

COMPASSION & RELIEF

FALL
2021

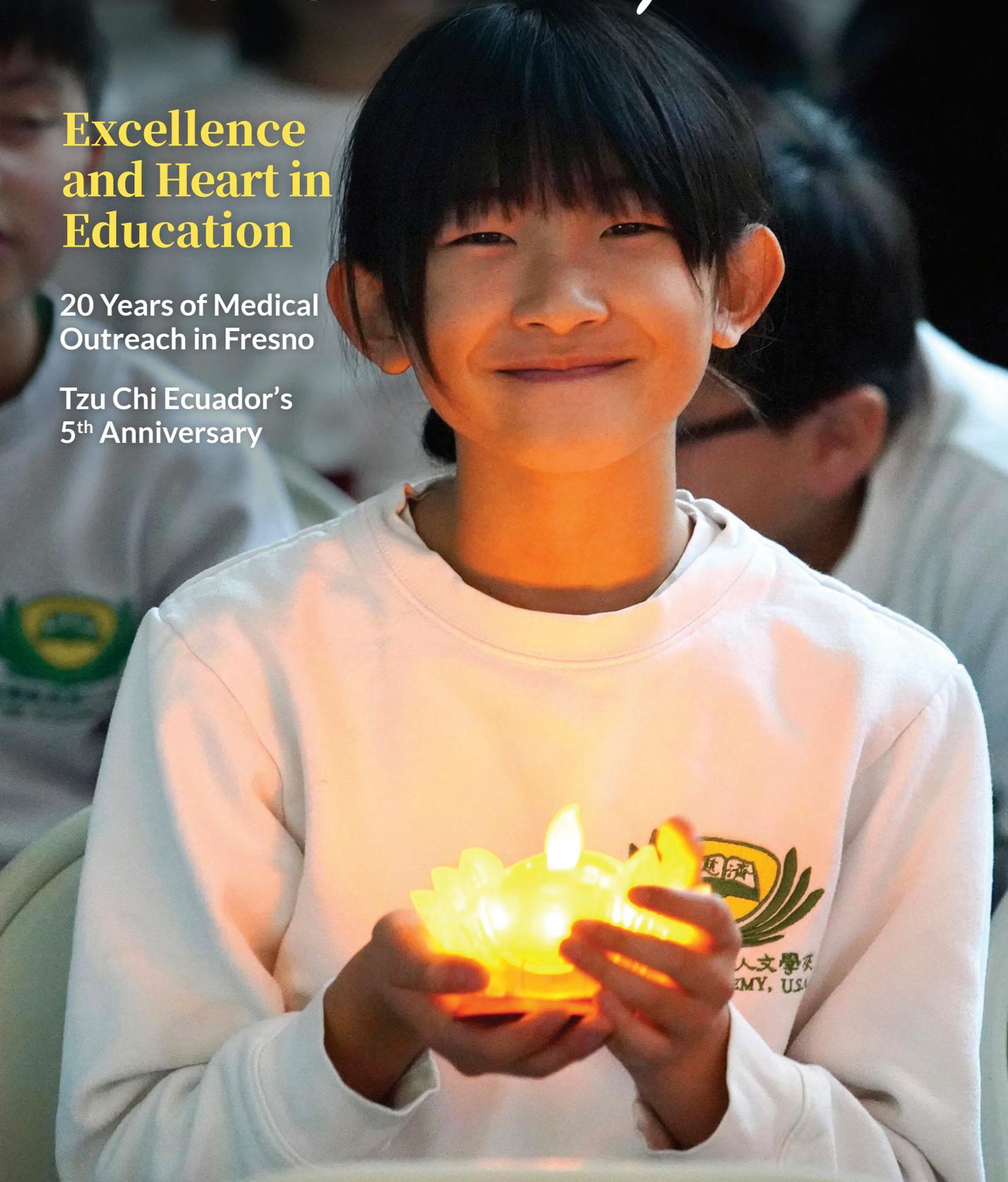
ISSUE
62

TZU CHI *USA Journal*

Excellence and Heart in Education

20 Years of Medical
Outreach in Fresno

Tzu Chi Ecuador's
5th Anniversary





CONTEMPLATIVE WISDOM

Thoughts for meditation, contemplation,
and reflection

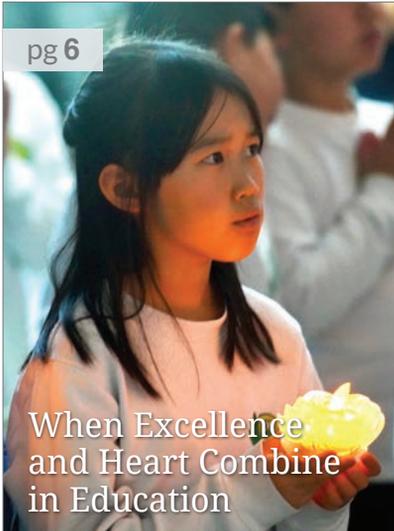
Dharma Master Cheng Yen

Founder of the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation

Let us shoulder heavy responsibilities
according to the needs of society.

Let us harmoniously accomplish good deeds with compassion
and inspire action with wisdom. 🌿

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Cover: Students at Tzu Chi schools and academies across the United States strive for scholastic excellence yet also aim to be a light in the world, of benefit to others. *Photo/Jack Chen*

The Editorial Team sincerely thanks all contributors and invites feedback and contributions. Please contact us at journal@tzuchi.us. Read the online version at tzuchi.us/journal.

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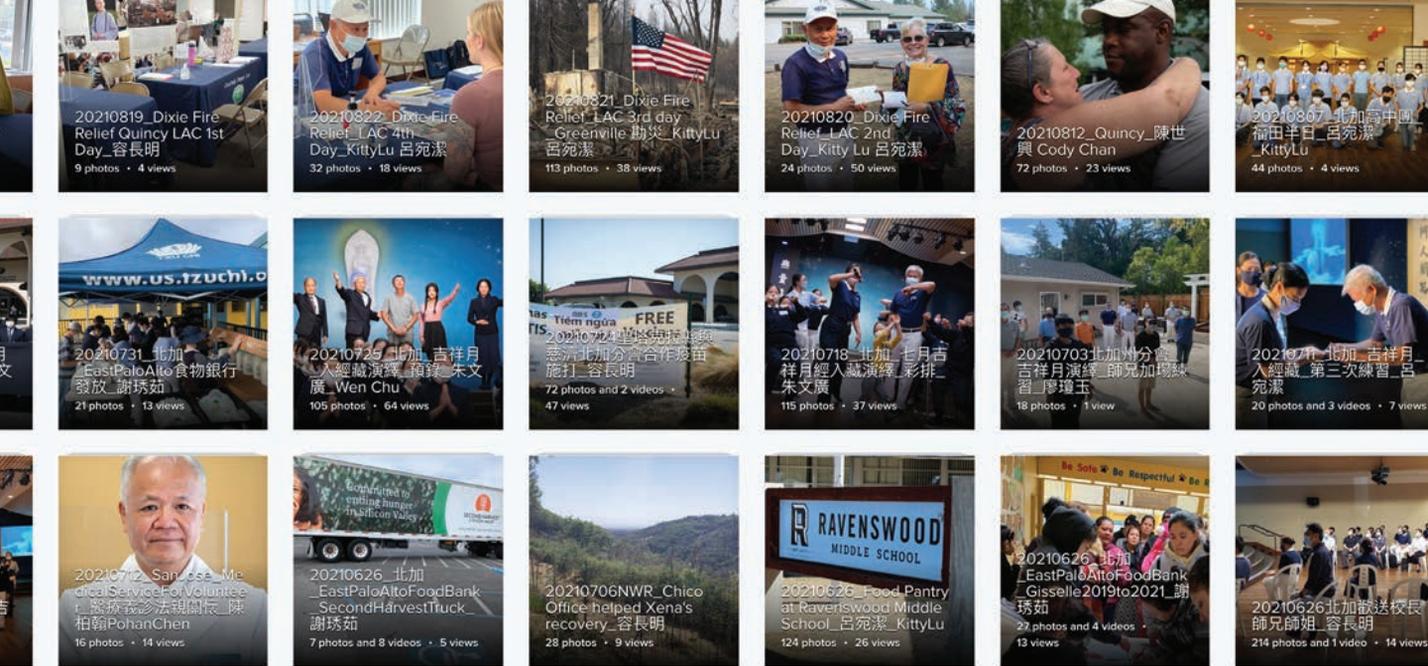
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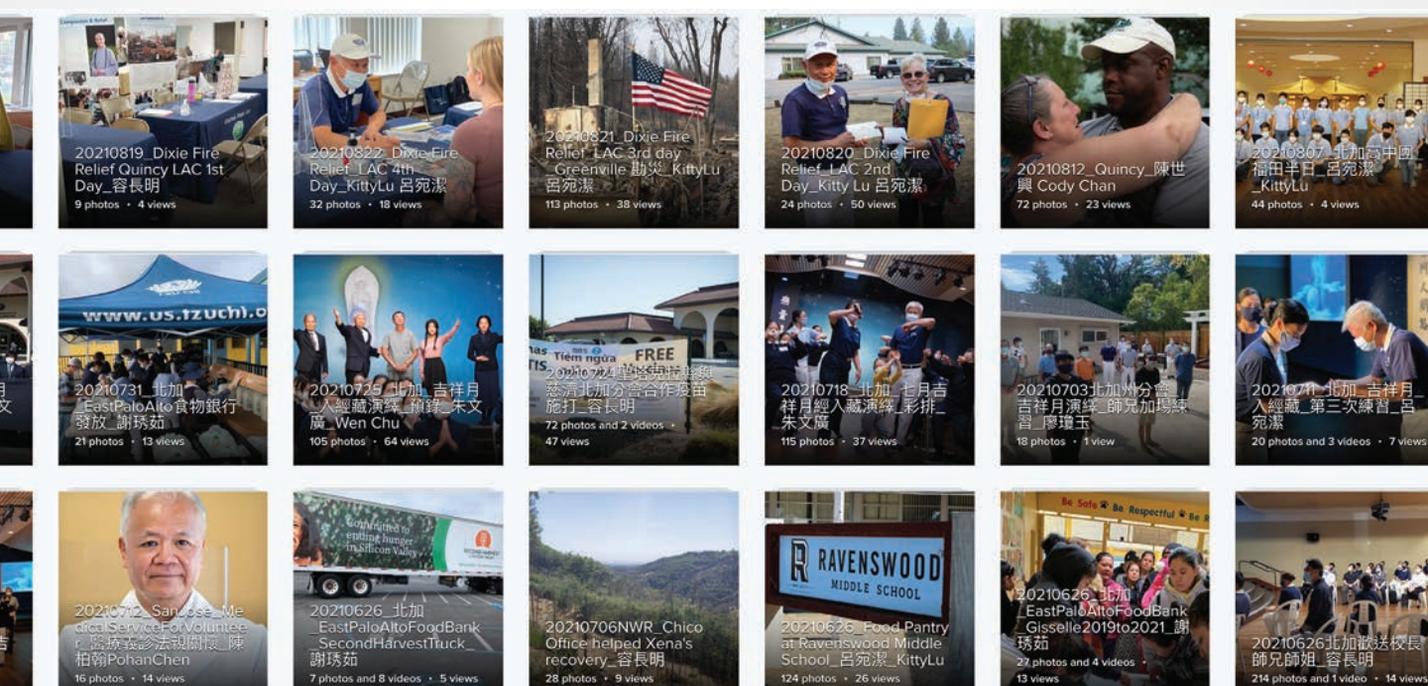
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Tzu Chi USA Directory



Tzu Chi USA Journal

Tzu Chi USA Journal is the official publication of the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, an international nonprofit humanitarian organization dedicated to providing compassionate relief throughout the world. Tzu Chi USA Journal highlights news and reflections from volunteers engaged in disaster relief, medical outreach, character education, and more, in the United States and abroad, while also featuring the inspirational teachings of the organization's founder, **Dharma Master Cheng Yen**.





Editor's Note

Welcome to Tzu Chi USA Journal Issue #62, the focus of which is Education. At Tzu Chi, we firmly believe that Education is the foundation of knowledge, the root of self-improvement, and the hope for an ever-improving world with opportunities for all.

In our cover story, “When Excellence and Heart Combine in Education” we announce that two of Tzu Chi’s educational institutions in California received accreditation from the Accrediting Commission for Schools of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACS WASC) in 2021.

Our first feature story, “Growing up With Tzu Chi in Bayview-Hunters Point,” then reveals how one student has blossomed over the years through Tzu Chi’s ongoing educational and charity support in the Hunters Point community.

This issue also honors two wonderful anniversaries for Tzu Chi in the Americas. In our feature “Celebrating 20 Years of Medical Outreach by Tzu Chi Fresno,” we join the Tzu Chi Fresno medical outreach team in looking back with gratitude and joy at two decades of dedicated service.

Continuing on the theme of rejoicing, we travel south to Ecuador in our third feature, “Ecuadorians for Ecuadorians: A Circle of Care Provides Food During the Pandemic,” as two Tzu Chi Ecuador volunteers who have been part of the story from the beginning, Jenyffer Ruiz and Boris Garcia, share about their journey of service and what they’re accomplishing since COVID-19 brought additional hardship to their nation.

Our last feature, “Helping Asia in the Fight Against COVID-19,” shares insights and updates on the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation’s relief work as the pandemic continues on the Asian continent. Aid has encompassed the delivery of oxygen tanks to the next epicenter, India, and assistance to Taiwan in getting over five million doses of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines.

Our issue then offers two portraits that further reveal the scope of Tzu Chi USA’s educational initiatives. “Thanking Our Dharma Friends in Prison for a Precious Connection” presents the Chuan Fong Correspondence Program, bringing spiritual support and Buddhist teachings to inmates across the United States. It’s a portrait that’s near and dear to us since sending the Tzu Chi USA Journal to inmates is also part of the program, and we greatly value the readership of our friends living behind bars.

In our second portrait, “Students Are the Future,” we take a look at the educational support offered by Tzu Chi Hawaii (Pacific) and Tzu Chi Washington D.C. in their respective regions.

We hope you enjoy reading Tzu Chi USA Journal Issue #62! 🌿

By Anik Ghose

The Japanese Samurai Who Dug a Tunnel

Master Cheng Yen's Teachings

Translated by the Dharma as Water Team

Every day is a new beginning, every moment a time for self-vigilance.

Dharma Master Cheng Yen

In ancient Japan, there once was a handsome and strong samurai. He was given an important position by a general. Due to the nature of his work, the samurai fell in love with the general's wife. After a while, the general became suspicious of them. However, the samurai struck first, finding an opportunity to kill the general in the wilderness when no one was around. He was afraid that people would find out, so he ran away with the general's wife to a faraway place.

A drifting life was not easy. The general's wife was accustomed to an opulent and comfortable lifestyle; she could not endure life in poverty. She began complaining and looking down on the samurai. Gradually reflecting on what he had done, the samurai became deeply remorseful.

After an argument, the general's wife left the samurai. The young samurai finally had an awakening and decided to engage in spiritual cultivation deep in the mountains. He found

a mountain situated by the only way out of a nearby village. Rocks frequently fell onto the mountain road, hurting passersby. Horses that traveled too fast on the mountain road would often fall down the cliff, leading to many unfortunate accidents. After witnessing this situation, the samurai vowed to dig a tunnel to ensure the safety of the villagers and animals. After he made the decision, he began his work to open up a new road.

It was a rocky mountain, and it was definitely not easy to dig a tunnel with the strength of only one person. However, he was resolved to do this as a way to make amends for his past wrongdoings. He begged for alms during the day and dug the tunnel at night. He worked no matter how tired he was, no matter the weather. In a flash, twenty-eight years had passed by.

One day, the general's son passed by. He heard there was a monastic digging a tunnel and was deeply moved. He decided to visit the monastic. When they met, the general's son realized the person who killed his father was right in front of him. He took his sword out, ready to kill the monastic.

The monastic knew what was coming, but he pleaded with the general's son: "I should pay for my past wrongdoing. However, please give me two more years until I can complete this tunnel. By then, I will certainly give you my head."

The general's son was moved by his spirit. He said, "Okay. I will give you two years." After that, the monastic did not even go begging for alms during the day anymore. He worked day and night to dig the tunnel. The general's young son saw him working so tirelessly and was very touched. It was boring to simply sit in waiting. So, in order to help him finish the job early, he joined in on the work to forge a new road. Finally, with their joint efforts, they finished the tunnel.

On the day when the tunnel was completed, the monastic told the general's son, "Today also marks the end of two years. Thank you for waiting for me for two years, allowing me to fulfill my vow. Thank you for allowing me to repay my debt." He sincerely knelt down before the general's son. He handed the samurai sword that he had used to kill the general to the general's son, asking him to strike.

The general's son took the sword, but he was hesitant. After a while, he finally threw the samurai sword away and said, "In this world, no student should kill their teacher. Over the past two years, I have learned very much. I witnessed your spirit and strong will. You persisted through your physical fatigue with great endurance in order to ensure the safety of the villagers. Two years was not long. However, I realized that the cycle of vengeance is never ending. I view you as my teacher, and I cannot kill my teacher. Please accept me as your disciple."

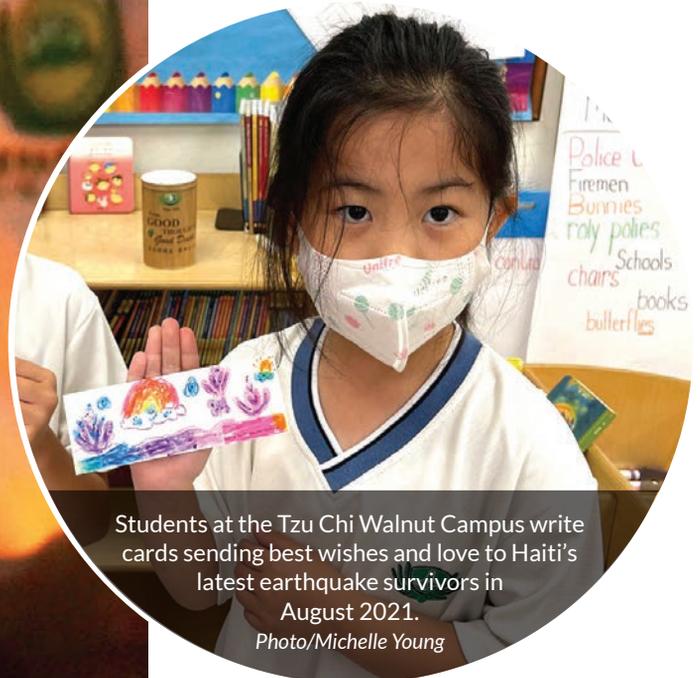
In the past, thoughts arose in this monastic's mind that led him to make a big mistake. However, once his wisdom was awakened, he saved himself from falling deeper. With his perseverance, he worked to benefit people and walked a path that he would never regret. In the end, he moved his enemy to resolve the bonds of resentment and animosity. 🌿

When Excellence and Heart Combine in Education

By Jennifer Chien | Translated by Diana Chang | Edited by Ida Eva Zielinska



Tzu Chi's educational mission is to advance a global humanistic culture, which it does through schools (operated by the Buddhist Tzu Chi Education Foundation) and programs (by Tzu Chi USA's Education Department) that balance developing the mind and opening the heart. They comprise Great Love Preschools, of which there are currently four - two in California and two in Texas - and Tzu Chi Elementary School in Walnut. Each offers a holistic curriculum that supports spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, and creative development while cultivating integrity and social responsibility.



Students at the Tzu Chi Walnut Campus write cards sending best wishes and love to Haiti's latest earthquake survivors in August 2021.

Photo/Michelle Young

Students at Tzu Chi schools and academies across the United States strive for scholastic excellence yet also aim to be a light in the world, of benefit to others. *Photo/Jack Chen*

Concurrently, Tzu Chi Academies, which are weekend programs operated by Tzu Chi USA's Education Department, focus on teaching the Chinese language and culture and the practice of joyous giving through sincere compassion. The first Tzu Chi Academy was established in Los Angeles in 1994, and today, there are 25 across 14 states, with nine in California alone.

The Buddhist Tzu Chi Education Foundation also created a Character Education Program that has been reaching students in elementary and middle schools throughout the United States since 2006. The Foundation additionally offers seasonal camps that aim to enhance children's interpersonal skills while helping them build good character, develop self-esteem, and acquire self-management skills for life.

Celebrating the Fruits of Excellence

This year, 2021, brought honors to two Tzu Chi educational institutions in California – Tzu Chi Academy Tri-Valley in San Ramon, and Tzu Chi Elementary School and Preschool in Walnut – through accreditation from the Accrediting Commission for Schools of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACS WASC).

“The purpose of the Commission is to foster excellence in elementary, secondary, adult and postsecondary institutions, and supplementary education programs. The Commission encourages school improvement through a process of continuing evaluation and recognizes institutions through granting accreditation to the schools that meet an acceptable level of quality in accordance with the established criteria.”

ACS WASC Website

According to Elizabeth Oberreiter, Senior Director at ACS WASC, the accreditation represents a third party evaluating and validating the school's complete educational system. “It's an outside set of eyes looking at the program. And WASC looks at everything in order to validate the program.”

“We have over 5,000 schools around the world that are WASC accredited, and they go from kindergarten to adult schools to supplemental programs, which are like after-school programs, and they're worldwide.”

*Elizabeth Oberreiter
Senior Director, ACS WASC*



Young Tzu Chi Academy Tri-Valley students perform at a Chinese New Year event, much to the delight of their parents. *Photo/Steven Voon*

In February, ACS WASC accredited Tzu Chi Academy Tri-Valley in San Ramon, as meeting their Supplementary Education Center/Program criteria for Language. Tri-Valley is the first WASC accredited Academy in the Bay Area, while being the newest, celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2021. The Academy is also a member of the Association of Northern California Chinese Schools (ANCCS) and is the only ANCCS school to now be WASC accredited.

The Path to and Rewards of WASC Accreditation

WASC is one of the six regional accrediting commissions in the United States approved by the U.S. Department of Education. For Jack Chen, Principal of Tzu Chi Academy Tri-Valley, one of the most significant advantages of WASC accreditation is that other schools now recognize the Academy's credits in Chinese Language instruction.

“WASC accreditation is a requirement for public schools, especially high schools because high school credits must be accredited in order to articulate with colleges and universities. Tzu Chi Tri-Valley Academy is now certified to offer high school credit. High school students can take Chinese classes at Tri-Valley, and their Chinese class grades will be listed directly on their high school transcripts as an official course and grade.

Jack Chen

Principal, Tzu Chi Academy Tri-Valley



And, this was the plan all along, Chen shared. Before establishing the Tzu Chi Academy Tri-Valley the planning team made high school credited classes a goal and directed teaching standards and operations to meet WASC accreditation standards. Chen then added, “what was most touching was that when we proposed to get WASC, an application process that takes a large group of people, in fact, the whole Academy, including teachers, students, volunteers, and parents, were ready to participate and support the application.” Their dedication and spirit paid off: Mission accomplished.



Tzu Chi Academy Tri-Valley students receive a Tzu Chi Red Envelope at the 2020 Chinese New Year celebration event as a personal gift from Dharma Master Cheng Yen, representing her blessings. Photo/Jack Chen

In June, five months later, Charles Crane, Principal of Tzu Chi Elementary School and Preschool in Walnut, also learned that this institution had received WASC accreditation. It was a milestone, indeed. Buddhist Tzu Chi Education Foundation head Debbie Lee remembers the path to reaching it well. The Foundation established its first preschool in 2006, which led to the other three and then an elementary school in 2010, yet a level of public recognition felt missing.

“Although we felt that our school was very good, and the model was good enough to be applied in continuing to establish schools, with the preschools receiving good feedback from the public in all aspects, we began to encounter a bottleneck at the elementary school stage. We needed to have a third party’s voice, a well-known accreditation to recognize us so that parents can be more assured that Tzu Chi is recognized by everyone, whether in the academic, overall development, or other aspects of the school.

Debbie Lee

CEO, Buddhist Tzu Chi Education Foundation



Debbie Lee is the Chief Executive Officer of the Buddhist Tzu Chi Education Foundation. Photo/Harley Lee

That kind of recognition of excellence is what this WASC accreditation brings.

“What makes [WASC accreditation] special from the private school perspective is that not all private schools are accredited and not all elementary schools are accredited. Very, very few are accredited, and those that are accredited see the value in WASC coming in to look at their program. We’re not like an auditor or an evaluator; we’re colleagues that come to see your program, all of the school’s programs. And we look at the curriculum, we look at the instruction, and the assessments, and all of the social and emotional components that really make the academic journey very special for each child.

Elizabeth Oberreiter

Senior Director, ACS WASC

The accreditation process can be challenging, yet Lee and the whole Tzu Chi Education Foundation team were positive and determined, with their far-reaching goals in mind.

“Let the certification committee know that we know where our strengths are, where our resources are, where our future direction is, and how to ensure that our strengths are sustained, in writing, and in operation. This is like what Master Cheng Yen says, ‘have a commitment, and to do it step by step.’ We may feel the pressure, but we must work together to achieve the goal step by step, and not be afraid. We should not be afraid of being seen with shortcomings.

Debbie Lee

CEO, Buddhist Tzu Chi Education Foundation

Oberreiter acknowledges that the accreditation process can be stressful for a school, but sees beyond that, saying that “the beautiful thing about it is that a school is able to tell their story and look at the importance of continuous improvement, and that’s what WASC is all about. WASC is all about, ‘how do we improve that academic journey for the students and their future years?’”



Parents will even drive a great distance to get to the preschool and elementary school on the Tzu Chi Walnut Campus, valuing the education their children receive there. Photo/Ihsuan Tsai

In the final analysis, ACS WASC was impressed, as Lee recounts: “WASC has definitely given us a lot of positive recognition during the evaluation process and we’re very blessed. From interviewing the parents, staff, and students, they felt that Tzu Chi School is different from other private schools. Our members are like family and feel safe, comfortable, and happy in this environment. They also felt that Tzu Chi’s curriculum was very diverse, not only in academics, but also in bilingualism and environmental science, which the judges felt was very unique.”

Oberreiter kindly shared some of her observations, and what impressed her the most about Tzu Chi Elementary School and Preschool in Walnut:

“Many, many factors impressed me as a former principal as well. But I think the immersion program impressed me the most – that ability to bring in both languages. Also, the dedication of the teachers. The dedication of the parents to enroll in a very small school, and some of the parents are driving in from pretty far away for their [children’s] education. Something else that impressed me was the curriculum offered to the students – it wasn’t just opening up the books, but it was that hands-on curriculum; that they were able to use not just ‘all the time, computers’ like everybody is using these days, but that hands-on approach. That was very, very impressive. What we also saw was a very strong ability to grow for many future years to come, as well as sustainability. That’s another important factor when we first come and look at a school. ‘Is the school able to continue for many more years?’ And so, we saw all of that. And I must say that, in some of the classes that I viewed virtually, the kids were having fun. They were enjoying their education, and that’s what it’s all about, for students to enjoy learning and seeing them grow from that.

Elizabeth Oberreiter
Senior Director, ACS WASC



The curriculum provides many opportunities for hands-on learning, not just book study or work on the computer.
Photo/Shuli Lo

The Future Looks Bright

Debbie Lee and the Buddhist Tzu Chi Education Foundation are thrilled about this milestone and what it represents. As the only WASC accredited Tzu Chi school to date, Tzu Chi Elementary School and Preschool in Walnut can be used as a benchmark and training ground for other Tzu Chi schools, thus benefiting them all.

“WASC is an international level accreditation, and it is also an internationally credible accreditation organization, including many famous colleges and universities, such as Harvard, are WASC accredited schools. Schools that are accredited represent a certain level of academic performance. If you pass WASC accreditation, it means that your school has reached a certain level, and it will certainly be a plus to apply for other accreditation, awards or grants in the future.

Debbie Lee
CEO, Buddhist Tzu Chi Education Foundation 



Tony James Harper (middle) and his siblings attend Tzu Chi's 2021 Summer Camp together. Tzu Chi volunteers have been accompanying Tony, a student in Bayview-Hunters Point, for over 12 years. Photo/Lulu Yin

GROWING UP WITH TZU CHI IN BAYVIEW-HUNTERS POINT

By Christina Chang | Translated by Diana Chang
Edited by Adriana DiBenedetto

“From kindergarten to high school graduation, I am very grateful for the Tzu Chi volunteers who have been by my side along the way,” said Tony James Harper, a high school graduate at Tzu Chi’s online scholarship ceremony. Tony lives in Bayview-Hunters Point, a neighborhood in San Francisco, California. After the summer of 2021, Tony will attend the University of California, Merced, to study Computer Science and begin a brand new chapter in his life.

In 2009, Tzu Chi volunteers began donating books to schools to serve and uplift the community, and donated uniforms to Dr. George Washington Carver Elementary School students. This experience was the first time Tony received a uniform from Tzu Chi. And it was the dawn of a unique twelve-year academic journey, too.



Students wear uniforms donated by Tzu Chi and sing happily at the Perfect Attendance Award ceremony. *Photo/Shuli Lo*

Twelve Years of Perfect Attendance

Tzu Chi USA's Happy Campus Program aims to ensure the needs of students from low-income families are met with the utmost care, and provides students with the love, inspiration, and everyday essentials needed to help achieve their potential. Through these educational projects, volunteers instill confidence within the hearts of both students and families. Working together earnestly at every level with educators, Tzu Chi promotes a future for children framed by equality, compassion, respect, and sincerity.

With the support of Dr. George Washington Carver Elementary School, a team of Tzu Chi volunteers in San Francisco established the Happy Campus program at the school in 2010. Accordingly, a Perfect Attendance Award Pro-

gram was extended to encourage students to attend school on time every day. Thinking back on this program, Roxanne Buchwitz, one of the Tzu Chi volunteers who has accompanied Tony since 2009, recalled that he was the only student who received the Perfect Attendance Award from K-12th grade.



Tony James Harper receives his Perfect Attendance Award from a Tzu Chi volunteer. *Photo/Lulu Yin*

Tony's mother drove her children to school on time every morning and then continued on to work. One morning, however, she couldn't locate her car keys and would have been late for work if they followed their usual routine. Tony anxiously told his mother, "You keep looking for the keys; I can go to school myself." As soon as he provided his explanation, he rushed out of the house and ran to school. Later, Tony recalled how important the perfect attendance record had become for him, and how much he'd grown.



Tony James Harper hugs his mom (middle) at the 2014 Perfect Attendance Award ceremony, thanking her for all her loving efforts. *Photo/Lulu Yin*

📖 Growing up at School and Home

In 2021, twenty-four students in San Francisco received scholarships from Tzu Chi. Tony received \$6,000 for his school expenses for the next four years at college. In a thank-you video, he expressed his gratitude to Tzu Chi for the care – not only for the financial support, but the companionship he received over so many years as well. Tony specifically mentioned the summer of 2018, when Tzu Chi volunteers invited 11 students and teachers from Hunter’s Point to visit Tzu Chi’s Global Headquarters in Taiwan.



Tony James Harper, fellow students, and teachers visit Tzu Chi’s Global Headquarters in Taiwan in 2018. *Photo/Lulu Yin*

When the teachers and students arrived in Hualien, Taiwan, they visited the Jing Si Abode and met the venerable Dharma Master Cheng Yen, who started the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation. The group also participated in Tzu Chi activities at two Tzu Chi locations in Hualien and Taipei to learn about the daily routines. What impressed Tony most was the trip to Tzu Chi’s Recycling Education Center in Neihu, Taiwan.

“I saw how the volunteers organized all kinds of recycled materials and learned how to live sustainably to make Mother Earth a better



A Tzu Chi volunteer serves tea to Tony James Harper during a Tea Ceremony demonstration. *Photo/Lulu Yin*

place to live,” Tony recalls. And indeed, tens of thousands of Tzu Chi volunteers protect the environment by collecting and sorting raw polyethylene terephthalate (PET) materials, which are then transformed into DA.AI Tech yarn, and woven into an array of high-quality textiles without increasing the total PET volume. Through its sustainable reclamation process, DA.AI Technology produces environmentally-friendly clothing, backpacks, and other everyday textile products. These include the warm and durable eco-blankets that Tzu Chi volunteers have distributed to disaster survivors during relief missions since 2006.

📖 Finding the Way at Tzu Chi Summer Camp

The laptop Tony earned through the Perfect Attendance Program when he graduated elementary school had followed him all the way through high school graduation.

Lulu Yin, another Tzu Chi volunteer who’d been there since the beginning, had become just like a family member. One weekend, Tony asked Lulu if Tzu Chi would be able to provide him with a new laptop to meet the needs of his college curriculum.

“Of course,” Lulu swiftly responded. “We will absolutely continue to support your education.”



Tzu Chi volunteers provide timely assistance to students of different ages in the Hunters Point community. Photo/Lulu Yin

In the summer of 2021, Tony's sister also graduated from elementary school with six years of perfect attendance. They both received a brand new laptop computer from Tzu Chi to continue their next big chapter in life.

Tzu Chi volunteers' care for the children in the Hunters Point community doesn't end after high school graduation but continues, providing support that answers their changing needs at different stages of life. One example of this is Tzu Chi's summer camp.

Tzu Chi is entering its 13th year of service in the Hunters Point community. Initially, the annual summer camp was created for elementary and middle school students. In 2021, however, it shifted to include a life exploration program for high school and college students. As such, activities that ask, "Who are you?" and "What do you want to do?" will help participants discover their inner selves and find a path for the future. Tony has also been a member of the camp from K-12.

Alex Tsao, a volunteer who accompanied Tony when visiting Tzu Chi's Global Headquarters in Taiwan, had offered Tony his blessings back in 2018. As Tony readied to enter college, Alex expressed the same words of support he did back then: "The care of Tzu Chi volunteers is always there, and cares for the child throughout their life. In the future, whether it's in school, in the workplace, or in the course of life, anytime you have a problem, please feel free to come back to us." 🌿



Tzu Chi USA's San Francisco Branch celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2019 with Tony James Harper. Photo/Lulu Yin



Tzu Chi Fresno medical team's outreach in 2021 marks over 20 years of service, providing over a thousand events by Tzu Chi's mobile clinics traveling to reach those in need of care. Photo/Olivia Chung

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF MEDICAL OUTREACH BY TZU CHI FRESNO

By Christina Chang | Translated by Diana Chang | Edited by Ida Eva Zielinska

“You must be God sent!” Ninety-year-old Matilde exclaimed most gratefully to a Tzu Chi volunteer as she glanced over at her 85-year-old husband, Isaac, getting his second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine while seated comfortably under the shade of a tree. The elderly couple’s worries finally dissolved on this summer day in Del Rey, California, where the warmth was emanating not only from bright sunshine but also the caring love they were receiving from Tzu Chi Fresno’s medical outreach team.



Tzu Chi Fresno's mobile clinic vans travel along California State Route 99 during all seasons, stopping in rural areas to provide medical, dental, and vision care services. *Photo/Olivia Chung*

The Tzu Chi Fresno medical team began providing community outreach in 2001, so 2021 marks its 20th Anniversary of care. Volunteers provided over a thousand medical care events during the span of those two decades. The outreach began with the first Tzu Chi Mobile Clinic van in service, outfitted for general medical care, then two dental and one vision care vans joined the fleet.

Over the years, one could regularly see the four mobile clinic vans traveling along California State Route 99 or parked in the countryside and farmland to provide free medical services for those in need. And, as Tzu Chi volunteers in their blue and white uniforms emerged from the vehicles, farmworkers would pause their activities in the fields to wave and say hello, yelling out cheerily, "Hi, my friend! You're back!"



Energy Beams from Tzu Chi USA's Fresno Service Center

In the small Tzu Chi office in Fresno, you'll see great efforts.

Steven Voon

*Executive Vice President
Tzu Chi Medical Foundation*

Tzu Chi volunteer Steven Voon is currently the Executive Vice President of the Buddhist Tzu Chi Medical Foundation and the Director of Tzu Chi's mobile clinics in the United States. He has lived in Fresno for over 20 years yet perhaps what he most likes to remember is the day in 2002 when he took the initiative to call Tzu Chi USA's office in Fresno and ask about volunteering in upcoming activities.

The volunteer who had answered the phone gladly announced, "Great, we'll be holding a medical outreach tomorrow," and Steven was welcome to lend a helping hand. The event was the second medical outreach held by Tzu Chi Fresno, but it was a momentous first for Steven, marking the start of his journey volunteering with Tzu Chi.

Steven took on the responsibility for directing the flow of patients at the registration station, which demanded being on his feet for several hours straight. However, what he recalls more vividly than the physical aspect of his premiere volunteering experience, was how he was feeling, "I don't feel tired; I'm happy to have the opportunity to serve the community." And that sentiment persists until this day.



Steven Voon's first volunteer experience dates back to 2002, when he served during Tzu Chi Fresno's second medical outreach event.

Photo/Steven Voon

It wasn't long before Steven Voon emerged as Tzu Chi Fresno's principal volunteer dedicated to medical outreach activities. In the first two years, Tzu Chi volunteers traveled to Fresno from Southern and Northern California to assist in medical outreach events. From the third year onwards, the Fresno medical team began holding medical outreach events independently. Still, this hardly impeded solidarity nationwide in providing medical services, as 2018 would show.

That year, Tzu Chi International Medical Association (TIMA) held its annual conference in Fresno, gathering volunteers from 19 chapters in the United States and Honduras. During the event, Steven shared about Tzu Chi Fresno's medical outreach mission and what has supported the team's efforts. For one, they could pool strength and energy from the growth in the number of certified volunteers, reaching 18 by 2021. Additionally, collaboration with many organizations in the community amplified the scope and the reach of their care and services.

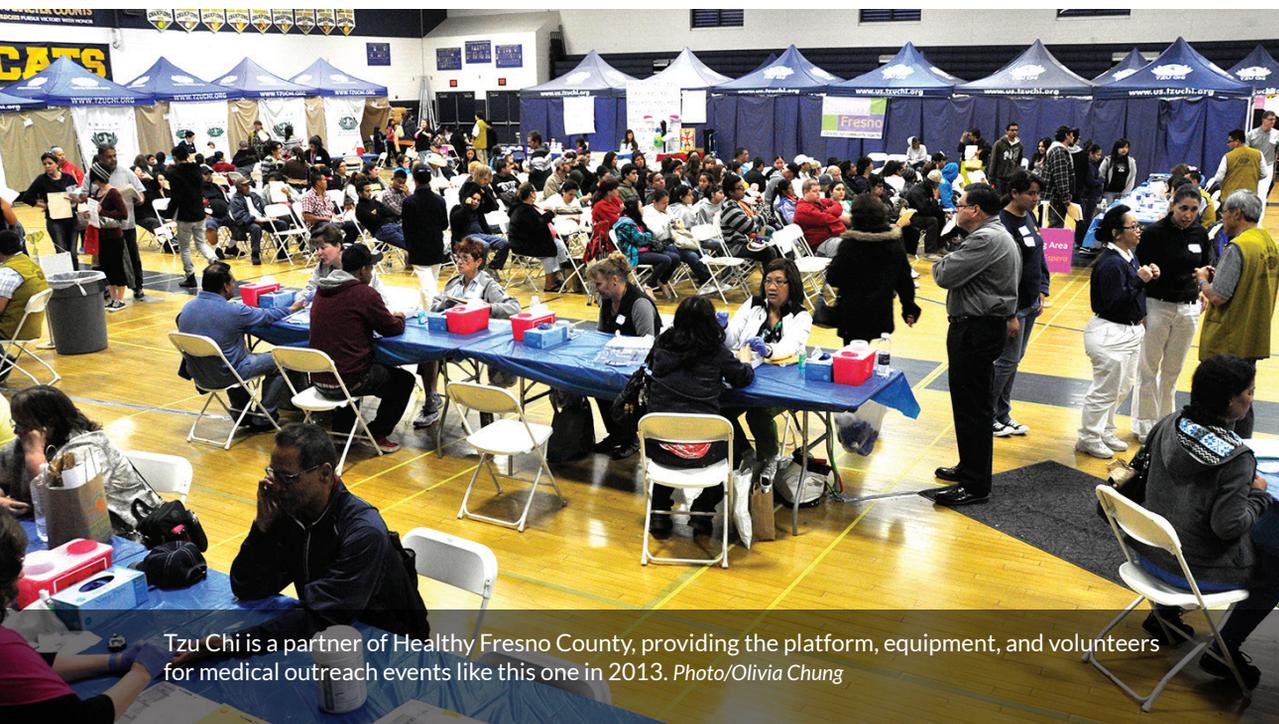
The Tzu Chi Fresno medical outreach team truly believes that together with partners, they share the responsibility for guarding the community's health. Their forging a partnership with Healthy Fresno County (a joint project of the Fresno Community Health Improvement Part-

nership and the Fresno County Department of Public Health) was a milestone towards this purpose becoming a concrete reality.

Healthy Fresno County aims at "building a culture of health in Fresno County where there are fair opportunities for everyone to achieve optimal health and well-being." Tzu Chi Fresno provides a platform, equipment, and volunteer workforce towards this community mission and plans to serve everyone in Central California who needs medical attention.

To summarize the main reason Tzu Chi Fresno's medical team successfully reached 20 years of service, Steven said that "Our perseverance was acknowledged in the community." The Fresno medical outreach team is also ready to support other Tzu Chi teams across the nation. For instance, volunteers often travel to Tzu Chi USA's Las Vegas Service Center to help train its medical volunteers.

Learning about the success of Fresno's medical outreach activities moved the 2018 TIMA conference attendees deeply. In response, they vowed to assist Tzu Chi USA's Northwest Region – to which Tzu Chi Fresno belongs – in obtaining two new vision mobile vans to strengthen their free vision services in the community.



Tzu Chi is a partner of Healthy Fresno County, providing the platform, equipment, and volunteers for medical outreach events like this one in 2013. Photo/Olivia Chung



Fresno residents form a long line outside a medical outreach venue in 2013 to register for the free medical services they need.
Photo/Steven Voon

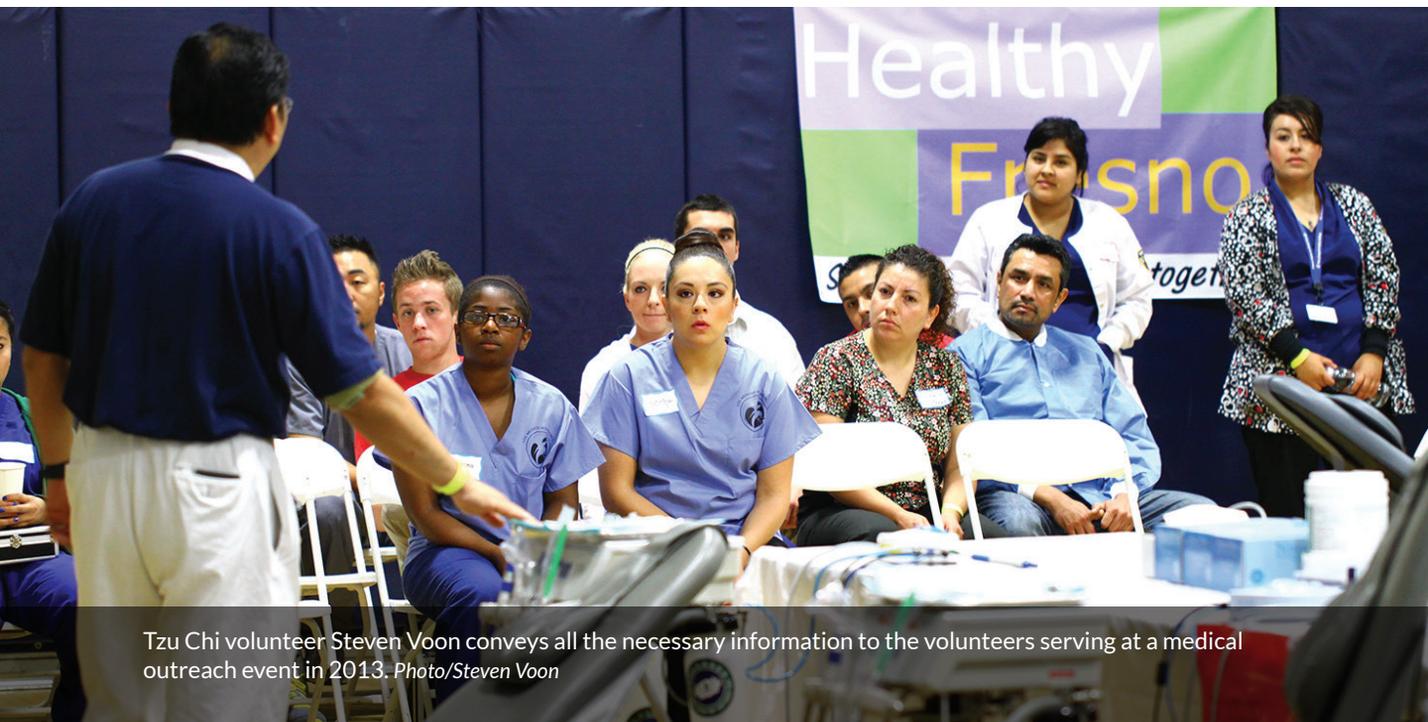
The two decades of service in the Fresno region have made Tzu Chi volunteers a known and welcome presence in the community. To illustrate, when not long ago, Steven Voon went to Saint Agnes Medical Center in his Tzu Chi uniform to pick up doses of the COVID-19 vaccine for an outreach event, a maintenance technician called out, “Tzu Chi, I know you. I got help from you at a medical outreach event 15 years ago.”

Steven replied warmly with a beaming smile, knowing that the Fresno medical team’s persistence in guarding the community’s health is rooted in gratitude for the opportunity to



Steven Voon’s smile brightens every medical outreach event helping guard the health of the Fresno community, such as this one in 2013.
Photo/Steven Voon

give back. Since all the volunteers keep this view at heart, their activities will continue blossoming, thereby benefiting many more in the years ahead.



Tzu Chi volunteer Steven Voon conveys all the necessary information to the volunteers serving at a medical outreach event in 2013. *Photo/Steven Voon*



Tzu Chi Fresno's 1,000th medical outreach event takes place in the City of Madera on May 20, 2021, helping 25 kids get an eye exam and prescription glasses if need be. *Photo/Olivia Chung*

Love and Care Through One Thousand Medical Outreach Events

In early 2021 as the government gradually reopened since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Olivia Chung, the manager of Tzu Chi Fresno's mobile clinics, began holding three to five medical outreaches per week. On May 20, 2021, eight volunteers from the medical team set off from the Fresno Service Center early in the morning.

When they arrived in the City of Madera, an hour's drive away, they began to provide free vision exams and glasses for 25 children in the area. During Tzu Chi Fresno's 20th anniversary year, this event marked the team's 1,000th medical outreach event.



Despite the scorching heat or the dark, Tzu Chi volunteer Olivia Chung focuses on helping more people in need at each medical outreach event. *Photo/Olivia Chung*



After arriving in the U.S. from Malaysia in 2003, Olivia Chung joins the Fresno medical team.
Photo/Steven Voon

After Tzu Chi Fresno had completed a thousand medical outreach events, Olivia only thought about how they could do more in the future: “The number of medical outreach events has already reached four figures. Then reaching two thousand should be fast too.” And, looking at the Fresno mobile clinics’ calendar, fully booked with events and plans, this vision isn’t a dream but a goal that has a good chance of being accomplished.

From 2001 to 2016, the Tzu Chi Fresno medical team completed 507 medical outreach events. Within five years starting from 2017, close to 500 more followed, although, among those, the team had to postpone several for nearly a year due to the pandemic. Currently, the team is resuming outreach events one by one, and the mobile clinics’ vans will once again dot the path along California’s State Route 99.

In March, a collaboration with Fresno County sent Tzu Chi’s medical team to a rural area where agricultural workers needed COVID-19 vaccination, reopening the guarding health plan for the community. The services of the team are vital, indeed.

Tzu Chi Fresno’s 1,000 medical outreach events in 20 years have served low-income families without health insurance in metropolitan

areas. They have also met the needs of migrant agricultural workers toiling in the fields, many undocumented and struggling to make ends meet, with medical care a luxury they can’t obtain without such outreach initiatives.

Moreover, the medical outreach extended further in 2021, when Every Woman Counts (EWC), which provides free breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostic services to California’s underserved populations, contacted Fresno’s medical team. Beginning on March 19, with the EWC providing the equipment for check-ups and Tzu Chi offering support through volunteers in rural areas, the Tzu Chi Fresno medical team started another chapter of guarding health in the community with these collaborative preventive measures.

Another area of targeted service that the medical team has firmly on the horizon is care for senior citizens. Tzu Chi Fresno recently used an external grant of \$70,000 to purchase new equipment for eye exams, which can detect issues caused by chronic diseases such as diabetes. After such exams, the team can determine if they should refer patients to medical institutions for further treatment.

At present, the insurance held by many seniors only covers general eye exams. The new equipment can provide advanced exams for elderly members of the community. These services are free of charge, and after surveys and discussions, the initial availability will begin in August, with a series of added programs to follow.



Olivia Chung provides eye exam services to seniors in the community at a medical outreach event on December 3, 2019. *Photo/Steven Voon*

From cities to small towns and villages, from underserved families and children to women's health and attention to seniors, the reach of Tzu Chi USA's medical mission in Fresno is growing thanks to its volunteers' infinite perseverance, accomplished one milestone after another for the benefit of many.

 **From One Outreach to a Thousand Means the World to Many Tzu Chi Fresno Volunteers**

It's not only Steven Voon and Olivia Chung's volunteer experiences in Fresno that extend back many years.

Susette Ishizuka joined Tzu Chi as early as 1996. At the time, Tzu Chi volunteers Ling Cho and Jeanine Morgan invited her to assist in caring for individual charity cases in the community. She participated in Fresno's first medical outreach in 2001, organized by Tzu Chi volunteer Grace Yang, and served during the 1,000th medical outreach event in 2021, hoping that underserved children from migrant families could correct their vision if need be with glasses on the spot.



Despite inclement weather, Tzu Chi Fresno medical team's 1,000th outreach proceeds with free eye exams for children in a rural area. After frame selection, the children who need them get prescription glasses within an hour.
Photo/Olivia Chung



Hsiuhua Chang selects suitable frames for children needing glasses at Tzu Chi Fresno's 1,000th medical outreach event. *Photo/Olivia Chung*

Another Tzu Chi Fresno volunteer, Hsiuhua Chang, is grateful for the opportunity to participate in the first, the 1,000th, and many, many more medical outreach activities. She's grateful for all the volunteer experiences over the years as she credits them for bringing a sense of accomplishment to her life: "I hope that our efforts will have an impact on changing the world."

Currently, Hsiuhua also serves as the point of contact for Tzu Chi Fresno's charity cases. During their medical outreach events, if the medical team deems that a family needs further assistance, they'll refer them to Tzu Chi's charity case manager to establish an individual care case which means more support can follow.

It's been a momentous five years for all the volunteers involved in Tzu Chi Fresno's medical outreach mission. They're ready to help more and more people get the medical care they need going forward, with what lies ahead on the horizon looking mighty bright when taking into account how far they've already come since 2001. 🌱





Volunteers from Portoviejo travel far to bring a food kit to a lonely elderly woman in Junin during the 7th food distribution in February 2021. Photo/Tzu Chi Ecuador Team

ECUADORIANS FOR ECUADORIANS: **A CIRCLE OF CARE PROVIDES FOOD DURING THE PANDEMIC**

By Ida Eva Zielinska

“For us, it’s something we didn’t expect, being here after five years. I never thought that I would be helping my people in the name of Tzu Chi. We’re in charge of Tzu Chi right now here in Ecuador. And normally what happens is somebody from Taiwan who comes to live in [a country], they are the face of Tzu Chi in that country. But in this case, it’s us: Ecuadorians for Ecuadorians.”

*Boris Garcia
Tzu Chi Volunteer*

In July 2021, Tzu Chi Ecuador marked its 5th Anniversary with celebrations in Santa Ana and Canoa to commemorate the moment. In attendance were honored guests, local residents and community volunteers, and the two Tzu Chi Ecuador volunteers who have been part of the story from the beginning, Jenyffer Ruiz and Boris Garcia.

In Canoa, the ceremony took place in the Church of San Andres, making the event even more special since Tzu Chi rebuilt this church following its destruction in the magnitude 7.8 earthquake that struck the nation in April 2016. Under the tragic circumstances of this devastating and deadly catastrophe, the love story between Tzu Chi and Ecuador was born.

Tzu Chi volunteers from outside the country arrived within days and quickly launched a Cash-For-Relief program in the hardest-hit cities in Manabi Province along the coast. The program motivated residents to rise above their sorrow and distress and begin the massive clean-up that lay ahead while earning money to feed their families amid an interrupted economy. When, a year later, in 2017, severe flooding impacted thousands of people – some still recovering from the earthquake – Tzu Chi’s Cash-For-Relief program helped restore hope once again.

Tzu Chi International Medical Association (TIMA) initiated its first medical outreach mission in Ecuador in 2019, providing free health-care services for those in need. From then on, Jenyffer and Boris saw a growing interest from their fellow Ecuadorians to join Tzu Chi’s aid efforts by offering a helping hand.

“From 2016 to 2019, we were just Jenyffer and me. We were doing everything. And right now, we have a group of volunteers that are in training to become [certified],” Boris explained, “They’re wearing the grey shirts [uniform].” On top of this, there are around 150 community volunteers who wear a Tzu Chi vest. “They’re training to go to the grey shirt. Every day we’re getting more volunteers. I feel really happy about that,” Boris shared enthusiastically.

It will come as no surprise then that when the COVID-19 pandemic struck around the world in 2020, the growing team of volunteers in Ecuador was eager to assist their fellows as everyone’s situation was suddenly increasingly grave:

“Ecuador is one of the poorest countries in America. Ecuador was already in a depression before COVID started; there were very few jobs available, people were struggling. So, with COVID, things just got so much worse. More people are poor, in extreme poverty.”

Jenyffer Ruiz
Tzu Chi Volunteer



Tzu Chi Ecuador celebrates its 5th Anniversary in Santa Ana in July, 2021. Photo/Tzu Chi Ecuador Team



This family of five in Santa Ana all have epilepsy and live in extreme poverty. Thankfully, once Tzu Chi Ecuador's food distributions during the pandemic began, they would have a regular supply of food staples. Photo/Tzu Chi Ecuador Team

However, many volunteers were experiencing challenges of their own, including Boris. He was in the construction business and had up to five projects a year until 2020, when it all stopped due to lockdowns. "We were in our homes for three months, and I couldn't do anything. My construction business disappeared and I didn't have any income," he recounts, adding, "I was devastated because I needed to let go of all my workers."

Boris was desperate for a solution to help his family survive. "I needed to reinvent myself. I saw that during the pandemic, one of the businesses that were still alive was everything related to food," and so he and his wife opened a convenience store. He also offered a job to some of his former workers. Although the 150 he once employed had dwindled to 20, "we're working on providing for our families," Boris states proudly.

Actually, his career pivot would soon benefit Tzu Chi's aid initiatives. Tzu Chi Taiwan had noted the situation in Ecuador following the outbreak of COVID-19, where Jenyffer confirmed that "a lot of people are scrambling even to put food on their tables." In response, Tzu Chi Taiwan offered to fund the purchase of food for distribution to those most in need and cover the fuel cost for its transport. And Boris's concession store became the headquarters for the whole operation.

♡ A Logistical Feat Each Month

The food distribution mission focuses on cities in Manabi Province where Tzu Chi has provided aid since 2016, so there is a base of community support, namely, Portoviejo, Canoa, Santa Ana, and Manta. But, preparing from several hundred to 3,000 food kits per month is no easy feat. "He has to send monthly like tons, I mean, I'm not talking about small quantities but tons of food to every city," Jenyffer points out.

Boris is humble but admits, "Every food kit weighs around 60 pounds. Of course, it's not just me. Maybe, I can say I'm the brain behind all the operations here. But I have relatives, I have employees that work in their free time, and I have a bunch of friends." Some neighbors joined in, too, after seeing big trucks coming in and going out once a month and asking Boris, "Why don't you give me one of these kits?"

Boris would answer, "Did you lose your job? Do you have any illnesses or problems in your body? You can't work, you can't walk or anything like that?" When they said no, he'd counter with, "So, you don't qualify to apply for that kind of help. So now that you asked, you can help me to make all this situation possible." And many are, learning what Boris himself learned.

Sometimes you have your challenges, but there are people that show you that you're in a really good position if you compare it to their life. [When] we started the distribution and we were going to all these places, we were seeing that there are people that maybe eat once a day. When you reflect on your life you see that ...what you can do is put in a little bit of effort in order to help all those people.

Boris Garcia
Tzu Chi Volunteer



Boris Garcia and his family, employees, neighbors, and friends work together to prepare food kits for distribution each month. Photo/Tzu Chi Ecuador Team



Four orphaned children living with their grandmother receive Tzu Chi's food kits regularly. Their mother left, and their father committed suicide. Thanks to Master Cheng Yen's compassion, these children can have a daily meal. Photo/Tzu Chi Ecuador Team

"Every month, he's the one that buys the food," Jenyffer explains. "The whole process starts when I start looking for suppliers," Boris elaborates, saying that he seeks the best prices to buy as much as possible within the budget. "And then he has a place where he puts all the food. And it's not like it's already divided," Jenyffer continues. It has to be portioned per household, then divided for transport to the four different cities.

Each food kit contains staples such as rice, lentils, two kinds of beans, cereal, oil, corn flour for tortillas, and noodles. "We designed this kit to last, for a regular family of four, to last a month," Boris says, adding that "sometimes they split that kit and use it in three different families," so each kit can be a lifeline for many.

Once the trucks arrive at their destination, bearing anywhere from between 250 and 800 food kits per city, local teams will unload and then distribute them over a few days. Rain or shine, on foot and even by boat, they'll venture out, often across rough terrain to reach remote areas, some abandoned by the government.



The team in Portoviejo traverses muddy roads going from house to house on February 7, 2021. Photo/Tzu Chi Ecuador Team

"In Portoviejo, Canoa, and Santa Ana, those towns are located in the countryside. Over the mountains, and you need to cross a river, and you need to do many, many things. It's a difficult task, but that's why we're truly happy because there's always more volunteers that want to go to more communities, to visit more people," Boris elaborates. The dedication of those community volunteers sometimes even attracts assistance from firefighters and police officers in the area.



The team unloads the first 250 food kits for Manta in April 2020. Photo/Tzu Chi Ecuador Team

♥ Networks of Volunteers in Every City Make It All Possible

The food distribution mission is to assist those most in need, and they can best be identified through local support, people who know their communities inside out. For instance:

In Portoviejo, Consuelito Rivadeneira, who's the leader there, has been the community president for over 35 years. In that time, she knows who's who. In Santa Ana, the same thing. Egda Macias, the person who's helping us, she's been working as a social worker for almost all her adult life, she knows the community and she also relies on other people who know the community to find out who needs [help].

*Jenyffer Ruiz
Tzu Chi Volunteer*

Manta is home base for Jenyffer and Boris, and the group of volunteers in the San Mateo area emerged after Tzu Chi International Medical Association's outreach there in 2019. Estela Franco leads the group and the food distributions.

In Canoa, Anita Sanchez and Brigitte Gracias are the community leaders, and both are extremely committed, even at the cost of personal sacrifice.

In Anita's case, "she's from a very, very poor family," Jenyffer explains. And, "she's a single mother, and she needs to work, yet sometimes she sacrifices that and goes to do the [volunteering] job," Boris added.

“Unless I die, I will never stop being a Tzu Chi volunteer.”

*Anita Sanchez
Community Leader in Canoa*



A disabled man in Canoa receives a food kit during the first distribution in Canoa in April 2020. Photo/Tzu Chi Ecuador Team

Their communities have noted Anita and Brigitte's care about those most in need. Their persistence in providing help not only inspires the volunteers they lead but aid recipients as well. Luis, his wife, and two children are one example. Luis, a taxi driver, has been unemployed during the pandemic, yet after receiving a food kit from Tzu Chi, the family decided to bake bread to share with their neighbors.



An elderly lady receives a food kit in San Mateo. Photo/Tzu Chi Ecuador Team

In Santa Ana, the network began with students who wanted to help following the floods that devastated the area in 2017. While that original group dwindled, when the pandemic struck, Boris and Jenyffer reached out to the mayor's office, as they would know who was most in need. That's how they established contact with Egda Macias, who was a social worker with the mayor's office for years and knows the community.

Sadly, Edga was later infected with COVID and has been suffering long term effects, but the community group she organized has been able to proceed with the distributions, and more volunteers are joining. This is a blessing given the level of need for assistance in many families.

“They expect these food kits every month. They can worry about other situations or necessities but about food they don't need to worry anymore.”

*Boris Garcia
Tzu Chi Volunteer*



Volunteers in Santa Ana visit the homes of elderly people who live in very poor conditions, bringing food during the 10th distribution between May and June 2021. Photo/Tzu Chi Ecuador Team

Consuelito Rivadeneira, the team leader in Portoviejo, is another example of the unstoppable attitude of Tzu Chi Ecuador's community leaders. Although she requires knee surgery and suffers as her knees often swell, making walking

extremely painful, that doesn't stop her from accompanying the team to distribute the food kits. Jenyffer sometimes tries to tell her not to go, but Consuelito will reply, "I must do this. I must get it done. The mission is important."



Consuelito suffers due to severe pain in her knees but this does not stop her from continuing to personally deliver food kits to those in need. Photo/Tzu Chi Ecuador Team

Consuelito also lives on a fixed income. Jenyffer recalls how "I've asked her to take money for the expenses she incurs during the distributions, like gasoline, and she refuses. She's told me that I'm insulting her every time I ask for her to take money. So, it's inspiring to see how people with very little want to give so much."

The volunteer teams in each town go the extra mile to get the job done. Boris recounts that "sometimes the volunteers need to collect money to hire a truck to go to communities that are really far away. They collect money between them and they accomplish the mission even if they need to sacrifice their own resources." And, it makes a world of difference for the most vulnerable members of each community. Some food recipients may also go on to become long term charity care cases.

One recent case in Manta is that of Yessica Coromoto, a single mother of three abandoned by her husband when he returned to their homeland in Venezuela. She now lives in a shack with a dirt floor and some walls made of sheets. She has no choice but to leave her daughters alone when she sells coconuts on the streets,



Ready to hit the road by truck in Portoviejo in December 2020. Photo/Tzu Chi Ecuador Team

barely earning enough to pay the rent on the shack. “It’s heartbreaking to see those little girls there because anything could happen to them,” Jenyffer says, adding that the mom suffers from a blood disease and can’t afford the medication.

One must remember that these distributions of food kits are happening during a pandemic, which dramatically affected the team beginning in February 2021.

“There was a point in February where things were really bad with COVID, especially in Portoviejo, where I would say more than 50% were infected. In every household somebody had it. So, people were really afraid, volunteers were really afraid. Of course, Master Cheng Yen always says safety is first, but I have to tell you, the volunteers, the leaders in the communities, they give of themselves as much as they can.”

Jenyffer Ruiz
Tzu Chi Volunteer

By March, the Pisloy district became one of the epicenters of COVID cases in Portoviejo as entire families, entire blocks tested positive. Claribel Saltos, the volunteer team leader there, was tragically affected, losing several family members within a week or so, including her father, aunt, grandmother, and grandfather, with her mother and brother testing positive for COVID as well.

As Claribel struggled with grief, she commented, “It has been a nightmare!” Still, she continued to organize her volunteers to deliver food kits to those in need in the communities around her. Reflecting on it, Jenyffer said, “They want to do it. They want to be there for the people that need it because they know people depend on this.”

The dangerous rise in COVID infections in Portoviejo was not the only emergency that struck around this time. On February 12, some 215 miles away, in Chunchi, a landslide of unprecedented scale had brought massive destruction to a community. Tzu Chi Ecuador was ready, and the volunteers from different cities would unite to build a disaster relief team and launch their first mission.



Claribel Saltos in Portoviejo encourages “sharing with your neighbour” and some aid recipients will weigh the sack of rice they get and give half to another family in need. Photo/Tzu Chi Ecuador Team

♥ Tzu Chi Ecuador’s First Solo Disaster Relief Mission

At the beginning of April, 12 volunteers from Santa Ana, Manta, Portoviejo, and Canoa set out for Chunchi, six hours away. They went on to provide \$49,500 in aid benefiting 43 families comprising 122 individuals. It was a genuine milestone for the team. “They were able to give to other people that weren’t from their community, and they were going through something very difficult. So, this was a great experience,” Jenyffer said.



The disaster relief team walks to the distribution site in Chunchi on April 4, 2021. Photo/Tzu Chi Ecuador Team

“We showed what Tzu Chi does around the world to these people that never heard about Tzu Chi. It was pretty much the same that happened to us in 2016 after the earthquake when Tzu Chi volunteers came here and we were like, ‘Why are these people traveling all that distance in order to help?’ So, it was pretty much the feeling that these people were feeling, and we were in the other [position.]”

*Boris Garcia
Tzu Chi Volunteer*

The aid was immensely appreciated and unexpected for care recipients like Blanca Guallpa, a 74-year-old woman who survived the landslide by holding on to a tree then was rescued from under the mud. And on the volunteer team, Rolando Ordonez, who is Boris’s brother-in-law, was equally thankful, saying:

“My most sincere gratitude to Master and all the volunteers for the great opportunity given me to be part of this noble mission in Chunchi, where I was able to experience and see the faces of happiness and gratitude of those benefited, who never imagined that someone would come to give them a hand moved by compassion, which motivates me to continue being a volunteer.”

*Rolando Ordonez
Tzu Chi Community Volunteer*

📍 Looking Towards the Future

“I have to tell you that people, really when they hear Tzu Chi, they hear ‘people that want to help.’ Especially now that we’ve been monthly giving out food distributions. Tzu Chi equals hope, Tzu Chi equals love, Tzu Chi equals compassion, Tzu Chi equals all that.”

*Jenyffer Ruiz
Tzu Chi Volunteer*

To prove her heartfelt commitment to Tzu Chi, Jenyffer shared that “I made a vow of 5,000 volunteers in the next five years.” Responding to

it, Boris stated, “I’m pretty sure we’re going to be able to do it. Because in five years we’ve accomplished a lot.”

Given his background in construction, Boris sees it from a building perspective, and what Tzu Chi Ecuador has built is a solid foundation. Although it is intangible, it is real.

“The people we started to help in 2016, in those communities, right now, they know they’re getting the help, but at the same time, they can help other people. It is a circle, and it is a circle of virtue, all the people helping. And they’re doing the best that they can. Of course, there are many necessities there; they help.”

*Boris Garcia
Tzu Chi Volunteer*

To date, the teams have provided 22,600 food kits during the course of 12 distributions completed between April 2020, and July 2021. At the same time, many aid recipients paid the love forward by giving to Tzu Chi’s bamboo banks, their donations totaling \$10,768.28.



Scarlet and her parents live in a house with no bathroom and struggle financially, but they’re happy to pay Tzu Chi’s love forward with a donation. Photo/Tzu Chi Ecuador Team

“Helping is not the privilege of the rich, everyone can help.”

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen 🌿



On May 27, 2021, Tzu Chi volunteers in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, deliver medical supplies and personal protective equipment via Singapore, Malaysia, and Taiwan to the military and police force in Khan Pou Senchey. Photo/Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation

HELPING Asia IN THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

By Dilber Shatarsun

With the promise of COVID-19 vaccine rollouts and increasing returns to “normalcy,” many of us began 2021 with an air of hope. But in India, the Delta variant had been gaining deadly ground. Suddenly, the whole world looked on in horror as photos of mass cremations emerged by April. This new wave was a proverbial canary in the coal mine, so Tzu Chi USA put all hands on deck and launched the COVID-19 fundraiser, “Send Help to Asia.”



Tzu Chi Nepal volunteers deliver medical supplies to the National Kidney Center of Nepal in Kathmandu on June 21, 2021. Photo/Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation

By May 2021, the Global Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation had already been sending medical and personal protective equipment (or PPE) and food across seven different countries including India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Laos, and Cambodia. Fifty-nine local partner organizations helped distribute these items to over 330,000 families and groups. One such donation included five ventilators being sent to Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital in Kathmandu, Nepal. A week after the donation, the Dean of the Institute of Medicine, Dr. Dibya Singh Shah, told us that the ventilators had already saved many lives.

Donated medical supplies include...

- COVID-19 vaccine doses in Taiwan
- Oxygen generator plants in India
- Oxygen tanks & concentrators
- Ventilators
- X-ray, ECG, and autoclave machines
- KN95 respirators and surgical masks
- Protective coveralls
- Gloves and more

In the meantime, a generous donor contributed \$1 million US dollars as a donation match, through which Tzu Chi USA could ultimately pitch in \$2 million to this global effort. In addition to medical support, this money would help send household items like food and soap to families struggling economically. “I came to Kathmandu to work from my hometown,” said Sumita Tamang, a Tzu Chi care recipient at a socially distanced food distribution in Nepal in June. Having lost her job due to shutdowns, she’d been left scrambling to make ends meet. “It is a great relief to receive this food now,” she told us; “it is a gift from the Buddha.”

Donated household items include...

- Dry goods, e.g. rice and flour
- Cooking oil
- Beans and lentils
- Powdered milk
- Sugar and salt
- Hand sanitizer and soap

Further east, Taiwan, which had remarkably escaped widespread COVID-19 infections in 2020, was grappling with its first wave of the disease by the spring of 2021. As Tzu Chi volunteers in Taiwan distributed PPE and other relief items across the country, in May, they began the process to secure a particularly precious item: COVID-19 vaccines. By July, the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, in cooperation with

the government of Taiwan, had been granted permission to purchase five million doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine to be distributed and administered for free throughout the country. It has indeed been a breakthrough milestone that could not have been achieved without the support of gracious donors in Taiwan, the U.S. and around the world.



At the Tzu Chi Jing Si Hall in Taiwan, an elder receives a dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.
Photo/Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation

Moreover, it is compassion in the far reaches of our world that proves that relief is possible in the face of obstacles. Out of concern and respect for the risks posed to one another’s families, organizers of a Tzu Chi food distribution in May in Narayanganj, Bangladesh required that volunteers get consent from their households to join despite the risk. What’s more, the stigma of women holding jobs outside the home gave one organizer’s mother a great pause. Sahida was a key organizer, and after her fellow volunteer Rajib explained the good her participation would do for the community, Sahida’s mother shocked everyone by not only allowing her daughter to participate, but to volunteer herself, along with her other children – proving that humanity triumphs all.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, Tzu Chi remains hopeful that peace and well-being lie on the horizon. With vigilance, compassion, and love, Tzu Chi USA is committed to helping its brothers and sisters in need, wherever they may be. 🌿

For full stats and to learn more about our COVID-19 relief efforts, visit tzuchi.us/coronavirus.

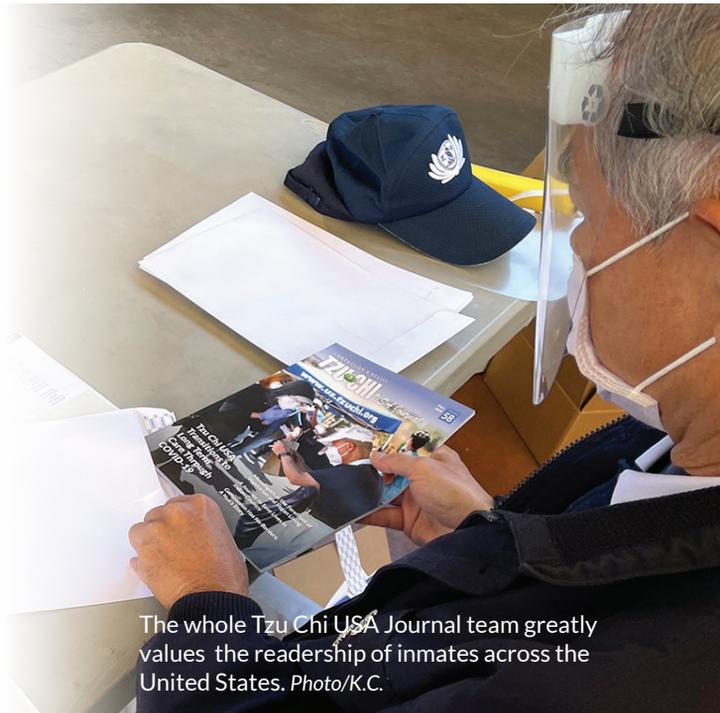
Thanking Our Dharma Friends in Prison for a Precious Connection

By Ida Eva Zielinska

Opening Note:

Tzu Chi volunteers in the United States are involved in a prison correspondence program, as part of which they exchange letters with inmates nationwide. Concurrently, our friends in prison receive issues of the Tzu Chi USA Journal. If you're reading this from behind bars, know that our whole team at the Journal values your readership.

We hope our selections of Dharma Master Cheng Yen's Buddhist teachings and the stories about compassion in action through the activities of Tzu Chi volunteers inspire and uplift your heart and spirit. With this story, we're also reaching across time and the boundaries of space to extend our best wishes to you.



The whole Tzu Chi USA Journal team greatly values the readership of inmates across the United States. Photo/K.C.

How the Exchange of Letters Began

Tzu Chi USA's Chuan Fong Correspondence Program started in 2013, and its name has a special meaning. K.C., the Tzu Chi volunteer behind the start of the program, explains:

“In Chinese ‘chuan’ means ‘spread,’ ‘fong’ is ‘wind.’ So, we’re trying to spread the Tzu Chi spirit. We’re spreading Master Cheng Yen’s message. We’re spreading Buddhism in action.

From a Buddhist perspective, everyone deserves compassion and the chance to achieve peace of mind and, ultimately, happiness, or in Buddhist terms, “liberation from suffering.” Additionally, we must also develop compassion towards others. And, in the Tzu Chi path founded by Master Cheng Yen, we ought to put that compassionate, selfless, and benevolent spirit into action in the world.

In fact, the volunteers who answer letters keep this view close to heart, and for them, this is a calling. One shared that, “There are limits on visiting inmates in person, such as distance and schedule, even before the 2020 pandemic prob-

lems. Writing letters can go beyond these limits.” Another said, “It’s such an honor,” cherishing the opportunity to bring Buddhism to incarcerated individuals.

The correspondence program started thanks to what Buddhists would call an auspicious convergence of causes and conditions. At the time, Tzu Chi USA was making books of Master Cheng Yen’s *Jing Si Aphorisms* available in hotels. The aphorisms are succinct observations that contain the essence of the Buddha’s teachings and guidance in a form that’s easy to absorb and apply in daily life.

Learning about this initiative, K.C.’s sister said, “You know, *Jing Si Aphorisms* will work well with inmates.” She was a mentor in the Prisoner Correspondence Course Program offered by the Chuang Yen Monastery of the Buddhist Association of the United States (BAUS) in upstate New York, so had some experience. Around the same time, someone else asked K.C. to put together a prison outreach program, so everything came together naturally.

“After we started this program, we got about 450 on the mailing list that the Chuang Yen Monastery provided us with,” K.C. recounts. And so, he sent a general letter, a book of *Jing Si Aphorisms*, and a *Tzu Chi USA Journal* to everyone on the list. And then the letters from inmates began to arrive, and the mailing list grew steadily, reaching around 1,100 in 2019 before it started to drop due to inmate releases around the country to reduce prison crowding.

Touching Hearts

**“There is no one in the world that I don’t love.
There is no one in the world that I don’t trust.
There is no one in the world that I cannot forgive.”**
Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen

Today, Tzu Chi USA Headquarters receives about 30 letters from inmates per month, with over 2,000 received since the beginning of the correspondence program. Answers to letters are sent quarterly to match the publication schedule of the *Tzu Chi USA Journal*, as our friends in prison often express how much they appreciate receiving a copy.

“I am writing to you today because I have just read *Tzu Chi USA Journal* Winter 2020 Issue 59. Wow. I am touched by the compassion, love and selflessness of your organization,” “Thank you for all the magazines that you have sent me,” “I just wanted to write to say thank you for your journal and the emotional support.” These are just a few of the words of encouragement that the entire Tzu Chi USA Journal team appreciates in turn.

Appreciation is also due to Brother Andy Kaoh for his vast generosity, as he donates all the books of *Jing Si Aphorisms* that Tzu Chi volunteers send out, leave in hotels, and more. His selfless gift benefits many.

In the beginning, K.C. alone answered all the letters while admitting that “before 2013, I had no experience in this area,” adding, “I tell you, it’s very stressful.” He was deeply aware of how much the inmates depended on this exchange of letters:

“Really, this is one, possibly the only communication they have with the outside world because I would say most of them are abandoned by their families already. Many of them are actually in life imprisonment, so they lose all contact with the outside world. They don’t get any care from anybody. So, it’s a tremendous responsibility.”

While sitting down to answer letters may feel a bit daunting at times, K.C. says, “I feel blessed to be able to do it,” and thus he is diligent when he does, taking each letter sincerely to heart as much now as before: “I have to spend several days. Sometimes responding to one letter took me several hours. I mean, we’re so important to them that they write to us, sometimes they share their feelings with us, so I took every letter very seriously.”

As the volume of letters grew, Tzu Chi volunteers learned about the program and some reached out to join. And yet, K.C. is cautious about who can, saying that “it has to be someone who knows Buddhism very well. Because we have these questions coming in. Secondly, they have to know Tzu Chi very well, plus commit to doing it.”

He knows that when a writer feels a deep sense of commitment, it comes through the letters, and they can positively change people's minds with their words.

Being the Chuan Fong Correspondence Program's lead, K.C. is also careful about assigning the right volunteer to answer and begin what he hopes will be a long-term exchange. "When I receive the letters, I'll match the letter's content with the writer's background because I want them to be able to connect. Because I want our friend in prison to continue to write to us."

K.C. continued, saying that "We have a very focused goal. You know, we don't distract from that. If you want to know more about Buddhism, about Tzu Chi, if you want to change your life, that's where we can help." When it comes to how this process of personal transformation can begin, K.C. will introduce core Buddhist teachings in the letters he sends.

In his August 2021 letter, he said, "Buddha told us 2,500 years ago, that we live in an interdependent world, and that we depend on others to achieve health and happiness for ourselves. Our actions affect others, and vice versa." Powerful words for someone who may be feeling regret about past deeds or harboring resentments about what led them to the choices they made in life, sometimes, simply on the spur of the moment.

One incarcerated Dharma friend wrote, "I think the reason I received a life sentence in prison is because of my past actions. I have been locked up now for almost 23 years and I can tell you I am not the same person now as I was then. In the past I only cared about myself and it really did not matter who I had to hurt to get what I wanted. Now I am paying with my life for my past lifestyle. Is that Karma?"

Reflecting on this, K.C. shared, "Many of these inmates, they believe more in Karma maybe than most of us outside do. Because they are experiencing it." He then points out how Buddhist teachings can help not just those behind bars but all of us really. In August, his letter highlighted how they can help us find a level of meaning in life that we can rely on or settle our disturbed minds. He wrote about the Buddha's guidance, how "People should let go of things (without thoughts

of gain or loss, good or bad, etc.), while at the same time, practice giving to others."

He then brought up how the Tzu Chi USA Journal gives concrete examples of this selflessness and work on one's mind, a way of life the men and women the volunteers are exchanging letters with may have never seen in action.

"They say, 'whoa, these people, they actually are doing this kind of thing, they don't just talk about it, they're actually doing it. So, there is another world, another way to live.' That really opens their mind."

K.C.

Tzu Chi Volunteer

Founder of Chuan Fong Correspondence Program

But you know, this exchange goes both ways because the volunteers who are in correspondence with friends behind bars are also benefiting and growing, as some shared with us for this article:

"It's given me a different perspective when interacting with other people and has shown me that everyone has a Buddha Heart that just needs to be awakened no matter who they are or what they've done in the past. I also learned many lessons through the interactions."

"I am so honored to have this opportunity to send a little drop of sweet dew to those who choose a hard way to balance negative karmas. As a matter of fact, we're stuck in the Wheel of Reincarnations. We're working hard to balance our own karmas as well."

"Their true heart to repent touched me so deeply because no one in this world is perfect but as long as we repent within ourselves, that's the true salvation."

And, to best describe how the Tzu Chi volunteers corresponding with incarcerated individuals through the program feel, perhaps this writer's response to our queries expresses it best:

I hope what I do makes them feel someone [is] caring for them and [it] gives them hope to continue the difficult journey.

Embracing a Different Path

What is to be feared is not the long distance to our goals, but rather, not moving forward even one step.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen

When one moves beyond cherishing one's own experience first and expands the heart to embrace the needs and wellbeing of others, it can be life-changing. Tzu Chi volunteers know this well on their path of service. Through reading their letters and issues of the Tzu Chi USA Journal, some inmates feel an impulse to help those in need outside their prison walls. For instance, one friend wrote, "Even though I am sentenced to 40 years in prison is there anything I can do to help others?"

Some find ways to do so inside the prison, and one friend shared: "I try to do my part, eat half of my food and give the other half to people less fortunate than myself." A few will send a donation as well, which is not easy to do from a correctional facility. "They often donate a small amount of money, but to them, that is a huge amount since their hourly pay rate is just a quarter per hour. Sometimes they donate a whole month's earnings to show their sincerity," one volunteer explained.

A few inmates have enclosed stamps as a donation. And one inmate who lost his institutional job and couldn't donate money anymore sent pieces of jewelry he'd made instead, saying, "Hope you can put these in a charity auction for a few dollars," which they later were as per his wishes.

The volunteers encourage giving, as it's at the core of Tzu Chi's philosophy and roots, K.C. adding, "I always try to encourage. I say this is what Master Cheng Yen says, it's really for your own good, not really for anybody else's.' So, you just donate whatever you feel comfortable with, but do it regularly. Because each time you do this you open up your own compassionate mind. And that's a training that we all need to keep."

As we put the front foot down, we lift the back foot up. We let yesterday go and focus on today.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen



A Tzu Chi volunteer with the Chuan Fong Correspondence Program adds a Jing Si Aphorism when answering a letter. Photo/K.C.

In K.C.'s view, Tzu Chi USA's Chuan Fong Correspondence Program is so important. The people the volunteers are writing to are especially open to Buddhist teachings, such as the Four Noble Truths about the nature of suffering in life, and the Law of Karma, which Master Cheng Yen has encapsulated, saying, "Karma means that we reap what we sow." In K.C.'s heart, Tzu Chi's Dharma friends in prison already have a solid foundation.

You don't have to tell [our Dharma friends] 'Life is suffering.' They are suffering, okay? And you don't have to tell them much about Karma. Once they know Karma, they know the concept, they agree with it. So, they're really looking for something they can hold on to. And Buddhism gives them that. Our Master's teachings give them that. They can change their lives. Because if they do start the good things now their future will change. So, I think this is really a very good opportunity for people to accept Buddhism and change their minds.

K.C.

Tzu Chi Volunteer

Founder of Chuan Fong Correspondence Program

And from there, liberation from suffering can follow.

***A confused mind suffers agony.
An enlightened mind feels at ease.***

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen 🌿

Andrea Barrera (second right) joins Tzu Chi volunteers at a 2019 Tzu Chi medical outreach event.
Photo/Mark Tsai



Students Are the Future

By Sophie X. Song | Translated by Diana Chang
Edited by Adriana DiBenedetto

Tzu Chi USA's Washington D.C. Region and the YMCA's Youth and Family Services have nurtured a lasting partnership for many years, aiming to create opportunities for support, success, and empowerment. And in fact, it's been so long that Andrea Barrera, the Community School Coordinator from the YMCA's Youth & Family Services, can't be sure of the exact date the partnership first began.

“I’ve been working at the YMCA since September of 2004, and we’ve been working with Tzu Chi since then. Technically, we met a year or two before that, so it’s been almost 20 years.

Andrea Barrera

*Community School Coordinator
YMCA Youth & Family Services*

When thinking of the YMCA, many will recall spacious swimming pools and sports facilities. Tzu Chi USA’s collaboration with the YMCA, however, focuses on providing crucial social services within the community.

The Initial Collaboration

In the beginning, Tzu Chi’s partnership with the YMCA concentrated its attention upon providing assistance for low-income families and students at JoAnn Leleck Elementary School at Broad Acres in the D.C. area. Key support activities included a monthly grocery distribution and an annual walk-in health service event that provided free medical consultations and flu shots to families without health insurance. Tzu Chi also funded an after-school program, and recruited teachers and committed staff to provide tutoring for students to help them succeed.

“Many of the students come from migrant or undocumented families, and their parents don’t speak English,” said Andrea. “Even if they wanted to tutor their children, they wouldn’t be able to do so.” Knowing that many migrant students may face multiple barriers to academic achievement, and parents wish for their chil-

dren to have more opportunities than they may have had, Tzu Chi’s programs offer understanding, attention and effective enrichment.

Tzu Chi has been supporting these programs in the community for nearly two decades. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, heightened many existing challenges for people all across the nation. Amid job and income loss, low-income families were particularly hard-hit. Therefore, Tzu Chi implemented additional programs to meet the needs of families, including financial assistance for those whose income was affected by the pandemic. When volunteers learned of two families who lost their source of income during this period, for example, Tzu Chi provided monthly financial assistance until they could gain employment.

“I remember one child who was diagnosed with cancer. The mother had to work multiple jobs to pay for her child’s treatment, but then she had to give up caring for her child by herself. Or she had to give up her job to be with her son and completely lose her financial resources,” Andrea described another Tzu Chi individual care case. “Fortunately, Tzu Chi decided to provide financial assistance to the family so that the mother could stop working and focus on caring for her child.” Additionally, Tzu Chi distributed food to the family every month. These two programs made it possible for the family to get through this extraordinarily difficult time together.

According to Andrea, the young man is still undergoing treatment, but his health has since improved.



Andrea Barrera (second left) joins Tzu Chi volunteers for a food distribution at JoAnn Leleck Elementary School in 2020. Photo/Tzu Chi Greater Washington D.C. Region

A Backpack Full of Love

The yearly provision of school supplies is an important part of Tzu Chi's mission to uplift low-income students as well. Before the start of each new school year, Tzu Chi distributes backpacks for hundreds of children, lovingly filled with colored pencils, notebooks, markers, folders, pencils, and other stationery, so they can return to school feeling prepared to focus on their studies.

With in-person learning temporarily on hold during the pandemic, volunteers knew students studying remotely would need further support. Therefore, volunteers regularly brought groceries and cash cards in addition to stationery supplies for low-income community residents. A wider variety of school supplies were included as well, such as miniature blackboards.

As COVID-19 vaccination rates increase and schools continue to announce the return of in-person learning, many of Tzu Chi's relief activities will resume as well. At the end of August, Tzu Chi's Greater Washington D.C. Region

Branch will once again be offering school supplies for seven schools, including JoAnn Leleck Elementary School, Rosa L. Parks Elementary School, Summit Hall Elementary School, and Silver Spring International Middle School.

Rosa L. Parks Elementary School is a new partner as of January. This partnership was formed thanks to Ivana Fields, a social worker from the school district. Ivana met Tzu Chi while working at another school in Montgomery County, and witnessed how the efforts of Tzu Chi volunteers were making a difference in the lives of many families.

"I saw the work Tzu Chi was doing to help families in need, and I believe in their mission to help alleviate suffering," said Ivana. Since then, she's been a most remarkable guide as volunteers continue reaching out to Rosa L. Parks Elementary School for food distribution activities. More than 300 students from this school will receive supplies from Tzu Chi this year.



In May of 2021, several volunteers deliver food to low-income families at Rosa L. Parks Elementary School. Photo/Wendy Tsai

A Wave of Warmth in Winter

Tzu Chi USA's Washington D.C. Region is not the only Tzu Chi chapter that helps ensure children have the care and resources they require to reach their potential. Tzu Chi's chapters in Texas also hold charitable activities regularly, and this year, young volunteers from Tzu Chi's Pacific Islands Region organized a meaningful fundraiser to help low-income families as well.



Tzu Chi volunteer Josh Wang organizes donated clothing. Photo/Tzu Chi Pacific Islands Region

According to United Way statistics, “On any given night, 5,000 people are homeless on Oahu.” Furthermore, many families experiencing homelessness have children under the age of twelve. Without shelter, persons contend with augmented infection rates and the absence of healthcare resources in addition to the challenges already faced — like finding warmth in the winter.

After becoming familiar with the Nānāku-li-Wai‘anae Complex Schools in mid-January, the youth volunteers from Tzu Chi's Pacific Islands region were determined to organize a donation drive to help children experiencing temporary homelessness. Every Tuesday through Saturday from 10 AM to 3 PM from February 4

to March 13, 2021, Tzu Chi volunteers received clothing donations to help meet the needs of community members. Tzu Chi likewise called on the community to donate gently worn, clean clothing to provide love and warmth to families in Oahu, HI.

The participating youth volunteers understood the transformative power of concerted, loving efforts within one's community first-hand through this mission. And when asked about this practice, volunteer Josh Wang replied, “Through this activity, I've learned responsibility. Since I joined, I've persevered, and I'll continue 'till the end to benefit the community.”

Elaine Liu, a sophomore at Iolani School, helped create flyers for students to distribute to their schools and communities. Elaine Liu told us that her mother is also a Tzu Chi volunteer, and introduced her to the event as a way of guiding her to give back to the community. “The program is uncomplicated: we organize clothing donations and distribute them to families in need,” explained Elaine. “With an hour or two of participation, we can really help our community.”



The community donates clean and warm clothing. Photo/Tzu Chi Pacific Islands Region

Across the U.S., Tzu Chi volunteers mobilize to uplift their communities and provide a steady and safe foundation. Whether in the form of clothing or school supplies, Tzu Chi's donations, too, will ensure students know their Tzu Chi family is here for them, always. 🌿

A GREAT LESSON TO CHALLENGE MANKIND

“By using our time and abilities to benefit all sentient beings, we will find more fulfillment and meaning in life; we will feel happy and blessed.”

Master Cheng Yen's Teachings

Translated and Compiled by the Dharma as Water Team

With this pandemic, my mind is full of complex feelings all jumbled together. Every day, I wish for good news, to hear that the confirmed cases are decreasing so that people feel more at ease. However, it is not the time to be lax in our preventative measures. In particular, since the new variant is highly transmissible, we must be vigilant to prevent another resurgence. We all fear that another more severe wave rises up before this current wave subsides.

I would like to express my gratitude to the professionals in our medical system. During this time, they all took up great responsibility. Every ounce of love they give is meant to safeguard life. They work tirelessly, day and night; yet when they shared their experiences, none mentioned the hardship. Instead, they said that they were very willing to work. They did not complain about the long hours, and they persisted even though they were very tired. When they hear a word of thanks from the patients they treated and looked after, I believe that our medical professionals feel that they have tapped into their altruistic potential. This is where the true value of life lies.

Tzu Chi's charity mission took on even more responsibility than before as volunteers stepped up to provide comprehensive support. When school changed from in person classes to online classes, volunteers fixed up second-hand computers to provide children in low-income families the tools they need to participate in distance learning and continue with their studies at home. The pandemic affected many people, causing them to lose their jobs or have their hours cut, thus reducing their income. Tzu Chi provided both manpower and materials, packing boxes with daily necessities and fresh produce and delivering them so that parents could feel at ease. We tried our best to be meticulous and considerate.

In this global pandemic, our charity mission is gaining experiences everyday. We have gained more strength through taking on more responsibilities. While we are so grateful that we have created such value in our lives through putting our skills and abilities to use, and we also hope that more people can come and give us a helping hand so that Tzu Chi can gather every drop of strength there is to give to this world.

Humankind has paid a very high price in this pandemic. We must also learn through this experience. Let us turn our fear into willingness to learn, and let us contemplate how we can educate others in this world. Let us help people understand moral principles, turn evil to good, and change their diet to be plant-based. Let us combine all virtuous energy to benefit this world and turn this pandemic into a chance to benefit others.

Perhaps we have always thought that we have nothing to do with what is happening in nature. Perhaps we have been racing against time every day in our quest to

make more money, obtain greater profits, and enjoy more lavish food, clothing, housing, and transportation. These raging desires of ours lead us to create negative karma.

Currently, the pandemic is raging throughout the world. The more we hear and see of the situation in different countries, the more we can feel and understand what the Buddha said, that life and the world is full of suffering. Let us take a pause with our desires and truly look at why the pandemic happened. When we no longer pursue materialistic desires, then we will not create as much pollution. We must control our desires and cravings. To be content is to know our blessings, and to know our blessings is to not be wasteful. We must be able to stop our actions when we know they are not right and take virtuous ones instead. In this way, with time, we can accumulate virtuous karma.

Right now, we see that in order to satisfy humankind's insatiable desires, animals lose their freedom and are gathered and pent up in small spaces. When they are finally captured and killed, they are displayed for consumers to select and purchase. Once consumers arrive home, the animals are chopped up and thrown in hot, boiling pots, then plated and delivered to the tableside for all to consume. How cruel is this!

There is a saying, "An eye for an eye." Karmic debts have to be repaid eventually. When our cruelty creates negative karma, humankind will collectively experience suffering. We must not consume something that will lead us to create karma of killing. We must not be narrow-minded due to our desire for good food, becoming unable to see or empathize with the suffering of other beings. Let us broaden our hearts by releasing, safeguarding, and cherishing lives. When we can live in harmony with all things in the world, our world becomes infinitely wider.

We ought to never again use our mouths to swallow lives, but instead, use them to reverently share teachings and persuade others to see the importance of our food sources, and that adopting a plant-based diet is paramount. When we first develop our confidence and aspiration, then we will naturally have strength in persuading others. We must first believe that we can do it, then persuade others that they can, too. In this moment, the universe has given us a great mission. It requires us to stand up tall and shoulder the responsibility, and bravely and steadily go forward. If we were to remain still and unmoving, then time will slip away.

The pandemic is ongoing, and the future is unknown. It is not helpful to worry and be anxious. Instead, what is more important is to remember that this pandemic is also a great lesson. It is an important lesson which challenges humankind. It is a teachable moment that provides humankind the chance to try again. When we tame our desires and cherish lives, the pandemic will naturally subside. Everyone, please be more mindful! 🍃



Dharma Q & A

Dharma Master Cheng Yen responds to questions from visitors, volunteers, staff, and disciples.

Passing on Virtue to Future Generations

When Master Cheng Yen was talking to some businesspeople, she brought up the subject of children's education.

“What is more important than leaving huge fortunes and businesses to our children is to pass virtue on to future generations. We should guide our children to do good for others. Then, they will lead good and proper lives.”

Teaching Knowledge and Imparting Wisdom

Q: *Today's students are very clever, but once they leave the classroom for the real world and start working, will they be able to apply the humanistic spirit that they have learned from Tzu Chi?*

A: *To guide these children at every stage of life to cultivate their wisdom is indeed not easy. I hope that in addition to teaching specialized knowledge and professional skills, we can help to awaken the wisdom and potential for goodness in our students.*

The Power of Collaboration

Sometimes I feel powerless when I'm working on something.

Everything is created by the mind. “Powerlessness” occurs when one feels alone. The more people you collaborate with, the more strength is gathered, and the more power can be exercised. Others will assist you when you are consistently content, grateful, understanding, and accommodating.

Excerpts from Infinite Teachings, Infinite Meanings compiled by Jing Si Editorial Group (Jing Si Publications, 2015). For more information, please visit Jing Si Books & Cafe (directory on Pg. 64) or jingsi.shop

Children of the Earth

Chinese Lyrics & Music: Jia-Shiang Wu
Translation: Dharma as Water Team, Tzu Chi USA
Illustrations: Martina Lo

Ho He Ho Ee-Eh-Oh Ho He Ho Ee-Eh
Ho He Ho Ee-Eh-Oh He Ho Ee-Eh-Oh

We all live on the same planet, full of joy and without worries
We all live under the same sun, using love to write out our stories

'Cause we are all children of the Earth,
and our dream is that we'll all come together
We are small, but we are strong, we can all make people happy
Let us join hands, come and sing along with me

Ho He Ho Ee-Eh-Oh Ho He Ho Ee-Eh
Ho He Ho Ee-Eh-Oh He Ho Ee-Eh-Oh





“We are small, but we are strong!”

There are so many ways we can help our planet. We can avoid using single-use dining ware or containers whenever possible. We can walk, bike and take the bus or train. We can eat less meat and increase the thermostat for our air conditioning. But most of all, we can take good care of every person, animal and object around us. This is something we can all do, no matter how big or small, or young or old. When we fill the world with kindness, we can help mitigate climate change and gradually reduce the disasters happening in the world, so all people can be happy! 🌱

Martina Lo is an UC San Diego Tzu Chi Collegiate Association (Tzu Ching) alumna and currently one of the chapter advisers. She is a children’s book illustrator and she enjoys creating heartfelt and colorful illustrations that make people smile. She lives in San Diego, California.



Compassion at Home

By Sophie X. Song

Tzu Chi Restarts Free Clinic Services

In July 2021, more than a month after California announced its reopening, medical volunteers from Tzu Chi USA's Northwest Region relaunched their free clinic service at the Tzu Chi Milpitas Service Center, suspended for over a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The first stage of reopening will be limited and small-scale, focused on serving Tzu Chi volunteers as a warm-up, with all procedures carried out according to pandemic safety regulations. Thus, the medical team will be well prepared when they serve the public at large soon.



In July, Tzu Chi Northwest relaunched its free clinic service in Milpitas, CA after its suspension due to the COVID-19 pandemic. *Photo/Christina Chang*



After careful planning, Tzu Chi's medical volunteers restart the Traditional Chinese Medicine clinic at the Tzu Chi Milpitas Service Center on Monday, July 12. *Photo/Pohan Chen*



Dr. Kevin Hwang, a specialist in spine neurology, alleviates his patients' aches and pains by diagnosing diseases in the central nervous system. *Photo/Christina Chang*



Dr. Kevin Hwang learns his patients' medical history during consultations before diagnosing and providing a course of treatment that supports their health and peace of mind. *Photo/Christina Chang*



Medical and general volunteers collaborate every step of the way to assure the best quality of care to the patients they serve. *Photo/Christina Chang*



Lan Krajcovic, recovering after a leg injury from a car accident, comes to Tzu Chi's Milpitas Service Center to receive a Traditional Chinese Medicine treatment. *Photo/Pohan Chen*



Mike Liao, a Traditional Chinese Medicine physician, carefully checks his patient's pulse before diagnosis and treatment. *Photo/Pohan Chen*



Tzu Chi volunteers implement every safety measure while registering patients then providing consultation or treatment. *Photo/Christina Chang*



A Tzu Chi medical volunteer measures a patient's blood pressure in preparation for the consultation with a doctor that will follow. *Photo/Pohan Chen*

Tzu Chi Taiwan Headquarters Hosts an Intensive Leadership Training Camp

The much anticipated Global Four-in-One Intensive Leadership Training Camp offered by Tzu Chi Taiwan was held online from July 30 to August 1, 2021. The camp brought together more than 20,000 locations from all over the world, with more than 1,000 Tzu Chi volunteers and members participating in the online training course.



Tzu Chi volunteers from the Los Angeles area gather at Tzu Chi USA National Headquarters during the leadership training camp to study and practice together. *Photo/Shu Li lo*



Jackson Chen, CEO of Tzu Chi USA, encourages all the participants to continue studying and improving after the event. *Photo/Yong Zhong Zeng*



Volunteer Wei Lixing shares his experience on Zoom. *Photo/Shu Li Lo*



Volunteers from the Los Angeles area take advantage of breaks to participate in a series of fun activities that draw the group together. *Photo/Shu Li Lo*



Volunteer Lu Xingzi listens to the lectures on her smartphone and praises the hard work and dedication of Tzu Chi volunteers in Africa. *Photo/Shu Li Lo*



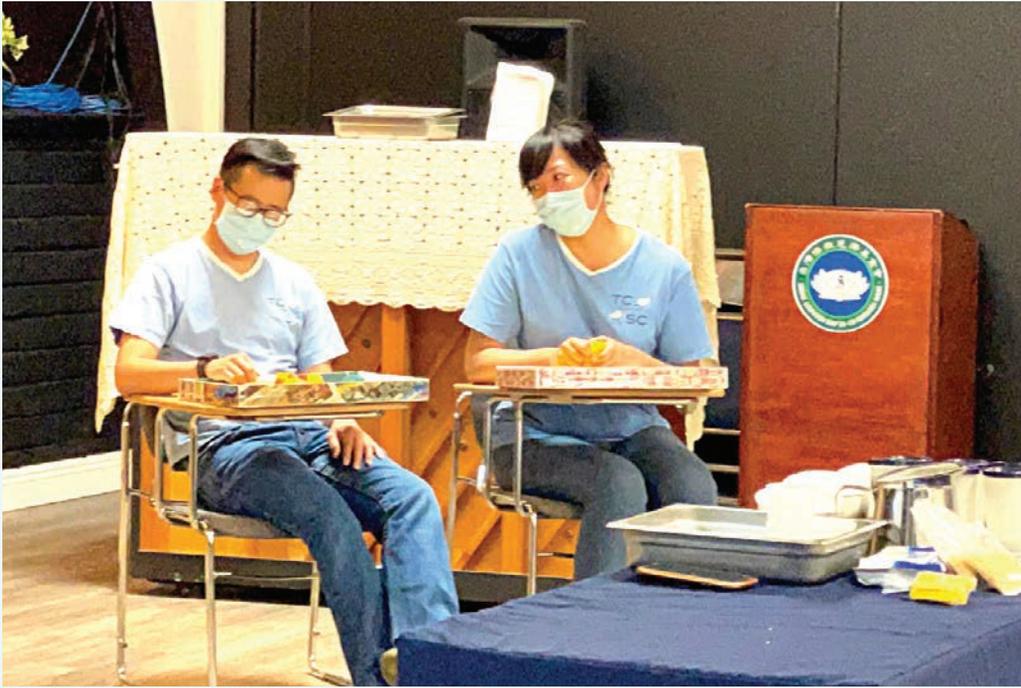
The camp participants study together diligently and share personal experiences during breaks. *Photo/Shu Li Lo*

Tzu Chi USA's Character Education Summer Camp Teaches Children Not to Waste Food

After the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, children in the U.S. studied remotely from home and didn't go to school. Fortunately, after more than a year, as the pandemic began to wane, students could attend Tzu Chi's 2021 summer camp in Walnut, California. Tzu Chi's character education team designed various activities for these students, including a special class that taught them the importance of not wasting food. Teachers helped students learn that their relatively comfortable and prosperous life was a special gift that not everyone in the world was fortunate enough to receive. Therefore, they must learn to cherish food, not waste it, and do their best to help people who don't have enough to eat every day.



Students participate in the class on not wasting food during Tzu Chi's summer camp.
Photo/Wendy Wang



Two teachers put on a short performance emphasizing the importance of not wasting food.
Photo/Wendy Wang



Students taste Jing-Si Instant Rice, learning that Tzu Chi provides this unique food staple to those in need, especially as part of disaster relief in areas where cooking is impossible. *Photo/Wendy Wang*



Since the start of the pandemic, students are finally able to attend summer camp in 2021.
Photo/Wendy Wang



Students play the guitar together with their teacher. *Photo/Shu Li Lo* 🌿

Relief Around the World

By Diana Chang, Sophie X. Song, Ida Eva Zielinska, Adriana DiBenedetto

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues through 2021, climate change accelerates at an unprecedented rate, impacting ecosystems and communities around the world. We are seeing this through global floods, wildfires, mudslides, droughts, and other natural disasters. Nevertheless, Tzu Chi volunteers around the world mobilized to bring essential supplies to families in need and comfort them with love and care this summer.

“Make every second count and move forward step by step; think kind thoughts and do good deeds; practice good teachings and share the joy of Dharma with everyone.

Jing Si Aphorism by Dharma Master Cheng Yen



The “Veggie Kitchen Coming to You” campaign promotes vegetarianism in the United Kingdom.
Photo/Suzhen Wang



Personal protective equipment (PPE) is delivered with love to the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services in Australia.
Photo/Yunhua Peng



A cleanup event called “Environmental Protection and Loving Earth” promotes an environmentally-friendly vegetarian diet in Canada.
Photo/Tzu Chi Canada



Tzu Chi volunteers deliver their support for survivors of domestic abuse in Toronto, Canada.
Photo/Yuequn Zhen





Tzu Chi volunteers in Taiwan donate PPE to promote wellness amid the pandemic.
Photo/Guiqi Zhan



Tzu Chi's New Zealand chapter holds a relief distribution on July 4 for tornado survivors in Auckland, New Zealand.
Photo/Meirui Wu



Tzu Chi volunteers in Mozambique harvest vegetables at the Metuchira DA.AI Farm on July 7 to assist people experiencing food insecurity.
Photo/Yuequn Zhen



On April 15, Tzu Chi volunteers in Harare, Zimbabwe collect discarded fruits and vegetables from farmers at the market to make compost.
Photo/Hiengisile Jiyane



Tzu Chi volunteers in Johannesburg, South Africa, guide local employees, manufacturers, and non-governmental organizations, to launch a joint relief effort to help neighbors affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
Photo/ Kaifan Cai



On June 26, Tzu Chi volunteers in the Dutch Quarter of Sint Maarten acquire food and supplies for people impacted by the La Soufrière volcano eruption.
Photo/Tzu Chi Sint Maarten



Amid the challenges brought forth by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, a Tzu Chi volunteer named Zhenxiang Xie and his family organize a distribution of groceries and supplies for the Pozo Colorado neighborhood in Bolivia.

Photo/Zhenxiang Xie



On July 27, Tzu Chi volunteers donate care packages to members of the local government in Bangkok, who will help distribute them to residents in need of assistance.

Photo/Kela Si



Tzu Chi volunteers collaborate with other charity organizations to promote the well-being of foreign workers in Singapore during Hari Raya Haji, or Eid al Adha.

Photo/Jianxing Huang



Tzu Chi's relief in Haiti began over one decade ago, after an earthquake tragically struck the country in 2010. Volunteers sprung to action again when Hurricane Matthew battered the southern coast of Haiti in 2016, and volunteers have regularly reached out in loving aid ever since through distribution events and more.

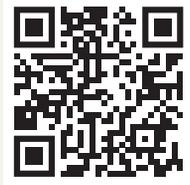


 Tzu Chi volunteers in Haiti launch the Tailoring Vocational Training Program on May 14, 2021, a work-for-relief initiative for women from severely impoverished families. Adline Domercant, one of the program's teachers, leads a class. *Photo/ Keziah Jean*



 On August 14th, 2021, a deadly 7.2 magnitude earthquake struck Haiti. Mobilizing swiftly, teams of Tzu Chi volunteers in Port-au-Prince began their assessment to ascertain survivors' needs and what aid may be most effectively delivered. At the Buddhist Tzu Chi Education Foundation, students were determined to add their love as well, and prepared 2,800 handwritten cards adorned with heartfelt messages and drawings. These greeting cards accompanied a delivery of 15,000 first aid kits. 🌿

Connect With Us: Be A Volunteer



tzuchi.us/volunteer

Discover what it means to put compassion in action as a volunteer with Tzu Chi USA. You'll join a welcoming group of individuals dedicated to doing good. To ensure that we can best match your offer to volunteer with our specific and current needs, we kindly ask that you fill out the application form below accurately and in detail.

For more information, please call **909.447.7799**, email **info@tzuchi.us**, or visit your nearest **Tzu Chi office**. Thank you!

Fields marked with an * are required

Gender* Male Female

First Name *

Last Name *

Email *

Phone

Country *

City *

US States *

Zip *

Languages* English Chinese Mandarin Cantonese Spanish Other

Field of Interest* General Charity Medical



State	Tzu Chi USA Offices	Address	Tel / Fax	State	Tzu Chi USA Offices	Address	Tel / Fax
AZ	Phoenix Service Center	2145 W. Elliot Rd. Chandler, AZ 85224	480-838-6556 F: 480-777-7665	KS	Kansas Office	9508 Shannon Way Circle Wichita, KS 67206	316-323-5798
S. CA	Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, US Headquarters Area	1100 S. Valley Center Ave. San Dimas, CA 91773	909-447-7799 F: 909-447-7948	LA	New Orleans Office	52 Driftwood Blvd. Kenner, LA 70065	504-782-5168 F: 504-832-2022
	Jing Si Books & Café, San Dimas		909-447-7799 x 6569	MD	Montgomery County Service Center		703-707-8606 F: 301-339-8872
	Tzu Chi Academy, San Dimas		909-447-7799 x 6551 F: 909-447-7944	MA	Boston Service Center Tzu Chi Academy, Boston	15 Summer St. Newton, MA 02464	617-762-0569 617-431-4844 F: 617-431-4484
	Buddhist Tzu Chi Medical Foundation	1008 S. Garfield Ave. Alhambra, CA 91801	626-427-9598 F: 626-788-2321	MI	Lansing Office	3511 West Hiawatha Dr., Okemos, MI 48864	517-505-3388
	Tzu Chi Medical Center, Alhambra		626-281-3383 F: 626-281-5303		Detroit Service Center	2122 Fifteen Mile Rd. #A Sterling Heights, MI 48310	586-795-3491 F: 586-795-3491
	Tzu Chi Community Clinic, South El Monte	10414 Vacco St. South El Monte, CA 91733	626-636-8706 F: 626-671-8778	MN	Minneapolis Office	1485 Arden View Dr. Arden Hills, MN 55112	617-939-6965
	Buddhist Tzu Chi Education Foundation	1920 S. Brea Canyon Cutoff Rd. Walnut, CA 91789	909-895-2125 F: 909-345-7025	MO	St. Louis Service Center	8515 Olive Blvd. St. Louis, MO 63132	314-994-1999 F: 314-994-1999
	Tzu Chi Great Love Preschool & Kindergarten, Walnut		909-895-2126 F: 909-927-8336	NV	Reno Office	903 West Moana Lane Reno, NV 89509	775-827-6333 F: 775-770-1148
	Tzu Chi Elementary, Walnut		909-895-2125 x 3200 F: 909-345-7025		Las Vegas Service Center/ Academy	2590 Lindell Rd. Las Vegas, NV 89146	702-880-5552 F: 702-880-5552
	Tzu Chi Academy, Walnut		909-895-2280	NJ	Mid-Atlantic Region/Jing Si Books & Café	150 Commerce Rd. Cedar Grove, NJ 07009	973-857-8666 F: 973-857-9555
	Tzu Chi Elementary, Monrovia	429 E. Wildrose Ave. Monrovia, CA 91016	626-357-3286 F: 626-357-3287		Tzu Chi Academy, Northern New Jersey		
	Tzu Chi Great Love Preschool & Kindergarten, Monrovia	206 E. Palm Ave. Monrovia, CA 91016	626-305-1188 F: 626-599-8098	Tzu Chi Academy, Central New Jersey	50 Woodrow Wilson Dr., Edison, NJ 08820		973-857-8666
	Tzu Chi Academy, Monrovia	220 E. Palm Ave. Monrovia, CA 91016	626-775-3675 F: 626-359-8199	Central New Jersey Service Center			908-420-5218
	West Los Angeles Service Center	11701 Wilshire Blvd. #15A Los Angeles, CA 90025	310-473-5188 F: 310-477-9518	NY	Northeast Region/Academy	137-77 Northern Blvd. Flushing, NY 11354	718-888-0866 F: 718-460-2068 718-799-3000
	Torrance Service Center	1355 Broad Ave. Wilmington, CA 90744	310-684-4465 F: 310-684-4460		Brooklyn Service Center	5721 6Th Ave. Brooklyn, NY 11220	917-909-0682
	Tzu Chi Community Clinic, Wilmington		310-684-4466 F: 855-651-1717		Long Island Branch/Academy	60 E Williston Ave. East Williston, NY 11596	516-873-6888 F: 516-746-0626
	Orange County Service Center	22911 Mill Creek Dr. Laguna Hills, CA 92653	949-916-4488 F: 949-916-5933		Manhattan Service Center	101 Lafayette Street, 4/F, New York, NY 10013	212-965-1151 F: 212-965-1152
	Tzu Chi Academy, Irvine	4321 Walnut Ave., Irvine, CA 92604	714-624-3026 F: 949-916-5933		East Long Island Office	4 Milburn Rd. S. Setauket, NY 11720	631-964-3393
	Cerritos Service Center	14618&14620 Carmenita Rd. Norwalk, CA 90650	562-926-6609 F: 562-926-1603		Tzu Chi Center, New York	229 E. 60th St. New York, NY 10022	212-660-9229 F: 646-864-0086
	Northridge Service Center	8963 Reseda Blvd. Northridge, CA 91324	818-727-7689 F: 818-727-9272		Raleigh Service Center		919-322-8389
San Gabriel Valley Service Center	9620 Flair Dr. El Monte, CA 91731	626-416-4527 Warehouse: 626-416-4529	Charlotte Office		4527 Dwight Evans Rd. Charlotte, NC 28217	704-281-8060 F: 704-943-1031	
Jing Si Books & Café, El Monte		626-448-1362	Cincinnati Office		11228 Brookbridge Dr. Cincinnati, OH 45249	513-469-2161 F: 513-469-2161	
San Diego Service Center	5754 Pacific Center Blvd. #202 San Diego, CA 92121	858-546-0578 F: 858-546-0573	Columbus Service Center		2200 Henderson Rd. Columbus, OH 43220	614-457-9215 F: 614-457-9217	
N. CA	Northwest Region	2355 Oakland Rd. San Jose, CA 95131	408-457-6969 F: 408-943-8420	OH	Dayton Service Center	1459 E Dorothy Lane Dayton, OH 45429	937-701-7111
	Tzu Chi Academy, Tri-Valley		925-785-7413		Cleveland Service Center	1076 Ford Rd. Highland Heights, OH 44143	440-646-9292 F: 440-646-9292
	Jing Si Books & Café, San Jose		408-457-6981	Portland Service Center	3800 SW Cedar Hills Blvd #194 Beaverton, OR 97005	503-643-2130 F: 503-643-2130	
	San Francisco Branch	2901 Irving St. San Francisco, CA 94122	415-682-0566 F: 415-682-0567	OR	Tzu Chi Academy, Portland	12250 SW Conestoga Dr., Beaverton, OR 97008	503-841-7776
	Tzu Chi Academy, San Mateo	2675 Ralston Ave., Belmont, CA 94002	650-888-1582	PA	Philadelphia Office	107 North 9th Street Philadelphia, PA 19107	215-627-1915 F: 215-627-1916
	Tzu Chi Academy, San Francisco	350 Girard St. San Francisco, CA 94134	415-680-5225 F: 415-682-0567		Pittsburgh Service Center/ Academy	1333 Banksville Rd. #201 Pittsburgh, PA 15216	412-531-8343 F: 412-531-8341
	Modesto Service Center	1100 Carver Rd. #J Modesto, CA 95350	209-529-2625 F: 209-529-2625	TX	Southern Region/Academy	6200 Corporate Dr. Houston, TX 77036	713-270-9988 F: 713-981-9008
	Stockton Office	1212 W Robinhood Dr. #3D Stockton, CA 95207	209-957-7800 F: 209-957-7800		Jing Si Books & Café, Houston		713-981-8966
	Tzu Chi Academy, Cupertino	1280 Johnson Ave San Jose, CA 95129	408-823-8799		Tzu Chi Great Love Preschool & Kindergarten, Houston		713-395-0303 F: 713-395-0305
	Santa Rosa Office	1615 Cleveland Ave. Santa Rosa, CA 95401	707-546-1945		Austin Service Center	7221 Northeast Dr. Austin, TX 78723	512-491-0358 F: 512-926-1373
	Sacramento Service Center	1820 Tribute Rd. # J Sacramento, CA 95815	916-568-5800		Point Comfort Office	P.O. Box 700, 201 Formosa Dr. Point Comfort, TX 77978	361-987-7130 F: 361-987-7139
	Ukiah Office	527 S State St. #B Ukiah, CA 95482	707-462-2911 F: 707-462-2911		San Antonio Office	19179 Blanco Rd. #109-2 San Antonio, TX 78258	909-576-2387 F: 210-566-3970
	Oakland Service Center	620 International Blvd. Oakland, CA 94606	510-879-0971 F: 510-879-0971		Central Region/Academy/ Jing Si Books & Café	534 W. Belt Line Rd. Richardson, TX 75080	972-680-8869 F: 972-680-7732
Tzu Chi Academy, San Jose	625 Educational Park Dr. San Jose, CA 95133	408-457-6970	Tzu Chi Great Love Preschool & Kindergarten, Dallas		214-446-1776 F: 214-446-1772		
Fresno Service Center	7421 N Maple Ave. Fresno, CA 93720	559-298-4894 F: 559-298-4894	Greater Washington D.C. Region/ Academy	1516 Moorings Dr. Reston, VA 20190	703-707-8606 F: 703-707-8607		
FL	Orlando Service Center	5401 Alhambra Dr. #A Orlando, FL 32808	407-292-1146 F: 407-292-1146	Richmond Service Center	1318 Tomahawk Creek Rd. Midlothian, VA 23114	804-306-6037 F: 804-378-3520	
	Miami Service Center	8070 Pasadena Blvd. Pembroke Pines, FL 33024	954-538-1172 F: 317-645-9907	Seattle Branch/Academy	15800 SE Newport Way Bellevue WA 98006	425-643-9104	
GA	Atlanta Branch	2000 Clearview Ave. #100 Atlanta, GA 30340	770-458-1000 F: 770-986-8669	WI	Milwaukee Office	5356 W. Silverleaf Ln, Brown Deer, WI 53223	414-357-8427
HI	Pacific Islands Region/Academy	1238 Wilhelmina Rise Honolulu, HI 96816	808-737-8885	Madison Office	726 W Main St. #302 Madison, WI 53715	608-268-7692	
IL	Midwest Region/Academy/ Jing Si Books & Café	1430 Plainfield Rd. Darien, IL 60561	630-963-6601 F: 630-960-9360				
	Chicago Chinatown Service Center	215 W 23rd St., Chicago, IL 60616					
IN	Indianapolis Service Center	2929 E. 96th St. #E Indianapolis, IN 46240	317-580-0979				



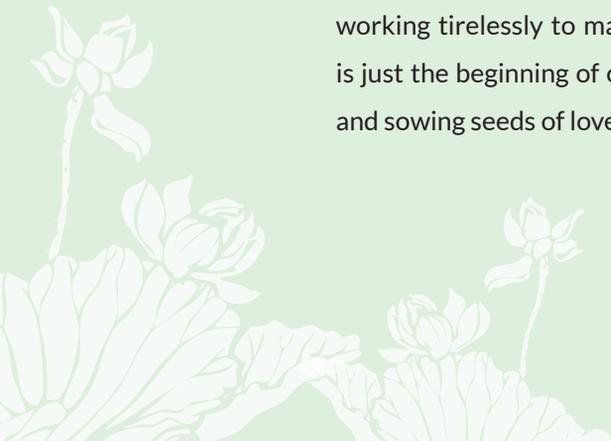
Who We Are:



The Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation is a volunteer-based international non-governmental organization, established by Dharma Master Cheng Yen in Hualien, Taiwan, in 1966. From 30 housewives saving 50 NT cents (approx. 2 US cents) from their grocery budget every day to help the less fortunate, Tzu Chi has now brought humanitarian aid to 126 countries and regions. The Foundation is dedicated to providing community and social services, national and international disaster relief, medical and charitable aid, education, environmental protection, and a bone marrow donor registry while promoting humanistic values and community volunteerism.

Tzu Chi USA, the first overseas chapter of the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, was established in Alhambra, CA, in 1989. It all began when Stephen Huang, a wealthy American businessman seeking personal guidance, visited Dharma Master Cheng Yen in Taiwan. Meeting this gentle nun, who had created a powerful organization, and was able to realize one seemingly impossible dream after another, solely for the benefit of others, changed his life. Filled with awe and admiration, Huang became a disciple and vowed to bring the spirit and mission of Tzu Chi to the United States, which he did by establishing Tzu Chi USA.

Tzu Chi USA began by mobilizing volunteers, then hosting “tea parties” where they could share their thoughts, experiences, and joy of volunteering. The events drew supporters and quickly inspired the creation of additional chapters. Today, Tzu Chi USA has 65 offices and facilities throughout the U.S., with volunteers and donors working tirelessly to make a difference in their communities. This is just the beginning of our journey, serving others unconditionally and sowing seeds of love and kindness in the Americas. 🌱





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Volunteers distribute Tzu Chi's eco-blankets, issues of the Tzu Chi USA Journal, and a total of \$24,700 in Emergency Financial Assistance to Dixie Fire survivors in Northern California in August 2021. Photo/Kitty Lu

With your love, we can do more.
Help us make a difference
donate.tzuchi.us/california-wildfire