China lures PhD holders

2018-02-09

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 China Daily USA |  
 Updated: 2018-02-09 12:32

The number of doctoral and postdoctoral Chinese students studying in the US who are returning to China is growing, enticed by government support, a strong economy offering more jobs at higher pay and innovation-driven development, reports Zhang Ruinan in New York.  
Lei Ting, a postdoctoral scholar at Stanford University, has been flying back and forth between Beijing and the US this past year.  
Planning to become a teacher at Peking University and continue his research project there, Lei is attracted to China because of its strong economy and rapid developments in innovation, as well as the country's constant efforts to support overseas talent willing to go back.  
Although the number of doctoral and postdoctoral Chinese students studying in the US who are returning to China is not huge, it is growing. They are returning for a variety of reasons, from being homesick to getting financial rewards from the government and opportunities for better jobs with higher pay.  
In 2013, the American National Science Foundation reported that 92 percent of Chinese graduates who earned a PhD in America still lived in the US five years after graduation.  
From 2008 to 2015, only 3.5 percent of returnees held doctoral degrees, according to a report on Employment & Entrepreneurship of Chinese Returnees in 2017 conducted by the Center for China and Globalization (CCG). In 2016, the percentage was 11.09.  
The term "sea turtle" has long been used in China to refer to people who have returned home after having studied abroad for several years. These overseas educated graduates make up a privileged cohort in Chinese society, and they were difficult to lure.  
However, according to the latest statistics published by the Chinese Ministry of Education, about 540,000 Chinese went to study overseas in 2016, while about 430,000 came back at the same time. Compared to 2011, 2016 saw a 37.61 percent increase in the number of students studying abroad and a 56.95 percent growth in those that returned to China.

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