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NU-Q Graduates Largest Class to Date

Doha, Qatar – May 8, 2018 – When Fouad Hassan, NU-Q’s student speaker at its graduation ceremony told people he was attending Northwestern University to study film and theater he said that “jaws would drop eyes would roll, and an unnecessary pointed cough would follow to cover the confusion.” Hassan said the confusion was understandable since he is blind. His response four years ago, he told those gathered for the ceremony, is the same he gives today, “This is what I love, and this is what I will do.”

Hassan was one of 61 students of NU-Q’s seventh graduation class. In his remarks, he reminded them of all that they had accomplished in their four years at Northwestern. This brings the total to 282 graduates since the first ceremony in 2012.

“Our time at Northwestern pushed us to achieve higher goals and summon the courage to pursue tougher journeys. As media students, Northwestern has also taught us to pursue and tell the untold stories, to connect and empathize with one another, and more importantly, to fight for what we know is right,” Hassan said.

Renowned filmmaker and journalist Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, the graduation speaker, explained how the power of storytelling contributes to the commanding role of communication in a global society. Recounting the outcome of her first-ever investigative story on extreme bullying Pakistan, Obaid-Chinoy told the students what her father told her, “If you speak the truth, I will stand with you, and so will the world,” she said.

After detailing a series of additional lessons, the two-time Oscar winner summarized her advice to the class by saying that their journey of life is now beginning and they should “remember that stubborn dreams are worth pursuing; remember to stand up for yourself, to be relentless, to fight back, to have thick skin, to embrace failure, to apologize when you make mistakes, and to break bread with strangers.”

Northwestern President Morton Schapiro, who has attended every NU-Q graduation, told graduates and their families how much NU-Q students have inspired him over the years. “You not only carry the Northwestern purple flag so proudly, you absolutely exemplify the best of what we can achieve,” he said, “you are an inspiring example for the university itself, and as you join more than 250,000 alumni worldwide and I am confident you will make your mark in the world too.”

NU-Q Dean and CEO Everette E. Dennis in introducing the class said, “Anyone who ever doubted the value media and communication witnessed its importance during the blockade of Qatar,” adding that, “this class began their year with uncertainty, but they and Qatar have been resolute and resilient, and that has led us to this triumphal event today. Over the last four years, the graduating class has demonstrated academic and extracurricular excellence across all platforms and leaves here as educated and professionally competent women and men.”

A delegation of high-level representatives from Northwestern’s home campus in the U.S., including Provost Jonathon A. Holloway and members of NU-Q’s Joint Advisory Board, joined this year’s graduating class in celebrating their academic successes.

Earlier in the day, President Schapiro hosted the annual awards ceremony where students receive special honors. At this year’s event, Zaki Hussein received the Dean’s Award while the Student Leadership Award was given to Jueun Choi. Individual honor for each of the academic programs included Habiba Abbas, Liberal Arts Award; Ibtesaam Moosa, Communication Award; and Shageaa Naqvi, Journalism and Strategic Communication Award.

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About Northwestern University in Qatar

Northwestern University in Qatar draws from its parent organization, [Northwestern University](#) (Evanston, Illinois), a distinguished history, famous programs and an exceptional faculty. Founded in partnership with Qatar Foundation, NU-Q provides a framework through which students explore the world and, ultimately, shape its future through its distinguished schools of [communication, journalism and strategic communication](#), and [liberal arts](#).