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Texas A&M University at Qatar welcomed Australian mechanical engineer, activist and the founder of Youth Without Borders Yassmin Abdel-Magied for an inspiring talk on her life story 9 Nov. in the Texas A&M Engineering Building in Education City.

Abdel-Magied was welcomed by the Australian Ambassador to Qatar Dr. Axel Wabenhorst who spoke to Abdel-Magied's "outstanding representation of a global citizen." Wabenhorst also emphasized the value of a STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education, like his in computer science and Abdel-Magied's in mechanical engineering, as a tool to secure your future. "You're not closing any avenues by studying the STEM disciplines," he said.

That sentiment was especially fitting since the talk was sponsored by the Office of Development, Engagement and Outreach at Texas A&M at Qatar, which oversees the branch campus' STEM outreach programs designed to inspire young people in Qatar to take up STEM disciplines in school and university. Wabenhorst stood as living evidence that even a Ph.D. holder in computer science can lead to a career in diplomacy and fluency in Arabic to boot.

Abdel-Magied spoke to the Texas A&M at Qatar community about her journey, which began with her birth in Sudan and subsequent emigration with her family to Australia. She was unofficially the second Sudanese family in Brisbane. "I was not your typical Australian girl," she said. That otherness was on display when she announced to her mother her dream to be the first female black Muslim Formula One driver. That dream shifted to maybe just designing race cars, which she did. She designed and built her own race car named Habibi.

At 16, Abdel-Magied founded Youth Without Borders, a youth-led organization that empowers young people to work together to change their communities positively. She started a mobile lending library in the jungles of Indonesia, an initiative to encourage Muslim girls to play soccer called "Shin pads and Hijabs" and a free engineering camp called "SPARK."

What was her impetus to start Youth Without Borders? A simple saying of her mother's: "If there's something wrong, why don't you do something about it?"

Abdel-Magied went to England to fulfill a dream to work for a Formula One team, but then decided it was no longer for her and rather decided to work on an oil rig in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. She was the first female hired. There she became acutely aware of workplace discrimination and biases toward woman engineers. "A woman is deemed incompetent until proven otherwise."

She said talking about social change and biases is deeply uncomfortable, but as an engineer, she's a problem solver and can't ignore this absence of a culture of equality.

Abdel-Magied, through her experience with Youth Without Borders, realized to "never underestimate the impact a single individual—you—can make. Provide other people a leg up. Giving opportunities to people who may not share our background is really important.

The reality is we all can't necessarily change the world, but we can change the world around us."

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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.