

Fostering the Next Generation of Great Mathematical Minds in China

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Shing-Tung Yau, a renowned Chinese-American mathematician and formerly a professor at Harvard University who grew up in Hong Kong, was awarded the Shaw Prize in Mathematical Sciences in May 2023, along with Vladimir Drinfeld, a professor from the University of Chicago. In an interview with OrangeNews, Professor Yau shared how his academic interest was sparked in the first place and why he embarked on a teaching journey at Tsinghua University after retiring from Harvard.

During his years at Harvard, Shing-Tung Yau realized the Chinese students' lack of competitive edges in mathematical innovation. While this group consistently excels in standardized tests, their creativity is in dire short supply and reliant on guidance from teachers. In comparison, their American peers are bolder to venture into uncharted territories and thus more likely to make breakthroughs.

On a self-set mission to narrow the gap, Yau joined Tsinghua University to found Qiuzhen College, dedicated to helping students transcend the confines of standardized exams. According to Yau, though it takes long-term endeavor to achieve excellence in education, the vision of cultivating great mathematical minds in China holds for him unparalleled significance.

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