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Bright minds do Qatar proud

QATAR STUDENTS WIN AWARD AT WORLD VIRTUAL SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING FAIR

DOHA - A team from Qatar won the Silver Award in the first ever World Virtual Science and Engineering Fair held at the College of the North Atlantic-Qatar (NCA-Q) yesterday.

Dory Al Kassis and Fatima Al Muslih, who did the country proud, were among eight finalists from six countries who vied for the honours.

While the duo competed in the college category, Rohit Dinesh of Qatar won a Honourable Mention in the High School category.

The finalists presented cutting-edge scientific projects in the fields of computing/mathematical science, engineering technology, life science/environmental, science/biotechnology, and physical science/earth science that impressed both the judges and visitors to the fair.

Among the judges adjudicating at the competition was Canadian astronaut and the world's first neurologist in space, Dr. Roberta Bondar.

Dr. Bondar lauded the young scientists' exceptional achievements, saying, "It's not only these young minds that are growing, we as well have grown."

The eight finalists were chosen out of 103 entries and the winners were adjudged on the basis of their scientific thought, originality and creativity, and web presentation.

In the High School category the winners were Vlad Ternosky, Canada (Platinum Award); Shaun Williams, Australia (Gold Award); and Fatima Shami, Pakistan (Silver Award).

The winners apart from the Qatar team in the College Category were: Katja Miller, Germany (Platinum Award); Esther Chiew Yee Chiong, Malaysia (Gold Award); and Robert Young and Jordan Chin, Canada (Hon. Mention).

The top three winners received cash prizes and an open scholarship to an institution of their choice. The Platinum awardees got \$20,000 each, Gold awardees \$15,000 and Silver awardees \$7,500.

"These are very advanced concepts, they would be enough to be the basis of postgraduate or master's level theses so its very encouraging since this is the first year that they had this fair, one can imagine that as the years go on, this will be more sophisticated and more people will participate and it will be better, but right now I think this is fantastic," Dr. Bondar told *The Peninsula*.