

# Indiana University Department of Biology

## 2010 Sonneborn Lecture



Photo by Michael Marsland/Yale University

### Tian Xu

Professor and Vice Chair  
Department of Genetics  
Yale University School of Medicine

**“Forward Genetic Screens  
in Flies and Mice for  
Deciphering Biology  
and Disease”**

**Wednesday, October 6, 2010  
4:00 p.m., Myers Hall 130**

*After the lecture there will be a  
reception outside of Myers Hall 130.*

Tian Xu is a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator. He is also an adjunct professor and director of the Institute of Developmental Biology and Molecular Medicine at Fudan University in Shanghai. Professor Xu was a special advisor on science and education in China to the president of Yale University (2003 – 2010).

Professor Xu earned a B.S. from Fudan University in 1982 and a Ph.D. from Yale University in 1990. He did a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of California, Berkeley, from 1990 – 1993. The major thrust of the Xu lab research effort lies in developing and utilizing novel genetic approaches to understand biology and disease. The genetic mosaic system that Xu developed has been used in *Drosophila* labs throughout the world. His newly developed piggyBac transposon system for mammals provides the opportunity for systematic functional annotation of the mammalian genome. Major news media, including *The New York Times*, heralded the discovery as one that “could affect all our lives.” His work on elucidating the TSC pathway and its role in regulating growth has contributed to clinical trials and was recognized by the Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance with the Rothberg Courage Award. His recent work on metastasis has provided new insight about cancer biology and development. Xu loves teaching and his genetics course is one of the most popular classes at Yale.

Professor Xu is chair of the Scientific Advisory Board for the Rothberg Institute for Childhood Diseases and was president of the Chinese Biological Investigators Society (2002 – 2005). He currently serves on the editorial boards of multiple scientific journals, including *Cell*; *Disease Models and Mechanisms* (founding editor); *Annual Review of Genetics*; *Integrative Biology (iBiology)*; and *Molecular Cancer Research*. He is a member of the American Association of Cancer Research, the Genetics Society of America, and the Chinese Biological Investigators Society.

Professor Xu was a Helen Hay Whitney Postdoctoral Fellow, from 1990 – 1993, and a Pew Scholar, from 1995 – 1999. His other honors include: Advisor of the Best M.D./Ph.D. Thesis, Yale Medical School (1998); the Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance Rothberg Courage Award (2001); Presidential Awards, Fudan University (2003 and 2005); the National University Science and Technology Award, China (2005); and Advisor, National Youth Invention Award (2006); Magnolia Silver Award, Shanghai (2008); and Best Thesis Advisor of the Year, China (2009).