

## **Georgetown student takes listeners around the world on radio show**

When Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q) student Sami Wehbe (SFS '17) decided to take a course on presenting and voice overs, he didn't expect it to lead him down a path towards hosting two national radio shows and interviewing ambassadors from 18 countries. But almost two years later, he has done just that.

In addition to his academic studies, the GU-Q senior served as the host of Qatar Foundation Radio's (QF Radio) *Around the World in 30 Minutes* and the co-host of the *Rise* morning show with Laura Finnerty. *Around the World in 30 Minutes*, a show which Wehbe started and produced, involved weekly interviews with ambassadors who discussed their country's tourism industry, culture and cuisine. Countries featured on the show included Canada, France, Switzerland, Italy, Sweden, Japan, Brazil, South Africa, Cuba and Germany.

"As students, we are exposed to politicians and the diplomatic community from very early on. This definitely gave me confidence in dealing with the diplomatic elites of Doha," explained Wehbe. "In addition, our curriculum has aided me tremendously in addressing political matters and sensitivities in the phrasing of interview questions. The ambassadors were very impressed with what I knew about their countries, as well as the questions that I directed towards them. This has a lot to do with what I learned at Georgetown."

Wehbe was assisted by fellow Georgetown student Omar Al-Khateeb (SFS '18) who helped with researching countries for the *Around the World in 30 Minutes* show. Al-Khateeb recorded a two minute segment for each show to introduce listeners to the country in question, briefing them on basic facts including the capital city, population and geographical location.

Working at the radio station involved intensive training in how to use the equipment and edit audio, as well as how to present the weather, traffic and news, and host a show. As part of his work for the *Rise* show, Wehbe had to wake up daily at 05:00 a.m. and be at the station half an hour before the 06:30 a.m. start, before returning to the Georgetown campus for a full day of lectures.

"The most valuable thing that I believe I gained from my work at the station was what I learned about myself and the confidence that this gave me," said Wehbe. "There were moments when I really doubted myself and felt like giving up. Balancing radio with academics and a social life was a very difficult task. There were many highs and lows and I got both hate and love for putting myself out there on Doha's radio waves. Yet every single person has supported me even if they did not intend to. The negativity thrown my way only made me work harder."

Wehbe's efforts at the station were assisted by GU-Q alumni Nabil Al Nashar (SFS '11), among others. "The QF Radio team did everything in their power to support and teach me," continued Wehbe. "I would like to thank Laura Finnerty, Roger Prior and Scott Houston for their patience with me on air in the morning show, as well as Mohammed Al-Beshri and Benedict Tantengco for all their efforts in making this possible. Although QF Radio is closing, my experiences at QF Radio have sparked my interest in the media sector and I hope to find more opportunities to continue in this field, whether it is in radio or television."

Although QF Radio ceased operating at the end of October, Wehbe has archived the shows so they will be available for interested listeners indefinitely. They are available online here: <https://qatar.sfs.georgetown.edu/qfradio-sami>