

School pupils showcase their talents at QU's Al Bairaqa science programme



The winners of QU's Al Bairaqa Science in Sports module.

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Students from secondary schools across Doha were recognised for their research projects, in the presence of Qatar Olympic Committee secretary general Sheikh Saoud bin Abdulrahman al-Thani in Aspire Academy's theatre, at the conclusion of Qatar University's **Al Bairaqa** Science in Sports module.

The competition, organised by QU's Centre for Advanced Materials (CAM), aims to engage high school students in science and technology as part of its highly-successful Al Bairaqa programme.

This new element of the programme was launched for the first time in Fall 2012. Students from Omar Bin Al Khattab Secondary School for Boys, and Qatar Secondary Independent School for Girls took part in the course, working in teams to undertake projects based on scientific research related to the sports sector.

Focusing on the use of different materials in sports products, they looked at using materials such as concrete to produce unusual items such as bowling balls and even boats.

The teams had to create 3D models, presentations, films and they participated in a movie maker competition by creating a short story using photos they took of their research. They gave presentations in front of a panel of experts, including representatives from Al Bairaqa's partner Unesco, platinum sponsor RasGas and sponsor Qatar Petroleum.

There was also a social media competition with all groups participated in Twitter and Facebook on a daily basis, recording the progress of their projects. Sheikh Saoud and QU's vice-president for research Dr Hassan al-Derham honoured the winning teams.

They were: Best Presentation – first place to AlAbtal team, second place to Almotahedeem team and third place to Alesekshaf team, all from Qatar Secondary School.

Best Movie was won by Alnokhba team from Omar bin Al Khattab Secondary School, the Best Video award was won by Alesekshaf team from Qatar secondary school while the winner of the Electronic Sites Challenge was Almotahedeem team from Omar Bin Al Khattab Secondary School.

Sheikh Saoud said he supported QU's Centre for Advanced Materials and recognised the importance of their Science in Sport and other research programmes in inspiring young people to become Qatar's researchers of the future.

Dr al-Derham praised the students for their outstanding research and added that the project was part of a wider drive at QU to develop a promising generation of young people who have the capability to supplement the country's economy with knowledge and research expertise.

CAM director Dr. Mariam Ali al-Maadeed said: "The purpose of Science in Sports is to use the latest teaching methods and materials to introduce students to science in an accessible and interesting way. We want to break down the fears of studying science and bring together all its aspects – chemistry, physics, engineering and statistics – and connect them to the field of sports, which is something young people can relate to and are interested in."

CAM external relations manager Dr Noora Jabor al-Thani thanked Aspire Academy and Al Bairaqa partners and sponsors for their continued support and outlined the role of Al Bairaqa World - one of the university's key initiatives aimed at engaging young people in science.

Run by CAM, its streams I am A Researcher and I Am Discovering Materials have seen hundreds of students take part in workshops, training, experiments and research projects and exposed them to the expertise of professionals from academia, industry, government and business, she said. The finals of I am Discovering Materials will take place on January 9 at QU.