

STARS OF SCIENCE YOUNG INNOVATORS SEE DRAMATIC ELIMINATION

Egyptian and Tunisian Candidates Triumph in Engineering Episode on MBC4

Doha, 31 October 2015— In a dramatic elimination episode of MBC 4's *Stars of Science*, an “edutainment reality” TV program initiated by Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF), Omar Hamid of Egypt and Fawzy Othman of Tunisia delivered a spirited defense of their prototypes to prevail over their competitors. The pair edged out Abdullah Aldossary of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Hussam Al Hinnawi of Palestine in an episode that featured Season 7's most diverse set of inventions yet.

The Arab world's most promising young innovators compete against each other to make their ideas come alive on the series, which brings to fruition QF's vision of encouraging and facilitating the region's next generation of aspiring young science and technology innovators. Twelve candidates aged 18 to 30 are given the opportunity to come to Doha, Qatar, where they are mentored by world-class engineering and design specialists in the laboratories of Qatar Science & Technology Park (QSTP), a member of Qatar Foundation. There, the innovators are challenged as they develop their ideas from concept to potential products.

With full hearts and frayed nerves, the candidates took turns presenting their prototypes to the expert jury in yesterday's engineering episode. First, Fawzy explained to the jury how his Robotic Goalie Trainer could revolutionize goalkeepers' practice sessions by automatically shooting footballs as part of a customized program. Omar unveiled a re-engineered, compact Prayer Chair designed to offer assistive sitting and standing to worshippers in a mosque with physical disabilities.

Next, Hussam demonstrated how his Automatic Stair Climber Machine uses robotic, tank-style treads for users to ascend stairs without effort at the press of a button. Rounding out the group, Abdullah debuted his Airport Smart Chair, a lounge with many automated features, including an alarm that notifies travelers when their plane begins boarding, even if they are sleeping.

The jury included perennial fan favorites Mr. Yussif Abdulrahman Saleh, General Manager of Qatar Shell Research and Technology Center, and Dr. Fouad Mrad, Executive Director of the United Nations ESCWA regional technology center. Joining them was Dr. Francois Gilardoni, a prominent venture capitalist and scientist from Geneva, Switzerland.

The jury, led by Dr. Gilardoni, was critical of Hussam's Automatic Stair Climber Machine, pointing out that the machine appeared unstable while traversing stairs during his demonstration. They noted that while Abdullah was able to prove that focus groups liked the idea of the Airport Smart Chair, his presentation had weaknesses that raised more questions about his prototype's utility than it answered.

Fawzy employed a skillful defense of his Robotic Goalie Trainer prototype when jurors quizzed him about its mechanics. But Omar managed to steal the show when he presented his Prayer Chair. All three jurors were impressed by the simple effectiveness of the invention, as well as the perseverance Omar showed despite several early setbacks in the laboratory.

The jury scored the young innovators based on prototype performance (50 percent), product outlook (30 percent) and the resourcefulness and leadership exhibited by the candidate (20 percent).

Omar outscored everyone by a large margin, earning 69 points, while Fawzy came in second with 52.3 points. Abdullah and Hussam placed third and fourth, respectively, and were eliminated from the competition.

“I’m humbled that the jury appreciated the potential of the Prayer Chair, as well as its possible applications even beyond the mosque,” said Omar. “I passionately believed in my invention and its potential from day one. Having world-class, highly sophisticated innovation veterans recognize my project is a dream, come true. Moving forward, my goal is to give my absolute best effort and encourage others around me to do the same – we are all in this together.”

“I have worked to develop innovative projects for years, but I can say that *Stars of Science* has been a major catalyst for my success. Advancing this far is a crowning achievement for me and a testament to the effectiveness of the program,” said Fawzy. “I’m delighted to have progressed this far, but I’m not satisfied. I will redouble my efforts to eliminate weaknesses in my prototype, so that I can impress the jurors in the design stage and rise above my competition.”

The next *Stars of Science* episode, to be shown on MBC4 Friday, November 6th at 7PM KSA/ 4PM GMT, will see three candidates face the jury in the design stage. One of them will be eliminated. The four finalists who survive the design stage will earn a share of the \$600,000 prize, with the winner determined in a special live final episode.

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Stars of Science

Stars of Science, an “edutainment reality” TV format initiated by Qatar Foundation, is the region’s leading innovation program. *Stars of Science* fosters and advances the Arab world’s aspiring science and technology entrepreneurs. In this seventh season, 12 candidates are challenged to prove their resourcefulness during critical stages of the innovation cycle while collaborating with industry leading mentors. An expert panel of jurors assesses and eliminates candidates and their innovative products in Engineering and Design episodes until only four remain. These four finalists vie for a share of a \$600,000 prize, determined by a jury deliberation and voting from the public.

***Stars of Science* airs from Friday, September 18th, to Friday, November 20th, 2015 on MBC4.**

Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF) is a private, non-profit organization that is supporting Qatar on its journey from a carbon economy to knowledge economy by unlocking human potential, for the benefit of not only Qatar, but the world. Founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, QF is chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser.

QF's work encompasses education, research and community development. World-class universities are brought to Qatar to help create an education sector in which young people can develop the attitudes and skills required for a knowledge economy. At the same time, QF builds Qatar's innovation and technology capacity by developing and commercializing solutions through key sciences. The Foundation also works to foster a progressive society while enhancing cultural life, protecting Qatar's heritage and addressing immediate social needs in the community.

About MBC Group

MBC Group (Middle East Broadcasting Center) is the largest and leading private media company in the Middle East & North Africa region. For the past 23 years, MBC Group was able to enrich people's lives through information, interaction and entertainment. In 2002, nearly a decade after the launch of MBC1 in London, back in 1991, and as the 1st private free-to-air Arab satellite TV channel, MBC Group moved its headquarters to Dubai Media City, United Arab Emirates, where it remains.

Today, MBC Group includes 20 TV channels: MBC1 (general family entertainment); MBC2 and MBC MAX (24-hour western movies); MBC3 (children's edutainment with a mix of both local productions and western acquisitions); MBC4 (entertainment for young families with a female-focus); MBC Action (an indigenous adrenaline-packed channel targeting young males with local and homegrown productions); MBC Variety (Western films and general entertainment with uninterrupted broadcasting); Al Arabiya News Channel (the 24-hour Arabic language news channel); Al Hadath (an extension of Al Arabiya News Channel with a specific focus on real events in the Arab world and beyond); Wanasah (24-hour Arabic music channel); MBC DRAMA (24/7 Arabic drama); MBC MASR (general family entertainment geared towards the Egyptian family); MBC MASR 2 (providing the Egyptian audience with superior quality entertainment, in addition to live coverage of some of the Egyptian league's football matches); MBC + Drama (a joint paid-for channel between MBC and OSN); MBC Bollywood (delivering the freshest in Bollywood content geared towards the region via an Arabized interface); and most recently four sports channels, MBC PRO SPORTS (geared towards the "Saudi Football Premier League" fans in the Kingdom); and MBC USA (the channel is present on "Dish Network" in the US, and targets Arab audiences aboard; the channel is dedicated to offer and broadcast a wide range of content from the prominent MBC channels including movies, series and global formats).

In July 2011, seven channels within MBC Group began to broadcast in HD across the MENA Region: MBC1 HD, MBC2 HD, MBC4 HD, MBC Action HD, MBC Drama HD, MBC Max HD and Al Arabiya HD. In 2013, MBC3 HD joined the collection of HD channels followed by MBC Variety HD in 2014.

MBC Group also includes two FM radio stations: MBC FM (Gulf music) and Panorama FM (contemporary Arabic hit music); as well as O3 Productions, a premium content drama production company. Furthermore, MBC Group includes online platforms: www.mbc.net, www.alarabiya.net, www.shahid.net

(the first free VOD and catch-up portal in the Arab world) and www.actionha.net, and www.mbcprosports.net among others.