

Xiamen attracts Taiwan talent

City provides many benefits for islanders

By **HU MEIDONG** in Fuzhou and **ZHANG YI** in Beijing

The coastal city of Xiamen in Fujian province — the nearest mainland city to Taiwan — is taking the lead in offering favorable policies to improve the lives of Taiwan residents who work or run businesses on the mainland.

By the end of last year, 120,000 Taiwan residents, including 2,400 students, were living in Xiamen, and 195 were recognized as high-end talents by the city, according to the local government.

Huang Kai-yun, who ran a music school in Taiwan for about 20 years, decided to move her business to Xiamen after visiting the city in 2016.

"I was attracted by the musical atmosphere and the many families who wanted to give their children a musical education. I also saw the difference in educational methods between the two sides, so I wanted to bring my music school to the mainland," she said.

At the end of 2016, Huang received a one-time subsidy of 80,000 yuan (\$11,700) for starting a company in the mainland, along with a monthly subsidy of 6,000 yuan to cover the cost of renting premises.

"Starting a business in an unfamiliar place is not an easy task, but the help I received from the local government confirmed my decision," said Huang, who has now launched a second music school in Xiamen.

Technological talent from



Airline cabin crew members from Taiwan attend an inauguration ceremony held by Xiamen Airlines on Aug 16. The company, based in Xiamen, Fujian province, has hired 104 flight attendants from the island this year. CHEN LIJIE / FOR CHINA DAILY

Taiwan has also been introduced to help boost scientific research and innovation in the city.

For example, San'an Optoelectronics Co has about 400 employees from Taiwan, with many being high-tech talents in the LED industry who have brought technologies and research experience to the company.

Senior engineer Hsu Chenko joined the company's branch in Wuhu, Anhui province, in 2008, and became the technical director of the headquarters in Xiamen in 2013.

"I was the first person from Taiwan in the company, and I thought it was a good opportu-

nity because the company was growing and the mainland offered various living and working subsidies," the 46-year-old said.

High-end talent from Taiwan employed in Xiamen and recognized by the local government can now receive a work subsidy of 1.2 million yuan, and the policy is more favorable than those offered by authorities on the island or countries overseas, he added.

"I recommend young people from Taiwan who want to work in the mainland to come here as early as possible; they can even attend mainland colleges to adapt earlier," said Hsu, who has introduced

many people to the opportunities in Xiamen.

The arrival of people from the island with technical experience to work in the mainland saw Xiamen start a system of professional appraisal which is used to assess salaries and working conditions.

Chang Gung Hospital, a medical brand from Taiwan, opened premises in Xiamen in 2008. Many of the physicians come from the island, and 17 of them have been awarded honorary titles by the mainland authorities to cement their standing in the local community.

Hu Chia-jui, 40, who joined the hospital in 2009 after

graduating from the Medical School at Peking University, said the policies make people feel secure so they can concentrate on their careers.

"Doctors from the two sides have their own advantages and can learn from each other. Those from Taiwan usually have a stronger sense of service, which is welcomed in Xiamen," he said.

"There are good opportunities in the mainland and also competition. The mainland's medical development has made a lot of progress and the people work very hard."

Contact the writers at zhangyi1@chinadaily.com.cn

Nursing project offers aid across the ages

By **LI HONGYANG** in Beijing and **MA ZHENHUAN** in Hangzhou

A nursing home in Hangzhou, capital of Zhejiang province, is renting vacant rooms to young white-collar workers at a negligible price in exchange for voluntary assistance. The program not only saves the young people money, but ensures that older residents enjoy regular company.

Young residents at the Sunshine Nursing Home in the city's Binjiang district pay just 300 yuan (\$45) a month, the property management fee for a 33-square-meter twin room they share with a peer.

In return, they are obliged to spend at least 20 hours a month entertaining the seniors and enriching their lives by providing services such as tuition in calligraphy and technical skills or just chatting with them, according to Wang Kai, director of the nursing home's social work department.

"Some European countries such as Switzerland also use this intergenerational pattern. We think it is a good thing to learn from. The rent in our dis-

trict is a little high for young people, and we initiated this project along with the district's Communist Youth League committee and the civil affairs authority in December to reduce the pressure on them," he said.

The website of Ziroom, a popular apartment rental company that owns residential properties in nine cities, including Hangzhou, shows that the average rent for a 20-sq-m room in the district is at least 2,000 yuan a month.

"At present, 14 volunteers live here with more than 600 seniors. We have our own full-time social work group, so the young residents don't need to do laborious work. What they need to do is spare a little time to act as partners. With lively younger people living in the nursing home, which used to be very quiet, the seniors gain valuable memories," Wang said.

Eligible candidates are required to be single and to not own any residential property in the city. In addition, they should have a college degree and must have graduated in the past seven years.

"This is a two-way selection.



Three young residents help seniors practice calligraphy at the Sunshine Nursing Home in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

The seniors will decide whether the young tenants can stay and the young people can also opt to leave if they don't like the setup," Wang said.

Wu Kai applied for the project when he graduated this year.

The 21-year-old, who works for a community association, often watches the TV news with older residents in the evenings. He also plays table tennis with the seniors and acts as a teaching assistant at weekend calligraphy classes.

"I hope to stay with them for

as long as possible, unless I change my job. Their children are busy with work, but the seniors enjoy the company of younger people. I have benefited a lot, too. For example, a retired teacher in our apartment enjoys sharing her geographical knowledge with us. I have really learned lots from the seniors," he said.

The program recruited the first volunteers in December, and held a second recruitment round in May.

Two successful applicants from the first group are still liv-

ing at the nursing home.

"So far, we have only tested the project at the Sunshine Nursing Home because it was built fairly recently and has good facilities. We plan to increase the number of volunteers if most of those selected are able to stay for long periods," Sun Yijing, an administrator for the Communist Youth League committee in Binjiang, said.

Contact the writers at lihongyang@chinadaily.com.cn

Tunnel construction signals new phase in bridge project

By **ZHOU MO** in Shenzhen sally@chinadailyhk.com

Construction of the Shenzhen-Zhongshan Bridge, another mega bridge and tunnel project along with Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, entered a new stage when construction of an immersed tube tunnel began in July.

With a length of 6.8 kilometers and a width of 46 meters, the two-way eight-lane tunnel will be the largest and widest in the world upon completion. More than 320,000 metric tons of steel will be required for its construction.

Song Shenyou, chief engineer of the Shenzhen-Zhongshan Bridge, said the construction of the structure is a highly complicated procedure. In some aspects it is even greater than the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge because a number of factors need to be taken into consideration, such as height limits, flood control and environmental protection measures.

At 24 km in length, the Shenzhen-Zhongshan Bridge links eastern and western cities in the Pearl River Delta. The two areas have shown unbalanced development in recent decades as a result of underdeveloped transportation networks, with the western area

lagging behind in terms of economic growth.

The bridge is expected to improve the situation. Experts say it will become an important channel connecting the east and west of the region and promote integration of cities in the Greater Bay Area.

In particular, cross-boundary cooperation between the mainland and the two special administrative regions of Hong Kong and Macao will be strengthened.

During recent visits of the chief executives of the two regions to Zhongshan, both expressed the hope that Hong Kong and Macao's research resources could be incubated in Guangdong province.

Liang Haiming, chief economist at the China Silk Road Valley Research Institute, said better transportation links will improve contacts between mainland cities in the Pearl River Delta region and Hong Kong and Macao.

Song said: "Because of the bridge's strategic significance, cities and areas involved in the project have attached great importance to it. In terms of determining the routes and engineering proposals for the bridge at the preliminary stage of project demonstration, we needed to submit (plans) to the higher level of government for decision-making."

The plan to build a road-way across the Pearl River

dates back to 2002, when the Guangdong government started research into building a cross-river channel between Shenzhen and Zhuhai, which are both in Guangdong.

In 2008, the government carried out a feasibility study on the construction of the Shenzhen-Zhongshan Bridge. Seven years later, in December 2015, the National Development and Reform Commission, the country's top economic planner, officially approved construction of the structure.

With total investment of 44.69 billion yuan (\$6.69 billion), the bridge is expected to come into operation in 2024.

Pharma pioneer gives returnees a shot in the arm

By **CHENG SI** and **LUO WANGSHU**

Medical researcher Ding Lieming returned to China in 2002 after 10 years studying and working in the United States. Having earned a degree in medicine at the University of Arkansas, Ding returned and founded Zhejiang Beta Pharmaceutical Co in Hangzhou, capital of Zhejiang province.

"I could have lived a middle-class life if I had stayed (in the US), but I could not fulfill my dream to innovate and start my own business," he said. "In China, I can turn my research results into industrial products, but if I stayed overseas, I might have to sell the patent or research results to big pharmaceutical firms."

"I was raised with China's opening-up, received a higher education, studied abroad and returned to China to start a business."

He said he has enjoyed all the benefits provided by the opening-up policy, and has devoted himself to researching new drugs.

In 2011, Ding and his team developed icotinib hydrochloride, also known as Conmana, the first targeted anticancer drug made in China.

Lancet Oncology, a leading medical research journal, commented that the treatment "has created the new era of China's R&D of anticancer drugs."

"There were many ups and downs ... but Chinese people really need these medicines. Foreign companies had a long-term monopoly on expensive imported medicines in the Chinese pharmaceutical market, which meant many people could not afford the pills," Ding said.

He referred to *Dying to Survive*, a recent Chinese box-office hit movie about a man who smuggled cheap versions of leukemia medication from India for resale to patients in China.

Public discussion heated up after the movie's release, and triggered a written instruction from the central government that highlighted the urgent need to reduce drug prices and ensure adequate supplies. Chinese people need affordable medicines, Ding said.

Contact the writers at luowangshu@chinadaily.com.cn

District boosts legal services on IP disputes

By **CAO YIN** caoyin@chinadaily.com.cn

Businesses in Beijing's Haidian district that are involved in intellectual property disputes at home and abroad will benefit from improved legal services, according to a statement released by the district government.

To help companies efficiently handle IP disputes overseas, especially those regarding the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative, the Haidian authorities have established IP services or aid sites overseas, according to a government statement.

By the end of last year, the district had established seven sites in a number of countries, including the United Kingdom and France, and the program will be expanded, the statement said.

While providing more assistance to help businesses resolve IP disputes overseas, the district has also paid greater attention to IP case hearings at home, especially those between Chinese and foreign litigants.

Last year, the district court heard 11,650 IP cases, a rise of 75 percent year-on-year, and about 80 percent of them focused on online copyright,



I could have lived a middle-class life if I had stayed (in the US), but I could not fulfill my dream to innovate and start my own business."

Ding Lieming, Zhejiang Beta Pharmaceutical Co founder

The price of Conmana is about 60 to 70 percent that of similar medicines that are imported.

"There were concerns within the company that if we set the price lower than that of imported medicines, patients may misunderstand and think Conmana is inferior to imported medicines," Ding said.

"But our target is to allow more patients to use and be able to afford the medicine. When the market grows big enough, we will gain good returns and our company will maintain sustainable development."

One Conmana tablet sells for about 67 yuan (\$10), and according to the instructions patients need to take three pills a day, meaning they will have to spend about 6,000 yuan on the treatment every month.

So far, about 160,000 patients have used Conmana. To further reduce the cost, Ding led a program to distribute free pills to patients who had used the drug for six months and still found the medication effective.

As a "pioneer" among overseas returnees, Ding said modern China provides a great range of opportunities. "China is increasingly valuing talent. In 2002, when I returned, I received funding of about 200,000 yuan, but now the money runs to millions and facilities are improving," he said.

Contact the writers at luowangshu@chinadaily.com.cn

according to Cao Liping, deputy chief judge at the court's IP tribunal. She added that the number of IP hearings at the court had risen by 30 percent in each of the past five years.

Cao said the court hears about 100 IP cases involving foreigners or foreign enterprises every year, many of them related to trademarks, domain squatting and online games. "Our attitude in these hearings has never changed. That is, to abide by the law and provide equal legal protection, no matter where the litigants come from," she said.

Given the district's rapid development of businesses in the technology and internet sectors, the court often holds seminars with the local internet association, IP-related authorities and business representatives to study current or new IP issues, according to Cao. "We conducted research in accordance with IP demand from businesses, as well as visiting companies to popularize IP knowledge and answer related questions," she said.

Cao said the big challenge now is learning how to balance the interests of different business operators when handling disputes related to unfair competition "because there are very few laws governing the new issue to follow."