

The ICTP-MAIS will address the specific needs of the region, says acting director Arnulfo Zepeda. "That is why, in addition to applied mathematics and theoretical physics, we are focusing on energy and the environment." The center will start by offering a course to prepare physics bachelors for top-level PhD programs, and in the longer term will create a physics PhD program; the highest physics degree currently available at the local university is a master's.

With funding from the state of Chiapas, the federal ministry of energy, and Mexico's main science funding agency, the ICTP in Mexico will hire five researchers, and Zepeda says he hopes to attract about a dozen visitors in the first year. "There are very few physics schools in Central America. We think [people] will be attracted when we provide the opportunity."

Quevedo, who is from Guatemala, chairs the steering committees of the new centers. The key factors in going ahead with the sites in Brazil and Mexico, he says, were scientific quality and a "natural generosity toward the neighboring countries. They will be able to lift the level of science in their regions." The brand-name of the ICTP, he adds, "provides prestige and experience gained over the years." **Toni Feder**

news notes

Hats off to Japanese center. The Institute for the Physics and Mathematics of the Universe (IPMU; see photo) at the University of Tokyo appears to be the first national research institute in Japan ever to receive a substantial gift from a non-Japanese donor. In February the Kavli Foundation announced a \$7.5 million endowment to the IPMU, making the institute the foundation's 16th—its 6th in astrophysics and 3rd in theoretical physics.

"Within just four years, IPMU has established itself as a world-renowned institute starting from zero," said Daisuke Yoshida, director general of the research promotion bureau in Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. The Kavli IPMU, as it is now called, was launched as part of a Japanese initiative to internationalize the country's scientific community (see PHYSICS TODAY, December 2008, page 28). The center has grown to 200 researchers, more than half from outside the country.

"I am super excited!" says Kavli IPMU director Hitoshi Murayama. The center's new visibility will help attract



IPMU

scientists, he says. And the flexibility of the Kavli money will be especially helpful for such things as inviting potential recruits' families to visit and seeding new research concepts. "All in all, it is a great honor to be recognized internationally for our excellence and globalization effort." **TF**

Herschel archives. A collection of papers from astronomer siblings William Herschel and Caroline Herschel, and from William's son, John Herschel, is now open to scholars, thanks to \$10 000 from the Friends of

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