

# Love and Humanity Treasures Fresh Nurses



**You-Chen Chao, Superintendent of Taipei Tzu Chi General Hospital**

Another Monday morning. Having a routine 6:30am morning briefing with the vice superintendent and Chief Secretary Chiao where everyone engaged in a discussion to smooth the operation of the trauma team, to ensure that all emergency patients could receive appropriate treatments without been turned away, and to allow wards to accommodate patients more efficiently. Without the major contribution of nurses, though, these ideals could never be realized.

This year, our hospital was fortunate to welcome 150 nursing graduates, and after 3 months of training, on Nov. 11th, 70% of them became full-time employees and earned their place on the frontline. it was exhilarating to watch these newcomers mature, thanks to the mindful guidance of the head nurse and other nurses, after all, books and patients, theories and experience are worlds apart.

After morning volunteer assembly, I visited a patient at the surgical ward whom was referred from China and came to ER on Sunday. I was informed that the patient was suffering from a crushed foot with multiple-toe gangrene, and the doctor in China recommended amputation. I hoped our limb salvage team could offer more treatment options and better results. As I reached the ward, the room was empty, since our physicians arranged a hyperbaric oxygen therapy for our patient early in the morning.

I saw in the nursing station of the orthopedic ward, the head nurse was having a morning meeting with our nurses. These

newcomers, with snow white uniforms, looking so young; they were born in the 90's, and now they have graduated from nursing college, saving lives in hospitals. The pressure they endure must be overwhelming: instructions from their seniors, prescriptions from physicians, inquiries and requests from patients.

A petite nurse in charge came to explain in detail the conditions of the patient, using hand gestures to portray the severity of the gangrene, knowing that we had missed the patient. One can empathize her mindfulness to the patient from the intricate description and witness the professional confidence from her eyes.

I commended her diligence, and asked, "How long have you been in Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital?" "Two years now." She answered. Wow, two years of medical work is sufficient to accomplish an empathetic nurse such as her! With solid training, placing anxious and panicky patients in ER under their care is such a meritorious deed!



**Dr. You-Chen Chao, Superintendent of Taipei Tzu Chi hospital leads all managers to clean the dormitory for nurses.**



**Supt. of Taipei Tzu Chi hospital Dr. Chou delivers gifts for the new nurses before the recruit camp.**

During the 26 years after Master Cheng Yen built the hospital, it has saved numerous lives and trained numerous nurses for the society. Watching her smile, I expressed a sincere gratitude for our patients. Nurses, solacing sufferings day and night with no complaints or regrets, what a blessing!

Our hospital experienced nurse drought in the recent years. Many major hospitals are insufficient in nursing staffs and closed several beds. For the students of nursing colleges to comprehend the significance of nursing, particularly the principles and work environments of Tzu Chi hospitals, the staffs of Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital spent half a year, traveling around Taiwan, taking turns visiting schools all around, seizing the opportunity to interact with potential candidates during campus recruiting, sharing with them based on personal experience the challenges and opportunities of future clinical work. As soon as the national exam was over, 153 graduates came just as promised, which pleasantly surprised all our staffs, relieving us from the nurse drought.

In fact, during the two days of national exam, several of our hospital and nursing dept. supervisors cleaned and decorated the hospital dorm, hope upon hope, as if preparing for the arrival of their daughters. When they finally see these graduates wearing clean uniforms and nurse hats, following their alumni into the wards they chose, our colleagues were joyful, as if witnessing the bodhisattvas Master always commended.

To lead these outstanding graduates to familiarize with the history and humanistic features of our Tzu Chi medical mission, the hospital had already arranged a two-day camp for new recruits. The lecturers were carefully selected and schedules revised to ensure the lectures can be attractive and convey the essence of this training. The decision to visit care recipients was revised many times. After all, these recruits had only arrived, will they back out because they are asked to clean someone's house? With a little concern, everyone reached a decision to infuse Tzu Chi spirit into the lectures of this recruit camp.

Thanks to the arrangements of Brother Chen Chin-Hai of Luzhou Jing-Si Hall, the assistance of Sister Lo Mei-Chu from Sanchong, and the contribution from the team led by Sister Tzu Yueh, consisting Sister Tsai Yu-Jr, Brother Ping-Lun of Religious Dept., Sister A-Tao, Sister Yang Hsiu-Hsun, Sister Ming Yueh of Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital, Sister Chen I-Yun of Daai TV., which truly moved these new recruits. In addition to the laughters in the lecture rooms, many weeped from the touching contents.

On the 2nd day of the camp, the recruits were separated into 10 teams, visiting long-term Tzu Chi care recipients in Luzhou and Sanchong respectively. Upon arrival, they pull up the sleeves and wash toilets, paint walls, clean kitchens, carrying heavy trash from fifth floors, and bath people with disabilities. Although everyone was fatigued with sweat soaking their clothes, they smiled and were satisfied with the joy of giving.

After a demanding morning, everyone returned to Jing-Si Hall to wash up. When they appeared for lunch, everyone was in their white uniform filled with energetic vibrance. When asked if they were tired, everyone answered in unison, "No!" They were even eager for the next opportunity. These new recruits from the "strawberry generation" are actually compassionate, willing to learn, capable and modest. Their teacher and parents probably never realized their excellence. In this great Tzu Chi family, with brothers and sisters as exemplar, the potential and compassion of these new recruits are elicited from them.

The new recruits this year for Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital are very different. We wish that they would persevere in both their profession and humanities, be the bodhisattvas on the front lines, relief sufferings and bring joy to the world.

