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### **Texas A&M at Qatar graduates largest-ever class**

Texas A&M University at Qatar graduated its largest class ever 4 May in a ceremony at the Qatar National Convention Centre.

About 110 students received their bachelor's degrees in chemical engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering and petroleum engineering during the branch campus' annual commencement ceremony. Of those degrees, 56 were awarded to Qatari graduates. In addition, Texas A&M at Qatar awarded 14 Master of Science and Master of Engineering degrees in chemical engineering.

Dr. César O. Malavé, dean of Texas A&M at Qatar, presided over the ceremony — his first since he joined the branch campus in July 2016.

Malavé said, "It is an honor to serve as dean for Texas A&M at Qatar's 10th commencement ceremony. A dream that started with 29 students in the fall 2003 has now achieved a major milestone. All the credit goes to the faculty and staff who have dedicated their professional lives to the development of these amazing leaders. What you see today are fearless engineering leaders that will transform our world: Aggie engineers who will work hard to tackle the challenges of the 21st century and make our world a better place for all."

J. Todd Creeger, president of ConocoPhillips Qatar and a Class of 1986 graduate of Texas A&M University, was the night's guest speaker. Creeger congratulated graduates for earning a college degree, something that only seven percent of adults can claim.

"The knowledge you've gained, and the wisdom to apply this knowledge towards worthwhile pursuits, is something of priceless value that no one can ever take away from you," Creeger said. "Knowledge empowers us, and bestows on us a certain responsibility to people other than ourselves. Your generation will be called upon to deal with a host of pressing issues — population growth, affordable energy, clean water, and improved sustainability among them. Graduates will now be challenged to put their skills to work to solve some of the world's greatest problems. Today, I

challenge you to do just that. And I know when engineers are challenged, they respond. As engineers, you not only have the ability to make the world a better place, you have the responsibility to do so, and this responsibility is worth embracing.”

Creeger also gave graduates three pieces of advice he has learned throughout his career: to leverage their membership in the Aggie Network, to be bold and to choose to embrace each new day with a positive attitude, because life is short.

Tariq Atiyah, one of the night’s recipients of a degree in mechanical engineering, was selected by the graduating seniors to give the student address, surprising his parents whom he hadn’t told he had been chosen to speak.

To his fellow graduates, Atiyah said, “We have now successfully completed this journey at Texas A&M at Qatar and are about to embark on a new one, a more demanding one. When life challenges us we must rise above the challenge. When we are troubled by the ever-changing, uncontrollable, unstable nature of life we must continue to rise. We must not let these challenges stifle us but rather overcome them with grace and confidence.”

And to the parents and family members of the graduates, Atiyah said, “You have all graduated with us today. You have graduated from being the parents of children at home to being the parents of young men and women on their own. We are so grateful for the unconditional love and support you provided us to bring us all to this success. For the endless lessons you engraved on us and the many times you accepted us back into your arms when we fell down, thank you very much. You deserve this more than we do!”

Texas A&M vice provost Dr. Michael Benedik also addressed the students and guests on behalf of the main campus. Dr. Ryan McLawhon, a Class of 2003 graduate of Texas A&M and executive director of academic services at the Doha branch campus, inducted the graduates into the Texas A&M Association of Former Students, an organization that comprises the more than 450,000 graduates of the university and is known worldwide as the Aggie Network.

Graduating seniors were celebrated the previous day at a special luncheon in their honor, and outstanding seniors were named by each academic program: Muhammad Zain Raza, chemical engineering; Mariam Adel Y A Al-Awadi, electrical and computer engineering; Mohamed Tarek Mohamed Hussein Mohamed, mechanical engineering; Khalid Abduljabbar A A Saifaldeen, petroleum engineering; Mashaal Essa Y Y Al-Salem, liberal arts; and Omar Abdelwahed Abdelghany Abdelwahed Ashour, science.

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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 almost 850 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](http://www.qatar.tamu.edu).