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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Appliqué” Fashion Show Displays Talent of VCUQatar’s Students

**18<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Show hosted by Salam at The Gate Mall highlighted the extraordinary designs and skills of VCUQatar’s fashion design program students**

Doha, Qatar – Collections by students from Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar’s (VCUQatar’s) Fashion Design program were on display during “Appliqué”, the two-day fashion show on April 12 and 13, which was hosted by Salam Stores at The Gate Mall.

This unique show, which featured the collections of 22 sophomore, junior, and senior fashion students, was opened by Sandra Wilkins, VCUQatar’s Chair of Fashion Design, who thanked the audience for attending.

Wilkins explained that the title of this year’s fashion show was “Appliqué”, which depicts the building of talents and skillsets, while showcasing the ability of students to take a concept all the way through to completion. She also described how important the show is both for the students and for Qatar’s fashion design industry.

The students had to submit their designs to a jury of fashion experts who are strong supporters of VCUQatar’s fashion design program, and who would select the best designs for the show. “Only one garment was eliminated during this year’s jury selection, which speaks to the quality of the clothes,” said Professor Wilkins, explaining that such an occurrence was highly unusual.

Also presenting their designs at “Appliqué” were several students from the fashion design program from the home campus from Richmond, Virginia.

Ahmed El Sayed, the co-founder of House of Nomad and VCUQatar alumnus, was the guest designer for the show, where his most recent collection was presented to great acclaim.

The fashion show allowed the students to be judged by experienced jury members who have a thorough knowledge of the fashion industry.

The emphasis throughout was one of turning creative concepts into ready-to-wear pieces for the runway, which not only had to be beautiful, but also wearable and above all marketable. Fashion professionals, especially retailers are regularly invited each year to review the collections and concepts, and give their expert advice to the students.

The Salam Fashion Award was presented to Radheya Visperas. The award includes mentoring in the development and design of two bespoke collections, which will be sold exclusively within a dedicated space in Salam Stores, Doha. Designs by the previous winner Mahnoor Ansari are currently on sale at Salam Stores at the Gate Mall.

The W Doha Award went to Sarah Al-Abdulghani, and the GLAM award went to Sarah Al-Abdulghani and Samyah Abou Rahma.

VCUQatar's Golden Needle Award, which goes to the best Senior Collection, was awarded to Samyah Abou Rahma.

The award for Most Outstanding Junior Collection went to Fatima Al-Khulaifi. The award for Most Outstanding Sophomore Collection went to Heidi Rashad.

The award for Outstanding Senior with Highest GPA went to Radheya Visperas. The award for Outstanding Junior with Highest GPA went to Alia Al-Sowaidi. The award for Outstanding Junior with Highest GPA went to Sreehitha Saini. The award for Outstanding Sophomore with Highest GPA went to Heidi Rashad.

The Guest Designer Award went to Ahmed El Sayed from House of Nomad.

Awards were also given to Deborah Sedlacek, Joshua Bigelow, Skyler Crawford and Lydia Critchfield from Virginia Commonwealth University's home campus in Richmond, Virginia for their Senior Collections which were shown at the event.

Five VCUQatar students will have their collections shown at the home campus annual fashion show which will take place May 10.

The fashion show counts not only on an extremely supportive audience, but was also supported by W Doha Hotel, GLAM magazine, Tajmeel Qatar International Beauty Academy, Makeup District, Bombay Silk Centre, Exclusive Events, Inglot, Tribal Gems & Jewellery, Apparel Qatar, Holika Holika, and Sara's Secrets.

### **About Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar:**

VCUQatar is the international branch campus of Virginia Commonwealth University's School of the Arts, a top-ranked art and design program in the U.S. Established in 1998 through a partnership with Qatar Foundation, VCUQatar offers students the opportunity to earn a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in fashion design, graphic design, interior design and painting and printmaking, a Bachelor of Arts degree in art history and a Master of Fine Arts degree in design.

A vibrant community with global reach, VCUarts promises students a lifelong passion for and conversation about the arts. As the foremost example of its commitment to global outreach and education, VCUQatar presents valuable opportunities for cross-cultural exchange and connects VCUarts to the influential art and design world of the Middle East. The campus attracts renowned contributors to contemporary visual culture for speaking and teaching engagements, and hosts two major international events--the design conference Tasmeem Doha and the Hamad bin Khalifa Islamic Art Symposium.

### **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 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 Amir, 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.

*For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, visit <http://www.qf.org.qa>*