

Foundation Holds Its Seventh Annual Health Fair in Massachusetts

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation

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On November 13, the foundation's Boston branch held its seventh annual health fair in Quincy, Massachusetts to those from low-income families or without health insurance. A total of 83 patients attended the fair and received 394 services; 150 volunteers participated in the event.

The aim of the event was to offer free health consultation and screening to individuals who do not have easy access to medical care, especially those from poor families or without health insurance. The fair provided the following services: flu vaccination, tuberculosis (TB) skin test, HIV test, hepatitis B test, dental health check, vision care, health seminars and consultation stations for internal medicine, chiropractic, Chinese medicine, medications, pediatrics and health insurance. The five-hour event aimed not only to address the physical needs of the patients but also to improve their overall well-being. Tzu Chi volunteers greeted each and every patient with warm smiles and look after them diligently as they visited the different medical stations.



Everyone who took part voiced their strong support for the foundation's efforts to provide free health care in a convenient manner to those with limited financial resources. Upon arrival, each person registered at the front desk where he or she selected the needed consultations. Afterwards, they proceeded to the first station where their body weight, height and temperature were measured by Tzu Shao (Tzu Chi teenagers). Five medical students, including Steven Lin, a member of Boston [Tzu Ching](#) alumni, followed up with blood pressure measurements. The patients were then able to visit the various consultation services provided by licensed medical professionals. One middle-aged patient asked doctors of internal medicine and the chiropractor about her cough symptoms and leg pains that had been bothering her for some time. Having never seen a doctor before, she felt relieved at the end of her visit and was very happy to receive the care that she needed. The number of patients who left content from the event reflected another successful Tzu Chi health day.



Being able to serve the community through the free clinic was the ideal event to mark the fifth year anniversary of the [Tzu Chi International Medical Association](#), USA (TIMA) in Boston. New services that became available this year included pediatrics, led by Dr. Nancy Hurwitz, who became involved with Tzu Chi through its relief work after the Haiti earthquake. Students of the Liver Health Program from both Harvard College and Harvard Medical School were

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present to spread awareness about hepatitis B, with assistance from Quest Diagnostics for the screening. One volunteer in particular was extremely glad to see students involved in this cause because she had lost a family member to the disease. In addition, there was a central waiting area where patients could rest and listen to health seminars or browse through the Jing Si collection of books, environmental dining kits and food. All the efforts of the volunteers aim to improve the health of the patients and the community at large.

Looking ahead, TIMA Boston hopes to expand the program to include the entire family, from young to old, to promote a healthy community. The number of patients this year was lower than last year; this shows that the community is becoming healthier as universal health care is being implemented in the state of Massachusetts. The extra free time gave volunteers the opportunity to interact with each other. Doctors from different disciplines consulted each other about their health, medical students put career questions to the doctors and students from the Liver Health Program reached out to our own volunteers for testing. The scene was like a gathering for one big family. As the bonds between volunteers grow, the stronger Tzu Chi Boston becomes in its continued support for the foundation's medical missions in the years to come.