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Texas A&M at Qatar and Maersk Oil Qatar launch Arabic science podcast series for schools

Texas A&M University at Qatar and Maersk Oil Qatar recently launched a new Arabic podcast series for students called Engineering Works as part of their Dhia: Engineering Leaders partnership that promotes student engagement and participation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects.

Launched at Omar bin Al-Khattab Education Complex, the Engineering Works podcasts take a look at the little-known or whimsical side of engineering, and the creative ways engineering is used to make a difference in the world. The original podcast was developed by the College of Engineering at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas, USA. Both classic and new episodes on a range of topics of interest to audiences in Qatar have been written and recorded in Arabic.

The effort is part of the Dhia: Engineering Leaders initiative, a partnership between Texas A&M at Qatar and Maersk Oil Qatar that aims to attract Qatar's best and brightest young minds to choose career paths in STEM and support the goals set out in the Qatar National Vision 2030.

Dr. Fawzi Al Ajji, Education Relations Manager at Maersk Oil Qatar, said, "Through initiatives with leading local institutions like Texas A&M, Maersk Oil Qatar is delivering a significant and long-term legacy for Qatar in the field of STEM education. Innovative program content such as Engineering Works can play an important role in supporting students engage with STEM at an early age and inspire them to further pursue sciences. We hope that this new podcast series will bring both enjoyment and learning to thousands of school children across Qatar."

Dr. César O. Malavé, dean of Texas A&M at Qatar and himself an engineer, said, "Engineering is very much a part of our everyday lives that we often take for granted. We hope Engineering Works helps to inspire students to study engineering in college because Qatar needs engineers to drive it toward its ambitious goals of being a knowledge-based economy. Texas A&M at Qatar is proud to partner with

Maersk Oil Qatar to make a real, tangible difference in STEM education locally through the Dhia Engineering Leaders initiative to produce the next generations of engineering leaders in Qatar.”

Forty episodes of Engineering Works will be distributed on a weekly basis when schools are in session. The first episode, which focused on natural gas and natural-gas-powered vehicles, aired during the launch.

Upcoming episodes range from a group of elementary school children in the United States who have built and launched their own satellite that snaps and transmits pictures of Earth every 30-seconds as the satellite orbits; to a handful of pigeons wearing miniature backpacks full of air pollution sensors and individual GPS trackers that spent a week flying over the streets of London to monitor air quality; to a team of tiny robots that managed to move a car weighing more than 1,800 kilograms.

Ali Almalik, Mubark Almansoori and Ali Alnahari, grade 12 students in Omar bin Al-Khattab secondary school, said they were excited to have such a podcast that aims to educate students more about engineering and science fields. The episodes are short and will keep students engaged in hearing a new one every week. Moreover, they said, students will learn more about the role of engineers and get inspired to find out more about the presented topics.

Mohammed Haltam, physics teacher at Omar bin Al-Khattab secondary school, said, “The idea of a podcast and airing episodes each week is a new idea in Qatar. It will benefit the students and allow them to learn more about the various engineering fields, in addition to learning how engineering can protect the environment and help solve everyday problems. We are planning to distribute the episodes to our students through social media and broadcast it at the weekly morning assembly of the school.”

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About Texas A&M University at Qatar

Texas A&M University, recognized as having one of the premier engineering programs in the world, has offered undergraduate degrees in chemical engineering, electrical and computer engineering, mechanical engineering and petroleum engineering at Qatar Foundation’s Education City campus since 2003, and graduate degrees in chemical engineering since fall 2011. Texas A&M at Qatar has awarded more than 735 degrees since 2007. In addition to engineering courses, Texas A&M at Qatar provides classes in science, mathematics, liberal arts and the humanities. All four of the engineering programs offered at Texas A&M at Qatar are accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET. The curricula offered at Texas A&M at Qatar are materially the same as those offered at the main campus in College Station, Texas, and the courses in Doha are taught in English in a co-educational setting. The reputation for excellence is the same, as is the commitment to equip engineers to lead the next generation of engineering advancement. Faculty from around the world are attracted to Texas A&M at Qatar to provide this educational experience and to participate in research activities now valued at more

than \$236.4 million, and that address issues important to the State of Qatar. Visit www.qatar.tamu.edu.