

Wilson Around the Globe

Wilson is a good will ambassador to the far reaches of the globe. To understand, read on....

Qatar, a small country in the Middle East, boasts the world's third largest natural gas reserve. Self-designated as the education center of the Arab world, Education City (an initiative of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development) aims to be the center of educational excellence in the region. Founded in 1995 by decree of His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of the state of Qatar, and chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al Missned, Qatar Foundation has made it its mission to provide the best education to its citizens. Going for the best, they invited American universities to open campuses there; among those who came are Georgetown University and Texas A & M. While the country is wealthy and their literacy rates are increasingly high, the number of school programs available to help students who are struggling with literacy is limited.

In the middle of Education City sits The Learning Center School (TLCS) which serves students in grades one through twelve who face challenges to their academic achievement. Literacy is of the utmost importance for academic success. Last year Reading Specialist Lydia Kepich guided TLCS in their adoption of WLS and Foundations. Literacy Specialist David Marsh provided professional development, and comments: "The teachers, English-speaking expatriates from around the world, are enthusiastic and hungry for more. Because so many nations look to Qatar as the educational center in the Arab world and so many teachers are telling their home countries about it, we can have a huge impact on literacy worldwide." David returned this past November for follow-up sessions.



According to Kepich, the Wilson programs are ideal for TLCS because of their structure, flexibility, and comprehensiveness. "We have students at various grade levels that struggle with different aspects of literacy, whether it is because they are learning English as a second language, are older and have never been appropriately instructed, or are truly dyslexic." Kepich embraces the chain reaction – from literacy, to exposure to literature and writings of all kinds, to the empowerment for all through literacy. Literacy is a vital tool for building a bridge between Arab and Western cultures – for bringing us together instead of dividing us. Thus, as we wrote in the first line, Wilson is indeed a good will ambassador.