

Guide Me Through

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During the service activities, the guidance of the volunteer moms and dads has eased students' concerns. The students immerse themselves in service and realize the joy of helping others.

Since its inauguration, Tzu Chi College of Technology has been advocating for education in professional skills as well as in humanity. The focus on professional skills is the foundation of all occupation. However, humanity is so broadly defined. If one searches the word "humanity" on Google, tens of thousands of interpretations of humanity would come up. Tzu Chi's humanistic culture emphasizes the positive attitude of practicing professional skills. People who are practicing nursing can feel that their

work is fulfilling and those who receive the service will find comfort and gratitude.

Teachers at the Nursing Department are enthusiastic instructors who are willing to share their professional knowledge and provide the students with practical experience. This devotion to education is also a type of humanistic culture, including teaching students to show respect toward life and be meticulous about their own profession.

In the big family of Tzu Chi, commissioners are assigned to students as volunteer guidance. These volunteer “moms” are called “Yi-Te” Mom and “Tzu-Cheng” Dads; they lead by example, exemplifying selflessness and unconditional giving. They share their volunteer experiences and guide students


to think about the meaning of life.

Immersed in Tzu Chi environment, these nursing students are naturally willing to volunteer at various Tzu Chi activities over the weekends. With guidance from veteran volunteers, these young volunteers will learn as they practice through work.

The guidance and company provided by the volunteers have eased young students’ anxieties and provided answers for their concerns. For example, several sophomores and juniors of the five-year nursing program were volunteering at the psychiatric ward, and they were hesitant to ask about the conditions of patients who showed no obvious signs of misbehavior. It was the volunteers whose experience that coached them to unlock the secrets of each case. Most of the patients were



Photo depicts Tzu Chi College of Technology nursing students do volunteer service in Malaysia.



scarred from past relationship problems. Seeing a young girl threatening to commit suicide because of a break-up has made a student, Ching-Kuai Tsai, to think twice. Tsai said, “We should not act rashly out of emotion and do things that we will regret for life.”

A fourth year student of the five-year nursing program, Wan-Chi Lin, who volunteered at the leukemia ward, felt intimidated when facing patients. She said, “The first time I found myself face-to-face with a leukemia patient, I was inexperienced and had no idea how to comfort them and give them courage. Luckily, the volunteer moms and dads stood by me and guided me.”

When she began to interact with patients, Wan-Chi learned that the patients are not as depressed as she thought. On the contrary, she has learned a lot from the patients’ positive attitude toward life.

“The volunteering experience has shown me how precious life is. When facing obstacles, one should not run away from them, but face them with a positive attitude.”

Without the stress of practicing nursing, serving patients with other Tzu Chi volunteers allows the students to view their future career from a different angle. A freshman of the two-year program, Yi-Wen Lin, commented, “Thanks to the guidance of the volunteer moms and dads, we are able to understand the meaning of our service.”

One volunteer dad referred to a

phrase from the Tzu Chi Aphorisms – “To contribute is a given; to show gratitude is the true value.” Through the volunteer activities, we started to realize how lucky we are to have the opportunity to contribute and serve others. These young volunteers gradually learned the true spirit of Tzu Chi – to give unconditionally, and to give with gratitude.

Because of the worldwide shortage of nurses, we often remind our students that they will have a bright future. However, there is an underlining concern, “Why is there a shortage of nurses in the workforce?” The root of the problem is probably the short lifespan of a nursing career. Young graduates continuously fill in the spots vacated by nurses leaving for other professions. But why do nurses leave for other professions? It could be that nurses lack the sense of professional pride. Responsibility often cannot overcome the difficult nature of nursing.

While professional skills are necessary to earn a living, humanity will empower students with professional pride that will make their job more meaningful. The humanistic culture of Tzu Chi is to learn through practice. The guidance from volunteers has cultivated the seeds within these young students. We sincerely hope that, with these preparations for students’ compassion and pride, they can overcome career hardship and show perseverance in future workforce, and ultimately relieve people’s suffering like Kuanyin Bodhisattva (the Lady of Mercy).