

## Love Soothes Pains from Sufferings

Written by Lin Chin-Lon

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In 1993, the Tzu Chi Los Angeles Free Clinic opened for service. Looking back, the medical mission in the United States started more than 10 years ago, when Tzu Chi volunteers operated a simple mobile clinic serving the needy. Now, with the new clinic, volunteers are able to offer better medical care and treatment. Although new clinics mean more challenges, volunteers are able to provide quality medical service; using love to soothe hardship and spread the seeds of love and hope. The mobile clinic provides an opportunity for volunteers to participate and spread love. Providing medical treatment may seem like an easy task for doctors and medical staff, but for the non-medical volunteers, it requires learning. The planning, organization and transportation of equipment, food, lodging and others are key elements in ensuring the success of a clinic operation.

Master Cheng Yen said, "When patients encounter good doctors, not only their physical pains relieved, their souls are also comforted. These doctors are living Buddhas to all beings." To my fellow TIMA volunteers, we should always remember respect, love and caring for all. Since my return from the U.S., I had the opportunity to serve in remote villages in Taiwan. Apart from sharing my experiences regarding free medical service in the U.S., I was able to learn aspects of medical practice in the remote areas of Taiwan. Participating in the medical outreach program in various parts of the world caused me to realize that other medical professionals would like to contribute, both in terms of time and money, but were not given the opportunities. It happened in Philippines, the U.S. and other places, where opportunities arose and resulted in the formation of TIMA in their respective countries.

We strongly believe that medical services should not be confined only to the fortunate few but equally accessible to all, especially the poor. By sharing this message in every part of the world, it brings great joy and experience to our volunteers.



Along with TIMA for more than 10 years, more medical professionals are joining; enabling us to expand our services, such as a simple tooth extraction to complete oral healthcare and hygiene education. Currently, TIMA spans across 15 countries/regions with more than 10,000 TIMA members in 58 district offices. We have created a strong and well organized medical network and always on standby mode to provide emergency and disaster relief. It gives us tremendous joy to directly involve ourselves in providing disasters relief, recycling and other community services. In the past few years, the themes of TIMA convention range from "Emergency and Medicine", "Humanity and Medicine", "Media and Medicine", "Environment Protection and Medical care" to "Promoting Healthy Lifestyle". This approach has broadened the horizon of TIMA members. We hope that we will be able to recruit more doctors, nurses and others to join us for the good cause.

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