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NU-Q CLASS OF 2015 GRADUATE WINS EDUCATION EXCELLENCE AWARD

April 3, 2016 (Doha) — Maha Al-Ansari has won a prestigious award recognizing her achievements at Northwestern University in Qatar (NU-Q). The Education Excellence Awards - considered the highest academic honor for individuals and educational institutions in Qatar – are awarded annually by Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani.

Al-Ansari received a gold medal, which places her second in the university-level category.

“Maha’s exemplary academic record, professional achievements and service to the school and the community made her the perfect candidate for this well-deserved recognition,” said Dean and CEO of NU-Q Everette E. Dennis.

Education plays a significant role in the human development component of the four pillars of Qatar’s national vision 2030. The Education Excellence Awards honors outstanding students who are working towards that vision.

The complex selection process takes into account the overall performance of the applicants during their educational period, reviewing co-curricular activities such as athletic performance, and contribution to the community.

“The positive atmosphere at NU-Q has definitely allowed me to make the most of my university experience,” Al-Ansari said. “We’re constantly presented with amazing opportunities and surrounded by inspiring professors and peers at Northwestern, so striving for greatness is easy.”

Al-Ansari, who was the valedictorian of the Class of 2015, interned at *Sports Illustrated* in New York while a student at Northwestern and also worked as a sports analyst on QF Radio. In addition to serving as the treasurer of NU-Q's Student Union, Al-Ansari was the team captain of the women's basketball team, the Lady Wildcats, which often ranked first among Education City universities in league tournaments during her time as a player.

"Maha was a leader on the basketball court and in her class during her time at NU-Q. She has always been committed to excellent performance," said Mary Dedinsky, director of the journalism program and associate professor in residence.

Al-Ansari is the first Qatari to work at the beIN Sports English programs' department, where she is currently an assistant journalist. "I hope to be a pioneer in the field of journalism, and help set the foundation for future generations. While excelling in education is definitely important, it is merely a stepping stone. It's how you use that education in the future that makes all the difference," said Al Ansari.

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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 [liberal arts](#).