its creativity, collaboration across disciplines, and top programs in business, technology and the arts. The university has been home to some of the world’s most important thinkers, among them 19 Nobel Laureates and 12 Turing Award winners.

In 2004, Qatar Foundation invited Carnegie Mellon to join Education City, a groundbreaking center for scholarship and research. As Carnegie Mellon Qatar celebrates its 10th anniversary, the campus continues to grow, providing a prestigious education to 400 students from 42 countries. The university offers five undergraduate degree programs in Biological Sciences, Business Administration, Computational Biology, Computer Science and Information Systems.

Students in Qatar join more than 12,000 Carnegie Mellon students across the globe, who will become the next generation of leaders tackling tomorrow’s challenges. The university’s 95,000 alumni are recruited by some of the world’s most innovative organizations.

To learn more, visit www.qatar.cmu.edu and follow us on twitter @CarnegieMellon