

Park House English School visit

On March 30, 2014, about 30 students from Park House English School visited the QBRI laboratory space located in the Qatar Science and Technology Park. This was an educational activity aimed to educate students about stem cells and stem cell research and to give young students a chance to gain some hands-on experience working in the lab. QBRI always aims to encourage students to study science and consider careers in scientific research, because this is considered a step forward towards building a strong research enterprise in Qatar.

QBRI activities started with a fascinating talk about stem cells presented by Dr. Essam Abdelalim, a scientist with QBRI. The 15-minute presentation included images, charts, and videos from Dr. Abdelalim's own stem cell research, which showed the unique ability of pluripotent stem cells to differentiate into various types of cells such as heart beating cells, neurons and neuroglia cells. The subject as well as the presentation created an exciting atmosphere, which stimulated the students and their teachers intellectually and triggered them to ask many interesting questions that resulted in a very productive and fruitful discussion.

After the presentation, the students underwent safety training and entered the lab. Dr. Mohamed Emar, also a scientist with QBRI, along with Dr. Abdelalim introduced the students to some of the equipment, explaining its use and significance for stem cell research. Dr. Emar and Dr. Abdelalim demonstrated how to perform basic procedures that are regularly done in any research lab such as pipetting and vortexing. Under the supervision of the QBRI scientists, the students performed the planned procedures by themselves. All of the students were interactive and excited about having such an experience. Several students said that this hands-on experience was one of the most exciting parts of the visit.