

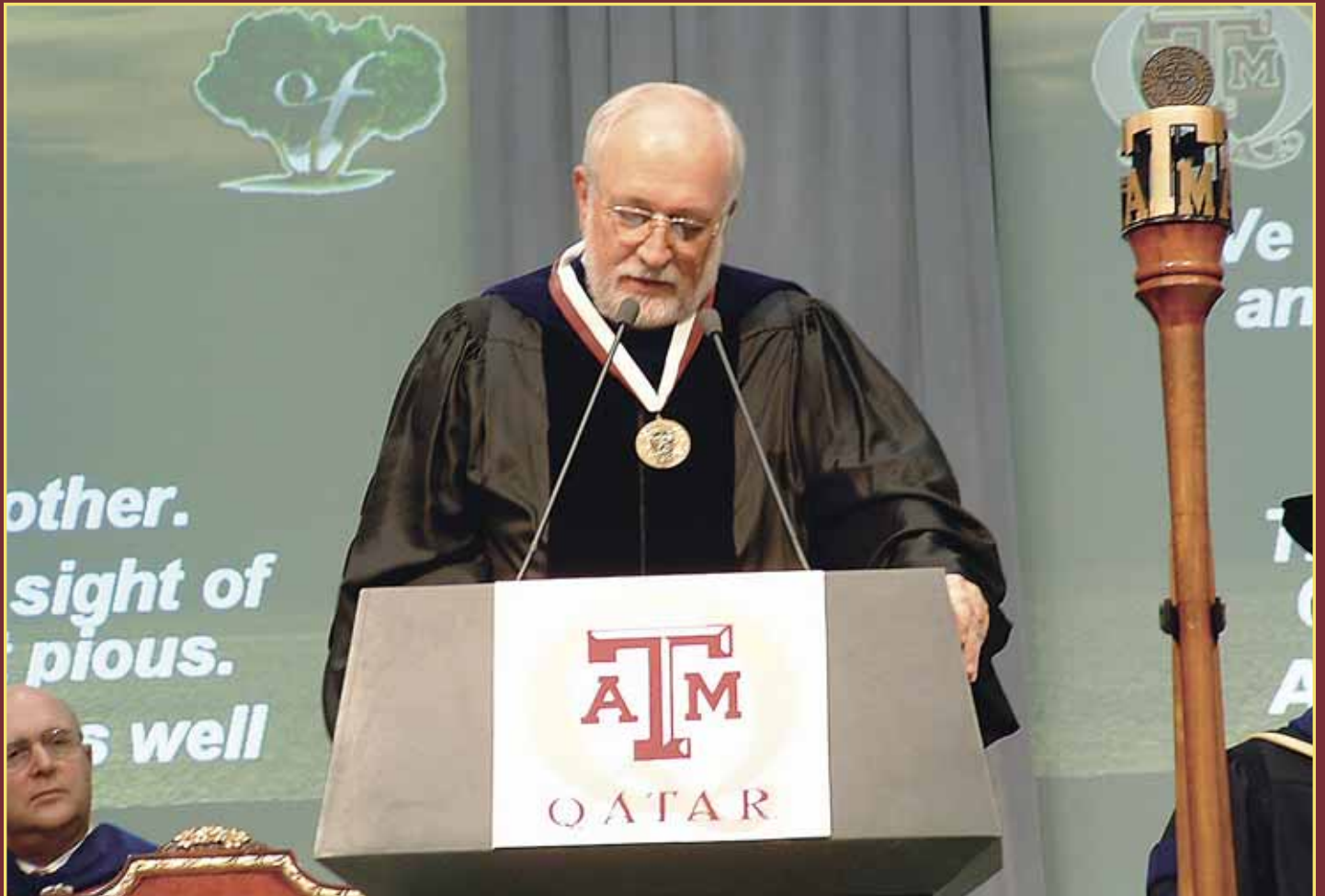
The Aggie Platform

منبر الأجي

News from Texas A&M University at Qatar

Volume 1, Number 1

February 2005



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On October 12, 2004 Texas A&M University at Qatar welcomed Dean W. Michael Kemp with an investiture ceremony in the first-floor foyer of the Liberal Arts and Science Building..... **Page 3**

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www.qatar.tamu.edu

Research Roundtable

Petroleum industry leaders describe Qatar's most urgent research needs

At first, response was slow. Having invited more than a dozen professionals from Qatar's petroleum partners and selected ministries and councils to discuss pressing research needs, Dr. Richard Ewing, Vice President for Research at Texas A&M University, was met initially with silence. The meeting room at the Doha Sheraton was as quiet as a lecture hall on the first day of school.

"Shall I start calling on people?" he asked, smiling.

With the ice broken, the conversation began in earnest — and it lasted all day.

Texas A&M University at Qatar is working with the Qatar Foundation to establish two interdisciplinary research centers to address the production and utilization of natural resources and environmental sustainability. The purpose of the

research roundtable according to TAMUQ Associate Dean Jim Holste, was to present proposed research plans for these centers and to receive reactions from the participants. Those plans include: future partnerships with industry, government and other educational institutions to identify and address the needs of the State of Qatar, especially those related to environmental sustainability and natural resources. Further, Dr. Holste said "Research is a fundamental part of our mission here. Our reputation as a research institution is among many other reasons the Qatar Foundation invited us to open a branch campus here in Education City."

According to Dean W. Michael Kemp, who was formally invested in his new position just two days before the roundtable, successful research programs are vital to TAMUQ's success as an academic institution. In order to attract top-notch faculty, Dr. Kemp explained, TAMUQ needs to offer career-making research opportunities.

"We believe that we are in a position to do that because of our existing relationships with



Our goal here is to establish the best educational environment possible. We want to produce the best engineers; we want these engineers to be leaders. We are looking forward to the new generation of engineers coming into the field, many of them wearing Aggie rings.



industry in Qatar. Among the needs they enumerated were research on carbonate oil and gas reservoirs, studies in production techniques for alloys and a clearinghouse for data that would help companies develop environmental models specific to Qatar.

Sustainability issues generally were at the top of everyone's list — from groundwater contamination issues to comprehensive infrastructure planning.

Texas A&M University faculty and staff responded to these concerns by explaining TAMUQ's ambitious plans for its research facilities at Education City, due to be completed along with its new building in 2006. The new building, Dr. Kemp explained, will be 450,000 square feet, with half of that dedicated to 32 laboratories. The whole building will be wired to

Texas A&M University in College Station, so TAMUQ's researchers and their industry partners will be able to benefit from the expertise and facilities available throughout the Texas A&M System.

The faculty and staff on hand for the roundtable, many of whom had come from College Station to attend the dean's investiture, described work already in progress that addresses some of the more urgent needs raised during the morning discussion. Indeed, though TAMUQ's research facilities won't be online for two more years, back in College Station the ball already is rolling. Researchers there currently are gearing up to tackle the problems unique to Qatar's petroleum industry.

"It turns out that our judgments of what people in the industry here considered important were pretty much correct," said Dr. Holste.

"We think that Qatar has enormous opportunities but it also has enormous concerns," said Dr. Ewing. Those concerns, he explained, many of which relate to issues of sustainability, are Texas A&M's opportunities.

many of the companies doing business here," Dr. Kemp said. "Much of the research we are doing in Texas already has applications here. So, to extend our presence to Qatar as a research institution is really a natural step."

The key, Dr. Kemp added, is continuity. To that end, Texas A&M University will form two research centers, and research will be done both in Doha and College Station. To ensure that TAMUQ's energies are properly directed, it was decided to consult with the companies that would be partners in and beneficiaries of the University's research programs.

"We understand that in the industry here, and in the agencies and ministries, there is already high-quality research going on," said Dr. Ewing. "So we're here today to understand what's happening and what your needs are so we can join and bring value-added collaboration."

The industry side of the table, which included representatives from ExxonMobil, Occidental, Shell, Dolphin Energy, Total, ConocoPhillips, Anadarko and others, spent the morning describing the state of the in-

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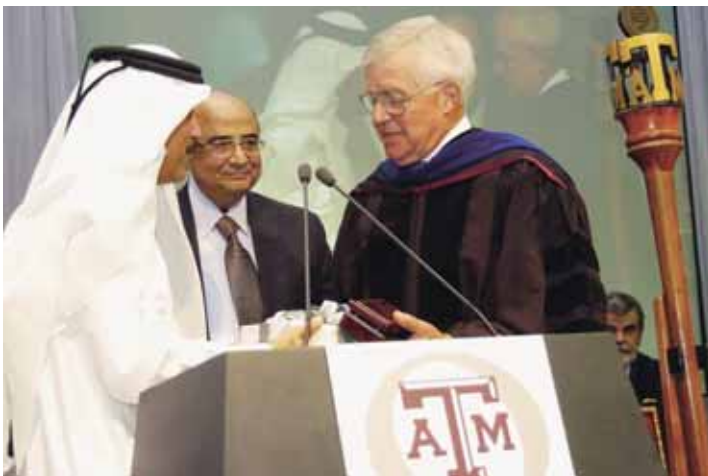
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Texas A&M University at Qatar is part of Education City established by the Qatar Foundation

Two Ceremonies in One

October's Convocation kicks off the academic year and marks the investiture of Dean W. Michael Kemp



On October 12, 2004, Texas A&M University at Qatar welcomed Dean W. Michael Kemp with an investiture ceremony in the first-floor foyer of the Liberal Arts and Science Building.

Then the new dean was immediately put to work, presiding over TAMUQ's first official Academic Convocation, the ceremonial kick-off of the academic year.

For incoming freshmen, the Convocation was an introduction to an academic career that will be book-ended by another ceremony in four years. In a letter to TAMUQ students, Dr. Robert M. Gates, President of Texas A&M University, noted that the Convocation ceremony "marks the beginning of your education at Texas A&M University, and the Commencement ceremony will be its conclusion."

Dr. Kemp officially was designated by Dr. David B. Prior, Executive Vice President and Provost of Texas A&M University, who joined a host of delegates from College Station in witnessing the dean's investiture. Dr. Kemp, in turn, delivered a Convocation address that described the educational philosophy of Texas A&M University and the obligations that accompany joining the Aggie family.

In his remarks, Dr. Kemp described Texas A&M University's origins as a land-grant university, dedicated to meeting the practical needs of the surrounding community. "Back in 1876, our community was Texas, and the practical needs of the community were engineering and agricultural expertise," Dr. Kemp said.

"What is happening here at Education City is unique in the history of higher education. I am honored to be a part of it."

— Dr. W. Michael Kemp
Dean of Texas A&M University at Qatar

"In the last 128 years, the scope of our expertise has grown, and so has our notion of community. Today we serve not just Texas but the nation and, increasingly, the world. By inviting us to Education City, the Qatar Foundation has expanded our definition of community even further."

Dr. Kemp, a native of Big Spring, Texas, joined Texas A&M in 1975 and has served in a number of positions, including Assistant Professor of Biology, Acting Head of the Biology Department, Interim Dean and Executive Associate Dean of the College of Science and Executive Director for Research. He also chaired the Council of Principal Investigators.

For the past seven years, Dr. Kemp served as Vice President and CEO of Texas A&M University at Galveston, where his successful tenure — marked by rapid growth in enrollment and expansion of facilities — made him a natural choice to head TAMUQ.

"What is happening here at Education City is unique in the history of higher education," Dr. Kemp told the audience. "I am honored to be a part of it."

Taking part in the ceremony, among many guests, were H.E. Youssef Kamal, Qatar's Minister of Finance, Mr. John White, a member of the Board of Regents for Texas A&M, Dr. David Prior, Executive Vice President and Provost of TAMU; and Dr. G. Kemble Bennett, Vice Chancellor and Dean of the Dwight Look College of Engineering. TAMUQ students contributed as well, in the form of a video presentation that encapsulated the milestones of the previous year.

The assembled students, families, faculty, staff and guests also heard from Jackson Hildebrand, Student Body President at Texas A&M University's College Station campus. After welcoming them to the Aggie community, Hildebrand led TAMUQ's Class of 2008 in reciting the Aggie Code of Honor: "An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do." Afterward, the classes of 2007 and 2008 were introduced by Dr. James C. Holste, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the afternoon's master of ceremonies.

The gathering at the Liberal Arts and Science Building was followed by a reception at the Ritz-Carlton.

TAMUQ CAMPUS EVENTS



A Creative Mind

Our English 104 class had the privilege of participating in a workshop on creative writing with visiting author and poet, Dr. Kirpal Singh.

In the lecture and workshop, Dr. Singh gave us valuable suggestions and insight into what our aims should be when we want to write something. He presented an interesting poem in his latest book, *Catwalking & the Games We Play*. As a class discussion activity, he presented another short poem, "Smoke and Ashes", written early in his career. He explored with our class the many interpretations that have been suggested for such a relatively simple and short poem. As an aside, he mentioned that one magazine published a three-page comment on the poem. My classmates were very

curious to know more about creative writing, and he was surprised by the number of questions from students during the question-and-answer session.

Dr. Kirpal Singh is Associate Professor of Literature (Communication Skills and Creative Thinking) in the Singapore Management University. He is a member of PSB Academy Board and the International Advisory Board of the Huxley Annual. Dr. Singh is a writer with a different attitude toward society; he is concerned about the welfare of his country and also the well-being of the people. He has authored and edited more than 14 books and has played a significant role in the literature of Singapore.

by Safa Naufal, Class of '08

Four TAMUQ Students Selected to go Forward in Competition for Abu Dhabi Conference Slot

In what was a highly competitive call for papers, four TAMUQ students have had papers approved and have been invited to a prestigious conference in Abu Dhabi concerning e-education theory and methods.

Khalid Al-Jufairi, Megha Mohan, Nikhil Shanbhag, and Lama Al-Oreibi first submitted abstracts and, along with their abstracts' acceptance, received constructive feedback to enable them to more closely tailor their papers for the conference. The faculty of TAMUQ congratulates these four students and looks forward to a full report on the conference in the next issue of *The Aggie Platform*.

e-education Without Borders 2005 will be held February 19 – 21: "Organized specifically for students by students, this prestigious three day e-learning conference brings together upwards of 500 students from over 70 different nations to discuss how information technology is affecting and changing education. e-education Without Borders (EWB) provides the opportunity for students in all academic fields to make their voices heard on various issues concerning the applications of electronic technology in education."

More information about the conference can be found online at: <http://www.e-education2005.com>



Control Room Screening and Discussion with Al-Jazeera Journalist

On December, 16, 2004 TAMUQ hosted students, staff and faculty from several Education City institutions at a screening of the documentary, *Control Room*. The movie argues the importance of the media factor in the politics of war — specifically the war in Iraq — and illustrates differing perspectives on the war as seen through Al-Jazeera Broadcasting, the Doha-based news media, and the contrasting perspective put forth by United States Army information specialists. This documentary has caught the attention of many people throughout the world and it has been shown in more than 1200 theaters in the U.S. and Latin America. The movie has won many awards and generated a great deal of controversy.

As a special treat for the guests, Hassan Ibrahim, one of the Al-Jazeera journalists featured in the documentary, responded to a thought-provoking question-and-answer session

about the documentary and politics in general. He also cautiously reported some interesting behind-the-scenes information not presented in the documentary due to its sensitive nature. Furthermore, Mr. Ibrahim stated that both sides in the film were very straightforward and the aim of the documentary is to put forth the facts from the mouths of the people directly involved on the ground, and to let the audience make their own conclusions.

Many of the faculty, staff and students from TAMUQ and Education City attended this event and asked some really interesting questions.

After the movie, refreshments were served and the attendees enjoyed speaking with Ibrahim on a one-on-one basis. Several times throughout the evening he commented on how impressed he was with what he observed in this academic community, particularly in the students.

by Yaser Assami, Class of '08

Student Exchange Program with College Station

The Student Affairs Office has announced plans to select eight to ten students for a cultural exchange trip to College Station during spring break. In addition, the Qatar campus will host 12 students from College Station when they come to visit Doha during their spring break.

Each campus will begin a process of selecting the

students as soon as the spring semester begins. The TAMU Aggies will visit Doha during the week of March 13-17, and the TAMUQ Aggies will visit College Station during the week of March 27-31. This program will provide a great opportunity for the students to learn about the culture of the country and campus they will visit.

A Visit with the TAMUQ Admissions Staff



Every couple of months, Joe Estrada packs his bags and hits the road. Muscat, Dubai, Aleppo, Kuwait City — he’s seen them all. This year he will add Egypt and Jordan to his collection of passport stamps.

As Director of Admissions, Estrada is the first point of contact between the university and a prospective student. It’s a position that he loves. Estrada first came to Qatar as part of the exploratory team sent by Texas A&M University in November 2002. When he was asked to consider leaving his position in College Station to become Director of Admissions for the new campus, he and his wife, Shannon, didn’t hesitate. “It took us maybe two seconds to decide once we were asked,” Estrada says.

The challenge of the first year was daunting: to recruit a class of the highest-caliber students and deliver them to the classroom — in just four months. University officials signed the agreement with the Qatar Foundation in May, with an expectation that classes would begin in September. “I love challenges,” Estrada said. “We had no classrooms, faculty, and students, and yet we knew that by September we would be offering a world-class engineering program to a small group of fortunate students — and we did precisely that. We had 29 very special students in our inaugural class, most of them, Qatari, and all but 4 of them are still with us.

With more time to select the subsequent class, the recruitment strategy was designed

Admissions Team from left to right: Mariam Al Mannai, Assistant – Academic Affairs, Joseph Estrada, Director of Admissions and Records, Gail Chester, Assistant – Academic Affairs, Maha Ayyash, Assistant Director of Admissions, Aphrodite Hammad, Senior Customer Representative Assistant.

“...the mission that we become an educational capital, is occurring — and occurring much faster than I think anyone had anticipated — and it’s quite an honor to share in that remarkable experience.”

—Joe Estrada, Director of Admissions
Texas A&M University at Qatar

to be multi-pronged, and to reflect TAMUQ’s ambition to build an international reputation.

“We’re here to educate the best and the brightest Qatari students we can find; at the same time, we’re a component of a university with a prestigious international reputation,” said Estrada. “So from the beginning we wanted to search out students both in Qatar and throughout the region to ensure that we added to the international flavor of the university.”

In order to raise awareness in Qatar, Estrada and his colleagues in the Admissions department visited secondary schools and brought students to Education City to see what TAMUQ had to offer. Estrada plans to do much more of both those things this year now that his admissions team is in place. “We’ve compiled quite a special admissions and records team that has readily accepted the challenge to promote the program regionally and is being quite effective in doing so,” said Estrada. “Maha Ayyash, Mariam Al-Mannai, Gail Chester and Aphrodite Hammad are the perfect combination of energy and drive,” Es-

trada added. “We’ve seen the office come alive with prospective students, parents, school officials and other visitors coming to campus to inquire about admissions. Just this fall alone, we have had over 600 official student visitors, with plans on another 600 before the May 1, 2005 application deadline. And those numbers do not reflect the number of prospective students that we have seen in the four exhibitions that we have attended this fall.”

All of the signs indicate a doubling of last year’s application submissions. “There is no question that the hard work the team is doing will reap exceptional benefits, Estrada said. “The application submissions at this early juncture in the season are beyond expectation,” and it is all because of the fine work of my admissions team.”

Promoting TAMUQ regionally, traveling to cities throughout the region and setting up displays at expositions alongside Education City’s other institutions of higher learning is spreading the unique vision of Education City to an array of regional students. “Doing this as an Education City team has gone a long way,” Estrada says of working with the Qatar Foundation and its various educational partners. “The message is much more powerful than as an individual university.”

(continued on page 11)

STUDENT NEWS AND VIEWS

The Aggie Platform Roving Reporter: "Can you tell us something about yourself?"



Katy Ashaary-Simi '08:

G'day Mate! As the oldest Aggie (and furthest from home), my experience at TAMUQ has definitely been unique. I was born in Iran to an Iranian family, but I grew up in Australia. After graduating from high school, I pursued different career experiences while in Australia. I chose to attend TAMUQ and major in Petroleum Engineering because of the vast resources in the Persian Gulf area, an ideal training ground for the profession. The Petroleum Engineering program at Texas

A&M University in College Station, Texas is ranked among the top in the United States and, to me, that says a lot about the program. Having a campus here in Qatar makes it possible now to have a "true Western education" without having to move to the U.S.

Once I graduate, I hope to use my academic and professional experience in Qatar to seek a career in the Scandinavian petroleum industry. I think becoming a real Texas Aggie is the best way to do that.



Ali Dashti '08:

Living in Qatar for my entire life has been incredibly unique and has ascertained a tremendously powerful tie between me, as a Qatari, and this breathtaking culture and the traditions I live in.

As I grew up, I started to comprehend that the future of this country is very bright. After finishing the twelfth grade in one of the finest public high schools in Qatar, I started looking around for one of the best engineering

universities in the world.

I ended up with a list of just two first-class engineering programs: Yale and Texas A&M University. Fortunately for me, Texas A&M University had recently opened a campus here in Qatar. Intuitively, I decided not to leave Qatar and applied to TAMUQ. After studying here for a semester now, I feel this university is the place for an engineer to be; it does, however, require a lot of hard work, team skills, and creativity.

New Clubs and Organizations Formed

Student Affairs at Texas A&M University at Qatar has been giving support and guidance to the students in registering their clubs. So far, the active clubs are:

- ▶ Italy Club
- ▶ Cultural Exchange Club
- ▶ Fun and Arts Club
- ▶ Sports Club

Class Council elections held in October 2004

The Class Council President-Elect is:

Mohammed Al-Kuwari

The Freshmen Class representatives are:

- Zuhaib Abdin**
- Ali Ahmed**
- Ahmed Al-Abdulla**
- Aeysha Al-Khuleifi**
- Saoud Al-Mannai**
- Lama Al Oreibi**

The Sophomore Class representatives are:

- Khalid Al-Meer**
- Sara Al-Saadi**
- Amna Al-Tayeeb**
- Aisha Al-Wadanni**
- Mohammed Mohammed**
- Yousef Murad**

Al Kawthar sponsors fundraising event

Students from the different institutions in Education City founded **Al Kawthar**, a charitable organization which will sponsor events to help worthy charities. TAMUQ student Yousef Murad serves as the public relations officer. **Al Kawthar** already sponsored a fundraising event on October 21, 2003. The event included a lecture, a traditional Arabic buffet and a bazaar featuring Indian handicrafts, traditional souvenirs, perfumes, a henna artist, a calligrapher, game booths and photo opportunities in traditional Arabic clothing. The proceeds will be distributed to charities at the end of the year.



Soccer match



The **Fun and Arts Club** sponsored a soccer game on October 9, 2004, against the International soccer players in Qatar. The students lost, but it was a great game and a privilege to have the professional players accept our students' invitation for a game.

STUDENT NEWS AND VIEWS

Highlights of Cultural Exchange Club Fall Activities at TAMUQ

Lecture with Dr. Mohamed Al-Anzi

"Balance Until You Reach" was the first lecture organized by the **Cultural Exchange Club (CEC)** at Texas A&M University at Qatar this fall. Dr. Mohamed Al-Anzi was invited by the club to present the first in a series of lectures about reaching goals in life. The lecturer spoke in Arabic, and at the end of his lecture he quizzed the students on the information he gave them. The ones who passed received an honor certificate that permits them to participate in the higher-level lectures.

The meaning of the title of this lecture is self-explanatory, however, I would like to give you a brief summary of my understanding of it. The essence of the lecture was that everyone has a goal or an aim and a human being should have a target (a dream) that he would like to reach. We know that no one is perfect, thus life will be easier for us if we have a set of rules to follow

in pursuit of our goals.

We all feel that we benefited from this lecture because it taught us techniques to follow in our daily routines that will give inner balance and clarity. His message also helped us to channel effectively our energy in the right direction.

*by Mohamed Daghbag,
Class of '08*

TAMUQ faculty, staff and students share Iftar

The **Group Iftar** was a special event organized by the **Cultural Exchange Club** during the second week of Ramadan.

When the club announced the event, one of our faculty members thought that Iftar is a meal that is served at lunchtime! To clear the confusion, the CEC planned an Iftar on campus so as to give a better understanding of how Muslims fast during the month of Ramadan and how they break their fast. All students, faculty and staff were welcomed to join in the Iftar and they brought traditional dishes from their own countries of origin.

By the time of the Maghrib prayer everything was ready. We had traditional dishes from

Egypt, Qatar, Syria, Pakistan, Lebanon, India, the U.S. (Texas) and several other countries.

Traditionally, in the Muslim Religion, we start fasting from the call for the Fajr prayer (dawn) until the call for the Maghrib (sunset) prayer. Following the prophet's tradition, the fast is broken with dates and milk, then Muslims gather to attend the Maghrib prayer at the mosque.

After we finished praying, we enjoyed the Group Iftar and the variety of dishes our faculty and staff brought. Later, we engaged in a cross-cultural discussion about the different foods we were sharing.

*by Mohamed Daghbag,
Class of '08*



Aggie Family Week

The week of October 10 – 14 was declared **Aggie Family Week** as a delegation from the main campus in College Station, including 11 Aggie students, visited Qatar. The week was filled with meetings and events organized by the Student Affairs office that brought students from both campuses together to bond and experience cultural exchange. Students met together in the four engineering disciplines: petroleum, chemical, electrical and mechanical. The College Station students also made presentations in several classes.

We were elated to meet the College Station students, we liked their sense of humor and enjoyed their friendship. It was an opportunity to share the Aggie Spirit at its best!

We spent four days together

and the highlights of the visit were a barbecue and evening on Palm Tree Island, and a farewell dinner at the villa of Dennis Busch, Director of Student Affairs.

The Cultural Exchange Club presented gifts to the visiting Aggies to remember their trip to Qatar. Traditional attire for both the men and women were given as gifts, and the students wore them to the Busch's dinner party. The TAMU Aggie students also received a framed quote: "Two Traditions, Two Cultures, One Spirit of the Aggie Land" with the date of the visit and their names, a traditional coffee pot called *Dallah* commonly used throughout the gulf region, and a book on the Miracles of the Holy Quran.

*by Mohamed Daghbag,
Class of '08*

Iftar meal and lecture

On Thursday, October 28, 2004, the **Cultural Exchange Club** sponsored an Iftar meal and lecture. About 200 students, faculty and staff attended the lecture from Education City. The lecture, titled "*Perfection of the Heart: Seeking Inner Spiritual Purification*" was jointly delivered by two visiting Islamic scholars from the U.S.: Dr. Umar Faruq Abd-Allah and Dr. Hamza Yousef.

The two scholars discussed spiritual and materialistic concepts. They defined the heart as the epicenter of the human being, as attested to in the Holy Quran. "They have hearts that they are not able to understand with," not the brain as many people believe. The Sound Heart, or Spiritual One, is free of defects and spiritual blemishes and it is the one that counts not the physical heart.

There are also different kinds of people. The mu'minun (the believers), the kafirun (the non-believers), and the munafiqun

(the liars). The scholars defined mu'minun as people who possess pure hearts, the kafirun as people with defeated hearts, and the munafiqun as people with sick hearts.

The heart is a source of knowledge, and wrong action irritates it. This means that the heart actually recognizes bad actions and this is why people who do bad things get negatively affected at the end.

The lecturers concluded that to cure heartsickness human beings have to resort to faith and follow God's words in the Holy Quran, and must follow prophet Mohammed's sunnah (steps) and instruction. Finally, we must follow alsahabah wa altabe'en (prophet's friends and followers). It is up to the individual to follow or not, but he has to know that God has promised those who will follow that they will be rewarded in this world and the after one.

by Saja Alnaimi, Class of '08

News from TAMU – College Station, Texas



The Qatar Support Office

Giving due credit to the amazing technological capabilities possessed by TAMUQ, transcontinental education would simply not be possible without the real humans of the Qatar Support Office in College Station. E-mail and faxes are fine and dandy, but when a faculty or staff member on either shore needs hands-on attention, the behind-the-scenes QSO staff renders a service of incalculable value. This remarkable four-person staff is led by director **Susan Williamson** and includes staff members **Corye Sparks**, **Rochelle McCall**, and **Rebecca Petty**, each of whom works in symphony with the staff on the Qatar campus to achieve the following encapsulated mission:

- I. Facilitate communication between TAMU and TAMUQ
- II. Relocation and resettlement for TAMUQ employees
- III. Reentry assistance to TAMUQ employees
- IV. Coordinate recruitment of faculty and staff to the Qatar campus
- V. Serve as the operational liaison between the TAMU College Station campus and the Qatar campus.

“As a crow flies,” there are approximately 8,500 miles, or 13,670 kilometers, between the TAMUQ campus and the QSO. The distance and logistical considerations force the staff of the QSO to possess two clocks on the wall of their minds — a nine-hour time difference means the beginning of the day in College Station is the end of the day in Doha. Thus, the QSO staff handles the many affairs of two offices almost two work days apart which, in itself, is a challenge. When a staff or faculty member from either campus needs to interface with another, the QSO staff schedules all the logistics, whether it is a simple telephone call or fax message, to a video-conference involving 20 people from both campuses.

Qatar Support Office team, counter-clockwise from lower left: Susan Williamson, Director, Corye Sparks, Rebecca Petty and Rochelle McCall, staff.

TAMUQ is a multi-national academic institution which means faculty and staff recruitment is a global enterprise. Currently, faculty members in Qatar are originally from countries such as Egypt, Lebanon, China, Jordan, India, and, the United States.

When a new faculty member is hired, the QSO handles relocation details, removing much anxiety on the part of the newly hired faculty member, as well as the normal concerns involved in relocating family members and an entire household. During an employee's tenure in Qatar, the QSO facilitates continued mail delivery and homeland communications. Ultimately, when a faculty member has come to the end of his or her contract, the QSO stands ready to aid in the often equally difficult process of repatriation.

TAMUQ is a multi-national academic institution, which means faculty and staff recruitment is a global enterprise. Currently, faculty members in Qatar hail from countries such as Egypt, Lebanon, China, Jordan, India, and the U.S. The QSO plays an integral part in the international communications and paperwork involved in bringing together faculty and administrators well-

sued for the unique academic environment situated in Qatar.

Not mentioned specifically in its mission statement, the QSO provides another indispensable task: hosting, hospitality and travel. Faculty and administrators are continuously traveling between the campuses, as are student delegations. The support staff of the QSO arranges extensive travel plans, or offers a friendly smile and a hot cup of coffee for visitors.

You, too, are invited to visit the QSO office online:

<http://qatarsupportoffice.tamu.edu>

*Liticia Salter
Texas A&M Class of 1977
Liberal Arts Faculty
Texas A&M University at Qatar*

History of the Aggie Club, Doha, Qatar

Dennis Mudd, an Original 12th Man Kickoff Team Member, organized the Texas A&M Doha Aggie Club in February 1997 and the club was recognized officially by the Texas A&M Association of Former Students in February 1999. The Club is open to all Aggie former students, families and friends of Texas A&M. Atwell Goins presided as the first club President. There are currently approximately 40 members of the club, though membership fluctuates reflecting the transient nature of our expatriate community. With the recent strong influx of both university staff and oil industry personnel, enrollment is expected to skyrocket as Aggies lead the way! There is not a single remaining member located in Doha from the Original Charter Signing on January 26, 1999 (the Charter included 38 names), which is a testament to the resiliency of our Club and to the newly arriving Aggies who step forward to “carry on the tradition”.

Founding members who organized the first “Boot Scoot” dinner and dance on February 25, 1999, included Dennis and Jamie

Mudd, Glenn and Ellen Scott, Mike and Jeanie Blincow, Atwell and Lesa Goins, Ben and Jan Stallings, and Tobe and Adam Cantu. In addition to the annual “Boot Scoot” fundraiser, the Club organizes Aggie Muster each year and has experienced several ‘Never to be Forgotten, Tear Jerking’ Aggie Musters in the years since 9/11. The Club was actively involved throughout 2002-2004 in hosting members of the Texas A&M University Management Team during their assessment and ultimate startup of the TAMUQ Campus.

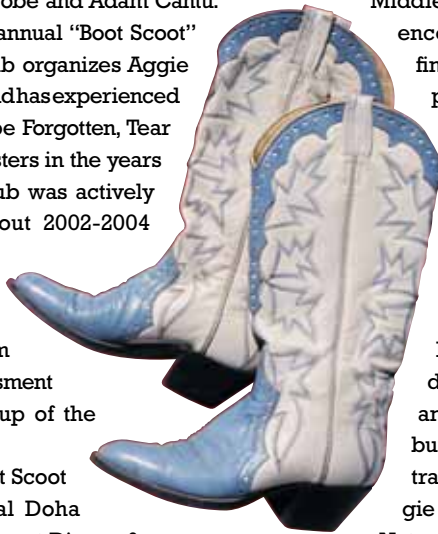
This year’s Boot Scoot is the “7th Annual Doha Aggie Club Boot Scoot Dinner & Dance.” Elizabeth Crites is our “Boot Scoot” Chairman and she has done a fabulous job organizing the entire event. The “Boot Scoot” will be held on February 11 at the Doha Sheraton in the “Al Majlis Room” from 7 pm until

1 am. All proceeds from the event will be donated to the American School of Doha (ASD) Middle School and High School science departments; we may even find some extra monies to support the Tsunami Relief Efforts.

Over the previous six years, the Texas A&M Doha Aggie Club has raised over \$70,000 for such organizations as the Doha Little League, the Doha Boy & Girl Scouts Programs, and the DESS Gym Club, and has made donations for shade, backstops and lights to ASD. New this year, but sure to become a Boot Scoot tradition, is a silent auction of Aggie memorabilia. Plan to be there.

Not only will you enjoy the “Best Party in Doha,” you will be supporting ASD and our local community. Gig ‘em!

*Rusty Martin, Texas A&M Class of 1985
President, Aggie Club
Doha, Qatar*



Memories of Cotton Bowls Past

One of the most prized memories of my youth is the recollection of going with my grandfather, professor Roy Wingren (Texas A&M, Class of 1924), up to the College Station Community Center to help his service fraternity pack lunch boxes with biscuits, corn and fried chicken for hungry fans on their way to crisp October football games at Kyle Field. Long before fast food, when even the rainbows on our television screens were still but black and white, the weekend football games were annually anticipated gatherings of family and friends from all across the state, as comfortable a ritual as the rising of the sun, perfectly designed for enjoying one another’s company while indulging in a favorite passion. Through the jubilation of victory, or the long walk home in defeat, the family — the great extended Aggie family — was the enduring constant.

Each season, the hope in every Aggie heart was to be at the Cotton Bowl on New Year’s Day, to know without a doubt

that the beloved heroes of the emerald turf had earned the champion’s right to be called the best football team in Texas. And there, on the grounds of the Texas State Fair in Dallas, the boys in maroon and white would have an opportunity to further test their skills against the best the rest of the nation had to offer, with the potential for even greater glory. The Aggies were the national champions in 1939, and went to the Cotton Bowl in 1941 and 1942. After that, however, “wait until next year” became a phrase spoken with supreme sadness for the next 25 years.

That is why I will remember January 1, 1968, one of the happiest days in my father’s life. James Ray Farmer (Texas A&M, Class of 1952) was a devoted fan, but not once in his adult years had his cherished Aggies made the Cotton Bowl. However, on that day, James Ray was in Dallas, a half-step away from heaven, as Texas A&M defeated an Alabama University team led by the most famous football



coach on Earth. And I was back in College Station, watching the game on television, flying with my own angel wings.

Perhaps that is why I was a bit misty-eyed on New Year’s Day 2005, 37 years later, when with my bucket of biscuits and fried chicken, and with my own family, friends, fellow faculty members, and Texas A&M alumni at my side, I sat in the middle of Lecture Hall “A” at TAMUQ, Doha, Qatar and watched an international broadcast of the Cotton Bowl football game, beamed from College Station, thousands of miles away, right into my very classroom. I could feel my father and my grandfather in

the hall with me, though both long gone to their eternal rewards, whispering the “Spirit of Aggeland” in my ears.

People ask why the Cotton Bowl is so important. One might as well question the sacredness of a grandmother’s grave. It is part of a collective memory, of a sweet dream, of feelings of hope, of bluebonnets and chill-blue skies, of a tradition that binds a great family together. “For we are the Aggies. The Aggies so true. We’re from Texas AMU.”

*C. Elliott Farmer
Texas A&M Class of 1978
Liberal Arts Faculty,
Texas A&M University at Qatar*

Technology at its best: Updated News from IT



Technology has never played as critical a role in connecting minds, ideas and information as it does today.

That's why Texas A&M University at Qatar is proud and excited to be the first Education City branch campus to use the acclaimed research tool, Internet2.

Also known as the Abilene network, Internet2 is peered with Education City's vast internal network to deliver high-speed transmission of enhanced video, voice and digital information to universities and research labs across the United States.

Dr. Tim Chester, Chief Information Officer and Computer Science Faculty at TAMUQ, said, "In addition to Internet2, Texas A&M University at Qatar, in collaboration with the Qatar Foundation, designed a state-of-the-art high-speed network connecting our campus with hundreds of other higher learning institutions across the United States, Europe and Asia."

To help take advantage of Texas A&M University at Qatar's vast information database, all first-year engineering students are supplied with fully configured Dell Notebook computers.

Freshman students receive their laptops during student orientation and are provided

with instructions on how to access the QFLink wireless network, configure their email, access storage space on the TAMUQ servers and access other online resources.

When asked about the current projects underway in the IT department, Dr. Chester described a project that is being done in conjunction with faculty and students. The Instructional Technology group with Information Technology Services (ITS) is working to conduct a pilot "Virtual Canvas" project. The "Virtual Canvas" combines various technologies like Tablet PCs, network-enabled multimedia projectors, and Microsoft Office 2003 to achieve interactive, participative and technology-enabled classroom experience for students.

Dr. Chester further explained that by using these tools a professor is able to connect his Tablet PC wirelessly to the classroom multimedia projectors. Using the annotation and digital inking features of Microsoft Office, the professor is able to provide a more sophisticated presentation of complex engineering concepts and mathematical problems, as opposed to static solutions. Problems may be assigned to students, who then are able to prepare a solution on their Tablet PC and

wirelessly project the details to the multimedia projector. Special software allows the professor to select which student has access to the multimedia projector at any given time.

The "Virtual Canvas" also extends outside the classroom and into student study and homework time. Using Microsoft Office and their Tablet PCs, students are able to complete problems using digital ink. Using Microsoft Outlook, students are able to forward the completed digital solutions to their professors. Upon receiving the assignments, the professor is able to write annotations directly on the students' work — also using digital ink. When finished, the professor can e-mail the entire "Virtual Canvas" back to the students using Microsoft Outlook.

Dr. Chester further confirmed that the "Virtual Canvas" will be piloted during a spring 2005 engineering course, and that preparations for this pilot are underway, including procurement of Gateway Tablet PCs, installation of wireless adapters in TAMUQ classrooms, and installation of the necessary software. Data gathered from the pilot will be used to determine how the "Virtual Canvas" can be further integrated into the engineering and science curriculums at TAMUQ.

Great Interest in Computer Training Courses

ITS at TAMUQ advertised the following training courses for the first quarter 2005 to TAMUQ faculty, staff and Education City. All open slots were filled in a few hours. Given this great response, ITS will be offering these courses again, in addition to other new courses to be announced.

MS Word 2003 Intermediate

Learn special features of Microsoft Word to create professional works such as books, research material and other long documents.

MS Excel 2003 Foundation

Learn the basics of Microsoft Excel and spreadsheets to create and save workbooks, format text and numbers, select ranges and use cut, copy and paste.

MS Excel 2003 Intermediate

Learn how to use Excel formulas and functions to add more power and utility to your spreadsheets.

MS PowerPoint 2003 Foundation

Create and edit a new presentation from scratch and from a template.

MS PowerPoint 2003 Intermediate

Learn how to create professional organizational charts and graphs with PowerPoint.

MS PowerPoint 2003 Advanced

Customize your presentations, work with masters and add builds and other special effects.

MS Outlook 2003 Foundation

Learn the basics of Outlook and Outlook Messaging, manage messages and create and insert an auto signature.

MS Outlook 2003 Intermediate

Learn how to schedule appointments in the Outlook calendar and invite others.



SnagIt Screen Shots

With this software you can copy your computer screen, windows, menus, text, movie still images or any other object on your screen and use it in presentations, manuals, e-mails, web pages or other documents of your choice.

Prof. Milivoj R. Belic, Ph.D., TAMUQ Science Faculty, has been awarded the Galileo-Galilei-Award 2004, established by the International Commission for Optics (ICO) for outstanding contributions to the field of optics, which have been achieved under particularly unfavorable circumstances. Dr. Belic will receive his award at a special ceremony during the next major event of the International Commission for Optics, which will be the ICO-20, Triennial Congress of the International Commission for Optics "Challenging Optics in Science and Technology" from August 21-26, 2005, in Changchun, China.



On September 30, 2004 TAMUQ History Faculty, **Dr. David Work** presented a paper titled "*A More Deadly Enemy: The Black Tenth Cavalry in the South, 1898-1899*" at the Mid-America Conference on History held in Springfield, Missouri. The paper describes the racial hostility the regiment encountered while stationed in the southern United States before and after the Spanish American War, and how the African-American soldiers dealt with this racism.

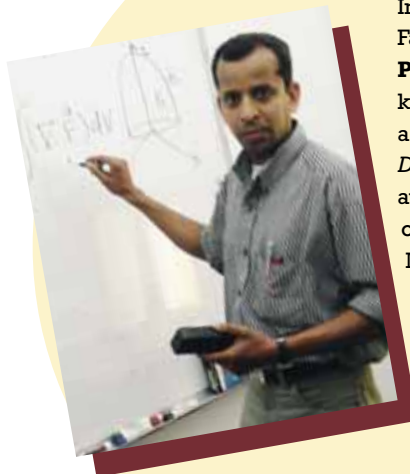


TAMUQ Chemistry Faculty, **Dr. Hassan S. Bazzi**, received the 2004 ADESAQ prize for best Ph.D. dissertation in the natural sciences and engineering in all of Quebec. The annual award, presented by the Association of Academic Deans in Quebec, is one of three that came

Dr. Bazzi's way this year. He was also recognized by McGill University, which awarded Dr. Bazzi his Ph.D., with the Carl Winler prize for best dissertation in chemistry and the D.W. Ambridge prize for best dissertation in the natural sciences and engineering.



In August, TAMUQ Math Faculty **Dr. Devanayagam Palaniappan** — more commonly known as "Dr. Pal" — presented a paper titled "*Slow Rotation of a Double Sphere in a Viscous Fluid*" at the XXI International Congress of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics, held in Warsaw, Poland. This is one of the most prestigious conferences in the world (in the field of mechanics), which is held once every four years.



A Visit with the TAMUQ Admissions Staff *(continued from page 5)*

Last year's visits to Bahrain and Oman, among other countries, were particularly successful; this year Jordan and Egypt have been added to the list of destinations. Estrada and his colleagues are searching out connections in Iraq as well, encouraged by the presence of two Iraqi students in the Qatar Foundation's Academic Bridge Program, who have said they would like to attend TAMUQ.

All that travel has paid off handsomely. This year's freshman class of 61 students boasts 15 different nationalities. The Admissions department already has received inquiries from New Zealand, Kenya, Ghana, the U.S. and Europe.

The school visits and regional travel will continue intensively for the next two or three years, Estrada said, until a network of connections is established and the school's reputation has been established sufficiently, so that he and his staff can afford to stay home in Doha and concentrate on recruitment events at Education City.

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Having graduates take their places in the community will certainly help create a self-sustaining publicity machine. Admitted students already do that, to a great degree, by sharing the positive experience they have had at TAMUQ with parents and peers.

Last year, Estrada received 200 applications for a class of 60 — and turned down another 200 applications that came in after the May deadline. He said that a few students who were accepted last year and chose not to enroll have re-applied for admission next year. And everywhere he goes he meets education

professionals and government officials who express admiration for and envy of what is happening in Education City.

"I feel very pleased with the success we've had," Estrada said. "The wonderful vision that Sheikha Mozah had, the great work and effort by people like Dr. Fathy Saoud, Dr. Saif Al-Hajari and others in the Qatar Foundation, the mission that we become an educational capital is occurring — and occurring much faster than I think anyone had anticipated — and it's quite an honor to share in that remarkable experience."

TAMUQ Professional Activities

INTERCULTURAL

SEMINAR — Texas A&M University at Qatar Human Resource Services developed and offered a series of seminars titled “*Intercultural Challenges in Qatar*” for the TAMUQ staff and their families on November 7 and 8, 2004. Dr. Doug Stuart and Ms. Janine Rentz Al-Tal, representing IOR Global Services, presented a seminar for employees and dependents on the first day. Other, more tailored sessions were offered for dependent children, spouses, faculty and staff. The seminars were designed to help TAMUQ expatriate employees and family members in their transitions to a new culture and to involve our locally hired employees in gaining a better understanding of their colleagues. These seminars are expected to be offered annually for new employees.

MANAGEMENT WORKSHOPS

— On December 2 and 3, 2004, Texas A&M University at Qatar Human Resource Services arranged for Ms. Merna Jacobsen to present two, half-day workshops on

Conflict Resolution Skills and Customer Service in Higher Education. Members of other Education City centers were invited to participate in the workshops. Ms. Jacobson is a member of the Student Affairs staff at the Texas A&M University main campus. She has presented workshops throughout the world and is highly regarded for her training skills.

TAX PREPARATION SEMINAR

— Texas A&M University at Qatar Human Resource Services arranged for Mr. Bernard Brown, representing PricewaterhouseCoopers, to visit the Texas A&M University at Qatar campus from October 21-23, 2004. Mr. Brown presented a session informing TAMUQ expatriate employees about U.S. income tax laws, procedures and requirements. He also met individually with employees to assist them in gathering information needed to prepare their 2004 income tax returns. Mr. Brown will return in February 2005 to gather tax information, which he will use to prepare the employees' returns.

Academy for Student Affairs Professionals

Texas A&M University at Qatar recently hosted the Academy for Student Affairs Professionals at Education City. The 18 participants represented every institution at Education City, including The Learning Center and Qatar Academy.

The Division of Student Affairs at Texas A&M University developed the Academy to respond to the issue of quality professional preparation. The program focuses on the distinguishable skills valued by the profession and acknowledges that a legitimate knowledge base serves as the foundation of the student affairs profession. The Academy was recognized by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators as a national exemplary program in 2004 and recently was featured in *Leadership Exchange*, a NASPA journal.

The Academy instructors were Ms. Merna Jacobsen and Dr. Kevin Jackson. Ms. Jacobsen is the Coordinator of Organizational and Staff Development for the Division of Student Affairs at the main campus in College Station. She



has worked in the fields of training, consultation, facilitation and mediation for 20 years. Dr. Jackson is the Director of Student Activities at Texas A&M University and has been with the University for 15 years.

The Academy may have been the first training course offered at Education City that crossed institutional boundaries and brought together various staff members with common professional interests. It was a huge success and the Student Affairs Group is already talking about hosting mediation training next year.

Students Celebrate the End of the Fall 2004 Semester



On December 21, 2004, faculty, staff, and students celebrated the end of the fall 2004 semester. The gathering was also an occasion to bid farewell to Mark Bell of the Liberal Arts faculty, who has been teaching at TAMUQ since it opened in September 2003. Mr. Bell will return to College Station shortly after the New Year. A gift from Qatar was presented to Mr. Bell by TAMUQ's Cultural Exchange Club.

