



## **A New 'Surge' in the Middle East: U.S. Nonprofit Organization Brings Leadership Training to Students in Qatar**

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Champaign, IL ([PRWEB](#)) March 18, 2007 -- As much of the Middle East grows conflict-weary and U.S.-wary, the small but prosperous nation of Qatar is training a new generation of student leaders-and it is enlisting the help of an American leadership program to do so. This March, 60 Qatari college students will gather in the capital city of Doha to attend The LeaderShape Institute, an intensive, six-day educational experience designed to expand and enhance the leadership capacities of young adults.

Conducted by the Illinois-based nonprofit organization LeaderShape®, Inc., the Institute promotes values such as integrity, diversity and creativity, encouraging participants to develop "a healthy disregard for the impossible." As Qatar looks to become a role model for economic and social progress in the region, The LeaderShape Institute serves as a form of educational diplomacy-and it may be one of the most important American exports in years.

The peninsula nation of Qatar, slightly smaller than Connecticut, is surrounded by the Persian Gulf on three sides and bordered by Saudi Arabia to the south. Under its current Emir, Qatar has already experienced a great deal of social and political change, such as ratifying a new constitution, extending the vote to women and creating the country's first-ever democratically-elected parliament. Though Qatar's current wealth rests in its extensive oil and gas reserves, it is utilizing this climate of cultural transformation to begin developing a "knowledge economy" through educational innovation and reform.

Aiding this transformation-and sponsoring The LeaderShape Institute-is the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, a private, nonprofit organization founded in 1995 by the Emir of Qatar. According to Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned, wife of the Emir and Chairperson of the Foundation, "The sharing of knowledge, ideas and values is the noblest way to transcend barriers. In this sense, globalization is the architect [that] constructs academic bridges across cultural and geographical landscapes."

The Foundation's flagship project was the creation of the 2,500-acre Education City, home to a wide range of university campuses and research centers, just outside of Doha. Most of the students at Education City are citizens or residents of Qatar, but many come from other countries in the Gulf and throughout the Middle East. Participants for The LeaderShape Institute have been selected from the Qatar campuses of three American universities: Carnegie Mellon, Virginia Commonwealth and Texas A&M.

From March 23 - 28, these students will engage in discussions, workshops and practical experiences led by trained facilitators and designed to build leadership abilities. The curriculum emphasizes concepts such as "Building Community," "The Value of One, The Power of All" and "Challenging What Is and Looking To What Could Be." Throughout the week, each student works to define a personal vision for changing or contributing to the world in a positive way, developing a "Breakthrough Blueprint" that details a plan for achieving that vision.

LeaderShape®, Inc., the nonprofit organization that designed and conducted the first Institute in 1986, seeks to improve society by inspiring, developing and supporting more people committed to leading with integrity. In



the words of LeaderShape president Paul Pyrz, Jr., "We are thrilled to partner with the The Qatar Foundation to bring The LeaderShape Institute to the students of Education City. The world is in desperate need of more individuals committed to creating change in their communities and doing so with the highest level of integrity. We look forward to seeing the results that these young people will be able to create and supporting them in their efforts."

To date, over 25,000 participants from American colleges, universities and corporations have attended hundreds of sessions of The LeaderShape Institute held across the United States. LeaderShape alumni include Google co-founder Larry Page, NFL quarterback Brian Griese and ABC Family senior vice president of marketing John Rood. The upcoming event in Qatar represents the first international session of The LeaderShape Institute in the program's 21-year history.

#### About LeaderShape®, Inc.

LeaderShape®, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that exists to inspire, develop, and support more people committed to leading with integrity. For more information, visit [www.leadershape.org](http://www.leadershape.org).

#### About The Qatar Foundation

The Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development is a private, nonprofit-chartered organization founded in 1995 to develop and utilize human potential through a network of centers devoted to progressive education, research and community welfare. For more information, visit [www.qf.edu.qa](http://www.qf.edu.qa).

For more information about this event, or to schedule an interview with Paul Pyrz, please call 800.988.5323.

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