

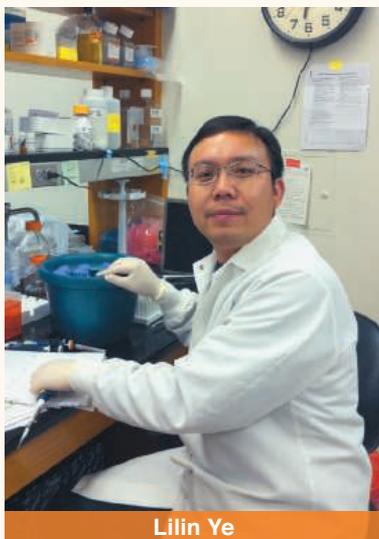
International Talents: Fostering a Global Reach

In recent years, many Chinese universities have significantly stepped up their efforts to bring their science to the international stage. CBMS is one such institution that has been implementing strategies to become more competitive in the global arena. In the last two to three years alone, CBMS has seen an uptick in bidirectional global connections, but staying competitive means being able to recruit a top-notch faculty both locally and abroad.

Helping achieve this talent recruitment goal is China's "Go West" strategy, which has been encouraging economical, educational, scientific, and technological developments in the country's western region and providing policy and funding support over the last decade. Given this increased focus on the West, Chongqing—the largest city in China—is poised to become a new center of international outreach.

Professor Xiaowei Chen, who graduated from CBMS several years ago and recently returned from his postdoctoral training at the Technische Universität München in Germany to be the head of the Brain Research Center, says the livability of Chongqing compared with that in major coastal cities allows him to "concentrate on doing science without worrying about money and housing." This is important for Chen since he feels a strong emotional attachment to the institute and plans to build China's first marmoset center for large-animal experiments right in Chongqing. Another example is Lilin Ye, a principle investigator who brought his research developing novel therapeutic vaccines to CBMS in 2012 from Emory University in Atlanta in the United States, explains that some other benefits of being in Chongqing are that the "kindergarten and school education is better than that provided by other institutions in Beijing or Shanghai."

CBMS also strives to stay competitive with universities located on either side of the Atlantic Ocean by providing top-notch research facilities as well as generous starter packages. "There are also fewer restrictions here as to how starter funds can be used," says Yi Zhou, professor of neuroscience, who joined CBMS at the same time as Chen. He moved from the University of Southern California to open his own lab studying how complex information is processed in the brain. Zhou is particularly impressed by the leadership at CBMS and TMMU. "The director of the college works harder than us!" he says. "We can bring bureaucratic issues, such as difficulties navigating complicated procedures, directly



Lilin Ye

to him," and he provides strong support to young investigators at TMMU, says Zhou. "Once he replied by e-mail after midnight, and my problem was resolved before the next day started," he explains.

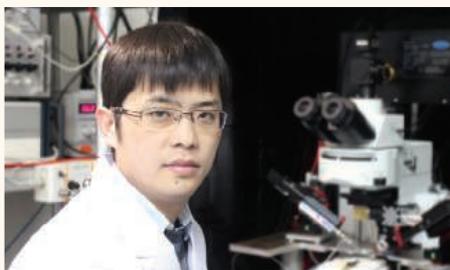
CBMS has also set specific recruitment goals to help strengthen its faculty. "We want [to recruit] junior-level talent who are not afraid of challenging the existing paradigms and exploring new theories," explains Yuzhang Wu, director of CBMS, "rather than transplanting established research groups from overseas." Wu hopes these free-thinking scientists will bring the scientific cultures from the countries where they were trained to China. Evidence of this can be found in many of the innovative teaching methods and evaluation systems CBMS has implemented in recent years, which have their roots in the places where CBMS researchers have been educated, such as Europe

or the United States.

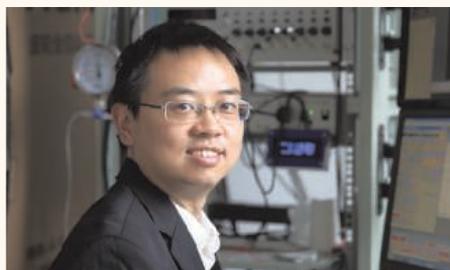
Scientists returning home to China don't leave their professional lives behind. Maintaining connections and collaborations with scientists outside China is very important to CBMS researchers. "There are no real differences between being located in Chongqing and being in Beijing or Shanghai," says Chen, "especially in the era of the Internet and frequent air travel." He still communicates regularly with former colleagues in Munich about collaborative projects.

Another strategy for CBMS in acquiring top talent is recruiting domestically. Jun Zhang, a principle investigator in the Department of Physiology, who specializes in sensory-motor integration, moved from Nanjing University (800 miles east of Chongqing) to CBMS in 2011. Zhang says that "Chongqing, and the surrounding Sichuan region, has always been a resource-rich area in China, and this is also true in terms of scientific research support thanks to ample funding and talent from all over the world."

More than 1,300 years ago, poets wrote about how quickly one could travel from Chongqing (the "White Emperor Castle") to Nanjing via the Three Gorges and Yangtze River, in only one day. With today's technology, the distance between Chongqing and other cities has become virtually nonexistent, making Chongqing a great location to conduct world-class research as well as stay connected to the global community.



Xiaowei Chen



Yi Zhou



Jun Zhang