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## GU-Q Highlights Student Research on the Indian Ocean

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Georgetown University in Qatar (GU-Q) recently hosted a groundbreaking research conference, demonstrating its commitment to mentoring undergraduate researchers. The event centered around the inaugural Indian Ocean Fellows, a cohort initiated under the Sonneborn Interdisciplinary Collaboration Chair. Comprising students and alumni from GU-Q's Doha and Washington, DC campuses, these Fellows presented their cross-disciplinary projects exploring themes related to the Indian Ocean region, all under the overarching theme of “Movement and Stasis.”

Dr. Rogaia Abusharaf, recently appointed as the Sonneborn Chair, along with collaborators Professors Anaya Chakravarti and C  il  n Parsons from Georgetown University in Washington, DC, spearheaded this endeavor. The chair's objective is to advance collaborative and innovative interdisciplinary research while nurturing student engagement. Through funding and support, the chair aims to elevate research endeavors and foster a supportive environment for student scholars as part of the Indian Ocean Working Group (IOWG).

Dean Safwan Masri highlighted the strategic importance of this initiative, emphasizing the need to strengthen connections between the campuses, particularly among faculty and students. Dr. Abusharaf expressed delight at witnessing the Fellows' insights into the dynamic Indian Ocean region, underscoring its global significance and the importance of nurturing future voices through the Sonneborn Chair.

The student presentations at the conference covered a diverse array of themes within the humanities, including history, literature, law, sociology, and migration. Projects ranged from exploring the legacy of slavery in Africa to examining ties and networks among Nepalese migrants in Qatar. Notably, alumni like Aashish Karn returned to present projects developed during their time at GU-Q, showcasing the lasting impact of the university's mentorship and research opportunities.

The Sonneborn Chair's establishment marks a significant milestone in GU-Q's commitment to interdisciplinary collaboration and student-centered research. Dr. Chakravarti and Dr. Parsons highlighted the transformative potential of involving students in a three-year project focused on experiential learning and research within the Indian Ocean region, bridging the gap between scholarship and student engagement.

Founded in 2014, the Indian Ocean Working Group, co-founded by Dr. Abusharaf and other esteemed faculty members, aims to remap the Indian Ocean World through collaborative expertise. This conference represents a pivotal moment in GU-Q's efforts to cultivate a vibrant scholarly community dedicated to understanding and addressing the complexities of the Indian Ocean region. For more information, visit GU-Q's dedicated website.

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