

## IPMU Now a Citizen of Todai!

Director of IPMU

Hitoshi Murayama

You must have heard devastating news about the biggest earthquake that has ever hit Japan, and ensuing tsunami and developing situations at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. I would like to express my deepest sympathies and condolences to those who had lost lives and their families, as well as those in the harsh conditions at shelters or devastated areas. We at IPMU experienced a very big shake, with loose items falling on the floor, and many were stranded by the shutdown of the railway systems. Our staffs helped those who stayed overnight at IPMU with food and providing ways to contact their family members. I'm happy to report no IPMU members were hurt.

There is bright news to report. On January 1, 2011, the Todai Institutes for Advanced Study (TODIAS) was established as a university-wide organization, and on January 11, 2011, Institute for the Physics and Mathematics of the Universe (IPMU) was approved as the first entity within the TODIAS. This provides IPMU a "citizenship" within Todai, and a wonderful opportunity to continue its research on the fundamental questions about the Universe. We hope to play our own role in pursuing the vision of President Hamada to realize Todai as a "world-leading center of knowledge." At the same time, this is a critical step for IPMU to become a permanent member of the Todai community.

IPMU was founded on October 1, 2007 by the World Premier International Research Center Initiative (WPI) of the Japanese government. The WPI funding

has a term of 10 years, and mandates (1) world class research, (2) internationalization by adopting English as the official language and employing a large number of non-Japanese researchers, (3) scientific breakthroughs by fusion of disciplines, (4) new organizational structure unprecedented in Universities in Japan. This way, IPMU is required to achieve a high visibility to the worldwide scientific community.

Starting from scratch, IPMU has been appointing researchers from around the world, setting its research agenda, and building up its infrastructure in a dizzying pace. In three years it has grown to a research institute of about 120 members including graduate students and support staff. About 60% of the 65-member full-time research staff are not Japanese nationals.

Yet we still have to work hard to acquire necessary resources to keep IPMU going in the long run. This is where MEXT, Todai, and every one of you count. We would like to make IPMU so visible both in the scientific community and general public that it would be impossible to terminate.

I deeply thank President Hamada for his bold vision, Director Okamura for his involvement in kick-starting IPMU, and everybody in the Todai community for making the TODIAS possible. The IPMU members and I will do our best to fulfill the expectations in TODIAS, and ask for your continued support.

