

the Aggie Platform



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY at QATAR

News from Texas A&M University at Qatar Vol. 4, Issue 1 Spring 2008

Geology Field Camp

The tradition lives on
page 10



the Aggie Platform

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Dr. Mike Pilant, professor of mathematics, and Abdulla AlMardawi, lab coordinator in electrical engineering, play music during a reception for officials from ConocoPhillips on 5 Dec. Pilant is playing an oud, a traditional Arabic string instrument.



For a complete list of events, please visit www.qatar.tamu.edu/calendar



1 March

SPE paper contest

The Society of Petroleum Engineers will host another technical paper competition at Texas A&M at Qatar.

4–5 March

Career Fair

Hosted by the Academic Services Office

9–14 March

Student Leadership Exchange Trip

Aggies from College Station will travel to Doha to learn about Texas A&M at Qatar.



23–27 March

Spring break

Aggies will enjoy a week free from classes, and 12 students will travel to College Station for the second half of the Student Leadership Exchange Trip.

30 March

IEEE Consumer Products Showcase

The IEEE student chapter will host vendors and manufacturers of the hottest technology at their consumer products showcase in March.



30 March–1 April

Applied Mathematics and Computational Science Conference



21 April

Aggie Muster

Muster is one of the University's most poignant traditions. Each year on 21 April, Aggies gather at Muster ceremonies around the world to remember fellow Aggies who have died in the past year.



8 May

Aggie Ring Day and Student Affairs Leadership and Service Awards

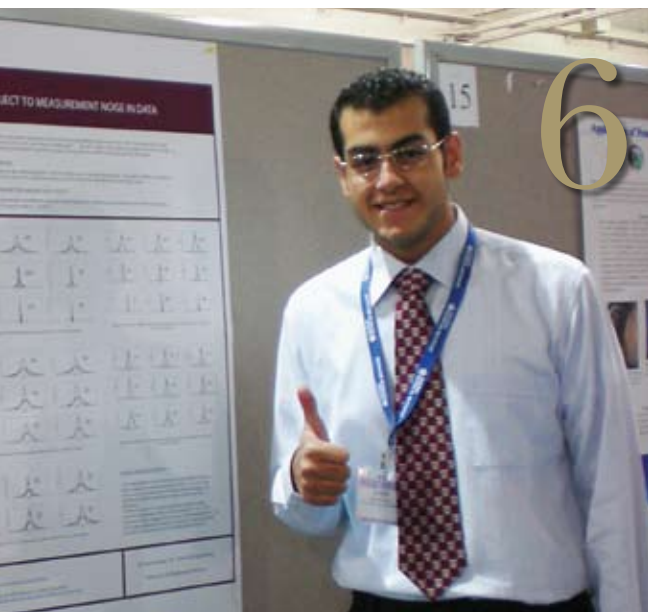


15 May

Commencement

University officials anticipate that about 25 Aggies will graduate from Texas A&M at Qatar this semester.

the Aggie Platform



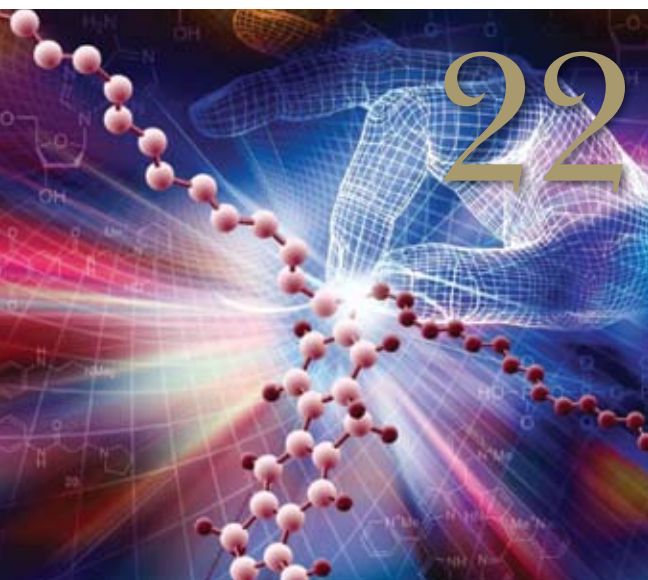
American Institute of Chemical Engineers student chapter of Texas A&M University at Qatar attend the 2007 AIChE National Student Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah

9 Texas A&M University at Qatar garners half of National Priorities Research Program Grants



More than 50 educators from across the region convened in Doha for the Middle East–North Africa Writing Centers Symposium

10 Aggies participate in four-week geology field course in Turkey



Qatar Fertiliser Company–Texas A&M University at Qatar Chemistry Conference held at Education City

28 Texas A&M at Qatar celebrates the graduation of two chemical engineers in December



Left: Aggie Ambassador Abdalla Abdalla '11 (left) answers questions from William Bullock Jr., president of ConocoPhillips Middle East and North Africa. Right: Amira Redissi '09 visits with Mike Stice, president of ConocoPhillips Qatar, about features of the Texas A&M Engineering Building.

Aggie Ambassadors score big giving tours of Engineering Building

Aggie Ambassadors is a new program being coordinated by the Office of Public Affairs. Ambassadors are students selected and trained to receive visitors to the University and lead tours of the new Texas A&M Engineering Building. Ambassadors are required to learn University history, facts and figures and be pre-

pared to answer most questions about the University, the Qatar campus, student life and academics.

Aggie Ambassadors have scored big points for the University since they began giving tours last fall. They have hosted top executives from ConocoPhillips and BP, and in January ambassadors conducted a building

tour for Diane Bodman, wife of US Secretary of Energy Samuel Bodman.

A similar program exists on the University's main campus in College Station, Texas.

To arrange a tour of the Texas A&M Engineering Building, please contact the Office of Public Affairs at +974.423.0045 or visit@qatar.tamu.edu.

12th Man Day draws crowds for soccer, basketball tournies

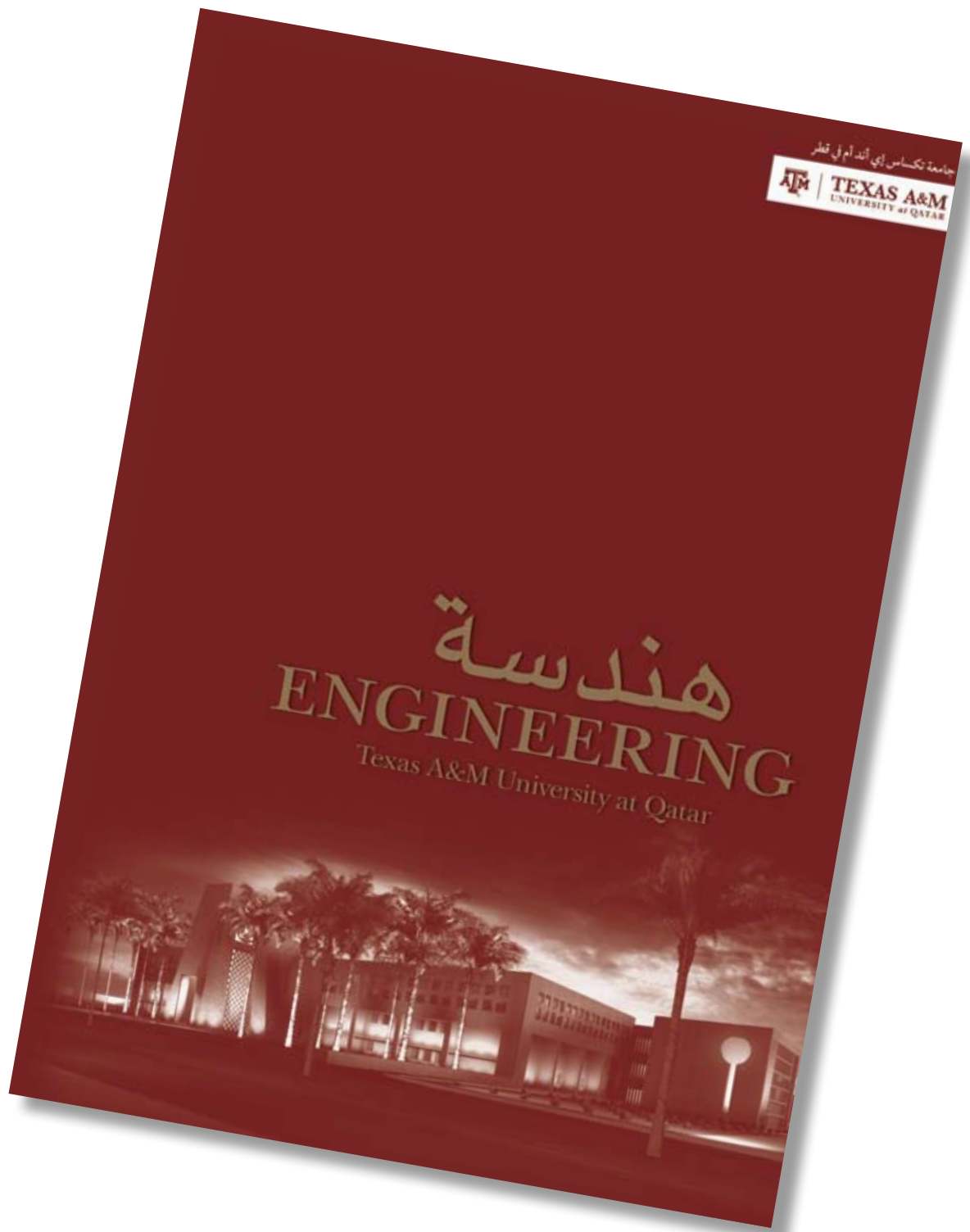
The 12th Man Club hosted a 12th Man Day for Aggies and other students in Education City. A mini soccer tournament and mini street basketball tournament were held in Qatar Foundation's outside courts and attracted many participants from different institutions from Qatar Foundation. Side events, giveaways and music filled the day with entertainment.

A team from Texas A&M at Qatar won the street basketball tournament. The team included Omar Abdallah, Wajih Idriss and Dani Wannous, and Mohamed Sheikh Al-Souk (College of the North Atlantic-Qatar). Aggies also took second place in the soccer tournament. The team included Mohammed Al-Marri, Mohammed Ben Amara, Bassel Babi and Ahmed Elsandedy. Carol Nader and Ibrihim Zein, both from Texas A&M at Qatar, won prizes in drawings during the event.



Above: Live music and door prizes were enough to attract some students to 12th Man Day, such as these girls, even if they weren't playing on a team. Below: Members of the winning basketball team receive their trophy.





Publication gives readers close look at Texas A&M at Qatar

The Office of Public Affairs debuted the new University showcase in November. The showcase, a 64-page booklet set in English and Arabic, provides a comprehensive overview of Texas A&M University at Qatar and features attractive photographs of students, faculty and staff—and of the new Texas A&M Engineering Building.

“This book captures the essence

of what Texas A&M at Qatar is all about,” said Norma Haddad, director of public affairs. “The showcase is a product of many weeks’ hard work by the public affairs team, and I think we all can be proud of how well it highlights the great things happening at the University.” The showcase complements admissions brochures—in both English and Arabic—that enu-

merate more specific applications requirements and procedures.

Haddad added that she is grateful for the University community’s support for the project. “We are so thankful for all the subjects who graciously agreed to participate in photographs for this publication,” she said. “The faces and smiles help us project the image Texas A&M at Qatar is known for.”



Because of the AIChE executive committee's hard work and our fellow students' support, our participation in the 2007 AIChE National Student Conference was possible. One big plan achieved... lots more to follow!



Whether in Qatar or in College Station, AIChE Aggies rock!



A Giant Leap to Utah

AIChE 2007 National Student Conference

by Mohd Mateen Kamal '10, chemical engineering major

In its quest to be recognized as The Texas A&M University at Qatar Student Chapter of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, the chapter's committee members envisioned a plan to attend the 2007 AIChE National Student Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah, United States, that was held between Nov. 2-5. This was the committee's brainchild since the late summer of 2007. After months of preparations, the dean of TAMUQ, Dr. Mark Weichold, gave his support to send a three-student delegation to the State of Utah.

Karim Farhat '09 (chapter president), Mohd Mateen Kamal '10 (treasurer) and Raid J. Hassiba '10 (internal officer) were elected to attend the conference. Accompanying the students was Dr. Ghada Salama, lecturer of chemical engineering. The 30-hour trip to Salt Lake City via Washington Dulles International Airport could not have been more pleasant thanks to the comfort and courteous service provided by every individual we met on our trip, including the Qatar Airways' crews. The low temperature and breezy weather in Utah meant that all four delegates were equipped with light winter clothing throughout the three-day convention. Unfortunately, Salt Lake City's surrounding mountains were stripped of their snow due to the bright sun during that particular weekend!

Upon our conference registration at the Salt Palace Convention Center, we met students from other uni-

versities in The Texas A&M University System such as the main campus in College Station, Prairie View A&M University and Texas A&M University-Kingsville. At this point, we learned that The Texas A&M University System has a very diverse and multicultural student body across its universities. Despite being around 1,000 chemical engineering students from across America, the three of us felt at home thanks to the presence of other Aggies. The student conference had three important features: the workshops, the Undergraduate Student Poster Competition, and the Chem-E-Car competition.

The first two days of the conference were filled with numerous workshops for students to attend to increase their scope and depth in chemical engineering. The career workshops included brief lectures by professionals from the industry regarding the future of the field



*"It was a valuable opportunity for us to represent Qatar and Texas A&M at Qatar in the biggest annual gathering for chemical engineers. Also, it allowed us to strengthen our ties with the global AIChE network."
—Karim Farhat '09*

of chemical engineering or how breakthroughs might affect the development of future technologies and benefit the future generation of chemical engineers among others. Other than the career workshops, workshops by various university chapters were also provided during the conference. Here, different chapters presented their success stories such as the implementation of the Chem-E-Car competition into their curriculum, or how to attain a high participation rate among students in the chapter and much more. It was during these workshops that the delegates were busy writing down notes to bring back home for sharing.

The traditional highlight of the annual student conference is of course the Chem-E-Car Competition. This is where different chapters compete for the national prize. So, what is a Chem-E-Car? It is a small-scale car designed by students to operate under chemical means, either through pressure or chemical reaction. These cars must be able to move a specified distance with a fixed load. The specified distance and fixed load will only be revealed to contestants just before the competition. Although the AIChE-TAMUQ delegation did not design a car for this year's competition, this did not hinder the delegation from learning from the other chapters' designs.

All the participating Chem-E-Car teams attended a closed inspection session to assess their final design and safety procedures. The TAMUQ delegation was invited to join the TAMU Chem-E-Car team for inspection. Unfortunately, the Aggies' car had some problems that prevented it from running. Karim was further asked to help the TAMU team members and to officially join them for the competition next day. The Aggies worked until 3:00 am in the hotel room-cum-workshop while other teams in the hotel were wondering about the noise coming from room 2145! Eventually, the joint efforts generated a fully functioning and running Chem E-Car for the competition next day.

The cooperation between the chemical engineering

students from both campuses was very inspiring. Both chapters were able to collaborate perfectly and decided to join the effort to make sure that A&M is well represented in the conference. The Aggie Spirit proved to be powerful as the TAMUQ chapter had the valuable chance to be practically involved in the Chem-E-Car Competition for the first time. At the end of the day, with all the experience and knowledge learned about Chem-E-Cars, AIChE-TAMUQ is confident to run in future Chem-E-Car Competitions.

The last day of the conference saw the Undergraduate Student Poster Competition. Karim's poster, titled "Sensitivity Analysis of Adsorption Isotherms Subject to Measurement Noise in the Data", was presented in the environmental section. Many professors and professionals welcomed the poster as it presented a more accurate model for measuring adsorption parameters than the one that is currently used by some industries. In addition, it was rewarding to see many people stopping by just to ask about TAMUQ and Qatar! Nonetheless, Karim's poster was not the only one that was hung in the exhibition hall as there were several hundred other posters with various students eager to present their own research. As research is very beneficial to the overall learning curve of a student, the TAMUQ delegates went around the exhibition hall inquiring many different students about their respective specific research. Several photographs of different posters were taken to share with the rest of the TAMUQ student body and also any interested TAMUQ faculty members.

Despite the tight schedule of the conference, the AIChE organizers managed to organize short recreational time slots for the students such as the Park City Tour and also a night filled with games and interaction between chapters and sponsoring companies. When it was time for us to leave Salt Lake City, we found that the conference was a very educational and eye-opening experience.

"The trip was truly a giant leap for the AIChE chapter, just like Neil Armstrong's giant leap on the moon."

—Mohd Mateen Kamal '10

Texas A&M garners half of National Priorities Research Program grants

Research will have real-world impact in several areas

Faculty at Texas A&M University at Qatar and Texas A&M University netted 20 research grants in the first cycle of the National Priorities Research Program (NPRP), the Qatar National Research Fund announced last fall. An additional three collaborative projects with other institutions means that Texas A&M will participate in one-half of all projects funded in the NPRP program.

The Texas A&M at Qatar research projects funded by NPRP will yield knowledge that can contribute to Qatar's thriving industry and economy. Among the benefits that will be

provided by this research will be better roads, more efficient and cleaner burning internal combustion motors, better mobile phone performance, more effective oil and gas production, alternative energy sources, and efficient use of energy in buildings.

"Our hard-working faculty have done it once again," said Dr. Mark H. Weichold, dean and CEO of Texas A&M at Qatar. "Their hard work has really paid off and has put Texas A&M at Qatar on the fast track to becoming a major research center for the Gulf."

Texas A&M at Qatar faculty will collaborate with scholars in Australia, Canada, Germany, Korea, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Serbia and the US, among others.

Weichold said Texas A&M's success in the first cycle of the NPRP augments already robust research programs, including research being conducted for the Qatar National Research


Fund through the Undergraduate Research Experience Program. Texas A&M faculty have already begun making preparations for undertaking the research presented in their proposals. The new Texas A&M Engineering Building in Education City has 32 research laboratories and will be an ideal environment for conducting research of this type, Weichold said.

"The research Texas A&M at Qatar will pursue on behalf of the Qatar National Priorities Research Program spans four engineering disciplines and the pure sciences—mathematics, chemistry and physics," Weichold said. "We are excited to conduct this kind of advanced research that has real-world impact and meaning."

More than 200 proposals were submitted by more than 50 institutions worldwide, Qatar National Research Fund reported.

Winning Proposals

Investigators	Dept.	Total Amount	Title
Jerald Allen Caton (TAMU), Reza Langari (TAMU) Timothy Jacobs (TAMU), Reza Tafreshi (TAMUQ)	MEEN	\$747,824	Development of Low Emissions – High Efficiency Natural Gas Engine: Implementation of Homogenous Charge Compression Ignition (HCCI) Technologies
Hussein M. Alnuweiri (TAMUQ), Narasimha Reddy (TAMU)	ECEN	\$671,435	Design and Analysis of New Generation of Protocols for Triple-Play Networks
Mohamed-Slim Alouini	ECEN	\$410,353	Collaborative Strategies for 60 GHz Wireless Personal Area Networks
Shehab Ahmed (TAMUQ), Prasad Enjetti (TAMUQ)	ECEN	\$500,820	Natural Gas Fed Fuel Cell Power Generation and Economic Development
Eyad Ahmad Masad (TAMUQ), Dallas Little (TAMU)	ENGR	\$384,514	Innovative Design of Road Materials Using Physio-Chemical Properties, Imaging Techniques and Constitutive Modeling
Khalid Qaraqe	ECEN	\$615,557	Scalable wireless multimedia in Qatar (and the rest of the world)
Dragomir Bukur	CHEN	\$745,153	Activation Studies with Cobalt Catalysts for Gas-to-Liquid Conversion
Ding Zhu (TAMU), Akhil Datta-Gupta (TAMU) Hadi Nasrabadi (TAMUQ)	PETE	\$741,371	Using Horizontal and Multilateral Well with Intelligent Completion to Develop Gas Fields in Qatar
Hadi Nasrabadi	PETE	\$413,448	Study of CO ₂ injection in oil reservoirs and saline aquifers in Qatar for dual purpose of carbon sequestration and improved oil recovery
Ahmed Abdel-Wahab	CHEN	\$595,499	A Holistic Approach to the Sustainable Use of Seawater for Process Cooling
Mohamed-Slim Alouini	ECEN	\$575,710	Universal Signaling Schemes for Multimedia Transmission over Wireless Networks
Mohamed Numan Nounou	CHEN	\$341,237	Improved Nonlinear Modeling using Multiscale Estimation
Michael Davis	MEEN	\$452,521	Development and Verification Of a VAV Air Distribution System Model Using Fan-Powered Terminal Units for Large Commercial Facilities
Hyunchul Nha (TAMUQ), Suhail Zubairy (TAMUQ)	PHYS	\$664,636	Quantum entanglement for secure communication
Ashfaq Bengali (TAMUQ)	CHEM	\$605,895	The Influence Of Electronic And Steric Effects On The Reactivity Of The Metal-(?-Aromatic) Bond: A Laser Flash Photolysis Study With Infrared Detection
Milivoj R. Belic	PHYS	\$748,558	Nonlinear Photonics for All-optical Telecommunication and Information Technologies
Michael Pilant (TAMU), Richard Ewing (TAMU) Yalchin Efendiiev (TAMU), Ahmed Abdel-Wahab (TAMUQ)	MATH	\$722,042	Development of a Computational Groundwater Model for Qatar
Hassan S. Bazzi (TAMUQ), David Bergbreiter (TAMU)	CHEM	\$744,980	Synthesis, characterization and applications of novel lipophilic metathesis catalysts
Hassan S. Bazzi (TAMUQ), Hanadi S. Sleiman (McGill)	CHEM	\$638,848	Novel biodetection methods
Hans A. Schuessler (TAMU), Milivoj Belic (TAMUQ)	PHYS	\$749,948	Utilizing Laser Spectroscopy of Noble Gas Tracers for Mapping Oil and Gas Deposits
TOTAL GRANTS		\$12,070,349	

A person wearing an orange shirt, blue jeans, and a green backpack stands on the edge of a rocky cliff. They are looking out over a vast, hazy landscape under a clear blue sky. The person's right hand is raised, palm facing forward, as if gesturing towards the horizon. The cliff edge is rugged and composed of light-colored rock. In the distance, rolling hills and a valley are visible under a clear blue sky.

*“This trip proved that if you take a bunch of Aggies
and throw them in the middle of nowhere,
they’ll excel and make the most of it.”*

Bashir Sinno '09, petroleum engineering major

Field Camp

Once upon a time, geology field courses were a rite of passage for undergraduates studying geology or petroleum engineering. Although many programs no longer require the course, Texas A&M University continues to offer field camp, and last summer, Texas A&M at Qatar offered its first installment of geology field camp.

Dr. Earl Hoskins, a professor of geology and petroleum engineering, took 12 Aggies to Turkey for a four-week geology field course. The course was organized by the South Dakota School of Mines, which offers the Turkey field course to universities throughout the United States.

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For decades, the geology department in College Station has offered a field course, known as “geology field camp.” The course focuses on the southwest portion of the United States and looks at formations such as the Grand Canyon and is an Aggie tradition of sorts—it truly is the stuff legends are made of. Now, at Texas A&M at Qatar, the tradition lives on. “This course was similar to what students would have received from the College Station course,” Hoskins said.



Hoskins said geology field courses are important for petroleum engineering students because they learn how geological data is collected—and that they must consider such data’s accuracy and reliability. “Things aren’t measured to the centimeter,” Hoskins said. “They’re measured to the meter at best, and sometimes in tens of meters.”

The Aggies in the Turkey field course were required to keep a geologist’s notebook in which they documented formations and sketched cross sections of the terrain they encountered. “Geologists record observations so that when they get back to the office, they can sit and construct a map,” Hoskins said. “You have to try to piece it together. Most people don’t realize what’s involved in making a geological map.”

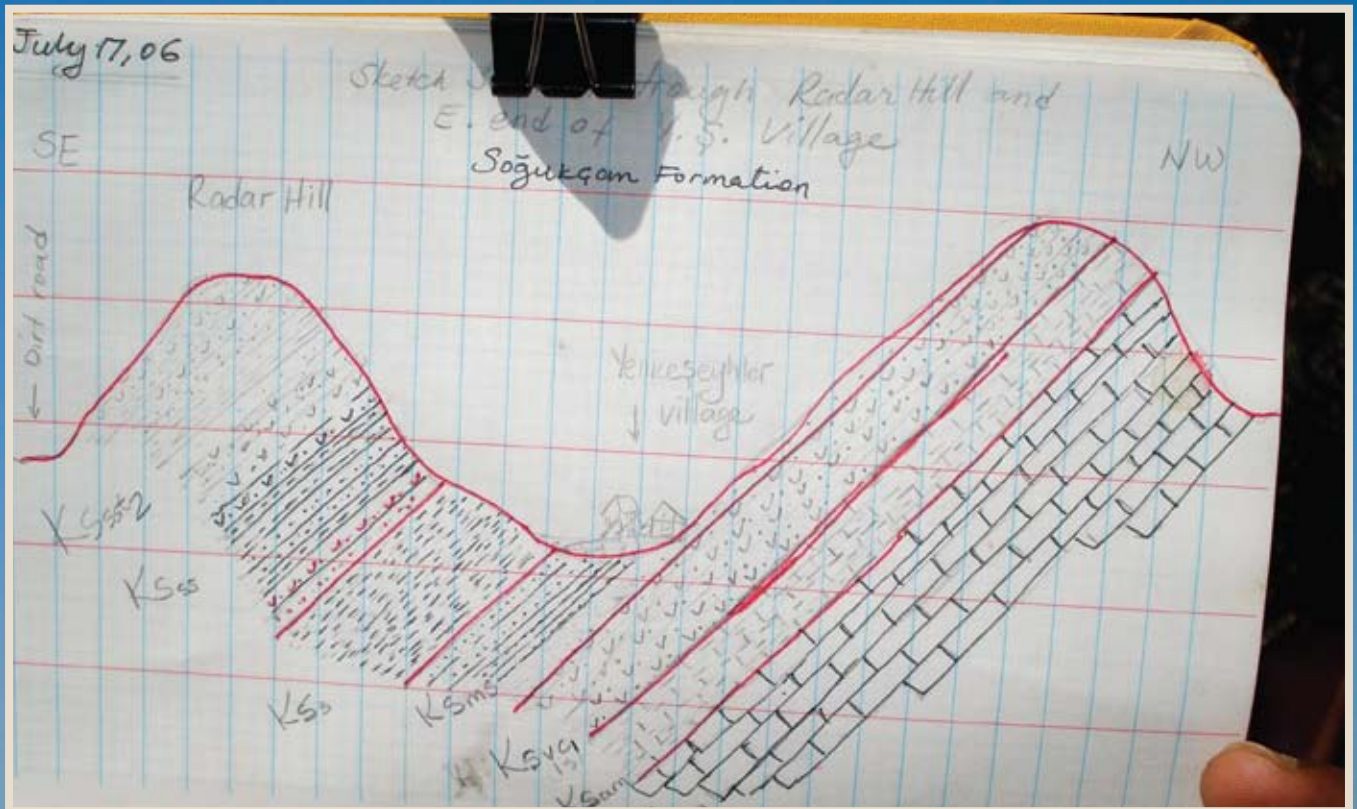
The real-world practicum of those observations taught invaluable lessons, said Bashir Sinno, a junior petroleum engineering student who took the course. “We learned what no book would have taught us,” he said.

Hoskins required his students to complete two projects during their four weeks in the field. The first was based on the geology of the area surrounding their base camp, and the second was based on another site about 100 kilometers away. They even spent a day in a coal mine learning about mapping underground. “The Aggies thought it was like an amusement park,” Hoskins joked.

But the course was intense, and the students had to work hard, Hoskins said. “It’s a legitimate geology field course,” he said. “It was a long, hard struggle getting started, but in the end, the students loved it.” While the Aggies

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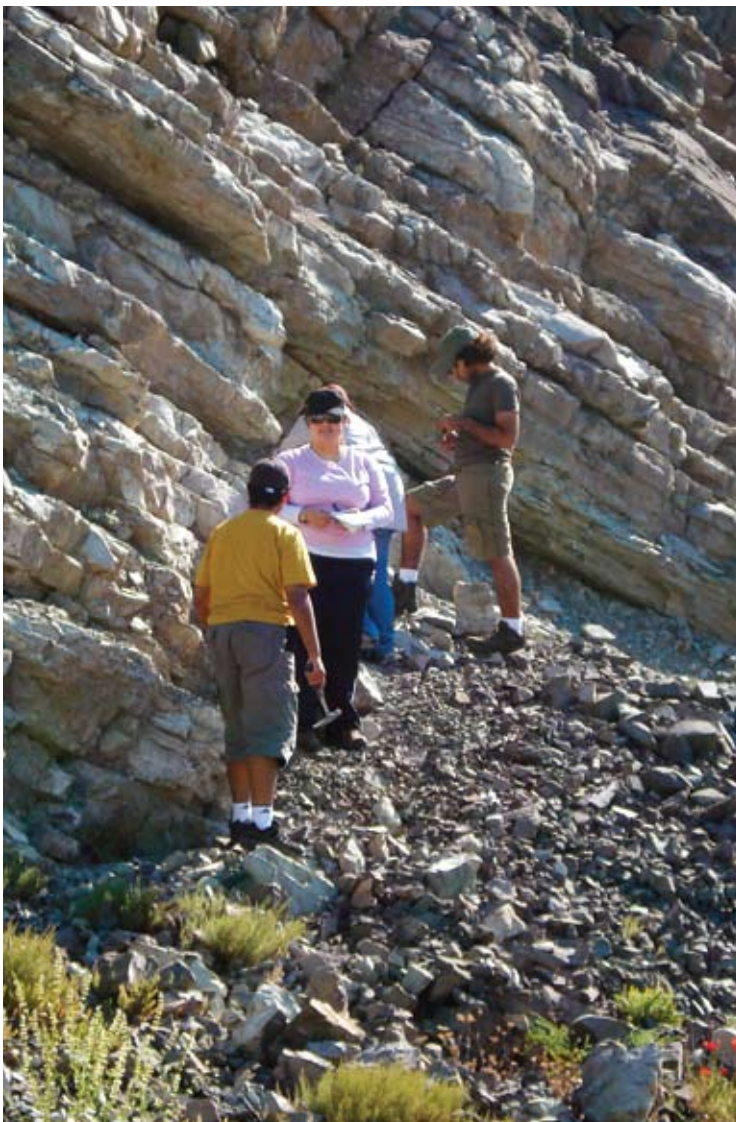




Field camp students kept a geologist's notebook in which they noted their observations of geological formations. That data was used to construct geological maps, such as the one above which depicts a cross section of a formation students encountered on their trip.







were learning a lot about geology, they were learning a bit about life, too. During the four weeks the students were in the field, they had to learn to live without many conveniences they were used to.

“We had to cook (the guys too!), and the guys washed dishes,” said Lama AlOreibi '08, one of two girls in the course. She said she learned lots of concepts of geology—and how to be less scared of heights. “But more importantly, I learned perseverance,” AlOreibi said. She summed up the course in one word: “amazing.”

Sinno said the experience of the field course was fulfilling culturally and professionally. “We met people that we never thought we’d meet,” he said. “This trip proved that if you take a bunch of Aggies and throw them in the middle of nowhere, they’ll excel and make the most of it.”



Qatar Petroleum, BP and Texas A&M to develop LNG safety research program

BP and Qatar Petroleum on 13 Dec. signed a memorandum of understanding to develop and fund a world-class liquefied natural gas (LNG) safety research program in Qatar in partnership with Qatar Foundation, and Texas A&M University and its affiliates. The landmark agreement was signed by H.E. Dr. Mohamed Bin Saleh Al-Sada, minister of state for energy and industry affairs.

The program, which will extend and complement the existing BP-sponsored program run at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas, will help advance the science and technical understanding of key safety issues impacting the worldwide LNG industry. The research will be carried out at Texas A&M University's branch campus in Doha and will encompass practical testing at Qatar Petroleum's Ras Laffan Emergency and Safety Training College which is being constructed at Ras Laffan Industrial City.

Signing the agreement on behalf of BP in Doha, Steve Peacock, president of BP's Middle East and South Asia Exploration and Production Unit, said, "BP is delighted to support what is Qatar's first postgraduate university research program to be sponsored by an international oil company. The program will create a unique and enduring training and development opportunity for graduates from Qatar Foundation and enable them to benefit from the outstanding post graduate teaching and research training provided by Texas A&M. As Qatar continues to develop its leading role in the LNG world, such activities will facilitate the transfer of relevant technologies and build human capacity in LNG safety for the benefit not only of Qatar but also the LNG industry worldwide."

Sheikh Khalid Bin Khalifa Al Thani, acting director of Ras Laffan, who was also present at the signing ceremony, added: "This MoU illustrates again the leadership and commitment of QP in the education of the people in Qatar and those in the MENA region.

"Such research facilities will be of great benefit to Qatar Petroleum and



The MoU was signed by (left to right) Steve Peacock, president of BP's Middle East and South Asia Exploration and Production unit; Dr. Mark H. Weichold, dean and CEO of Texas A&M at Qatar; H.E. Dr. Mohamed Bin Saleh Al-Sada, minister of state for energy and industry affairs; and Dr. Fathy Saoud, president of Qatar Foundation.

the petro-chemical industry in the State of Qatar as it will enable fire and emergency response services and fire engineers to learn more about the behavior of LNG fires, and it will also offer students in fire engineering the opportunity to do Ph.D. research.

The soon-to-be-erected, Ras Laffan Emergency and Safety College with its LNG fire training props, offers the ideal facility to conduct such research."

Dr. Mark Weichold, dean and CEO of Texas A&M at Qatar, said the research partnership represented a special opportunity for Texas A&M to conduct important research in a region where natural gas is a vital natural resource.

"Texas A&M at Qatar strives to produce research that helps the State of Qatar meet its most pressing needs," Weichold said. "Safety is essential to ensuring LNG producers maintain steady output, and our faculty researchers are ready and able to help BP and Qatar Petroleum innovate ways

to make their processes safer."

Dr. Jim Holste, associate dean for research and graduate studies at Texas A&M at Qatar, welcomed the invitation to partner with industry leaders on safety research.

"We are delighted to be a part of this research partnership related to LNG safety," Holste said. "The combination of industrial experience provided by BP, the safety expertise of the Mary Kay O'Connor Process Safety Center in College Station and the Texas A&M University at Qatar faculty, and the exciting new facilities of the Emergency and Safety Training College being developed by Qatar Petroleum at Ras Laffan cannot be found elsewhere in the world. The research partnership being established today represents a significant contribution by the State of Qatar to future progress in the LNG industry."

The program is expected to start in 2008.



The Middle East–North Africa Writing Centers Symposium brought together writing educators from eight countries in October.

Qatar Writing Center Network Hosts **Writing Centers** Middle East–North Africa Symposium

Sixty-seven educators from across the region convened in Doha 26–27 Oct. for the Middle East–North Africa Writing Centers Symposium to exchange ideas, define partnerships and collaborate on how to develop students’ writing and language skills.

With the focus on ways to enhance students’ communications skills, participants discussed a range of topics from setting up a writing center, to working with students as peer tutors, to conducting research.

The symposium was spearheaded by the Technical Communications Center at Texas A&M University at Qatar. Cecelia Hawkins, director of the center, said the idea of a regional writing centers symposium began in February 2007 amid discussions on the email list for the European Writing Centers Association. “I joined the European Writing Centers Association because that was the closest one available,” Hawkins said. Two people from that list—one from Beirut and one from Cairo — contacted Hawkins. “And that got me started thinking: Wouldn’t it be neat if we had a Middle East regional writing centers network?” Hawkins said.



Dr. Michele Eodice, director of the ConocoPhillips Writing Center at the University of Oklahoma, discusses best practices for starting a writing center at the Middle East–North Africa Writing Centers Symposium in October.

“Writing centers are gaining increasing attention for their innovative possibilities within education, and the new Middle East and North Africa network will facilitate dialogue and collaboration among universities in this region. The symposium is just the beginning.”

Autumn Watts

Coordinator of the writing center at Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar

About the time Hawkins began corresponding with the writing center directors in Egypt and Lebanon, the Doha writing center directors began meeting within an information network. “I brought to them the idea that we might have some kind of local conference to try to get people in the region together to talk about starting a regional writing centers association,” Hawkins.

And so it was.

Hawkins and her colleagues on the symposium organizing committee imported Dr. Michele Eodice, director of the writing center at the University of Oklahoma in the US and president of the International Writing Centers Association (IWCA), to lead the symposium. The event was structured as a series of interactive workshops. Eodice, who has many years’ experience in writing centers in large US universities, said writing centers must be a place for “informal education” rather than an extracurricular or co-curricular academic service.

The delegates were brought together by the Qatar Writing Centers Network, an informal group based

in Qatar Foundation’s Education City. The network comprises directors of the centers in Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar, Texas A&M University at Qatar (TAMUQ), Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar, Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar (WCMC-Q) and the College of the North Atlantic–Qatar.

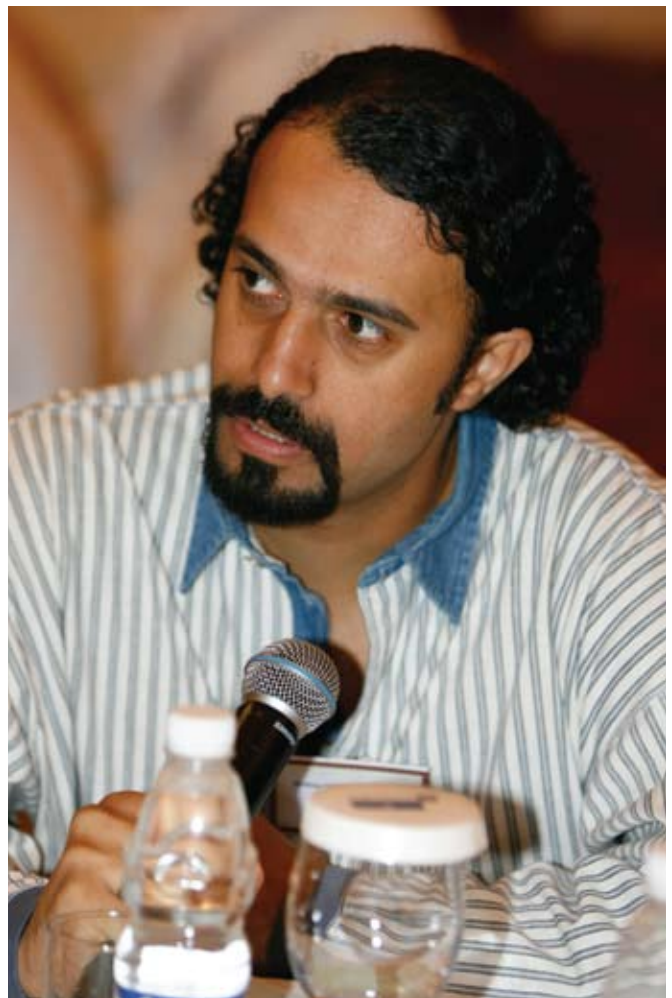
Several of the institutions represented at the event, including the University of Bahrain and the universities in Education City, already have writing centers. Others, such as Qatar University, have Web-based writing communities.

However, many delegates learned best practice for setting up such centers in their institutions, notably a group from the Higher Colleges of Technology in Oman.

Laila Al Hijri, from Ibra in Oman, said the sessions gave important guidance. “Now I know exactly how a writing center is going to help the students,” she said. “Because I have talked with so many people I know the kind of benefits it will bring to the students, the teachers and the administration.”



The symposium was conducted in roundtable format in which the educators could ask questions and discuss ideas with Eodice and other conference participants.



Delegates noted that introducing writing centers into high schools—before students reach the level of higher education—would be beneficial; they also discussed the applicability of the writing center model across languages.

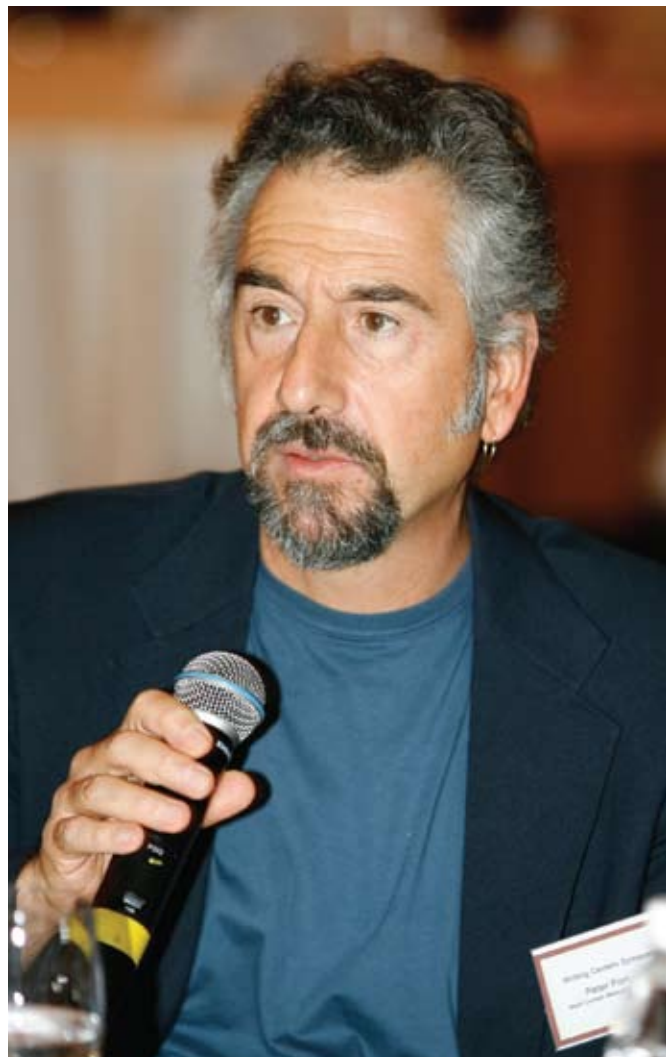
Another important outcome from the symposium was participants’ proposal to form a new regional network connecting writing center professionals on campuses that are distributed across a wide geographical area yet share a common interest in promoting effective use of language.

Autumn Watts, a member of the board of the planned regional organization and coordinator of the writing center at WCMC-Q, said: “Writing centers are gaining increasing attention for their innovative possibilities within education, and the new Middle East and North Africa network will facilitate dialogue and collaboration among universities in this region. The symposium is just the beginning.”

Countries represented at the symposium:

- Lebanon
- UAE
- Oman
- Bahrain
- Saudi Arabia
- Kuwait
- Iran
- Qatar

The IWCA will provide a central point of reference for them, Eodice said: “The organization can lend credibility to their work, help them build professional identity and give them a real support network here.”



ConocoPhillips donates QR250,000 for scholarships at Texas A&M at Qatar

Scholarship money will fund students' engineering studies

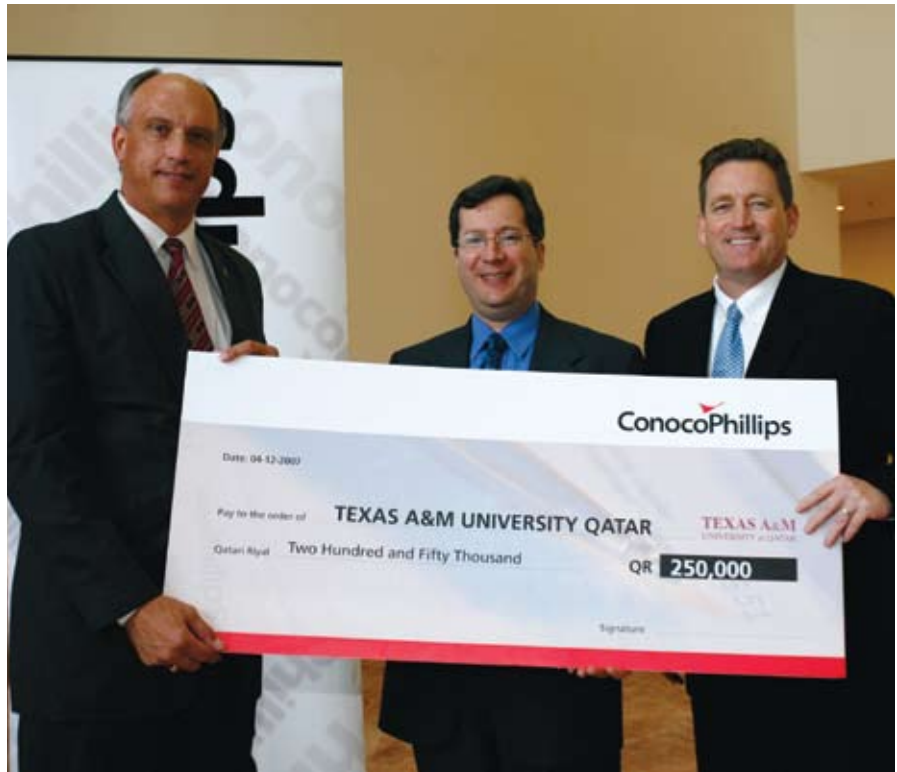
Texas A&M University at Qatar (TAMUQ) officials honored representatives from ConocoPhillips on December 5, 2007, for the company's QR250,000 (approx. \$68,500) donation to scholarship funds for engineering students at the University.

"We are delighted and honored to count ConocoPhillips as a longtime friend and partner of Texas A&M at Qatar," said Dr. Mark H. Weichold, dean and CEO of Texas A&M at Qatar. "These funds will support our efforts to educate first-class engineers, and we are thankful for the support ConocoPhillips continues to provide."

In his comments, Mike Stice, President, ConocoPhillips Qatar, stated: "ConocoPhillips is committed to supporting the State of Qatar's endeavor to further the cause of education. Today, we re-emphasize our pledge to support Texas A&M's efforts to generate world-class engineers who will sustain the thriving industrial sector in general and the oil and gas industry in particular, both in Qatar and the world. We are also looking into additional means to expand ConocoPhillips' cooperation with Texas A&M at Qatar, to combine students' academic knowledge with field expertise through training, internships, exposure to latest technology and field expertise."

This year's donation is the third of its kind since TAMUQ and ConocoPhillips both started operations in Qatar in 2003. The unrestricted ConocoPhillips donations have helped finance engineering students scholarships and education for the last three years.

ConocoPhillips further supports other Qatar Science and Technology Park and community projects, including the Water Sustainability



Top: Mike Stice (right), president of ConocoPhillips Qatar, and William Bullock Jr. (center), president of ConocoPhillips Middle East and North Africa, present a check for scholarship funds to Dr. Mark H. Weichold, dean and CEO of Texas A&M at Qatar. Below: Stice said ConocoPhillips is committed to supporting education in Qatar.

Center and the Gas Processing Centers at Qatar University, Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, Shafallah, Reach Out to Asia, Friends of the Environment and a number of other community outreach projects.

The donation ceremony was attended by William Bullock Jr.,

"ConocoPhillips is committed to supporting the State of Qatar's endeavor to further the cause of education."

Mike Stice

President, ConocoPhillips Qatar

president, Middle East and North Africa, ConocoPhillips, Dr. James Holste, associate dean of research, representatives of ConocoPhillips and the faculty, students and staff of Texas A&M University at Qatar.



ECE professor Enjeti tapped for academic affairs dean

Dr. Prasad Enjeti joined Texas A&M University at Qatar in January as associate dean for academic affairs. Enjeti has been a member of the Texas A&M faculty since 1988 and holds the Texas Instruments Professorship in Electrical and Computer Engineering. Before coming to Texas A&M at Qatar, Enjeti was associate head of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering in College Station.



Dr. Prasad Enjeti

Dr. Enjeti earned his Ph.D. from Concordia University in Montreal, Canada. He is the lead developer of the power electronics, power quality and fuel cell applications laboratories at Texas A&M. He is a registered professional engineer in Texas.

Enjeti said he believes in educating life-long learners who will contribute constructively to a complex, dynamic global society. "I am committed to the creation of a culture of academic excellence that motivates, challenges and engages students as active participants in their own education," he said.

Enjeti said that during his time as associate dean for academic affairs he hopes to engage students as active participants in their own education. He said he seeks to empower faculty in their role as teacher-scholars and to support faculty in creating new learning pathways with technology and distance education.

Urbina named director of Qatar Support Office

Patti Urbina was named director of the Qatar Support Office (QSO), located in College Station, Texas, in October.

In her role in the QSO she is responsible for overseeing efforts to promote the branch campus in Doha, Qatar, and serve as the operational liaison with the main campus.

Urbina has worked at the University for 19 years. Prior to joining the International Programs Office and the QSO, Urbina held numerous positions in the Vice President for Research's office of the Academy for Advanced Telecommunications and Learning Technologies, Petroleum Engineering's Global Petroleum Research Institute, the Engineering Program Office and the Human Resources Department. Urbina said she greatly enjoyed the experience of visiting the Qatar campus last year.

Urbina earned her undergraduate and master's degrees in history from Texas A&M with minors in Spanish and management. She is pursuing a Ph.D. in educational and human resource development, and she is bilingual in Spanish.



Patti Urbina

Cassidy is new assistant dean for finance, administration

Dale Cassidy joined Texas A&M at Qatar on 1 Nov. as assistant dean for finance and administration. He came to Texas A&M at Qatar after more than eight years as a Houston-based director in the PricewaterhouseCoopers education advisory services practice, exclusively serving the higher education and not-for-profit sectors. He has more than 22 years of consulting, auditing and financial management experience.



Dale Cassidy

Prior to rejoining PricewaterhouseCoopers in 1998, Cassidy was director of internal audit and responsible for controls and risk management at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston and at Tulane University.

Cassidy's experience in financial, compliance and operating matters in education is extensive. He has led numerous risk management engagements including enterprise-wide risk assessments, compliance risk assessments, and strategic assessments of internal audit functions in for-profit and non-profit, as well as public and private, institutions.

Cassidy is a CPA, licensed in Massachusetts, and is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. He holds an MBA from Babson College in Massachusetts as well as a bachelor's degree in economics.

Barker takes lead in Human Resource Services

Bill Barker was named the director of Human Resource Services on 15 Jan. He has served the past three years as the human resource director at Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar. Prior to that, he served as Training Manager and Organization Development Consultant in the HR Department of Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. Barker's background includes 12 years of service in the financial services industry with Bank of America, where he worked in several bank departments specializing in training and development and merger and acquisition activities.



Bill Barker

He also served in the US Army for 20 years, where he was an Infantry Officer, Helicopter Pilot and an Operations, Training and Force Development Specialist. Highlights of his military career include service as a combat helicopter pilot in Vietnam, four years of staff and company command in a mechanized infantry battalion in Germany and three years on the Command Briefing Team at Commander-In-Chief, Pacific in Honolulu, Hawaii. Barker holds a bachelor's degree in History from Saint Martins College and a master's degree in Education and Human Development from George Washington University.

80 attend 2008 QAFCO–TAMUQ chemistry conference in January



The chemistry conference attracted scholars and industry professionals from throughout Qatar and from Hong Kong, Singapore, UAE and the US.

Keynote speaker Matyjaszewski one of world's most cited chemistry scholars

Dr. Krzysztof Matyjaszewski discussed atom transfer radical polymerization and its applications Wednesday in his keynote talk at the Qatar Fertiliser Company–Texas A&M University at Qatar Chemistry Conference at Education City.

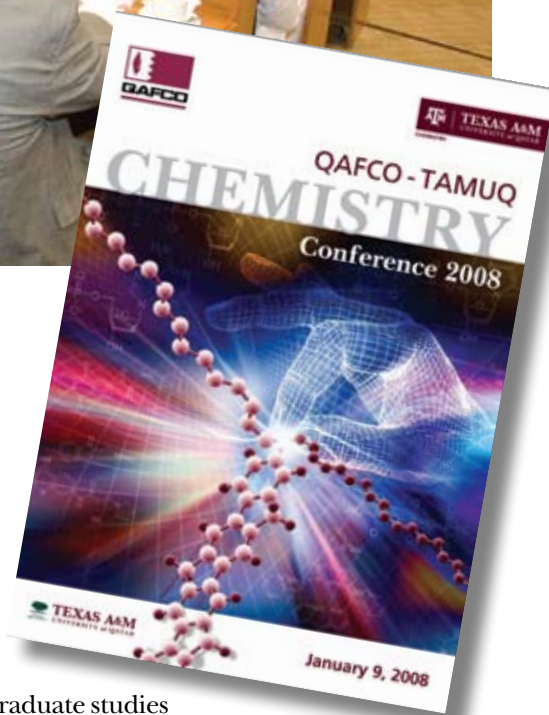
Texas A&M at Qatar convened the annual conference, sponsored by QAFCO, and hosted scholars from the United States, Singapore, Hong Kong, United Arab Emirates and Qatar.

Dr. Hassan S. Bazzi, science program coordinator at Texas A&M at Qatar, welcomed attendees and thanked QAFCO for its generous support of the conference. "I hope this conference helps in instituting a culture of research and development that will occur in parallel with the industrial, educational and economic development that Qatar has been undergoing in the past several years," Bazzi said.

Dr. Jim Holste, associate dean for research and graduate studies at Texas A&M at Qatar, lauded the conference as important outreach to industry and commercial interests in Qatar and the region. Mr. Khalifa Al-Sowaidi, managing director of QAFCO, spoke of the importance of the collaboration between Qatar industry and the educational institutions in Qatar. He pledged continued support for future chemistry conferences.

Bazzi and Holste presented Al-Sowaidi and keynote speaker Matyjaszewski with mementos marking the occasion.

Dr. Mark H. Weichold, dean and CEO of Texas A&M at Qatar, applauded the conference in his welcome to participants. "Texas A&M at Qatar is a hub for leading academic research, and the QAFCO–TAMUQ Chemistry Confer-

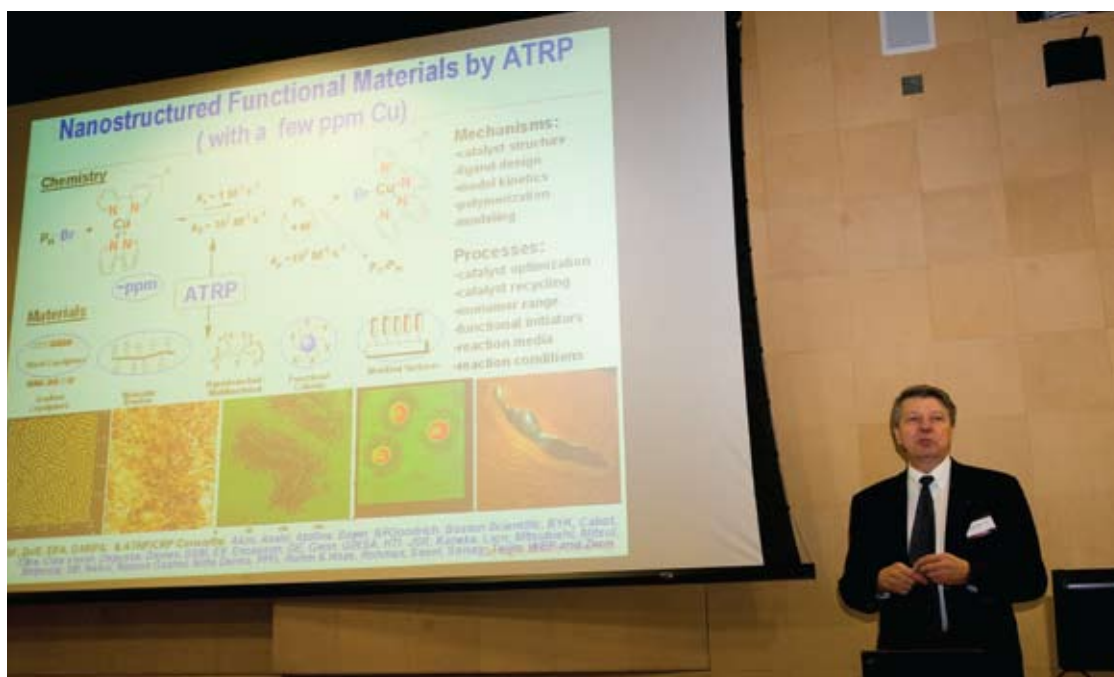




Top left: Dr. Jim Holste (right) presents Khalifa Al-Sowaidi, managing director of QAFCO, with a gift commemorating QAFCO's sponsorship of the chemistry conference.

Top right: Dr. Hassan Bazzi (right) presents Dr. Krzysztof Matyjaszewski with a gift depicting a scene of an oryx and a palm tree.

At left: Matyjaszewski gives his keynote presentation on atom transfer radical polymerization (ATRP).



“Texas A&M at Qatar is a hub for leading academic research, and the QAFCO-TAMUQ Chemistry Conference is an important part of that effort. This meeting of chemists from around the world is a tribute to the timeless tradition of scholars gathering to share, discuss and develop their ideas.”

Dr. Mark Weichold

Dean and CEO of Texas A&M University at Qatar

ence is an important part of that effort. This meeting of chemists from around the world is a tribute to the timeless tradition of scholars gathering to share, discuss and develop their ideas. I hope that your participation in the conference proves to be productive and worthwhile.”

Matyjaszewski is the J.C. Warner University Professor of Natural Sciences at the Mellon College of Science at Carnegie Mellon University. He is recognized worldwide as one of the most distinguished professors of chemistry. He is a University Professor, director of the Center for Macromolecular Engineering at MCS (1998-present),

and director of ATRP and CRP Consortia (1996-present). He has held many visiting positions at universities in France, Poland and Japan.

Matyjaszewski presented research about atom transfer radical polymerization (ATRP) and its various applications. He has published more than 500 peer-reviewed papers and 10 books. He holds 33 US and 81 international patents. His first groundbreaking paper on ATRP in 1995 has been cited more than 1,600 times and his citation record (>24,000) ranked him No. 6 scientist in all fields of chemistry worldwide in 2004, 2005 and 2006 and No. 4 in 2007.

Aggie cricket team works to finess its game ahead of league championship round



The Aggie cricket team has seen a lot of exciting action in the Education City league.

The Aggie cricket team advanced to the finals round of the Education City cricket league this semester. Team members have been practicing regularly to prepare for their championship game.

Misam Jaffer, a sophomore mechanical engineering major, said this semester's cricket play is a continuation of a tournament that started in the fall semester. "In the league matches, we played four matches each against Qatar Foundation, Georgetown, Cornell and Carnegie Mellon," Jaffer said. "We lost against Cornell after a very close finish and won the rest of the matches."

The Aggies ranked first in the league and secured the most points. "Our team has performed very well in all the matches we've played so far," Jaffer said. "Our club's membership has increased



significantly over the past few months and more people are coming forward to play the game and join the team."

The team's roster weighs in at about 18 students.

Aggies beat buzzer in win against CMU

The Aggie basketball team is 3–2 after its game against the American School of Doha on 7 Feb.

The Aggie basketball team defeated Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar 54–52 on 21 Jan. with a last-second basket by Wajih Idriss, coach Michael Collins reported. "It was a very good game battling with CMU," Collins said, adding that both of the team's games have been settled by a shot at the buzzer.

The Aggies fell to the College of the North Atlantic–Qatar in their first game of the season but recovered in the match against CMU and in a 24 Jan. game with Georgetown. The Aggies also defeated Qatar Academy 48–26 on 31 Jan.



The Aggies fell to College of North Atlantic–Qatar in their first game but rebounded for wins in their next two contests.



The Education City bowling league provided great excitement and comedy for bowlers.

Education City bowling league attracts the young at heart from Texas A&M

Two dozen faculty, staff and spouses from Texas A&M at Qatar participated in the first Education City bowling league during the fall semester. The league met weekly in Doha and featured friendly competition among bowlers from other Education City universities and Qatar Foundation programs such as Reach Out to Asia. The league concluded with an awards ceremony and trophy presentations for the best (and

worst) teams and individual bowlers.

The Aggie bowlers were the only league teams with their own custom bowling shirts, complete with bowlers' nicknames embroidered in script. There also have been reports of new bowling shoes and custom bowling balls being spotted in the Texas A&M Engineering Building. Qatar Foundation is organizing another league series for the spring semester.



Above: Jason Chaka '02 (right) presents Amine Bouras '08 with a certificate for his Aggie Ring, which he will receive for free when eligible.
 Below: Students pause for a breather after completing the Run for the Ring 5K.

Aggies Run for the Ring

More than 80 runners participated in Texas A&M University at Qatar's first "Run for the Ring" 5K run/walk event in Education City on 27 Oct. Students, faculty and staff from Texas A&M and other Education City universities, in addition to people from the Doha community, participated in the run, which started and ended at the Texas A&M Engineering Building.

Patti Collins, Run for the Ring organizer and coordinator of the Wellness Program, said the day was "fantastic." "The sense of community created by everyone involved made me even more proud to be part of Texas A&M University at Qatar. I hope everyone had as much fun as I did," Collins said. "The event was attended by many outside of Texas A&M at Qatar, and I want to tell everyone involved that those community members now know just how special it is to be a member of the Aggie family."

The Run for the Ring is a tradition from the University's main campus in College Station, Texas, to promote awareness of the venerated Aggie Ring, an important University tradition. Students who finish Run for the Ring are entered into a drawing in which they can win a certificate for their Aggie Ring. Aggies eagerly await the day they can order their ring, which they can do only after completing 95 credit hours. The design of the ring has not changed in more than 100 years, so the ring, rich in symbolism, represents Aggies' connection with each other and Texas A&M.

Texas A&M students Emil Mathai '09, Wajih Idriss '10 and



Amine Bouras '08 won ring certificates and, when eligible, will receive their Aggie Ring compliments of the 5K's sponsors: The Association of Former Students, the Department of Student Affairs at Texas A&M at Qatar, and the Student Body Government of Texas A&M at Qatar. There also was a drawing for other prizes for all participants.

The Wellness Program and the Department of Student Affairs hosted a second installment of Run for the Ring on 8 Dec.

Results of Texas A&M University at Qatar's first "Run for the Ring"

	Female	Male
Class of 2011	Sahar Elrefai	Mohamed Almodaris
Class of 2010	Sally Nicola	Misam Jaffer
Class of 2009	—	Khaled Hassiba
Class of 2008	Dina Nicola	Ahmed Al-Bikri
Class of 2007	Nour El Cheikh Ali	—
Faculty and staff	Melissa Minus	Mark Weichold
Doha community	Shannon Lofton	Geoff Heney

RasGas, Texas A&M at Qatar collaborate on wireless systems for drilling wells

Agreement affirms research potential with Qatar industry

With a strong reputation for being at the forefront of technology initiatives in the LNG industry, RasGas Company Limited (RasGas) has funded a research project with Texas A&M University at Qatar (TAMUQ) to investigate wireless communication systems for drilling wells. At a ceremony held at the new Texas A&M Engineering Building, the agreement was signed by RasGas Managing Director (CEO), Hamad Rashid Al Mohannadi and TAMUQ CEO and Dean, Dr. Mark Weichold. Prestigious guests, senior officials from both parties including Nafez Bseiso, RasGas Subsurface Group Manager and Chairman of the RasGas University Advisory Committee, a number of faculty and students were present at the ceremony.

The research project, led by Dr. Scott Miller, a professor of electrical engineering at the College Station campus of Texas A&M, will develop improved techniques for acoustical wireless down-hole communication systems. Dr. Miller, along with Dr. Khalid Qaraqe and Dr. Slim Alouini, both electrical engineering faculty at Texas A&M University at Qatar, as well as Qatari national students at the Qatar campus, will work with engineers from industry to develop and implement state-of-the-art systems. As Qatar's LNG industry gears up to meet a target of 77 million tons per annum (Mta) of LNG by 2012, accurate evaluation of producing wells is crucial.

The project will carefully study and characterize acoustical communication techniques and evaluate the propagation of acoustic waves in a pipe that is installed inside a well. A prototype system will be designed based on the results of the propagation studies. The project will also develop specification for RasGas specific well construction.



Above: Dr. Mark H. Weichold, Dean and CEO of Texas A&M at Qatar celebrates the research agreement with Hamad Rashid Al Mohannadi, managing director of RasGas. Below: Al Mohannadi shares his vision for the RasGas research partnership with Texas A&M at Qatar.



"This research project is part of ongoing collaborations between Texas A&M University at Qatar and RasGas, and it highlights both entities' commitment to research. With these funds from RasGas, our researchers will be able to conduct a thorough and meaningful investigation which will improve the oil and gas industry

in the State of Qatar in a significant way," said Dr. James Holste, associate dean for research and graduate studies at Texas A&M University at Qatar.

In a short speech during the ceremony, Hamad Rashid Al Mohannadi, RasGas Managing Director (CEO) commented: "RasGas' sponsorship of this project is yet another tangible step to further strengthening, not only the cooperation between RasGas and Texas A&M, but is a step towards strengthening the cooperation between Qatar industry and our educational institutions which will add significant value to Qatar's future prosperity and growth."

The signing comes as a result of the 2006 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between TAMUQ and RasGas. The MoU covers the relationship between RasGas and TAMUQ in many areas of cooperation, including the terms of Summer Internship Programs, and the collaboration in research projects.

"RasGas' sponsorship of this project... is a step towards strengthening the cooperation between Qatar industry and our educational institutions which will add significant value to Qatar's future prosperity and growth."

Hamad Rashid Al Mohannadi
RasGas Managing Director

ASME student chapter hosts hamburger, sausage cookout

The student chapter of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers hosted more than 140 students, faculty and staff at its cookout on 20 Nov. ASME members grilled hamburgers and sausage outside the Texas A&M Engineering Building and spent the midday enjoying fellowship and food. Club officers report plans to hold a cookout every semester.

The student ASME chapter has more than 25 members from the Mechanical Engineering Program at Texas A&M at Qatar. Its objective is to develop friendships between students and faculty as well as to provide an atmosphere of relaxation and enjoyment.



Dean and CEO Mark Weichold (second from left) breaks for lunch at the ASME cookout on 20 Nov.

Chili cook-off a spicy success for International Education Week

More than 60 people from throughout Education City attended a chili cook-off hosted by the Department of Student Affairs on 12 Nov. as part of International Education Week.

“As part of International Education Week, we want to bring a little Texas flavor to our students,” said event organizer Emily Yates, a student development specialist at Texas A&M at Qatar. International Education Week involved several Education City programs and its events offered participants a global perspective on many aspects of life.

The cook-off included three kinds of chili. Entries were submitted for taste-test approval by:

- Liticia Salter
- Mustafa Hallawa, Mohammed Al-Khori, Bader Al-Madhadi and Jaber Henzab
- Timothy Canterbury, Brady Creel and Melissa Minus.

By popular vote, the award for tastiest chili went to Canterbury, Creel and Minus. They served two versions of chili—“spicy” and “spicier”—and Canterbury said he was happy to see people were intrigued by the taste of the chili.



Health and kinesiology faculty member Timothy Canterbury (back row, second from left) shares a taste of Texas with Education City students on 12 Nov. during the chili cook-off.

There may be more chili to come, Canterbury said. “We have to defend our title and we plan to compete in every chili cook-off in Education City. Chili is a Texas tradition.”

Petroleum Engineering hosts lecture by SPE president Al Khalifa

In its efforts to be an active member of the Society of Petroleum Engineers, the petroleum engineering program hosted the Qatar section SPE meeting on 10 Sept. 2007. The SPE president, Dr. Abdul Jaleel Al Khalifa, was invited to be the speaker in this event. It was Dr. Al Khalifa’s first visit to Texas A&M University at Qatar and he was impressed with our facilities. In his talk entitled “Petroleum Industry 2020: Unleashing Industry Potential,” he discussed a few of the challenges facing the

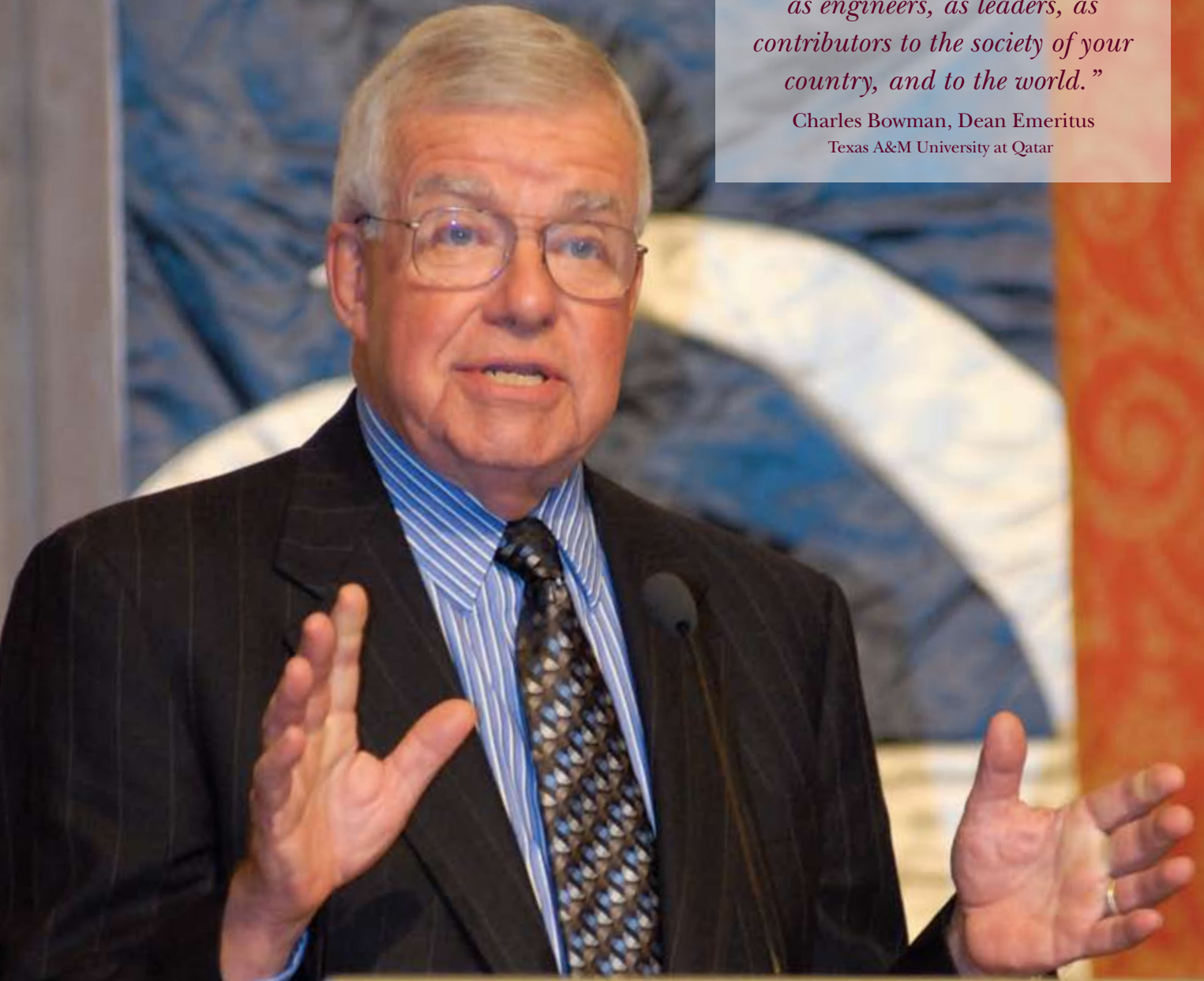
petroleum industry, and argued that the petroleum industry is not making full use of its human resources. Dr. Al Khalifa expressed the need for the industry to extend its outreach beyond economic benefit because humanitarian motivation can unleash extraordinary powers from the employees who will use their full potential when they are seeking the right motivation. Dr. Al Khalifa was also a guest speaker at academic convocation 11 Sept. 2007 and gave a highly inspirational speech addressing students, faculty and staff.

SPE student chapter elects officers

The 2007–2008 officers for the student chapter of the Society of Petroleum Engineers are: Karthik Sringeri, president
Amine Bouras, vice president
Mais Taha, secretary
Manzoor Ahmed, treasurer
Maryam Al-Raisi, membership officer
Mohamed Sirajudeen, publication and technology officer

“There is plenty for all of you to do during your working lifetimes, as engineers, as leaders, as contributors to the society of your country, and to the world.”

Charles Bowman, Dean Emeritus
Texas A&M University at Qatar





Texas A&M at Qatar Graduates First Engineers

Texas A&M University at Qatar honored Hessa Al-Missned and Aisha Al-Wadaani on December, 17, 2007, at a graduation recognition celebration. Al-Missned and Al-Wadaani were the first graduates from Texas A&M at Qatar since the University opened its branch campus in Doha in 2003.

Dr. Mark H. Weichold, dean and CEO of Texas A&M at Qatar, said the University's first graduates mark the beginning of a new era. "Texas A&M University takes pride not only in its students, but also in its former students, who are known for their lifelong kinship with Texas A&M," Weichold said. "As these two engineers begin their careers, I am confident they will represent the University well."

Weichold pointed out that Al-Missned and Al-Wadaani, both chemical engineering majors, met the same rigorous degree requirements as graduates from the University's main campus in College Station, Texas, USA. "As the University's first graduates in Doha—and as women engineers—Hessa and Aisha are pioneers in their own right," Weichold said. "I'm hopeful Hessa and Aisha will stay connected with Texas A&M at Qatar as mentors for younger students."

Qatar Foundation President Dr. Fathy Saoud brought greetings on behalf of Qatar Foundation and Education City, and he congratulated the graduates and Texas A&M for awarding its first diplomas in Doha.

continued on page 30



“As the University’s first graduates in Doha — and as women engineers — Hessa and Aisha are pioneers in their own right.”

—Dr. Mark H. Weichold, dean and CEO of Texas A&M at Qatar

“Qatar Foundation sought a university that could educate high-quality, exceptional professional and research engineers,” Saoud said. “Texas A&M met that need, but it offered something else: The University promised to produce Aggie engineers, and that standard goes far beyond classroom learning.”

Dr. Chuck Bowman, dean emeritus of Texas A&M at Qatar and professor emeritus of petroleum engineering at the main campus in College Station, delivered congratulatory remarks to the students. He implored them to apply their engineering knowledge to the pursuit of solving humankind’s most pressing problems. “There is plenty for all of you to do during your working lifetimes, as engineers, as leaders, as contributors to the society of your country, and to the world,” Bowman said. “I’m an optimist. I’m optimistic that you are up to the challenge.

I’m optimistic that our collective voyage into the future is in good hands.”

Al-Missned and Al-Wadaani said they are delighted to celebrate their graduation and look forward to contributing to the development of their country. Al-Missned’s studies at Texas A&M at Qatar were sponsored by the Higher Council on Education and Al-Wadaani was sponsored by Qatar Petroleum.

Dr. Jim Holste, associate dean for research and graduate studies, has been at Texas A&M at Qatar since Al-Missned and Al-Wadaani began their studies in 2003. He said their graduation affirms Texas A&M at Qatar’s mission of educating first-class engineers. “These two students have undergone a challenging course of study and have succeeded,” Holste said. “Their diligence has paid off, and we are proud of this fantastic accomplishment.”

Electrical engineering lab staff undergo advanced training

As part of efforts to enhance the quality of lab teaching and technical expertise of staff, the Electrical Engineering Program conducted two trainings during October 2007.

The first training was offered by Mr. Jain Vinamra from National Instruments (NI) for three days. It covered the use of CompactRIO, which is a reconfigurable control and acquisitions system. The system combines an open embedded architecture with small size, extreme ruggedness, and swappable I/O

modules. The system will be used for the ECEN 448 laboratory but it might find applications in experiments within other laboratories. The training covered configuration of CompactRIO, application architecture, FPGA, real time controller, data transfer, and synchronization.

A diverse combination of audience attended the training. For instance, faculty and staff from the Electrical Engineering and Computer Science departments of Qatar University attended the training along with

technical lab engineer coordinators, lab technicians, and teaching associates.

The second training, offered exclusively for TAMUQ EE staff, covered basic use of LPKF Laser & Electronics equipment for printed circuit board (PCB) prototyping. The trainer, Lars Fuhrman from LPKF, worked on the installation and setup of the equipment, in addition to a basic training of the equipment. The training covered the making of circuit boards using the Circuit-CAM/CircuitMaster software.

Aggie Rings garner lots of excitement during convocation

Fifteen students received their Aggie Ring on 11 Sept. during academic convocation in Doha.

Convocation, an annual academic rite to mark the beginning of a new school year, has become a fixture on the University's academic calendar. Every year at convocation, the University recognizes students on the dean's honor roll, but convocation has become particularly exciting for students who are receiving their Aggie Ring. Students receive their Aggie Ring only after completing 95 credit hours.

Dr. Mark H. Weichold, dean and CEO of Texas A&M at Qatar, referenced the Aggie Ring tradition in his opening remarks and reminded faculty and students that the ring represents the values for which Texas A&M stands.

"We are committed to educating the best engineers in the world—to producing graduates who are able to



Society of Petroleum Engineers President Dr. Abdul Jallel Al Khalifa encouraged students to pursue excellence in their university studies.

solve the most challenging of problems no matter the circumstances," he said. "We are committed to scholarly discourse and practical research. And we are committed to bridging cultures and to serving the people of Qatar and this region through partnerships that foster shared knowledge and understanding."

The guest speaker for convoca-

tion was Dr. Abdul Jallel Al Khalifa, the 2007 president of the Society of Petroleum Engineers and manager for the reservoir description and simulation department of Saudi Aramco. Al Khalifa urged students to maximize their opportunities to learn and excel as a student—and to always remember the importance of their chance at higher education.

RasGas and QP sponsor student trip to SPE conference in California

A team of four seniors from the Petroleum Engineering Program took part for the first time in the annual Petrobowl competition taking place in Anaheim, California, on 12 Nov. 2007 as a part of the SPE 2007 Annual Technical Conference and Exhibition (ATCE). Sixteen universities from around the world participated in this competition. TAMUQ

team members are Megha Mohan, Sara Al-Saadi, Bashar Hassna and Mohammed Al-Marri. Tausif Ahmed accompanied the team as an alternate member to gain the experience needed to lead the team next year. RasGas sponsored four students for this trip, including Karthik Sringeri, the president of the local SPE student chapter, and QP sponsored two

students. The trip was greatly beneficial to the students who had the opportunity to interact with petroleum engineering students from around the world through various student activities, to network with other SPE student chapters, and to attend various technical paper presentations and be exposed to cutting-edge research in petroleum engineering.

Letter from the Program Coordinator

This has been a productive fall for the Liberal Arts Program in Qatar. The program has shown initiative in several areas. Professor of Political Science, Douglas Thornton has developed a proposal for flexible hours during summer school in which the faculty member can decide on the length of his/her course from 5-8 weeks depending upon the material to be covered and the level of the course. Professor Thornton has also helped develop a model for the Liberal Arts Study Abroad program which may begin in fall of 2008. Professor Todd Kent of Political Science has initiated the Liberal Arts Research Forum which will bring a variety of scholars to the program from across Education City to give presentations on their current studies. This semester has seen the introduction of English 251: The Language of Film and, in the spring of 2008, Dr. Ernest Obadele-Starks will offer History 301: Blacks in the U.S. since 1877.

This fall has seen the first offerings in the entire university of Foundation Honors courses which may, eventually, spread to the other programs here. Political Science has proposed the offering of a minor in their area and this may be adopted as early as fall 2008. Faculty positions have been approved by the administration for five new hires in the fall of 2008 with positions in STLC (Foundations English), English, History, and Political Science. There will be a new area opened as well with the halftime hiring of a professor in Communication shared jointly with the Technical Communications Center which continues its expansion of student, faculty, and staff services.

Other new positions for 2008 included two Graduate



Assistants from the main campus. STLC and Political Science will be making use of these two positions. We will also be hiring a Lead Office Associate to help lift the often heavy burden from Khadija El Cadi our excellent Administrative Assistant. In the upcoming year, Liberal Arts faculty will be teaching their first summer school offerings, researching their fields of interest, training in TOEFL, attending educational and professional conferences all over the world, and continuing in their primary role of delivering to our students an A&M-quality education.

*James Hannah
Professor of English
Coordinator of Liberal Arts
Coordinator of Foundations and Writing Courses*

CALL Laboratory helps students develop English language skills

Room 228F of the Engineering Building contains a dedicated Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) Laboratory, part of the Liberal Arts Program. It contains 24 workstations, equipped with state of the art software for both English and Arabic. The faculty member responsible for the administration of the CALL lab is Douglas McPherson. The lab is primarily used for STLC, (developmental freshman English courses). Any requests for student usage outside these classes should be addressed to Cecelia Hawkins in the Technical Communications Center, the TAMUQ entity responsible for academic support in communication. Any faculty member wishing to have a look at the software and systems we have and use should see Douglas.

Douglas McPherson, English faculty and CALL Lab Coordinator, traveled to Kuala Lumpur to attend The 5th Asia TEFL International Conference, then he went to Penang, to attend the ICOOL 2007; *Pedagogical Scripting for Open and Distance Learning*, followed by a final stop in Langkawi for The 2nd International Conference On The Teaching & Learning Of English In Asia.

In July, he presented a paper that was published during the 2007 International Conference on ICT in Teaching and Learning in Hong Kong.

McPherson is concurrently researching and sourcing a range of open source software to complement activities in the TAMUQ CALL Lab (previously the computer section of the TCC).

Liberal Arts hosts *Married to a Bedouin* author Marguerite Van Geldermalsen

When they were in their late teens, New Zealander Geldermalsen and a friend visited Jordan and the famous Petra archeological site. There, in a single casual conversation with a Bedouin seller of tourist trinkets, her middle-class life took a new direction; she fell in love with a new lifestyle and a man who, even though he died in 2001, she still considers her soul-mate.

Organized by Leticia Salter, the Liberal Arts Program had the honor of hosting Ms. van Geldermalsen in an informal gathering in the student lounge when she visited Education City as part of a promotional tour for the new edition of her book, *Married to a Bedouin*. The students, staff, and faculty present for her presentation were intrigued by her stories of what most would consider a hard life. While she lived in a cave high in the hillside of Petra for almost twenty years, her love for the land and the simple life she led was apparent in every word. Today, Ms. van Geldermalsen lives part-time in Australia and Jordan. Her book, just out in a new edition, is a fascinating glimpse into a life most can only imagine.



“For anyone who enjoys travel books, especially about the Middle East, this is the real thing—a fascinating account of life as a Bedouin in the late twentieth century written by a Western woman.”

Mary S. Lavell
Reviewer

Faculty host first Education City Liberal Arts Forum for Research

Recognizing the growing number of Liberal Arts scholars at Education City, the Liberal Arts Program at Texas A&M University at Qatar hosted the first Liberal Arts Forum for Research in November. Championed by Todd Kent, Political Science faculty, the forum is designed to provide an interdisciplinary forum for liberal arts research, encourage scholarship in the liberal arts community, and provide opportunities for scholarly collaboration. “It is our desire that the group is broad enough to meet the needs of many area scholars yet become a valuable resource for each individual. Over the course of the year, we are looking for research presentations from diverse fields such as Economics, Political

Science, Public Policy, Business, English, History, Foreign Languages, and Art History,” said James Hannah, Liberal Arts Program Coordinator at TAMUQ. Presenters at the inaugural forum included Adhip Chaudhuri, an economist at Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar and Ernest Starks, a historian at Texas A&M University at Qatar. Dr. Chaudhuri spoke on monetary policy in Qatar and compared Qatari institutions to the Federal Reserve Bank in the United States. Dr. Starks discussed his ongoing research on the African-American Diaspora, specifically the migration of African-Americans from the United States to Mexico and Canada in the 1800’s.

Aggies take top honors in petroleum engineering paper competition



Above: The SPE paper contest attracted participants from throughout the Gulf. Below: Bashar Hassna, a senior petroleum engineering major, took fifth place for his paper presentation.

Al-Saadi advances to paper contest's next round in Dubai

Three Texas A&M University at Qatar petroleum engineering students were recognized November 26, 2007, for their top-ranked presentations in a Society of Petroleum Engineers paper contest hosted at the Texas A&M Engineering Building in Education City.

Sara Al-Saadi won second place for her paper, "Correlations Provide Confidence in CO₂ MMP Calculation." Bashir Sinno took third place for a paper titled "Wettability Alteration in Condensate Reservoirs" and Bashar Hassna was ranked fifth for his presentation, "Analyzing an Acid Stimulation of Gas Well Aggie07."

Undergraduates, graduate students and faculty from six Gulf universities participated in the contest. There were delegates from King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals, Kuwait

University, the Petroleum Institute of Abu Dhabi, Sultan Qaboos University (Oman), Texas A&M University at Qatar and the University of United Arab Emirates. Industry engineers evaluated the paper presentations.

"It was a very competitive contest in the undergraduate division with nine truly outstanding performances from all the participating students from the Gulf region," said Dr. Mahmood Amani, coordinator of the Petroleum Engineering Program at Texas A&M at Qatar. "All participating students truly deserved recognition for their performance yesterday, but our Aggies shined more and made all of us proud of them."

Al-Saadi advances to the next round of competition in Dubai on March 30. She will compete against the winners of all subregional competitions in the



Middle East, Iran, Pakistan, India and North Africa. If Al-Saadi wins in Dubai, she advance to the international contest in Denver, Colorado, USA, to compete against the top eight regional winners from around the world.

Schlumberger sponsored the contest.

"All participating students truly deserved recognition for their performance yesterday, but our Aggies shined more and made all of us proud of them."

Dr. Mahmood Amani

Coordinator of the Petroleum Engineering Program at Texas A&M at Qatar

Trade show tests students' writing, creativity and document design skills

Technical writing students at Texas A&M at Qatar had the chance to show off their creativity and document design skills during the end-of-semester technical communication trade show on 9 Dec.

English 210, Scientific and Technical Writing, helps students master academic discourse while furthering their English language preparation for careers in science and technology. In this course, students make oral presentations, write proposals, reports, business letters and résumés, and prepare a persuasive researched commercial white paper. To do this, they perform audience analyses, conduct research, visit the realm of business and industry operations and ethics, engage in job-seeking activities, test for usability, learn fundamental concepts of graphic design, and immerse themselves in the many aspects of the writing process in general. Students learn rhetorical strategies used in the professional world—the real world.

The goal of the course is to give students sufficient practice so they are able to quickly consider constraints, such as audience, ethics, genre, and purpose in each rhetorical situation to produce effective documents accordingly.

Similar to the many industry trade shows and conferences held around the world each year, the English 210 students taught by Leticia Salter and Joseph Williams held a trade show of their own at the conclusion of the fall semester. The year-end writing projects were developed around a central theme of “Formula X,” an imaginary chemical they were to give unique chemical properties and marketing identity.

“It’s about ownership of their ideas,” said Salter, a faculty member at Texas A&M at Qatar since 2004. “When these students graduate and take positions in industry, they will have to stand up for their ideas and persuade senior management of their merit. The trade show is something I did back on the main campus because I felt students needed to feel pressure beyond having only the



Above: Officials from ConocoPhillips discuss students' trade show presentations. Left: Students had the chance to critique each other's work and vote for their favorite trade show booth.

teacher evaluate the quality of their work. There is just something to be said for presenting/defending their ideas before a jury of their peers in a very public setting.”

Attendees of the trade show listened to sales pitches on everything from an energy drink, a concentrated drain-opener, a new jewelry cleaner, a smoking cessation treatment, and many others, including even a liquid tattoo remover. Visitors during the daylong show received hand-outs of product literature (as well as candies, chocolates and donuts) from each booth, voted for the best exhibits and enjoyed approximately 50 boxes of pizza.

“The trade show was like the final touch for a successful course,” said Khaled Al-Suwaidi, a junior petro-

leum engineering major from Qatar. “It gave us the chance to apply what we’ve learned in the technical communication class and also gave the whole university the opportunity to see and to be amazed by the quality of the work that we produced.”

Almost 100 percent of Texas A&M at Qatar students are at least bilingual, so they learn to understand and negotiate the rhetorical challenges on two or more levels—intellectually and intuitively, connotatively and denotatively. Many of the projects were at least partially done in Arabic—some even in Urdu, Farsi, and Bengali—so the students might visualize the internationalization difficulties faced by business and industry when conceiving and creating documents for the rapidly expanding technical environment of the Middle East.

“It was one of the most fantastic moments for me, because I got the chance to show people proudly what I learned and to teach them too,” said Sinan A. Sabih, a junior electrical engineering major from Iraq. “Also, it gave me an idea of how I would present any professional work in the future and make it attractive for people.”

98 new Aggies welcomed at new student orientation

Texas A&M University at Qatar welcomed 98 new Aggies during new-student orientation in August. The students' three-day orientation, led by University staff and upperclassmen, introduced the freshmen to student life through information sessions, meetings with faculty and even some Aggie yell practices. Two students from College Station—Society of Women Engineers President Sarah Larson and Yell Leader Grant Jungeblut—traveled to Doha to help welcome the new students. "The Class of 2011 was chosen from among more than 1,000 applicants," said Dr. Mark H. Weich-



Senior yell leader Grant Jungeblut '08, center, traveled from College Station to Doha to help welcome the incoming class of Aggies and teach them about University traditions.

old, dean and CEO of Texas A&M at Qatar. "We are excited to begin our first year in the new Texas A&M Engineering Building with these students,

and we are glad to have them as members of the Aggie family." Classes began 26 Aug; enrollment for the Fall 2007 semester was 271.

Student Affairs host open house to showcase student groups, clubs

More than 100 students attended the Department of Student Affairs first annual open house on 6 Sept. Modeled after the Memorial Student Center's open house on the main campus, the purpose of the open house is to share information about student organizations, programs and services with new and returning students.

Representatives from about 10 student organizations and four campus

departments were on hand to provide students with information about their activities and services. In addition, Student Affairs coordinated with the Texas A&M bookstore to provide Aggie merchandise for students to purchase during the open house.

Student leaders said open house gave their organizations greater visibility and recognition among their classmates. In addition, with the

expansion of services and programs for students in Education City, the open house provided campus departments such as Qatar Foundation Campus Life and Reach Out to Asia with a focused event to share information about their area with all students at Texas A&M at Qatar.

The Department of Student Affairs is making plans for another open house this fall.

Students polish résumés for career networking night

The Academic Services Office hosted its first career networking event on 27 Nov. More than 30 potential employers of Aggie engineers spent the evening chatting with 26 students in the Texas A&M Engineering Building.

The Academic Services Office prepared a directory of graduating seniors for employers to review. Dr. Mark H. Weichold, dean and CEO of Texas A&M at Qatar, lauded the quality of students in the upcoming graduating classes in a letter to those employers.

"The University's first group of students will complete their studies in December 2007 and May 2008. I would like to take this opportunity to



Shane Porter '01, an environmental engineer at URS Corporation in Doha, looks over the résumé of Amira Redissi, a senior electrical engineering major, during the senior career networking event on 27 Nov.

showcase our graduating seniors and the programs that they have worked so hard to complete," he wrote. "They enter the market with enthusiasm, a

wide range of skills, multiple language skills and an unsurpassed passion for serving their communities with engineering solutions."



Students make adjustments to their robots before their demonstrations. The robots had to be programmed to traverse an incline and navigate an irregular path.

ENGR 111 project has students test their robots' mettle

Near the end of the fall semester, students in Engineering 111 demonstrated robots they programmed to navigate an obstacle course amid the pyramids outside the Texas A&M Engineering Building.

"Students were asked to design, build and program a robot that can go up a slope, make a 90-degree turn and come down on the slope," said Dr. Eyad Masad, instructor for ENGR 111. "The same robot was also supposed to move on an irregular shape track. In order to move on the track, students had to utilize the light sensor capabilities of the robot."

Masad said the project was inten-



ded for students to explore ways to integrate information they learned in physics and in ENGR 111. They had to design the robot given the criteria provided to them. "Most students did very well in the project and they were able to come up with creative designs for their robots," Masad said.

Wellness Program sponsors fitness and nutrition program

More than 90 students, faculty and staff participated in the "Passport: Round Trip to Health" fitness and nutrition program sponsored by the Department of Student Affairs Wellness Program during the fall semester. Passport makes physical activity and healthy eating fun for participants with a world travel theme.

Patti Collins, Wellness Program coordinator in the Department of Student Affairs, said she offered the Passport program because she wanted to share the benefits of developing a healthy lifestyle. One mission of the Wellness Program is to promote healthy lifestyles, health maintenance, and disease and injury prevention. Collins said the Passport program was a fun way for students, faculty and staff to build a healthy lifestyle that will last a lifetime.

The Passport incentive program set an achievable but challenging fitness goal for participants—they can track minutes spent doing any exercise they enjoy or wear a step counter to track daily steps. And Passport makes healthy eating easy through six important nutrition goals, allowing participants to focus on each goal separately. These achievable goals paired with Passport's exciting "trip around the world" make the program ideal for everyone, Collins said.

Ethics course taught from College Station by videoconference

Texas A&M University at Qatar offered its first course taught wholly by videoconference during the fall semester. Engineering Ethics, a writing-intensive course required for all undergraduate engineering majors, was taught by Muhammad Haris, a doctoral student in the Department of Philosophy.

Because of the time difference between Doha and College Station, the course was scheduled during the evening in Doha. It met in the Texas A&M Engineering Building's main lecture hall, which is outfitted with state-of-the-art videoconferencing equipment and learning technology.



The engineering ethics course is the first at Texas A&M at Qatar taught wholly by videoconference. The students and their instructor can see and hear each other in real time.

Abdul-Jawad earns prestigious president's service award

Hala Abdul-Jawad, a human resources services representative, received the president's meritorious service award in December. The president's meritorious service award is the highest honor for staff at Texas A&M, and only a small number of the awards are given each year.

Abdul-Jawad, a four-year employee of Texas A&M at Qatar, said she was honored by the award. She learned of the award after being asked to meet with Dean Mark Weichold, who, along with members of the executive staff, read a letter congratulating Abdul-Jawad.

"Up to this moment, I still did not understand the reason behind my presence at this meeting," she said. "I was overtaken with a mixture of confusion and happiness. I rushed back to my office and called my husband to share with him the happy news. The news spread faster than expected. Colleagues and friends started calling and emailing me their congratulations."

Abdul-Jawad received her award at a presentation ceremony in College Station on 11 Dec. "That was a very memorable day," she said. "All the University employees surrounded me with great hospitality and care. Thank you to all those who nominated me and thought that I'm worthy of this award."



Hala Abdul-Jawad (center) receives the president's meritorious service award from Interim President Dr. Eddie J. Davis (left) and Porter Garner, executive director of The Association of Former Students.

Dr. Seyeong Choi, a postdoctoral research associate in electrical engineering, recently received acceptance for three papers he co-authored. The papers are titled "Finger Replacement Schemes for RAKE Reception in the Soft Handover Region with Multiple Base Stations," "Finger Management Schemes for Minimum Call Drop in the Soft Handover Region" and "A Practical Study of Finger Assignment Scheme in the Soft Handover Region with Multiple Base Stations."

Bashir publishes paper on political theory panel

Hassan Bashir, Political Science faculty, is pleased to announce the following papers accepted for presentation: "No People and a Foolish Nation: The Thirteenth Century Mongol Empire through Western Eyes" (panel on Horizons in Comparative Political Theory) at Western Political Science Association's 2008 Annual meeting in San Diego.

March 20–22, 2008; "Comparative Political Theory: Scope, Progress and Promise" (Panel on Contemporary Political Theory) at the Midwest Political Science Association's 2008 annual meeting in Chicago. April 3–6, 2008; "Delusions of Celestial Perfection: The Encounter between Jesuit Missionaries and the Chinese Literati in Early Modern China" at the Canadian Political Science Association Annual Meeting June 4–6 at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada; "Participant Roundtable on Non-western Political Thought: Its Scholarship and Teaching in Canada" at the Canadian Political Science Association Annual Meeting June 4–6 at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada.



Dr. Mohamed-Slim Alouini, visiting associate professor of electrical engineering and program coordinator for electrical engineering, received one of two best-paper awards for the 2007 IEEE Globecom Wireless Communication Symposium in November. Alouini's paper is titled "On the Capacity of Generalized-K Fading Channels."

Eslami studies language, culture relationships

Zohreh Eslami, Foundation English faculty, will participate in the following workshop in Taiwan (June 1-6, 2008): Transcultural Transdisciplinary Engineering Education and Practice. The keynote speaker, **Dr. Jim Holste**, associate dean for research, will present, "Setting up a Branch Campus to Teach Engineering in the Middle East." During the same conference, Dr. Eslami will present "Intercultural Communicative Competence in Engineering: Working Effectively with People from Different Cultures." Dr. Eslami also announces the following upcoming publication: Zohreh Eslami, Abbass Eslami-Rasekh & Blanca Quiroz (In-press) "English for Academic Purposes in Iran: a study of perceptions of English needs in academic contexts" *ESP Across Cultures*.

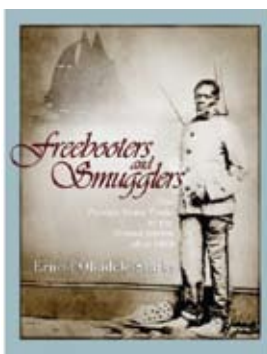


Dr. Hassan S. Bazzi, Science Program coordinator and visiting assistant professor of chemistry, and Dr. David E. Bergbreiter, professor of chemistry at Texas A&M, filed a provisional application with the US Patent Office titled “Nonpolar Phase-Soluble Metathesis Catalysts.” This is the first US patent application that has Texas A&M at Qatar affiliation. In addition, Bazzi and Bergbreiter published a paper titled “Heptane-Soluble Ring-Closing Metathesis Catalysts” in *Organic Letters*, an American Chemistry Society publication that deals with brief reports of significant research concerning organic chemistry.

Bazzi also published a paper titled “Synthesis, spectroscopic and thermal studies of the reactions of the donors piperazine and N,N'-dimethylpiperazine with δ - and π -acceptors” in the *Journal of Molecular Structure*. This is a collaborative project with the Department of Chemistry at Qatar University.

A new book by Obadele-Starks

Ernest Obadele-Starks, history faculty, is pleased to announce the publication of his book, *Freebooters and Smugglers: The Foreign Slave Trade in the United States after 1808*, soon to be released to the market. The book examines the tactics and strategies the adherents of the foreign slave trade used to challenge the law. It reassesses the role Americans played in the continuation of foreign slave transshipments into the country right up to the Civil War and sheds light on an important topic largely overlooked in the historiography of the slave trade.



Professor **Marvin Rowe** has been selected by the Study Abroad Program to teach in Texas A&M University's campus at Santa Chiara, Castiglion Fiorentino, Italy, during summer 2008. He will teach a special-topics course he developed, “Radiocarbon Dating of Italian Artifacts.” Students are primarily from the College Station campus, but students from Texas A&M at Qatar are also welcome to apply.

Liticia Salter, English faculty, has been awarded the Cambridge University CELTA certificate for teaching English to adults. Traveling to Sevilla, Spain, to take the course as a resident student, Salter spent six weeks over the summer preparing lessons geared toward teaching various levels of English language ability and participating in rigorous critique sessions. The Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA) is an international TEFL training and certification program. Originally known as the RSA Certificate, the program became the RSA/Cambridge CTEFLA in 1985. The name changed to RSA/Cambridge CELTA in 1996 and to Cambridge CELTA in 2001. The certificate is one of the world's foremost initial qualifications for people who wish to become professional teachers of English as a foreign language and is accepted throughout the world by educational organizations.



Curtis Elliott Farmer, following his acclaimed performance as orchestral director of the musical *Annie* at the College of the North Atlantic–Qatar in May 2007, has been asked by the Doha Players to return for a second season to conduct *The King and I* in March 2008. Mr. Farmer, a member of the Foundation English faculty, is also frequently seen as accompanist for choirs at the American School of Doha. He is a classically trained pianist with professional experience in various musical genres, including jazz and what he calls “juke box rock.” He is the former lead singer of *The Sentimental Journey Band* as well as keyboardist for *Excalibur* and the Sam Houston State *Houstonians*.

Dr. Erchin Serpedin, associate professor of electrical engineering, recently published three papers he co-authored. The papers are titled “Adaptive Signal Processing Techniques for Synchronization of Wireless Sensor Networks,” “On the Joint Synchronization of Clock Offset and Skew in Wireless Networks with Exponential Delay Profiles” and “Extension of Pairwise Broadcast Clock Synchronization for Multi-Cluster Sensor Networks.”

Williams presents on WebCT at linguistics conference

Joseph Williams, English faculty, presented “Blackboard Basics: Fun with WebCT,” at a recent conference in Chile. The Applied Linguistics Conference, which is held semi-annually, was held at Universidad de La Serena and featured guest speaker and renowned EFL text writer Diane Larson-Freeman. In his presentation, Joseph discussed housekeeping, planning and implementation, meaningful classroom activities, and feedback. He's happy to report that in spite of a technical difficulty or two, the presentation was well-attended and well-received. After the presentation, Joseph and his new local friends celebrated with an all night meringue party. La vida es tan bella!

David Work, history faculty, presented his paper, “Lincoln and his Political Generals,” in a lecture sponsored by the National Archives Experience, presented at the National Archives, Washington, D.C., March 2007. He also has a paper in an upcoming publication. “An Utter Failure: Colonel William C. Brown, General John J. Pershing, and the Punitive Expedition, 1916,” will be published in *Military History of the West* 37 (2007).

TAMUQ, NI introduce new Virtual Instrumentation Center for Excellence

Lab gear combines engineering concepts, technology to create hands-on experience

Texas A&M University at Qatar and National Instruments (NI) marked their longstanding partnership November 20, 2007, by introducing the Virtual Instrumentation Center for Excellence at Texas A&M at Qatar. Named after the approach to test and measurement pioneered by NI, the Virtual Instrumentation Center of Excellence award recognizes Texas A&M at Qatar's innovative use of NI software and hardware to provide students and faculty in the mechanical and electrical engineering programs with the technology to design, test and deploy projects. Victor Mieres, NI Vice President of Sales for Asia, presented the award.

Students in the engineering programs at Texas A&M at Qatar use NI software and equipment as part of their curriculum, complementing theoretical lessons and promoting experiential learning. The center will also bring local and regional students, faculty and engineers together for research purposes.

"The Virtual Instrumentation Center of Excellence provides an effective learning environment for students by integrating NI technology," said Dr. Khalid Qaraqe, electrical engineering faculty at Texas A&M at Qatar. "NI has worked with the electrical and mechanical engineering programs at Texas A&M at Qatar to develop training and course material for some time. We are proud to offer the university and local community the best in virtual instrumentation technology."

Dr. Mark H. Weichold, dean and CEO of Texas A&M at Qatar, lauded the University's ongoing relationship with NI. "Texas A&M at Qatar prides itself on having the most advanced teaching and research laboratory



Victor Mieres (right), National Instruments vice president of sales for Asia, presents a plaque for the Virtual Instrumentation Center for Excellence to Dr. Mark H. Weichold, dean and CEO of Texas A&M at Qatar.

"Texas A&M at Qatar prides itself on having the most advanced teaching and research laboratory facilities anywhere, and National Instruments plays an essential role in helping the University maintain that designation."

Dr. Mark H. Weichold

Dean and CEO of Texas A&M at Qatar

facilities anywhere, and National Instruments plays an essential role in helping the University maintain that designation," Weichold said.

Virtual instrumentation allows users to create multifunctional and customizable test and measurement devices using a combination of modular hardware and easy-to-integrate software. NI LabVIEW, the popular graphical system design software, features an intuitive programming environment that allows students to execute flexible and scalable design, control and test applications. NI software can be used to manipulate and control the functions of hardware, allowing the hardware to serve multiple users and functions.

"We are honored that Texas A&M at Qatar has selected NI tools to offer students a practical and hands-on approach to engineering education," says Michel Haddad, general manager

of NI Arabia. "NI commends Texas A&M at Qatar for its excellence in scientific and engineering education and ensuing benefit to the community and profession."

The center gives students real-world experience in areas such as control theory, DSP theory, RF telecommunications theory and mechatronics. It includes five labs for electrical engineering students and six for mechanical engineering students. In each lab, students can apply theories they have learned in class using products such as NI LabVIEW graphical programming software and PXI, RF digital communications, CompactRIO and the NI ELVIS platform. These powerful, professional tools help students visualize and implement engineering concepts and employ the same techniques widely used in the industry.



Ms. Mariam Al-Mannai, assistant director of admissions, with support from the Cultural Exchange Club, sponsored and hosted Doha schoolchildren for Garangao in the Texas A&M Engineering Building on 26 Sept. Garangao, a special Gulf tradition, is celebrated on the 14th day of Ramadan. Children wear national clothes and go from house to house singing. Their song promises blessings upon those who give treats of sweets and nuts.





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Welcome to Aggieland