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Texas A&M at Qatar launches fifth volume of student writing

Engineering students from Texas A&M University at Qatar showcased their writing talents in the 2018 edition of *Best Writing*, a book that demonstrates the ability and creativity of students at the branch campus.

Now in its fifth year, *Best Writing* features the writings of Texas A&M at Qatar students in a variety of genres, from poetry, short stories and personal essays to technical papers and research reports.

Dr. César Octavio Malavé, dean of Texas A&M at Qatar, said, “We are committed to educating well-rounded engineers who are critical thinkers and problem solvers, and who will lead Qatar’s transformation into a modern, knowledge-based society. *Best Writing* celebrates the talent and creativity of our Aggie engineers and shows their innovation and passion.”

This year’s book, *Stories We Live By*, features stories their authors live by. Several of the pieces published in the book reveal students’ struggles with difficult issues or decisions, and demonstrate the courage and resilience of each author as they try to make sense of their experiences.

During the book launch, several of the student authors read selections from their published pieces. Shaikha Al-Qahtani, who graduated in May, read from her thank-you letter to one of her favorite professors. Saeed Ali Binnoora read his piece, “Twilight Shore,” along with classmate Aisha Al-Kubaisi and senior mechanical engineering major Aalaa Abdallah read from her piece in which she talked about the struggle between who she is and who she wants to be. Ahmed Al-Nowfal Al-Tamimi also performed two poems in Arabic.

The book also features photos taken by Texas A&M at Qatar students, including Mowad Alaradi whose photo of Souq Waqif is featured on the book’s cover.

Co-editor and instructional associate professor Dr. Mysti Rudd first conceived of the book five years ago. Rudd said *Best Writing* shows that Aggie engineers in Qatar excel at thinking and writing creatively as well as critically. Rudd also praised the students who were brave enough to share their writings.

“I am humbled by the trust that each of these student writers places in us by sharing the ‘stories they live by’ — exposing their struggles and concerns, daring to give us

glimpses of what they have yet to learn. Reading through an entire volume of *Best Writing* is like listening to our students without interruption. If you listen intently as you read, both to what is said and what is left unsaid, I believe you will be changed by what you read.”

Co-editor Dr. Amy Hodges agreed and said, “We need stories to live by. Stories remind us of what kind of person we want to be, and they tell us what we are like at our worst. I encourage you to listen to the following student authors for the ways in which they tell us truths about each individual human spirit. These are volunteers who are speaking to you tonight, people who are answering a higher call than a professor assigning an essay. They are telling you the stories that we live by.”

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About Texas A&M University at Qatar

Since 2003, Texas A&M University has offered undergraduate degrees in chemical engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering and petroleum engineering in Qatar Foundation’s Education City, and graduate degrees in chemical engineering since fall 2011. Texas A&M at Qatar has awarded nearly 950 degrees. All four undergraduate engineering degree programs are accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET. Faculty from around the world are attracted to Texas A&M at Qatar to educate the next generation of engineering leaders in Qatar and to conduct research valued at more than \$248.2 million that address issues important to the State of Qatar. Visit www.qatar.tamu.edu.