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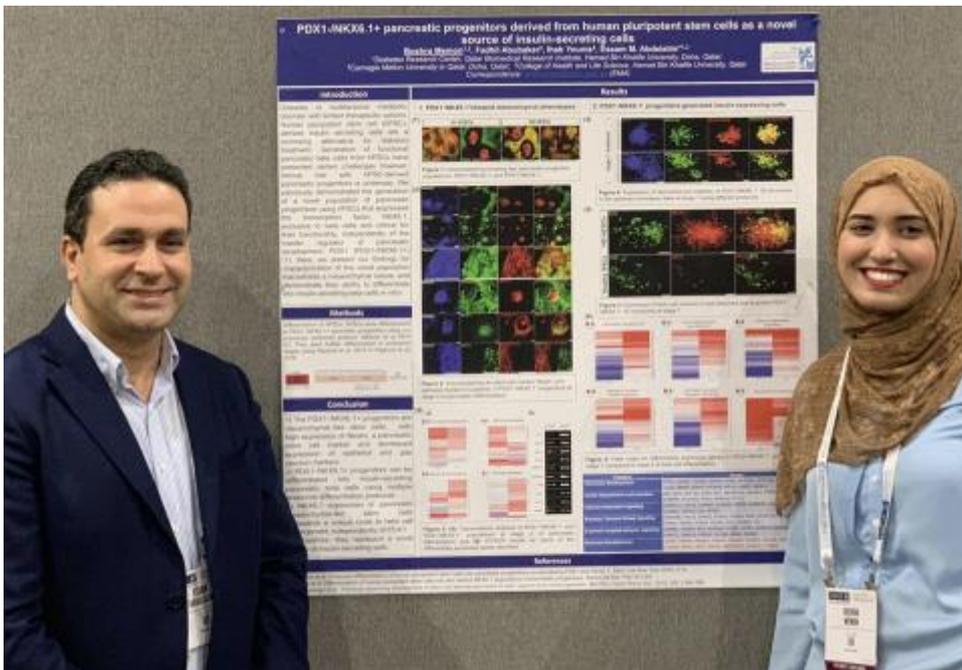
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College of Health and Life Sciences Student Honored for Stem Cell Research

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PhD student explores alternative source of insulin-secreting cells to treat diabetes



A student at the College of Health and Life Sciences (CHLS) at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) has received recognition from the International Society for Stem Cell Research (ISSCR) for her outstanding research on diabetes.

Bushra Memon, currently pursuing her PhD in Biological and Biomedical Sciences, was honored with the ISSCR Abstract Merit Award during the 2019 ISSCR Conference in Los Angeles, United States. Her research examines how human pluripotent stem cell (hPSC)-derived pancreatic beta cell progenitors present a promising alternative to traditional means of treatment for diabetes.

The research was conducted under the guidance of Dr. Essam M. Abdelalim, an assistant professor at CHLS and a scientist at the Diabetes Research Center at Qatar Biomedical Research Institute (QBRI) – part of HBKU. Through her research, the HBKU student discovered that these novel hPSC-derived beta cell precursors can be used as a promising alternative source of insulin-secreting cells for cell therapy for diabetes and studying human pancreatic beta cell development.

Commenting on the achievement, Memon, said: “I am grateful to Dr. Abdelalim whose guidance and support as my adviser not only gave me confidence in my research endeavor, but also ensured I had access to a state-of-the-art laboratory and was able to tap into his expertise.”

CHLS delivers graduate programs in biomedical and biological sciences, and in genomics and precision medicine, enriching its students with knowledge and hands-on experience in basic, clinical and translational research approaches.

Dr. Abdelalim, said: “Diabetes is a prevalent illness in the region and a key medical challenge for Qatar. Through our research, we are committed to promoting a deeper understanding of the illness so that we may be better equipped to formulate advanced means of diagnosis and treatment. It is a proud moment for all of us, to have the work of one of our students recognized and honored on a global stage.”

Dr. Edward Stuenkel, founding dean, CHLS, said: “CHLS is dedicated to offering its students an integrated learning experience where theoretical course work is complemented by hands-on research. Our strong emphasis on research ensures that our students graduate with the right tools to address the most pressing challenges in Qatar and further afield.”

CHLS offers five graduate programs: Master of Science in Biological and Biomedical Sciences; Master of Science in Genomics and Precision Medicine; Master of Science in Exercise Science; PhD in Biological and Biomedical Sciences; and PhD in Genomics and Precision Medicine.

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