

P02 | Academician Li Yanrong Appointed New President of Sichuan University

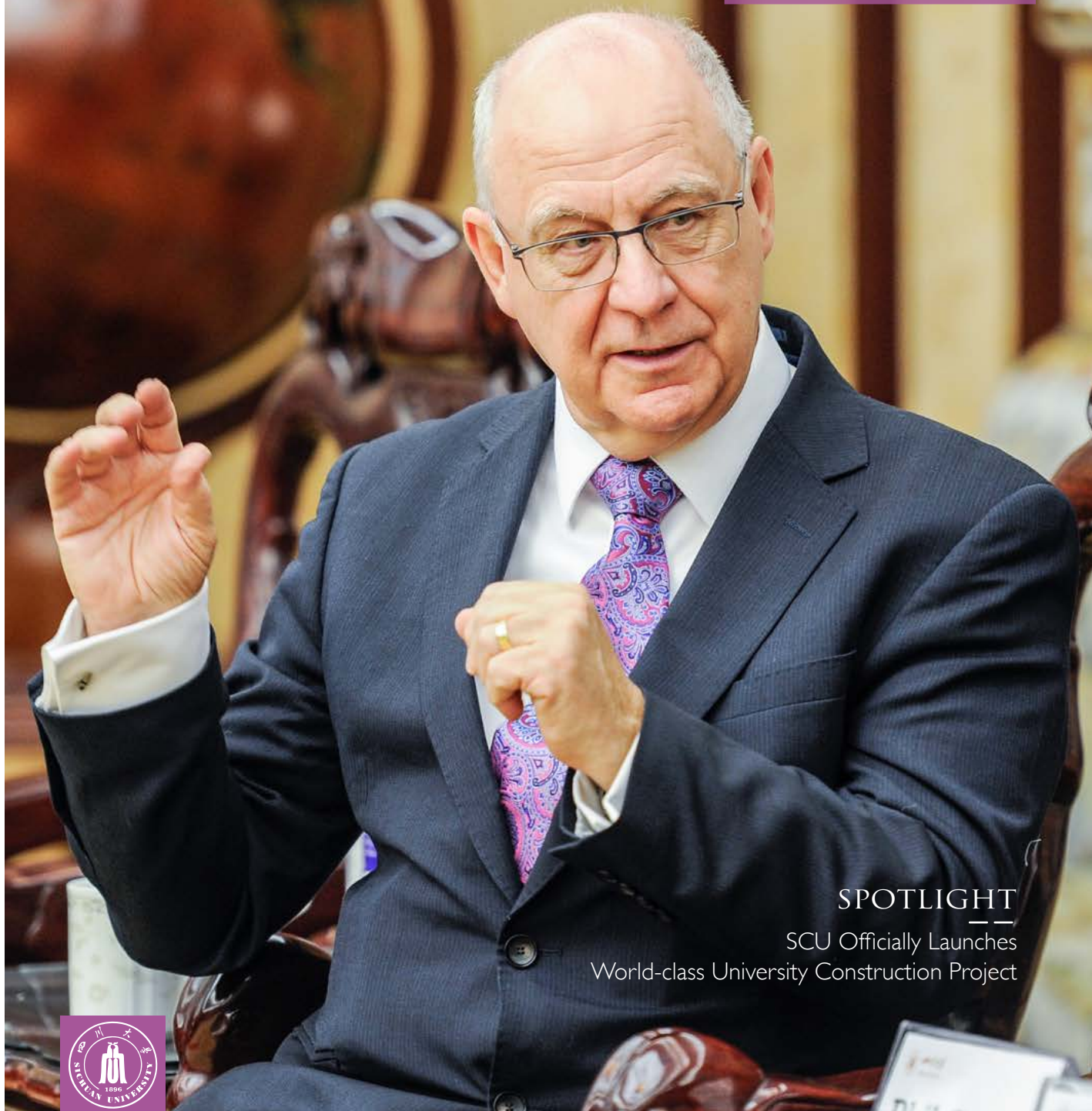
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Holds Special Lecture at SCU

SCU NEWS LETTER

WINTER

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SPOTLIGHT

SCU Officially Launches
World-class University Construction Project







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The Newsletter is published by the International Office of Sichuan University. We aim to share the latest news and events on our campus with our faculty members, students, and alumni of the University, as well as friends around the world. Any suggestions and questions are welcomed from our readers.

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Academician Li Yanrong Appointed New President of Sichuan University

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On December 26th, 2017, Academician Li Yanrong, fellow of China's prestigious Academy of Engineering, was formally instated as the new President of Sichuan University (at the level of assistant government minister). The announcement followed Academician Xie Heping's decision to retire from his duties as University President on grounds of having reached the standard age for Chinese retirement.

In his first address upon taking office, Li stressed the importance of the task ahead: SCU has been selected to construct a world-class university and, in doing so, to represent the strengths and achievements of Chinese higher education to the wider world. Li is honored to be entering SCU at this important time in the university's history and has pledged to become its dedicated champion. As the newest member of SCU's leadership team, he is happy to join the ranks of students, staff, and faculty who have continually contributed to this university's excellence and fine reputation. 卐



About

After earning his PhD from the Chinese Academy of Science in 1992, Li Yanrong went on to pursue post-doctoral studies at the University of Electronic Science and Technology of China, where he became professor in 1994. A year later, he went to Karlsruhe, Germany, as visiting researcher, followed by a further research visit to the University of Colorado Boulder in 1998 and a stint as visiting professor in Germany in 1999.

He also served as dean of the School of Information, Materials Science, and Engineering at the University of Electronic Science and Technology (UESTC) and in 2001 was appointed dean of the School of Microelectronics and Solid-state electronics there. In 2003, Li joined the university leadership and served as UESTC's president from 2013 to December 2017.

Li Yanrong has taught and supervised students in the area of materials and electrical components for many years; he has won many honors and awards for his innovative research and published over 260 scientific articles, as well as four monograph-length works. In 2011, he was appointed fellow of the Chinese Academy of Engineering.

SCU Officially Launches World-class University Construction Project

On January 12th, 2018, Sichuan University convened a large-scale conference marking the formal launch of its “dual world-class university construction” scheme.

On September 21st, 2017, the PRC had released its official list of Chinese universities selected for “dual world-class university construction,” a national project designed to develop top-ranking universities and academic disciplines in China that will compete with the world’s leading academic institutions and disciplines. 42 univer-

sities and 95 academic disciplines at Chinese colleges were initially selected for world-class development. SCU was among those designated as A-class university.

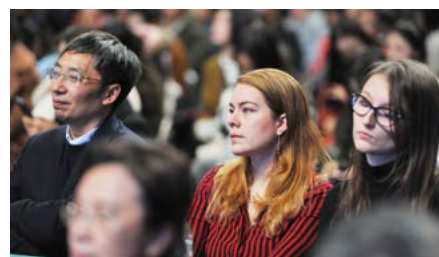
During the conference, SCU Vice President Xu Weilin spoke on “Sichuan University and World-class University Construction: A Roadmap for Strategic Development,” outlining the process and challenges of dual world-class university construction, introducing its overall aims and features, and detailing the “top ten construction” plan

, “4+1 discipline construction” scheme, and proposed systemic reforms.

To better facilitate the process of world-class university construction, Sichuan University has specially appointed chief scientists to supervise world-class discipline construction for individual disciplines; leading experts will manage quality control and establish targets in compliance with national and university supervision.

Academician Wei Yuquan has been appointed chief scientist responsible for





developing the discipline of biotechnology at SCU; Academician Zhang Xingdong is the leading scientist for the biomedical engineering group; Professor Luo Zhitian heads the regional history and frontier studies group; and Professor Cao Shunqing is the leading

expert for the group on the promotion of Chinese language and literature.

Representing the leading scientists responsible for developing world-class disciplines at SCU, Academician Wei Yuquan addressed the conference,

stressing his and his colleagues' firm commitment to establishing front-line university disciplines equipped not only to compete, but excel, on the global academic stage.

On the same day, SCU President Li

Yanrong and Chairman of SCU Council Wang Jianguo, signed agreements with the leading scientists and every college and school, detailing specific plans and strategies for the tasks ahead.

In his speech at the conference, President Li encouraged members of the faculty and university leaders to take their respective roles in the dual world-class university construction project and work hard toward the common goal of further raising the academic quality and global status of Sichuan University.

Wang Jianguo called on SCU faculty, staff, students, and alumni to contribute their experience and resources to the task at hand.

Vice President of Sichuan University Yan Shijing presided over the conference. He suggested that contributing to the construction of China's world-class universities represented a commitment to something larger: the "Chinese Dream" of the 'great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.'

Outlined in the tenets of Sichuan University's plan for dual world-class university construction is the mission to construct a top university with Chinese characteristics "SCU-style"; a global leader among higher education institutions and pioneer of innovative science rooted in the soil of Western China; a generator of new ideas, theories, technologies, and approaches to benefit society at large; a promoter of human progress, a producer of cultural goods, a preserver of civilizational treasures, and a beacon of hope for humankind. 山

SCU's Professor Philip David Coates Receives China's International Scientific and Technological Cooperation Award

On January 8th, the State Council of China's Communist Party Central Committee assembled in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing to hold the annual conferral ceremony of the International Scientific and Technological Cooperation Award of the People's Republic of China. Among the 2017 award winners was SCU's Honorary Professor Philip David Coates, Professor of Polymer Engineering at the University

of Bradford, Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering, Famous Overseas Scholar (Chinese Ministry of Education), and first ever recipient of the Tianfu Friendship Award in 2015. The 2017 International Scientific and Tech-



nological Cooperation Award certificate was presented by China's Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli. Before the ceremony, President Xi Jinping and other Party leaders met with Coates and other recipients of the award.

Following the award ceremony, Vice Premier Liu Yandong presented Professor Coates with a gold medal, congratulating him and expressing her appreciation for Coates's efforts toward establishing the Joint International Laboratory for Polymer Micro-processing (Bradford and Sichuan Universities) and his contributions to developing new technologies in polymer processing.

Coates is the first ever Overseas Honorary Professor of Sichuan University to receive the prestigious award, which this year was won by a total of only seven foreign experts based in China or working with Chinese institutions. 卐

About

The British Professor of Polymer Engineering has earned numerous other awards in the past decade, including the 2007 Yorkshire Forward Innovation Award, the 2008 EU Regio-Stars Award - Centres of Industrial Collaboration, and the 2009 IoM3 Composites Award, among others. In addition to serving as Director of the Joint International Laboratory for Polymer Micro-processing, Professor Coates is also director of the Interdisciplinary Research Centre in Polymer Science & Technology, the AME RKT Centre & Polymer Centre of Industrial Collaboration, and the Science Bridges China program. Coates was elected Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineer-



ing in 1995. In 2008, he was appointed honorary professor of Sichuan University and, in 2012, Top Overseas SCU Professor. Coates received the Sichuan International Cooperation in Science and Technology Innovation Award in 2016.

UC Berkeley's Daniel Kammen Awarded Honorary Professorship, Appointed Council Member of International Advisory Board

On December 11th, Distinguished Professor of Energy at the University of California, Berkeley, Dr.

Daniel Kammen visited Sichuan University, where he was appointed honorary professor and newest council member of

SCU's International Advisory Board. President Xie Heping welcomed Dr. Kammen and presented him with both letters of ap-

pointment. Vice President Liang Bin and representative faculty of relevant departments also joined the meeting.

President Xie emphasized that Sichuan University highly values its collaboration and exchanges with the world's leading universities and research institutions. To date, SCU has set up numerous international research platforms that have advanced important collaborative research and personnel training around the globe, yielding fruitful results. The development of green and clean energy sources is a global task, according to Xie, and SCU welcomes Dr. Kammen into its ranks to contribute to the university's own scientific and educational efforts in this area and to help prepare a new generation of green scientists for global competitiveness. President Xie looks forward to deepening the relationship with UC Berkeley and also establishing stronger ties between Sichuan and the State of California.

Professor Daniel Kammen has held a



number of notable positions, including that of Climate Science Envoy for the State Department; Member of the United Nations Secretary General's High-Level Group on Sustainable Energy for All; and Chief Technology Specialist, Director for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency at the World Bank. As the founder of several companies and founding director of

the Renewable and Appropriate Energy Laboratory (RAEL), Kammen has made vital contributions to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which in 2007 was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

The purpose of Kammen's visit to Sichuan was to promote further collaboration between SCU and UC Berkeley in the area of energy research. Kammen pointed to the common ground shared between Sichuan Province and California, both in energy and natural disaster research. Kammen looks forward to his cooperation with SCU in the near future, especially to the forthcoming establishment of a joint energy research center, which is currently in the works, and which will promote global sustainable development.

To conclude their meeting, President Xie presented Dr. Kammen with letters of appointment for the honorary professorship, as well as council membership with SCU's International Advisory Board. 🏛️



Opening Ceremony of Polish Language Program at Sichuan University

On the morning of November 7th, Sichuan University held the Opening Ceremony for its newly established Polish Language Program at SCU's National Base for Leadership Education and Training. Jointly hosted by Sichuan University's College of Foreign Languages and Cultures and the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Chengdu, the ceremony was an important highlight of this year's Chengdu Polish Culture Festival.

SCU Vice President Yan Shijing; Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Chengdu, Ms. Katarzyna Wilkowiecka; and representatives of the Sichuan Provincial Government Foreign Affairs Office and Education Department, along with students and Polish studies faculty from SCU's College of Foreign Languages and Cultures, attended the ceremony.

Yan Shijing offered a word of welcome and introduced the background and preparatory work for the establishment of SCU's Polish Program. Against the larger historical backdrop of China's "Belt and Road" initiative, as well as the "16+1" (China and 16 Central and Eastern European countries) cooperation mechanism, training interdisciplinary talents with foreign language skills has become more important than ever for China's universities. If economic partnerships

are to prosper, the partners should first learn to speak each other's languages, Yan stressed, adding that without a solid basis for bilateral communication, Sino-Polish exchanges and economic development will face inevitable restrictions. Vice President Yan stated that SCU would vigorously promote its "Polish+" major; set concrete goals for collaborating with the University of Warsaw in joint training and student exchanges; and educate students who will not only master the Polish language but become conver-

sant in Polish politics, economics, and culture, thereby supporting the implementation of the *Belt and Road* initiative and the "Chengdu-Europe Plus" strategy for the advancement of comprehensive socio-economic development. The joint training program not only promotes



foreign language education at SCU and the University of Warsaw; it also promotes Sino-Polish cultural relations on a broader, intergovernmental scale.

Consul General Ms. Katarzyna Wilkowiecka said she was delighted to be part of the opening ceremony of SCU's Polish Program on the 150th anniversary of Marie Curie's birth. After presenting an overview of Marie Curie's lifetime achievements, she congratulated the first 14 students entering SCU's Polish program, wishing them all the best for their future studies and careers.

Following the speeches, Yan Shijing, Ms. Wilkowiecka, and the dean of SCU's College of Foreign Languages and Cultures, Duan Feng, together unveiled the plaque for the new Polish language major. On behalf of the Consulate General, Ms. Wilkowiecka presented Sichuan University with an original work of traditional Polish art.

To conclude the inauguration, the first 14 Polish majors offered a fine rendition of a Polish folk tune, which was received with rapturous applause.

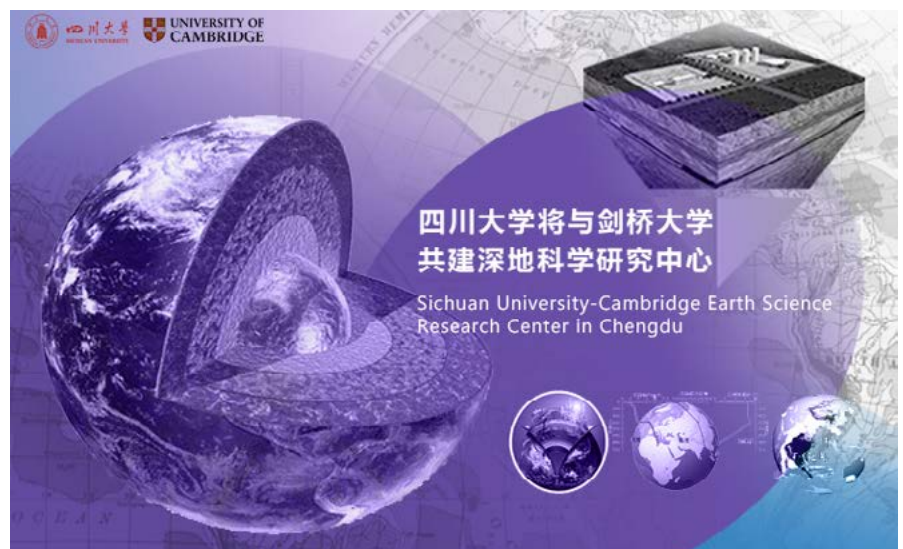
SCU's newest major serves the advancement and further implementation of various national initiatives, such as *Belt and Road* and China's growing economic partnerships with countries in Central and Eastern Europe. It is hoped that the program will produce well-rounded, interdisciplinary experts in Polish studies and relevant related fields, such as international relations, some of whom might go on to make vital contributions to Sino-Polish relations. To this end, SCU has hired Polish faculty from the University of Warsaw and the University of Łódź. 卐

SCU and Cambridge to Establish Joint Earth Science Research Center

On January 9th, SCU's Deep Underground Science Research Group and researchers from the Department of Earth Science at the University of Cambridge reached the unanimous decision to jointly establish the Sichuan University-University of Cambridge Earth Science Research Centre. Academician Xie Heping has taken a leading role in facilitating negotiations between the two sides.

Later on the same day, Professor Simon Redfern, Head of the Department of Earth Science at Cambridge, met with Academician Xie in the Academicians' Conference Room of the School of Hydraulic and Hydr-electric Engineering, where they dis-

cussed concrete plans for the establishment of the center. Academician Xie supplied an overview of the past work of SCU's Deep Underground Science Research Group, in particular in the area of underground hydrolics engineering and related fields. Deep underground science, he noted, has been selected for world-class discipline construction at Sichuan University, earning it the status of one of SCU's top disciplines. As SCU and the University of Cambridge share a number of common scientific interests in this area, and in light of favorable research conditions at SCU, the cooperation between the two sides holds great promise. Enjoying the solid support of both universities, the province of Sichuan, and the city of Cheng-



du, collaborative efforts have already made significant headway. Xie proposed that the cooperation proceed in three steps: first, the establishment of the center; second, the establishment of a research institute to serve the wider scientific community; and third, the establishment of a College of Earth Science at SCU.

SCU Vice President Yan Shijing and other university leaders joined the talks.

The joint research center will rely on the combined expertise and resources of both sides, including Sichuan University's State Key Laboratory of Hydraulics and Mountain River Engineering and the Key Laboratory of Deep Underground Science and Engineering, the latter of which falls directly under the Ministry of Education. The focus will be on conducting frontline, multi-disciplinary scientific research that advances the field while serving socio-economic development in the region and beyond. Specifically, the two universities will collaborate in the areas of earthquake and disaster research, deep underground science and engineering, as well as climate protection and emission control technologies. The University of Cambridge will send one of its professors to take up a long-term post at SCU and also recruit post-doctoral candidates.

In recent years, the two universities have collaborated on a variety of projects. In October 2014, they officially launched a joint program of compiling the world's largest database on Himalayan studies. In July 2015, the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge launched a formal program of academic cooperation and talent exchange with Sichuan University. Talks for this latest collaboration project began in 2017 with the visit of Redfern to SCU last September. 卐

VISITORS

David A. Weitz, Harvard Professor and Fellow of Three US Academies, Holds Special Lecture at SCU

On the afternoon of December 20th, David A. Weitz, Mallinckrodt Professor of Physics and Applied Physics at Harvard University, visited SCU's Wangjiang Campus, where he gave a special lecture entitled "Dripping, Jetting, Drops and Wetting: the Magic of Microfluidics." Weitz is fellow of the US National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Close to a hundred students and faculty from relevant departments came to listen to Professor Weitz's lecture.

Introducing the use of microfluidic devices, Professor Weitz discussed how these can accurately "control the flow and mixing of fluids to make drops," which in turn can be used in the creation of new materials not easily synthesized by other methods. "These materials have great potential for use for encapsulation and release." Professor Weitz further explained "how the exquisite control afforded by microfluidic devices provides enabling

technology to use droplets as micro-reactors to perform reactions at remarkably high rates using very small quantities of fluids." Weitz's talk was application-oriented and demonstrated how his re-



search relates to promoting development in biotechnology, industrial manufacturing, and a number of other fields. He also used the occasion of the lecture to encourage young graduate students in their experimenting and exploratory research: sometimes, he said, pointing to his own experiences as a young researcher, scientific discoveries are made by way of "accidents." Professor Weitz's humorous and entertaining style, as well as his ability to simplify

complicated subject matter, won him a captive audience and generous applause. Following the lecture, students were eager to ask questions, which Professor Weitz answered in great detail. 山



German Phenomenologist Walter Schweidler Holds Series of Philosophy Lectures at SCU's School of Public Administration

Noted phenomenologist Walter Schweidler, Chair of Philosophy at the Catholic University Eichstätt-Ingolstadt in Germany, came to SCU in October 2017 to deliver a series of lectures on phenomenology and Martin Heidegger.

During his ten-day visit from October 13th-23rd, Professor Schweidler held lectures for both undergraduate and graduate philosophy students in the School of Public Administration. Assistant researcher of the Philosophy Department He Nian hosted and translated the lectures.

On October 13th, the series was launched with a special lecture on "Overcoming

Metaphysics," a prominent theme in Schweidler's work.

From October 14th-22nd, Professor Schweidler held a series of lectures on phenomenology and Martin Heidegger, beginning with "Heidegger's philosophical concepts and his phenomenological starting point." He also lectured on "Heidegger's Being and Time," "From 'Being and Time' to 'Being and History'" and on "Similarity and Difference," dealing with Heidegger's later metaphysics and contemporary French philosophers (including Emmanuel Lévinas, Paul Ricoeur, and others).

On October 23rd, Professor Schweidler



gave a closing lecture entitled “Metaphysics and Politics: On the Contemporary Philosophical Thought of the Ritter Schule.”

Professor Schweidler’s research covers a spectrum of interests, from political philosophy to philosophy of law and human rights to bioethics. Born

in southern Germany in 1957, Schweidler studied philosophy and theology in Munich. His noted works include: *Wittgensteins Philosophiebegriff* (1983), *Die Überwindung der Metaphysik: Zu einem Ende der neuzeitlichen Philosophie* (1987), *Geistesmacht und Menschenrecht* (1994), *Der gute Staat: Politische Ethik von Platon bis zur Gegenwart* (2004),

Das Uneinholbare: Beiträge zu einer indirekten Metaphysik (2008), and *Über Menschenwürde: Der Ursprung der Person und die Kultur des Lebens* (Das Bild vom Menschen und die Ordnung der Gesellschaft, vol. 2) (2011), with 2017 translations into Chinese, English, Spanish, Japanese, and French. 🏠

SCU Awards Honorary Professorship to Prof. Mondher Bouzayen of the University of Toulouse

On the afternoon of January 5th, SCU Vice President Yan Shijing met with Mondher Bouzayen, professor of biology (*Classe Exceptionnelle*) at the Institut National Polytechnique de Toulouse, University of Toulouse, and elected member of the prestigious Academia Europaea at the VIP Hall on SCU’s Wangjiang Campus to appoint Professor Bouzayen Honorary Professor of Sichuan University. Members of the faculty and university leaders of relevant departments joined the awarding ceremony.

On behalf of Sichuan University, Vice President Yan Shijing extended a warm welcome to Professor Bouzayen and offered a brief introduction to biological sciences at SCU, a field with a long and well-established history. Yan highlighted the areas of botany and zoology, both

exceptional and nationally recognized. SCU’s biology program, he pointed out, has consistently ranked in the top five to ten percent nationwide. Professor Bouzayen’s joining the ranks of SCU scientists marks a step forward in the advancement of biological research and disciplinary development at Sichuan University.

Mondher Bouzayen remarked that he felt greatly honored by the appointment and, as honorary professor of SCU, will do his best to contribute to the development of SCU’s biological sciences. Professor

Bouzayen looks forward to his cooperation with SCU researchers and professors to develop the discipline of biology at SCU, strengthen the development of biological sciences in China, and promote ongoing friendship and cooperative ties between China and the European Union in the area of scientific research. 🏠

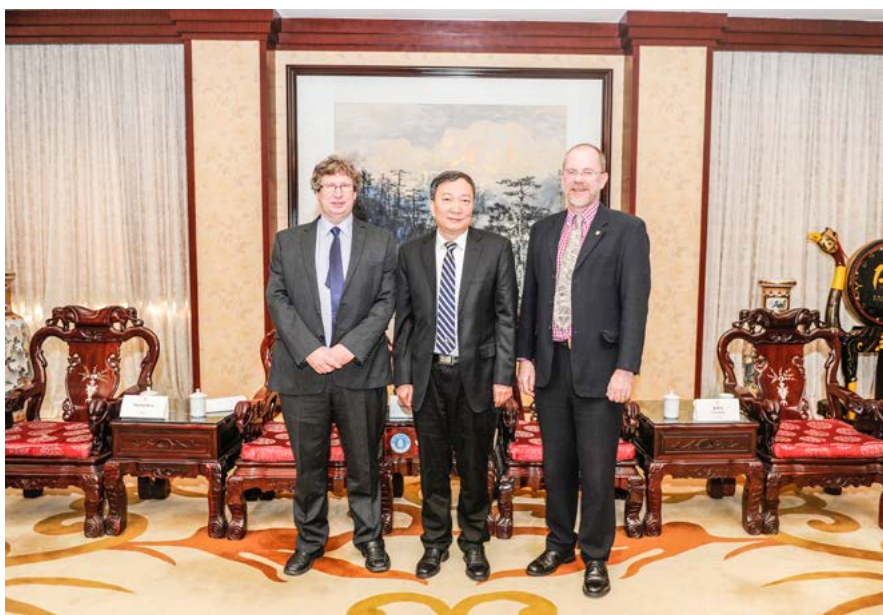


Chair of Earth Science Department at Cambridge Visits SCU



On the morning of January 8th, SCU President Li Yanrong met with a visiting delegation led by Cambridge University's Head of the Department of Earth Science, Simon Redfern, and Professor Martin Travis Dove of Queen Mary University of London. The delegation was received at the VIP Hall on SCU's Wangjiang Campus. SCU Vice President Yan Shijing and other university leaders joined the meeting.

Welcoming the delegation, President Li gave a brief introduction to Sichuan University, outlining the present project of world-class university and world-class discipline construction, SCU's earth science being one of the university's most important disciplines, with hydro-electric engineering, physics, and computer science counting among its leading subjects. Overall, SCU's disciplinary strengths provide a strong basis for the further development of earth science at Sichuan University, President Li suggested. Under China's National 13th Five-year Plan on Scientific and Technological Development, the current collaboration in the field of earth science between SCU and the University of Cambridge and Queen Mary University of London serves not only



scientific development but, beyond that, national interests, regional development, and industry promotion. Li expressed his hope that the visit of the two professors would further cement cooperative ties among the three universities.

Professor Redfern expressed his thanks for the warm welcome received at SCU. He looks forward to cooperating with Sichuan University on establishing a joint earth science research center, which is in the interests of both sides.

Professor Dove pointed out that SCU and Queen Mary University of London had enjoyed a long and fruitful partnership, which he is sure will continue to develop with the joint establishment of a planned big data analysis research center.

The establishment of a joint earth science research center by SCU and the University of Cambridge is set to be followed by the establishment of a School of Earth Science at Sichuan University in the not too distant future. 🏠

Joint Master Degree Program with Arizona State and Woosong University to Launch in 2018

Sichuan University has entered a formal agreement with Arizona State University and Korea's Woosong University to launch an accelerated degree program for an international Master's in "Finance and Management in Asia and the US." The signing ceremony was held at Woosong University on November 9th. SCU Vice President Yan Shijing, Arizona State Vice Provost Stefanie Lindquist, and Chairman of Woosong College, Kim Sung Kyung, served as signatories representing their respective institutions at the ceremony.

The three-way agreement was drawn up between SCU's Business School, Arizona State University's W. P. Carey School of Business, and the SolBridge International School of Business of Woosong University. Together, the three universities have drafted a plan for a 1+1+1 degree program, meaning students will spend a year at each university in turn to complete their international Master's, allowing not only for a diverse academic

experience at three separate institutions strong in the fields of international business and finance; students joining the program will also have the opportunity to reap the benefits of a rich cross-cultural experience and exposure to two foreign languages. The program will offer advantageous conditions to its students; in addition, they can simultaneously earn degrees from all three institu-

tions. The program will begin enrolling students in all schools in 2018.

Vice President Yan Shijing gave a short speech at the signing ceremony, stressing that this was the first time SCU signed a joint Master's degree program agreement established between three universities. In the course of jointly running Woosong's and Arizona State's



Confucius Institutes over the past ten years, Sichuan University has continued to build mutual trust and develop a fruitful working relationship with its US and Korean partner universities. Vice President Yan expressed his hopes that the three universities would make use of the opportunity of establishing this new program to continue the important

work of promoting comprehensive, in-depth cooperation on all sides.

Vice Provost Stefanie Lindquist was satisfied with the all-round favourable agreement the three universities had reached in a short amount of time and looks forward to Chinese and Korean students coming to Arizona State to study at the W. P. Carey

School of Business.

President and Vice Chancellor of Woosong University, John Endicott, expressed his best wishes for the success of the joint program. Representatives from SCU's Graduate School, Business School, and International Office attended the signing ceremony. 🏛️

SCU Vice President Yan Shijing Leads Academic Delegation to Sri Lanka

Keeping with SCU's mission of continually creating new platforms for international collaboration, its established tradition of excellence in South Asian studies, and its dedication to implementing key directives outlined at China's 19th National Congress by actively promoting the country's *Belt and Road* foreign policy initiative, SCU Vice President Yan Shijing recently led an academic delegation from SCU's Social Science Department, the School of History and Culture, and the School of International Studies to Sri Lanka in order to advance exchanges between SCU and academic institutions in the region. The group visited three well-known universities – the University of Peradeniya, General Sir John Kotelawala Defense University, and the University of Kelaniya – as well as a leading think tank, the Pathfinder Foundation, and engaged in successful dialogue and discussions with leaders at each of these institutions. The delegation also had the

opportunity to conduct on-site investigations at the Colombo International Container Terminals (CICT), a joint venture between China Merchants Holdings International and the Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA).

Through in-depth talks and fruitful exchanges with their Sri Lankan hosts, SCU's delegates were able to negotiate six important outcomes, including decisions to set up training programs; to offer Master and doctoral *Belt and Road* scholarships to students of all the three universities to study at Sichuan University; to organize joint research platforms, think tank forums, and academic conferences; to launch an archaeological research program to excavate sites along Sri Lanka's ancient mari-



time silk road (in collaboration with the University of Kelaniya); to promote short-term scholarly exchanges; and to establish an overseas *Belt and Road* training base for SCU students in the Sri Lankan capital of Colombo.

According to the agreements signed during the delegation's visit, all three universities, as well as the Pathfinder Foundation, will begin their cooperation with SCU in 2018. 🏛️

SCU Signs Cooperation Agreement with Birmingham University



Earlier this year, on May 22nd, Professor Jon Frampton, Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor and Director of the China Institute at Birmingham University, had already met with SCU's Vice President Yan Shijing for a signing ceremony that marked an important step in the collaborative relationship of several years between the two universities. The University of Birmingham, which prides itself on being "the global university at the heart of an ambitious city," and rightfully so, shares several features with Sichuan University, which has recently been selected for the "dual-world-class university construction" project, which sets Chinese universities on the track of establishing themselves and their top disciplines as internationally competitive and top-ranking: both institutions can boast an over 100-year history, both are comprehensive universities with large student bodies and fine research traditions, and both institutions have strong engineering and medical science programs.

On November 15th, Professor Frampton and Vice President Yan met at SCU's Wangjiang Campus again, this time to sign a cooperation agreement

to further promote student exchanges and develop their research partnership in the areas of hydraulic and hydro-electric engineering, as well as chemical engineering. Birmingham and SCU have agreed to establish a "3+2" combined Bachelor's and Master's exchange program, which will benefit students from both universities and open up significant opportunities for in-depth academic collaboration and exchange. Both leaders spoke of their hopes to expand the partnership in various areas, including summer

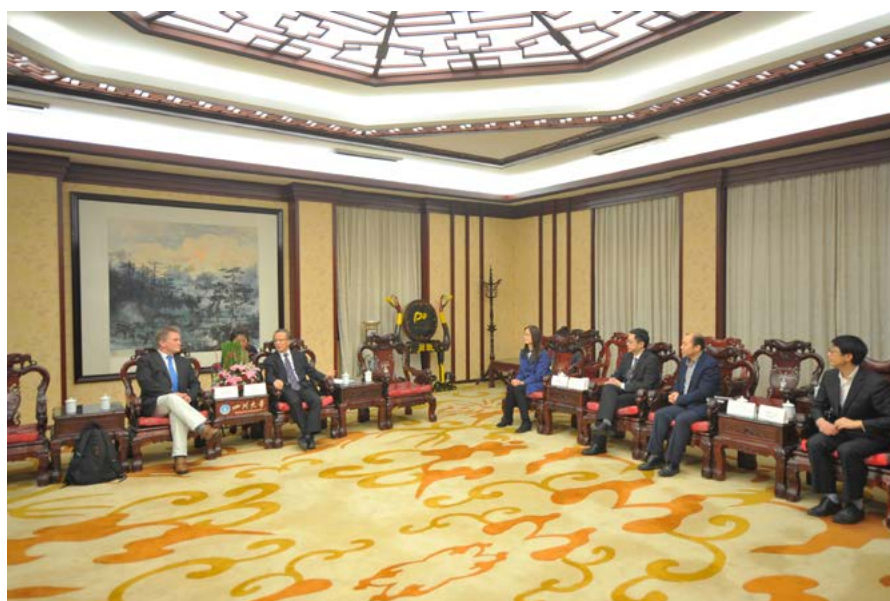
course programs, faculty exchanges, and joint research endeavours.

Vice President Yan opened the recent meeting by welcoming Professor Frampton to Chengdu once again. The two scholars had just returned from a tour of two departments in the School of Chemical Engineering, which gave them a lot to discuss. That morning, SCU and the University of Birmingham had also launched a joint research centre established to devote itself to researching rare diseases and



clinical applications in genomic sciences, which Frampton, himself a stem cell biologist, was visibly excited about. Vice President Yan offered a brief overview of the cooperative relationship between the two sides, which dates back to 1985, and highlighted the significant progress Sichuan University had made over the last year in its capacity to conduct research on clean energy, water provision, and dam construction. SCU's College of Water Resources and Hydrolic Power has made some highly substantive contributions in this field, offering real solutions for the province of Sichuan and advancing ground-breaking scientific research. Vice President Yan also drew attention to the important breakthroughs in precision medicine that the collaborative efforts between SCU and the University of Birmingham have helped to bring about. Looking ahead, Yan hopes that the two institutions will continue this impressive track record, with the next step being the "2+1" PhD exchange student program in water resources and chemical engineering. The two universities, Vice President Yan stated, had a lot to learn from each other. Yan noted the sophistication and established tradition of the University of Birmingham, one of the top-ranking institutions of higher learning worldwide and member of the Russell Group.

Professor Frampton was glad to be back in Chengdu: "Sichuan University is a great university, and we wish to work more closely with you beyond the cooperation we have already established... You mentioned that the University of Birmingham can help you,



but I'd like to say that it also works the other way: we can also improve through our relationship with SCU."

Frampton stressed that the signing ceremony was not just about agreeing to register each other's students, but also about the faculty and researchers of both universities actively and constructively working together:

"We will also cooperate on joint scientific projects. Academics from West China Hospital will be coming to Birmingham in the next few months to work out the details of the research projects that will be launched with the new centre."

Professor Frampton was enthusiastic about the prospects of scientific collaboration and mentioned that during his visit to the School of Chemical Engineering he had "had a lot of fun" and "felt like a young researcher again." He was deeply impressed by

SCU's model of Sichuan's dams and rivers, and the number of fascinating, large-scale research projects.

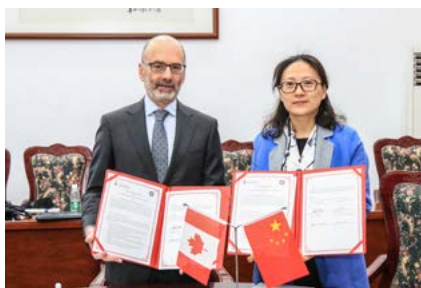
Both Vice President Yan and Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor Frampton took the opportunity of this meeting to introduce their universities' respective summer programs and encourage more participation in inter-collegiate exchanges. In this connection, Frampton also noted SCU's standing as one of Birmingham's "strategic global partners," of which, he said, "SCU is a valuable one." Yan in turn suggested an annual meeting of faculty of both universities coming together for academic dialogue and exchange, an idea that Frampton welcomed.

The meeting was concluded with the signing of the cooperative agreement by the two sides. Both university leaders look forward to deepening their friendship and collaboration in the coming years. 卐

MOU Renewed Between SCU's West China School of Stomatology and the University of Toronto's Faculty of Dentistry

On November 21st, 2017, West China School of Stomatology, Sichuan University and Faculty of Dentistry, University of Toronto renewed their cooperation agreement on research, education and clinical affairs. Both schools are leading institutes with world-class reputation, which shared a long history of fruitful collaboration. In 2010, a formal agreement between the two schools was reached and signed by Prof. Xuedong Zhou and Prof. Dennis Cvitkovitch, respectively. Since then, the connection and cooperation between the two schools have been greatly promoted. This time, Dean and Professor

Ye Ling representing West China School of Stomatology, Sichuan University joined with Dean and professor Daniel Haas representing Faculty of Dentistry, University of Toronto into the ceremony of MOU renewal. ㊦



On the morning of December 19th, the Second International Young Scholars Forum convened on SCU's Wangjiang Campus. 215 outstanding young scholars from the world's top universities and research institutes, including Harvard University, the University of Oxford, Stanford University, and MIT, attended the forum by invitation. Wang Jianguo, Chairman of Sichuan University Council; several Chengdu city officials; Director of SCU's State Key Laboratory of Biotherapy, Academician Wei Yuquan; Vice General Secretaries of the CPC SCU Committee Li Xufeng and Cao Ping; SCU Vice President Zhang Lin, and other officials also joined the event. SCU Vice President Liang Bin presided over the forum.

On behalf of SCU students, faculty, and staff, Wang Jianguo offered a word of welcome and encouraged young scholars returning to SCU on this occasion to support the university in its efforts toward internationalization and world-class development, to continue to contribute to their country and home university, and to do their part in working toward realizing the "Chinese Dream" as leading scientists, top researchers, and faculty in their respective fields.

Vice President Liang Bin introduced the present state of talent cultivation at Sichuan University, describing the favorable conditions, top-notch research facilities, and excellent support being offered to young scholars now coming to work and engage in research at SCU.



SCU Holds Second International Young Scholars Forum

In a round of interactive talks following the keynote speeches, young scholars from the world's elite universities explained why they had returned, or planned to come, to Sichuan University both to develop their careers and to serve their country.

The International Young Scholars Forum at SCU is an important platform for promoting the university's world class construction and talent cultivation. It brings together excellent young scholars from leading institutions around the

world, with years' participants having been selected through a rigorous screening process. The visiting scholars were also introduced to SCU via a campus tour, including a visit to the university museum. 川



International Symposium on Sino-Indian Relations

This past November, Sichuan University hosted an international symposium on Sino-Indian relations, which convened in Meishan City, just outside of Chengdu, from November 3rd to 4th. Jointly organized by the School of International Studies and the Chinese National Center for South Asian Studies, the international symposium enjoyed the support of Sichuan University, as well as local government officials. Altogether, more than 20 scholars of International Relations from China and India joined

the symposium. Representatives on the Chinese side included Chinese politician and diplomat Dai Bingguo, Chen Xiaogong, Shi Xiangyuan, Cui Liru, and Sun Shihai, among others. Leading experts and diplomats on the Indian side included the Indian career diplomat Shyam Saran and other Sino-Indian relations specialists.

Chairman of Sichuan University Council Wang Jianguo, gave the welcoming address, while former SCU President Xie Heping presided over

the symposium's opening ceremony.

The symposium offered an important opportunity for the two sides to exchange views on the bilateral relationship and deepen mutual understanding. Both sides confirmed their intention to continue their cooperation and exchange.

The Indian delegation thanked Sichuan University and the City of Meishan for their kind hospitality. 卐



SCU Delegation Attends 12th Annual Confucius Institute Conference

From December 12th to 13th, the 12th Annual Confucius Institutes Conference convened in Xi'an. Vice Premier of the State Council and President of the Council of the Confucius Institute Headquarters, Liu Yandong, attended the conference and gave a keynote speech. The opening ceremony was hosted by China's Minister of Education and Vice President of the Council of the CI Headquarters, Chen Baosheng. SCU Vice President Yan Shijing led a delegation from Sichuan University to attend the two-day conference.

The theme of this year's conference was "Working Together to Build a Community of Shared Future for Mankind through Cooperation and Innovation." Apart from 15 separate forums for Chinese and international university presidents and Confucius Institute directors, various exhibitions were held, including exhibitions on Mandarin teaching materials, Chinese culinary culture, and CI accomplishments. Nearly 2,500 university presidents and representatives of Confucius Institutes from more than 140 countries and regions attended the conference.

During the conference, delegates from Sichuan University participated in forums on "Confucius Institutes and China Studies," "How Confucius Institutes



Can Help Chinese and Foreign Universities Support 'One Belt One Road', and "Promoting Sino-foreign University Cooperation by Means of the Confucius Institute Platform," among others.

On the evening of December 11th, the Confucius Institute at Washington State, which was co-founded by Sichuan University, held its council meeting in Xi'an. The meeting was attended by university leaders and education officials from Chongqing and the State of Washington.

The Confucius Institutes are an impor-

tant vehicle for bringing Chinese education to the world; Confucius Institutes around the world have successfully modeled Sino-foreign cultural and educational cooperation and exchange. To date, Sichuan University has co-founded five Confucius Institutes, as well as 25 Confucius Classrooms, with a total of more than 10,000 students studying Chinese in America, Europe, and Asia every year. Among these, the Confucius Institutes at Woosong University in Korea and at Arizona State University were nominated "Confucius Institute of the Year" in 2010 and 2016 respectively. 🏆

China-South Asia People-to-People Dialogue and the 'Belt & Road' Initiative

The Sixth China-South Asia Cultural Forum

Jointly hosted by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and Sichuan University's Chinese National Center for South Asian Studies, the Sixth China-South Asia Cultural Forum was successfully held in Chengdu from December 17th to 18th, 2017. More than a hundred scholars, experts, and media representatives from China and across South Asia, with delegates from India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, attended this year's forum on the theme of "China-South Asia People-to-People Dialogue and the 'Belt & Road' Initiative."



Deputy Director of the Center for South Asian Studies, Li Tao, presided over the opening ceremony of the forum, while various distinguished foreign guests, including the Nepali Ambassador to China and university presidents, gave speeches.

Xu Jiuping, Assistant to the President of Sichuan University, addressed the forum, stressing the importance of South Asia's strategic position in relation to the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. Xu hopes that, as strategic partners, China and the South Asian region will further develop their collaborative relationship and

work together towards the flourishing of human progress.

The Nepali Ambassador pointed out that cultural exchange between China and countries in South Asia has always formed an important component of transnational relations in the region. Tapping into the interconnectedness of cultures allows people to understand each other on a deeper level, which ultimately promotes peace. As China enters this next stage of "socialism with Chinese characteristics," China and Nepal are well set to further develop their stra-

tegic partnership. This year's forum, he noted, provided a highly significant opportunity for experts and scholars from each country represented to discuss their respective understandings of each other, seeking common ground and promoting mutual goodwill.

Pakistan's Consul General in Chengdu explained that cultural exchange plays a key role in international relations. Going back many years, the history of Sino-Pakistani cultural exchange offers a strong example of friendly cooperation between two countries of very different

cultural, religious, and linguistic backgrounds. In the near future, the Pakistani Consulate General in Chengdu will establish the Pakistani Cultural Research Center to promote even better cooperation and exchange between China and Pakistan.

The president of Kabul University stressed that intercultural exchange was vital to peaceful coexistence among nations. The China-South Asia Forum serves to explore matters deeply relevant to the region, matters relating to security and regional peace, as well as economic development. He pointed to the case of the Confucius Institutes, which facilitate not only the teaching of Chinese language but also serve to familiarize students with Chinese traditional thinking. "I hope," he stated, "that through these and other educational and cultural exchange initiatives, the people of Afghanistan will be able to better grasp the essence of Confucian culture, including the concepts of *renyi* ("goodness"), *liyi* ("propriety"), *baorong* ("tolerance"), and *zhongcheng* ("loyalty")."

Subtopics discussed at the conference covered many aspects within the larger framework of cultural exchange in the context of China's 'Belt and Road' Initiative, including mechanisms for establishing people-to-people dialogue, educational cooperation, religious dialogue, and others.

This was the third time SCU hosted the China-South Asia Cultural Forum, testifying to the important role Sichuan University has played and continues to occupy in academic research on South Asia and Sino-South Asian relations. 🏠

SCU Engineering Professor Wang Qi among Five SCU Alumni Recently Appointed Members of China's "Two Academies"

The Chinese Academy of Engineering (CAE) and the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) have recently published their new membership lists: 67 scientists were elected new members of the Academy of Engineering, while 61 scientists have been newly appointed to the Academy of Sciences. Five alumni of Sichuan University are among the appointees: Zhou Zhicheng, Zhao Yuliang, Cai Ronggen, Lu Lin, and Professor Wang Qi of SCU's Polymer Research Institute.

Professor Wang Qi's appointment to the Chinese Academy of Engineering was announced on November 27th, after a nearly one-year review and assessment process of eligible nominees. In addition to completing her undergraduate and graduate studies at Sichuan University, Wang also earned a doctorate in engineering at SCU before going on to join the engineering faculty. A doctoral supervisor and Yangtze River scholar, Professor Wang holds a number of titles and professional positions in the academic and industrial sectors: she is editor-in-chief

of a leading Chinese journal on macromolecular materials science and engineering, deputy director of the expert committee of the China Plastics Processing Industry Association, and council member of the Chinese Chemistry Society, as well as the Materials Research Society. At SCU, Professor Wang directed the State Key Laboratory of Polymer Materials Engineering from 1998 to 2009. From 2004-2014 she was the chief scientist for the "985" scientific innovation platform on polymer and materials science at Sichuan University.

Professor Wang's research in materials preparation and processing of new technology and equipment dates back many years. She has presided over several projects funded by the National Natural Science Foundation of China and has collaborated with overseas scientists and institutions on various projects. Apart from winning prizes at province- and national-level science competitions for her innovative work, including patents for original inventions, Wang Qi has also published hundreds of articles and working



papers in scientific journals; she has supervised 50 doctoral and over 60 Master-level students.

The Chinese Academy of Engineering has a two-way channel for selecting new members, first through the China Association for Science and Technology and secondly through the nominations of existing members. A total of over 500 qualified candidates were nominated for membership this year. Apart from the 67 new Chinese members, 18 overseas members were newly appointed. Professor Wang Qi was one of only four women among the new Chinese members.

The Chinese Academy of Engineering (est. 1994) and the Chinese Academy of Sciences (est. 1949) are often referred to as the "Two Academies," or "*liang yuan*" in Chinese. They are both institutions under the State Council of China. The Chinese Academy of Engineering (CAE) is also part of the International Council of Academies of Engineering and Technological Sciences. Membership in the CAE represents the highest official distinction that can be obtained in the PRC in the fields of engineering and technology. The Chinese Academy of Sciences has been ranked among the top scientific research organizations worldwide. 卐

WCH Holds International Advanced VATS Course (European Class)

CHENGDU. From November 26, 2017, to December 1, 2017, the Department of Thoracic Surgery at West China Hospital (WCH) hosted the "West China International Advanced Video-assisted Thoracoscopic Surgery (VATS) Course" (European class). President Li Weimin and Vice President Liu Lunxu attended the opening ceremony and delivered speeches. Six senior thoracic surgeons from overseas institutions, including John Radcliffe Hospital of Oxford University, University Hospital Freiburg, Erasmus Medical Center, Sheffield Teaching Hospital, Medisch Centrum Alkmaar, and Laurentius Ziekenhuis, attended the training course.

During the one-week training, Dr. Liu Lunxu led the minimally invasive thoracic surgery instructor team to hold a full-length English course for trainees from Europe. The team taught the trainees the single-direction thoracoscopic lobectomy technique employed at WCH and the single-direction thoracoscopic segmentectomy extended on this basis, robotic lobectomy, complex lung cancer thoracoscopic surgery, complicated thoracoscopic treatment strategies and

thoracoscopic massive hemorrhage treatment strategies, as well as minimally invasive esophageal cancer surgery, among other procedures. Besides the theoretical teaching, trainees were also invited to visit the operating room to observe VATS lung cancer surgeries performed by Professor Liu Lunxu. Following daily surgical demonstrations, the participants gathered together to discuss questions with the lecturers and teachers in order to develop a deeper understanding of thoracoscopic technology. In addition, according to the specific interests of the trainees, they were invited to participate in chest radiography, morning visitations, operation case discussions and complex case discussions. Trainees had the unique opportunity to learn about the full range of the thoracic surgery process at West China Hospital, including surgical indication, perioperative management strategy, database construction and clinical trial development experience. The esophageal surgery team, robotic surgery team, and the Enhanced Recovery after Surgery (ERAS) team also introduced trainees to the minimally invasive esophageal cancer surgery technique, esophageal anasto-



mosis technique, robotics and lung cancer surgery, as well as the ERAS program.

After five days of intensive training, all the trainees completed their coursework successfully. Dr. Liu Lunxu awarded a West China Minimally Invasive Thoracoscopic Training Certificate to each of the trainees, who expressed their deep appreciation for the team of thoracic surgeons led by Dr. Liu

Lunxu. The trainees said that WCH's minimally invasive thoracoscope technology is leading in the world, making complicated thoracoscopic surgery simple and easy to learn. They stressed that what they had learned would not only enable them to perform surgeries, but to perform them well. They are determined to bring the technology back to Europe for the benefit of their European patients.

This is the first time in the history of WCH that doctors from developed countries come to systematically study clinical technology with our surgeons. Further, this demonstrates the international influence of minimally invasive thoracic surgery of WCH. Sichuan TV, West China Metropolis Daily, Chengdu TV, Chengdu Daily, the Medicine Field website and other media outlets ran full-length reports on the entire training course. 🏠

Sichuan University Secures Ninth Place Among China's "Dual World-class" Universities with SCU's Psychology & Psychiatry Ranked Among Top 1% in Global ESI

On January 12th, 2018, Clarivate Analytics, formerly Thomson Reuters, released its most recent *Essential Science Indicators* (ESI) data, highlighting the world's most influential scientists, publications, and institutions in different fields of research. For the first time, SCU's Psychiatry & Psychology ranked among the top percentile, bringing the total number of SCU disciplines ranking in the top 1% worldwide to 15 and propelling Sichuan University to 9th place among China's "dual world-class" construction universities (up from 11th place in November 2017).

Presently, the 15 disciplines at Sichuan Uni-

versity ranked among the world's top percent are: clinical medicine, chemistry, material science, physics, molecular biology and genetics, biology and biochemistry, pharmacology and toxicology, neuroscience and behavioral science, engineering, mathematics, agriculture, botany and animal science, computer science, social science, and psychiatry & psychology. This latest ESI not only highlights the strengths of SCU as a comprehensive university, but also supplies a solid basis for Sichuan University's continued development as a world-class university.



The *Essential Science Indicators* database relies on comprehensive and objective data to determine the world's most influential institutional and individual leaders in their respective fields. Drawing from over 12 million articles in over 12,000 journals around the world, ESI provides reliable information on global scientific trends. 🏠

SCU Professor Xu Zeshui Named 2017 "Highly Cited Researcher"

Clarivate Analytics, who publish an annual list of the most cited scientists worldwide, have once again

named SCU's Xu Zeshui "Highly Cited Researcher" in two separate categories, computer science and engineering, based

on his voluminous publications in these fields. The Yangtze River scholar from SCU's Business School was named among

the world's "most influential scientific minds" in computer science and engineering in previous years, too.

Clarivate Analytics "Highly Cited Researchers" are selected from the "top 1% most-cited in their respective fields over a recent 11-year period." This year, more than 3,000 internationally leading scientists were selected from within 21 natural science and social science fields, hailing from 900 institutions, having authored a total of over 130,000 papers.

Americans are most strongly represented among "Highly Cited Researchers" with 1,644 scientists (up 12% from 2016); the British come in second place with 344 top researchers; China (excluding Taiwan) ranks third with 249 scientists, up 41% from last year's ranking, which makes China the country with the most substantial increase in the number of most cited researchers over the past year. 🏆

For more information, please visit clarivate.com



West China Hospital's Peng Bing Selected Fellow of the American College of Surgeons

The world's most influential conference on surgical medicine, the American College of Surgeons Clinical Congress, recently held its 103rd meeting in San Diego, CA. It was at this meeting that Professor Peng Bing of SCU's West China Hospital was named Fellow of the prestigious American College of Surgeons. Through years of dedicated research, publishing, and clinical work, Professor Peng has distinguished himself particularly in the area of pancreatic surgery.

Peng has authored or co-authored a total of more than 40 important pa-

pers published in some of the world's leading medical journals. Between 2010 and October 2017, Professor Peng and his team performed over 300 laparoscopic pancreaticoduodenectomies. The team has successfully conducted numerous difficult and rarely performed surgeries, so that Peng and his team have been invited to share their significant experience with European and American medical scientists and physicians. In 2016, the team was invited to lecture at Bashkir State Medical University in Russia, where they also performed two surgery demonstrations. 🏆



The First Posterior Odontoidectomy Surgery Using Ultrasonic Bone Curette Successfully Finished in West China Hospital, Sichuan University

Recently, the surgical team of Professor Yueming Song from orthopedics department of West China Hospital, successfully completed one odontoidectomy surgery, which was the first odontoidectomy case in the world finished by ultrasonic bone curette. A successful clinical outcome was achieved and the patient discharged in the past few days.

The patient, who was a 41 years old female, came to see the orthopaedic sur-

geon with a chief complaint of progressive weakness and numbness in her upper and lower limbs, especially the right side. The symptom, which resulted from an accident injury, aggravated for two years. After admission, thorough examination was performed. The patient had congenital deformity in occipitocervical region and atlantoaxial dislocation. The dens moved upward obviously and caused severe spinal cord compression, which was called as "basilar impression" in nomenclature. Because of longtime atlantoaxial disloca-

tion, atlantoaxial joint had fused. It was impossible to reduce atlantoaxial joint. In addition, dens caused severe spinal cord compression. So dens resection was the only choice to get spinal cord decompression. Otherwise, consequences would be disastrous. The patient may have paralysis, or even die.

Dens resection means a surgery near human life center. The dens, whose position is very deep, locates in the top of spine. This region is the place where respiratory and circulation center locates. During surgery, any carelessness may cause damage to vital center and bring complications. The traditional procedure is transoral approach. Dens resection is performed by opening the mouth with self-retaining retractor system. However, the infection risk of traditional procedure is very high, and patients need to stay in intensive care unit for a long time, which brings heavy economic burden. Another traditional procedure is to remove dens by the extreme lateral-transatlas approach using high-speed drill. But high-speed drill is likely to slip, and this region is the place where respiratory and circulation center locates. So it is very likely to had complications.



This approach was first performed in West China hospital 20 years ago. However, it was abandoned due to high complication rate. For many years, such kind of patient was treated by longtime cervical traction and occipitocervical fusion. Nonetheless, without direct decompression of the spinal cord, patients got insignificant symptom improvement and poor quality of life.

In recent years, ultrasonic bone curette is widely used in orthopedic surgery. So Professor Yueming Song tried to use ultrasonic bone curette to resect the dens of the axis with vertebral column resec-

tion (VCR) technique. Ultrasonic bone curette, only causes damage to bone tissue by supersonic vibration, without the risk of vascular damage or spinal injury. VCR technique is a widely-used osteotomy technique in spine deformity, which requires complete excision of the vertebra from posterior bilaterally. To remove the dens with ultrasonic bone curette and VCR technique, thorough resection and decompression can be achieved.

The patient was sent to operating room at 2.00 pm October 25th. Using ultrasonic bone curette, the surgical team of Professor Yueming Song removed

the dens bilaterally through posterior approach, and complete spinal cord decompression was achieved. In order to restore the stabilization of head and neck, iliac crest graft was harvested and fixed to occipital bone by screws. At 7.00pm, the surgery was successfully finished. Postoperatively, the patient showed significant improvement in motor function of right extremities and the muscle strength was improved to grade 3. The patient could raise the right lower extremity from the bed. In the future, after subsequent rehabilitation training, the patient may recover better and return to her previous normal life. 🙏

SCU Professor Zha Tao Appointed Fellow of Econometric Society

SCU professor and Yangtze River Scholar Zha Tao has recently been elected fellow of the Econometric Society, an “international society for the advancement of economic theory in its relation to statistics and mathematics” (cf. econometricsociety.org). A scholar of macroeconomics, Zha Tao is one of only four fellows appointed to the Society who originally hail from mainland China.

Professor Zha currently serves as executive director of the Center for Quantitative Economic Research at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta in Atlanta, GA. He is also profes-

sor of economics at Emory University and research associate with the Monetary Economics and Economic Fluctuations and Growth programs at the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER). Having published widely in journals such as *Econometrica*, the *Journal of Econometrics*, the *American Economic Review*, the *Journal of Political Economy*, and the *Review of Economic Studies*, among others, Zha has earned distinction for his contributions in the fields of macroeconomic theory, financial economics, and econometrics. In 2011, the Nobel Economic Sciences Prize Committee quoted three of his articles



on topics ranging from US monetary policy and inflation to vector autoregression (VAR). In the past, Zha has collaborated with noted economists such as the Nobel laureates Thomas Sargent and Christopher A. Sims and has made significant contributions in the study of “Markov-Switching Rational Expectations Models.” More recently, Professor Zha has also ap-

plied some of his macroeconomic theories and proposals to the Chinese situation.

The Econometric Society was founded in Cleveland in 1930 and is one of the world’s leading research societies in its field. Bringing together the strengths of the world’s top researchers in econometrics, it aims to promote

the integration of economic theory and empirical studies, drive solution-oriented research, and advance the overall development of the science of economics. Apart from its monograph series, the society publishes three journals: *Econometrica*, *Quantitative Economics*, and *Theoretical Economics*, the latter two of which are open-access journals. 卐

New Insights for Type-2 Diabetes and Fatty Liver Diseases, and Implication for Public Health

Accompanying the social and economic achievement in China, however, pandemic of metabolic diseases, such as diabetes, obesity, and fatty liver diseases, is spreading, which create health and economic challenge for the societies. Metabolic disorders may further progress into heart diseases, stroke, and even cancer. It is estimated that more than one third of adults in China suffer varying degree of metabolic diseases. Thus, a question is that how such pandemic developed in past 20-30 years, in line with economic development and food abundance.

It is well known that a diet high in fat and high calorie can trigger metabolic syndromes, while some people are tolerant



and resistant, implying that additional hits or factors are critical. Many epidemiological surveys showed that lacking of sunshine exposure or low vitamin D levels are tightly associated with metabolic diseases, such as obesity and fatty liver diseases, while the underlying mechanism is not fully understood. Now, the graduate students, leading

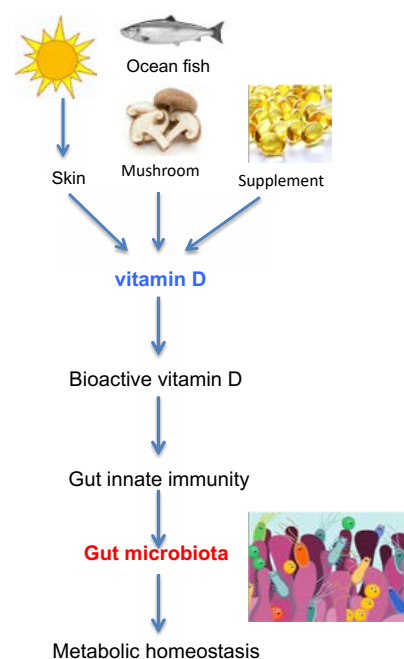
by Professor Yuan-Ping Han at the College of Life Sciences from SCU, in collaboration with investigators in USA, have discovered that vitamin D deficiency is necessary for metabolic syndromes and fatty liver disease in animal models. The research team found that lacking vitamin D could impair the innate immunity of small intestine, which consequently resulted in dysbiosis, a term to describe the abnormality of gut flora. Their work, published in *Frontiers in Physiology* in Dec. 2016, and a follow up publication in *Diabetes* in May. 2017, showed that vitamin D signaling can up regulate alpha-defensins in the small intestine, which restrain microbe growth in the small intestine. Moreover, vitamin D signaling can up regulate tight junction proteins and mucosa in the small intestine, which provide barriers and

tissue homeostasis for the host. The publication was well cited, and the news was spread in the public media including AAAS (the publisher of *Science*).

The group found that lacking diet vitamin D could worsen high-fat-diet initiated systemic inflammation, insulin resistance, a major driving force for biogenesis of type-2 diabetes. Importantly, sufficient diet VD3 can partially antagonize metabolic diseases through enhancing innate immunity and rebalancing of gut microbiota. In work was in collaboration with Professor Stephen Pandol, a world-renowned investigator in gastroenterology, at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles. Professor Yuan-Ping Han graduated from SCU in 1982, majoring in Biochemistry. After more than twenty years staying in USA and as a NIH funded principle investigator at University of Southern California

(USC) in biomedical sciences, in 2012, Dr. Han was recruited back to his alma mater and his birthplace, SCU.

Based on the animal work and molecular mechanism study, a clinical trial is organized by the group in collaboration with physicians in Chengdu and USA. Through an international cohort, they are testing efficacy of vitamin D supplement on patients suffering for fatty liver diseases and chronic liver diseases. In an interview with SCU News Letter, Professor said that vitamin D insufficiency is an urgent health problem, particularly for the people in Sichuan, where bright sunshine is scarce. Many countries recommend daily supplement for vitamin D and, for instance, WHO recommends dietary allowances (RDA) for vitamin D, 400 IU for general public. They want their work can promote public aware-



ness and health, the ultimate goal of biomedical research. 🙏

JACS Cover Paper from the College of Chemistry: Highly Regio- and Enantioselective Copper-Catalyzed Reductive Hydroxymethylation of Alkenes with CO₂

Recently, the group of Prof. Da-Gang Yu at the College of Chemistry of Sichuan University have reported the highly regio- and enanti-

oselective copper-catalyzed reductive hydroxymethylation of styrenes and 1,3-dienes with Carbon dioxide (CO₂) (*J. Am. Chem. Soc.* 2017, 139, 17011.

doi: 10.1021/jacs.7b10149), which was selected as the cover of *JACS*, among the top 4 most read *JACS* papers of the month and also highlighted by X-MOL

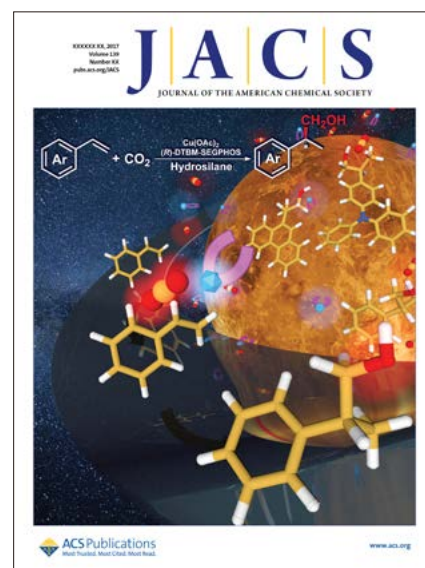
and OPR&D.

CO₂ is well-known as a greenhouse gas. In our university, many groups, including our previous president, Prof. He-Ping Xie, in the Institute for New Energy and Low-Carbon Technologies and also College of Chemical Engineering, are working on CO₂ capture. As an organic chemist, Prof. Yu considers CO₂ as an inexpensive, readily available and renewable carbon resource and an ideal one-carbon (C1) building block in organic synthesis. Since he found his group in 2015 in Sichuan University, he has been focusing on constructing valuable compounds from such a “waste”. Although it is very challenging due to its thermodynamic and kinetic stability and inertness, Prof. Yu challenged the limitations in this field and developed many novel transformations with CO₂.

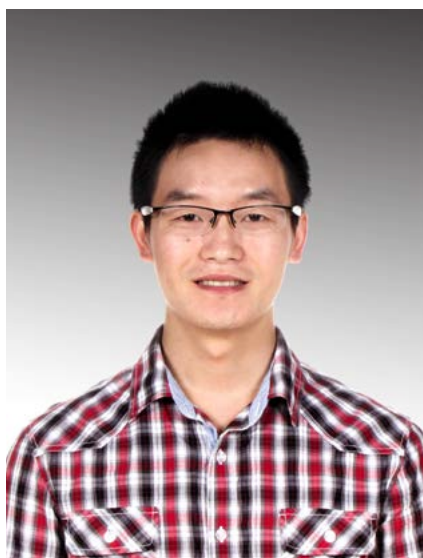
In this report, they described the use of catalytic Cu(OAc)₂ and DTBM-SEGPHOS and excess silane to successfully realize such a transformation under 1

atm of CO₂ and mild reaction conditions. Diverse important chiral homo-benzylic alcohols were readily prepared from styrenes. Moreover, a variety of 1,3-dienes also were converted to chiral homoallylic alcohols with high yields and excellent regio-, enantio- and *Z/E*-selectivities. A variety of common functional groups, such as ethers, esters, aryl halides, furans and thiophenes, were well tolerated. The utility of this transformation was demonstrated by a broad range of styrenes and 1,3-dienes, facile product modification and the synthesis of bioactive compounds (*R*)-(-)-curcumen and (*S*)-(+)-ibuprofen. Mechanistic studies ruled out silyl formates as intermediates and demonstrated the carboxylation of phenylethylcopper complexes with CO₂ as one key step.

In conclusion, the group of Prof. Yu realized an elegant and novel utilization of CO₂ in synthesis of valuable chiral alcohols from readily-available alkenes, which provide a new direction to make such a “waste” profitable. 🏡



Chemistry, Sichuan University in 2015, with the support from Recruitment Program for Young Professionals (The Thousand Young Talents Plan). His research interest includes green and sustainable organic synthesis (CO₂ utilization, visible-light photocatalysis) and novel transition metal-catalysis (especially Cu- and Fe-catalysis). During the independent work in last 3 years, he delivered about 20 lectures and also got a lot of awards and honors, including ACP Lectureship Awards to Japan (2017), Thieme Chemistry Journal Award (2017), Young Talent Award of Sichuan University (2016) and “Organic Chemistry Frontiers” Emerging Investigators (2015). He also encourages talented young chemist to join his group and enjoy the chemistry together.



About

Prof. Yu was born in Jiangxi Province in 1986. He got his B. S. in the College of Chemistry, Sichuan University in 2007. Then he pursued his doctor degree in Peking University in 2012 and did 2-years post-doc research with Humboldt Fellowship in Muenster University, Germany. Then he came back to work as a full professor in the College of

BRIEF NEWS



November 15th

- French Consul General Madame Fabyène Mansencal Visits SCU



November 29th

- Delegation from Taiwan's Tamkang University Visits SCU



December 4th

- Director of Arizona State's Biodesign Institute Joshua LaBaer Visits SCU



December 7th

- Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Australia's La Trobe University Kerri-Lee Krause Visits SCU



December 16th

- Dr. Uchizono, Provost of University of the Pacific, Meets with SCU Leaders



December 19th

- SCU West China Hospital Places Top of the Charts in "Medical Science and Technology Impact Factor" Rankings Fourth Year Running



November 9th-13th

- SCU Science Teams Win Gold at 2017 iGem (International Genetically Engineered Machine Competition)



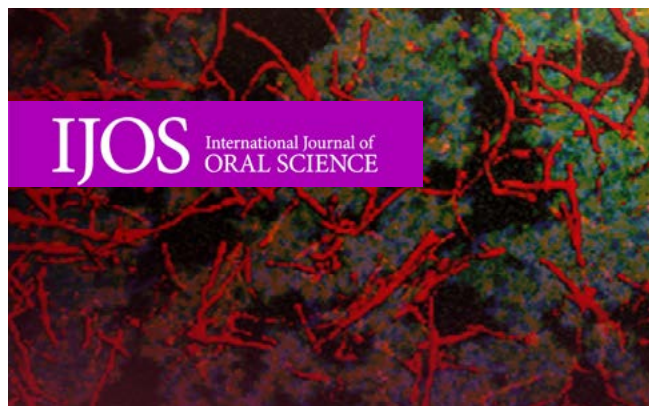
November 10th-13th

- SCU Gymnastics Team Excels at FUSC Gymnastics Meet in Beijing



December 7th

- SCU Professor Song A'yi'mu Wins Gold at International Vocal Music Competition in Tokyo



December

- West China School of Stomatology's International Journal of Oral Science Voted China's "Highest International Impact" Journal Five Years Running

Excellent Research Facilities and Marvellous Colleagues



Dr. Yousef Faraj

Associate Professor at SCU's School of
Chemical Engineering, Shares His Experi-
ences of Working at Sichuan University

Nov 20th, 2017



Yousef Faraj, now working with the Membrane Science and Functional Materials Group at SCU's College of Chemical Engineering, came to Chengdu in the summer of 2017; he has hardly been at Sichuan University half a year and has already made headway in a new field within chemical engineering, designed and begun work on two research projects – with two further research projects under construction, which will soon be submitted to the NSFC, the National Natural Science Foundation of China – held lectures, supervised graduate students, and made many new friends among his Chinese

colleagues and neighbours on the banks of the Jin River, not far from where he works as associate professor on SCU's over 100-year-old Wangjiang Campus.

Before moving to Sichuan, Professor Faraj was based at the University of Leeds in West Yorkshire; he relocated to China for a number of different reasons; for one, he hoped to learn more about research environments and teaching practices in a country that has long fascinated him. He has been coming to China every six months for several years, collaborating with fellow researchers at universities in Beijing, Tianjin and other

Chinese cities.

Following is an excerpt from my conversation with Professor Faraj on a typically cloudy, Sichuanese November afternoon.

I have always been fascinated by Chinese culture – I love Chinese food, for one. Since 2012, I've been coming to China twice a year and have made a lot of friends at different Chinese academic institutions. At one point, one of them suggested, "Why not come here to work?" My response was, "Of course, why not?" In fact, it was a big decision to make, especially as I ended up coming to China without my family.

Apart from missing my wife and children every day, I love being here. I feel lucky to be surrounded by such extremely kind and supportive people – without them I wouldn't be able to make it. They are so welcoming.

“My boss listens to what I have to say. I'm invited to make suggestions and offer advice.”

Based on what I'd learned in the past, I expected Chinese society, even within the university, to be extremely hierarchical. So I didn't expect that an expat, someone coming from a western country, would be invited to straightforwardly suggest or initiate. But the senior professors and group leaders here actually listen: they are very nice, very welcoming, and very understanding. If there is anything that can be beneficial to the students, the school, or the university as a whole, I make suggestions, and I am heard.

Sichuan University provides a great working environment; it's a great place to be. The city itself is extremely vibrant and very international. Although I haven't yet explored all that Chengdu has to offer, I've enjoyed what I have experienced so far: the energy and progressiveness are evident in its dynamic pace; at the same time, the city still retains a connection with its traditional roots.

Professor Faraj has noticed that while Chengdu offers all the modern amenities one would expect in a western mega-city, its residents also cherish the tradition, customs and historical distinction of their ancient city. This is seen, for example, in the many traditional-style tea houses along



the banks of Chengdu's rivers, where residents gather at small tables outdoors during every season of the year to drink tea, play mahjong, smoke, gossip and sometimes trade in tea for beer or hard liquor later in the day.

People come to Sichuan to live, they say here, but with over 260 Fortune 500's established in Chengdu, the economy booming, and a population of just over 14 million, many do in fact come to this city to work – from all over China and from around the world. For Professor Faraj, coming here was one way to realize some of his long-held ambitions as a researcher:

An important reason I came to China and to SCU was the booming national economy, which provides excellent opportunities for academics who want to realize their research-related dreams and need funding. I had so many ambitions, so many dreams related to my research that I wasn't able to realize before coming here. Now is an optimal time to apply

for support from government funding bodies in China. It is also thanks to my colleagues that I can do this because they and my students help translate my project proposals.

“I would recommend coming to China to my colleagues abroad.”

I asked Professor Faraj about his first impressions of Sichuan University and how SCU's School of Chemical Engineering compared to his department at the University of Leeds.

It differs drastically. One striking difference is the sense of community you have here, it is very tight-knit. It's not like a relationship between colleagues in the UK. It's more like friendship, particularly on our team; we all get along. I was asked when I first came if I wanted to be in another office on my own, and I declined because I'm happy here. My colleagues help me a lot – I'd be quite lost without them. When

an email comes in, for instance, I ask Professor Wang Wei or Professor Liu Zhuang what it says, and they translate it for me.

In terms of research facilities, Professor Faraj stressed that the group he works in is well set:

We have all the facilities needed to support our research. The research laboratories at SCU's School of Chemical Engineering are equipped with extensive state-of-the-art facilities for a variety of research in chemical, environmental and biomolecular engineering. Particularly in this group (Membrane Science and Functional Materials Group), we have top-of-the-range facilities across several labs.

I wondered whether Professor Faraj would recommend coming here to his colleagues abroad.

I would say it's a great place to be and to explore, whether you want to come for personal reasons or in order to build up your academic career – if its academia. I have actually arranged for two colleagues, two previous ex-colleagues from Leeds, to come work in China.

Working at the School of Chemical Engineering here has not been a walk in the park though. Apart from his own research and supervising graduate students, Professor Faraj also teaches a substantial course load and will be taking on administrative departmental duties in the coming semester. Another challenge, initially, was that he had to change his specialization:

My area of research is in microfluidics, functional materials and detection and

sensing– although this is not the area I specialized in before. At the University of Leeds I was working in a completely different field: I was working on the macro-scale (multi-phase flow measurement and visualisation); now I'm working on the micro-scale. One of the conditions for my taking the position here was actually that I change my research direction. So after I was given the offer, I had to think about what to do. Although I knew it was a risk, I eagerly accepted the offer. Working 12 hours a day for the past few months, I've made it through, and my first two project proposals are currently being carried out by two students, with two further projects underway and soon to be submitted to the NSFC (National Natural Science Foundation of China). I have also recently been approached by a number of undergraduate students who expressed their interest in joining the research group, so I am currently drafting five research proposals for them. I have no doubt that I will be successful in this area.

Professor Faraj is also a committed teacher, responsible for 112 undergraduate lecture hours a year, as well as teaching one post-graduate course for PhD students.

"I wouldn't leave the lecture theatre without knowing that everyone had understood me."

I face some slight problems with students due to the language barrier, but we can generally get around it. It's important for me to know that my students can follow my lectures. I wouldn't leave the lecture theatre without knowing that everyone

had understood the lecture in full. I sometimes consult with the students and make sure they have understood everything because this is the job I'm committed to.

As many dedicated academics in the modern university, Professor Faraj wants to figure out how best to strike a balance between his own research and teaching responsibilities.

My ideal combination of teaching and research would be "sixty/forty," that is 60 percent research and 40 percent teaching. I'd like to dedicate more time to research, perhaps even more than 60 percent. But even if the amount of teaching should increase, I'd take the time from my own personal time rather than spend less time doing research.

"It's a mixture of everything that is needed...this is another reason I came here, to glean the best of both worlds..."

Another reason Professor Faraj came to China was to "fully experience a different approach in the educational and academic system."

As you may imagine, the two systems are totally different, and I see it now. Each side has its advantages and drawbacks. It's a mixture of everything that is needed, I think. And this is another reason I came here, to glean the best of both worlds, to gain new experiences and hone my skills set. One important point in my own philosophy of teaching actually relates to the teacher-student relationship of mutual respect. Unfortunately, that is not easily found in the



under the supervision of Ministry of Education, and three key laboratories under the supervision of the Ministry of Health.

SCU's School of Chemical Engineering is really an excellent place to be, and I hope for the day when I can bring my family as well because that would encourage my stay here. I cannot compromise of course, but I would hope to stay here as long as possible and be a role model, in research and teaching, someone who cultivates in the students the knowledge and ability to look at the world critically and the belief in one's capacity to make positive contributions to society.

Finally, Professor Faraj shared from his daily experience in a typical Chengdu neighbourhood.

"It's amazing how just a smile and body language can create friendship."

I live a 20-minute walk from the campus. It's a lovely, safe area, quite beautiful. I live in a nice community as well. I've never had any problems living there. People are very friendly although we don't speak because of the language barrier... I have so many friends in the neighbourhood, from 20 to 80 years old. I don't speak Chinese, they don't speak English, but we are still friends, and we exchange WeChat messages and everything, so we are still in contact. And if I have any problems, they help me out. We don't speak at all, but it's amazing how just a smile and body language can create friendship. 🙏

UK. It can't be taken for granted. Conversely, in a Chinese university, there is such a respect for teachers. And of course, this can have a positive impact on students' learning and your teaching.

In general, I think the Chinese system, particularly in terms of the teacher-student relationships, is excellent. Of course, there are also drawbacks to this culture of respect, when it is a fundamental expectation. Students cannot say "no," for example. But I would like them to feel free and say "no" when they genuinely disagree with something. I believe that an ability to express disagreement helps students to explore their own intellectual capabilities: it encourages their independent thinking and analytical reasoning.

I also asked the professor what his thoughts were on the "dual world-class university" project.

I strongly believe that Sichuan University deserves the distinction of "world-class university." If we look at the exclusive group of elite universities such as Oxbridge (Oxford and Cambridge), Harvard, Yale and so on, we can see

that these world-class universities are recognised in part for their superior output: they produce highly-qualified graduates, who are in high demand on the labour market; they conduct leading-edge research published in top scientific journals; they contribute to technical innovations through patents and licenses etc. We can see all of this in SCU's current output: highly qualified faculty, excellence in research, quality teaching, high levels of government and non-government sources of funding, international and highly talented students, well equipped facilities for teaching, research and administration etc. There are so many high-quality publications, just coming out of the School of Chemical Engineering: it's impressive. It is therefore that SCU deserves to be placed among the top-ranking universities, particularly the School of Chemical Engineering, which, I think is one of the Schools that has been chosen for fast-track development. The university has 13 key national laboratories and engineering centres, four state-level international scientific and technological cooperation bases, eleven key laboratories and six engineering research centres

Student /////

Why I Came to Study at SCU's West China Center of Medical Sciences

Fourth-Year Medical Student Shireen
Talks about Her Studies at *Huaxi*

SCU International Office
Interview with Naomi Thurston

Dec 18th, 2017

“**R**igor, diligence, unity, dedication,” reads the motto of the West China Center of Medical Sciences (*‘Huaxi’*) of Sichuan University, formerly known as West China University of Medical Sciences before it merged with SCU in 2000.

Founded by different groups of western missionaries in the early 20th century, *Huaxi* today ranks among the top institutes for medical studies and medical scientific research in China. Each year, the college draws students from around the world to study with China’s top pro-



fessors of medicine, who teach specifically designed courses for international students: these courses are conducted in English, while international students also have ample opportunity to learn Chinese in and outside the classroom

SCU's International Office spoke with fourth-year medical student Shireen from Saudi Arabia about her reasons for coming to Chengdu to prepare for a career in medicine. Shireen did not come to China for a gap year, as a short-term exchange student, or to brush up on her Mandarin for a few months; instead, she is studying in China long-term to become a cardiologist. By 2020, she will have spent six years attending classes at *Huaxi*, immersed in medical textbooks when revising or preparing for exams, playing basketball or enjoying Sichuanese cuisine in her spare time, and getting to know people from many different cultures. Before she starts her medical internship next fall, she will have to pass a high-level Chinese exam that challenges even full-time learners of the language. She and her international classmates study medical Chinese on a regular basis when visiting patients at West China Hospital, situated just op-

posite the historic *Huaxi* Campus. "Our Chinese classmates are so kind," she says. "They help translate for us when there is something we don't understand and encourage us to practice speaking Chinese with the patients."

It's quite chilly here this time of year compared to Saudi Arabia, is that right?

Yes, the weather is a big change from back home. My parents have not been to visit. They say it's too cold, but they have to come for my graduation.

I hope they can make it. It is quite a distance, and the culture here is also quite different from your own, I take it. What were your reasons for coming to *Huaxi*? Why study medicine in China?

After completing grade 12, I was determined to study medicine. I began to compare prices and realized that studying medicine was quite expensive in many countries, including India, where my parents are from. Because I'm classed as an NRI – non-resident of

India – I would have had to pay very high tuition costs if I'd gone there. The cost was not the only consideration, of course. I wanted to find a medical school with a strong reputation and excellent program that was well-structured and student-centered. This is definitely the case at *Huaxi*: every-

thing is laid out perfectly from the first to last semester. Students focus on one subject intensively before moving to a new one; for example, Anatomy I is taught the first semester and Anatomy II in the second semester so that focused time can be devoted to each, with exams at the end of every semester, rather than at the end of the year.

Have you always wanted to be a doctor?

Yes. It was an on-and-off dream of mine. I kept thinking it would take too much effort to become a doctor. I asked myself if I could really do it. Then I got to know a student here who is now a senior. She is a couple of years ahead of me and doing her internship right now, so she is almost finished. When I talked to her, she told me that she loved the place. She loves Sichuanese food and the teaching methods at *Huaxi*, among other things. Her positive experience encouraged me to apply.

Can you tell me about a typical day of studies here?

A typical day usually starts either at eight or ten am and classes go until eleven or eleven thirty. Then we have a break until one or two in the afternoon, so we have enough time for a lunch break. In the afternoon, classes end anywhere from three thirty to five or six, depending on the semester and which subjects we are learning. In the first year we had Anatomy, so we stayed on campus until five or six on the days we did dissections.



What can you tell me about the professors here?

The professors use very interactive methods in the classroom. They are not too harsh. They lecture, then they ask questions. They help us a lot. Anytime we want, we can send them a message, which is good because not everyone feels comfortable raising questions or discussion points in class. We are encouraged to ask more questions in our own time, and the instructors give very helpful responses.

What will the internship look like?

During the internship you are assigned as a group to follow different professors and observe them at work. Every three or four weeks, the group will move to a new ward and study with a new professor. You visit patients on the ward, observe surgeries, and get a glimpse of a physician's daily work. You're evaluated based on how well you do in each ward. Passing the internship is a requirement for graduation. Initially I was nervous about doing the internship in a Chinese hospital, but now I'm quite happy I'm doing it in China. The internship is actually quite important because many medical students decide on their field of specialization while visiting different wards and being exposed to things they never learned in the classroom. My interest now is still in cardio, but that may change based on the experience of the internship, which many students say gives you a clearer understanding of where your interests lie and what you can imagine yourself doing in the future.



Would you recommend studying medicine at *Huaxi* to fellow internationals?

Yes, I would. China is a such a nice place. There is plenty of fun to be had in Chengdu for those who enjoy partying, but if you are someone who is very goal-oriented and likes to study, the campus environment and support structure here are excellent. I really like everything about living here: the food, the people, the sights. It's different from what I'm used to. Where I was brought up in Saudi people are quite different – the culture is different – and I enjoy meeting and being around people from different cultures. Modern Chengdu is very international. I've traveled to different places in the province, like Leshan, site of the Leshan Giant Buddha and other famous scenic spots in the region.

During the last October National Holiday [a seven-day annual break at the beginning of October celebrating the proclamation of the People's Republic on 1 October 1949] I went to Ya'an in western Sichuan with a group of international friends. We all rented a bus together and set out on the four to five-hour journey. The countryside around Ya'an, a former trading center for Chinese and Tibetans from nearby Kangding, is so beautiful – the water is magnificent, the air is so much cleaner than in the city. We stayed for a day or two and we lived in tiny huts. It was a fantastic trip.

Huaxi has drawn people from different countries together for over a hundred years. Just this past November, West China Hospital, which is affiliated with the medical school at SCU, ran a training course on Thoracoscopic Surgery for a group of surgeons from Western Europe – from Britain, Germany, and the Netherlands – the course, which was also held in English, was a success and is certain to be followed by others like it. Students such as Shireen have experienced an intercultural, international learning environment that is not limited to the classroom or going out with other foreigners on nights and weekends: the program that *Huaxi* offers allows medical students not only to work towards their degree in medicine at one of China's leading medical institutions; it allows them insight into clinical practice in a new cultural setting, where they are pushed to learn a new language and challenge themselves in ways they might never have imagined had they studied medicine in their home country. 🏡

SCU Internationale Students Welcome Party





||| ECHO |||

“ *I wouldn't leave the lecture theatre without knowing that everyone had understood me.* ”

--

Dr. Yousef Faraj

Associate Professor at SCU's School of Chemical Engineering



四川大學
SICHUAN UNIVERSITY