

California & New York, U.S.A.

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Supplies Replenished, Hospitals Reopened

In the past few months, Tzu Chi volunteers in the US have been collecting PPE and sending them to hospitals and neighborhoods. Volunteers have also been making face shields and cloth masks in their homes to help neighborhoods combat the virus.

On the 23rd of April, the US Tzu Chi Medical Foundation director, William Keh, and his wife, Mary Keh, led Tzu Chi volunteers in sending PPE to UCLA Health. On the 24th of April, they arrived

at the Methodist Hospital, which has been around for more than 100 years. Both directors received the packages on behalf of their respective hospitals to express their gratitude for Tzu Chi.

Ellen Wilson, director of UCLA Health, said that many hospitals were lacking PPE and that they were incredibly grateful for the donation, as it was like the timely rain that extinguished the fire of trouble. Cliff Daniels, director of Methodist Hospital, also said, “These masks and protective gowns are very useful, especially due to the lack of supply and the rise of prices on PPE.” Another director at the hospital said that many people who buy masks to donate to the hospital are not suitable for front line workers, but the masks that Tzu



US Tzu Chi Medical Foundation director William Keh (third to the left), along with his wife Mary Keh (right), Vice Director Dr. Stephen Deng (second to the right), and lawyer Zhang Tianjun (left) delivered masks, goggles, protective gowns, and other PPE to Methodist Hospital.

Chi delivered meet the standards, which show that they are indeed professionals.

“This will not be the only time we donate. We will continue to collect PPE and keep sending them to hospitals, so that they get the help they need,” said Dr. Stephen Deng, a member of TIMA in the United States.

From Viruses to Vegetarianism: Time to Act

Tzu Chi Volunteers in the US have not only delivered PPE to over one thousand hospital organizations but also have formed a bond between Tzu Chi and local hospitals. While delivering the medical supplies, they also introduced vegetarianism, encouraging people to fight the virus and to save the Earth by avoiding meat.

When Michael Sullivan, Vice Director of the UCLA Orthopaedic Institute for Children, arrived at the foundation headquarters to pick up PPE on the 19th of May, he was invited to join the vegetarian movement. He first thanked Tzu Chi for donating PPE for the third time, then mentioned that COVID-19 symptoms were much more devastating than expected by the medical world. The hospital has already opened a new isolation room for fifty COVID-19 patients. However, due to the rise of the pandemic, it was difficult to obtain PPE that met medical standards, so they were very



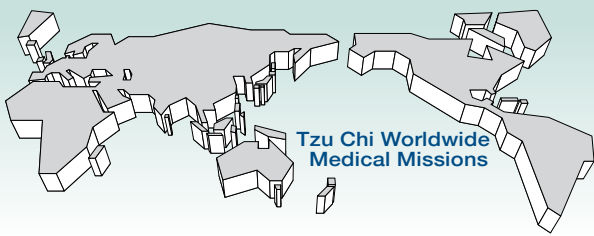
Vice Director of the UCLA Orthopaedic Institute for Children, Michael Sullivan, drove to Tzu Chi Headquarters himself to pick up the PPE, and the volunteers helped him load the packages.



Tzu Chi volunteers brought vegetarian lunch boxes to bond with hospitals along with the PPE, and Kaiser Permanente Vice Director Cao Youjin (center) and Dr. Victor Cheng (second from the right) welcomed them gladly.

grateful for Tzu Chi's donations. As for Tzu Chi's vegetarian cause, Michael replied in affirmation, “Tzu Chi's ideals are in harmony with the trend of the world today. Studies show that teenagers and young adults were more likely to accept the idea of vegetarianism in comparison to older adults. Because they still have a long life to live, they care more about preserving the natural resources of the Earth.”

Afterwards, when Tzu Chi volunteers



made their trip to Kaiser Permanente Baldwin Park Medical Center to deliver PPE, they also brought many vegetarian lunch boxes for the directors to try. Dr. Victor Cheng, who also served at the medical center, shared that his grandfather was a doctor in the rural villages who treated poor patients without charging a penny. When he was in medical school, he attended a Tzu Chi activity for the first time and felt their passion for serving the poor, which reminded him of his grandfather who served while seeking nothing in return. He became determined to help Tzu Chi heal the world, and in 1996, he earned his medical license and joined the TIMA.

Kaiser Permanente Baldwin Park Medical Center supported Tzu Chi's cause of giving medical consultations to the

poor and donated a mobile optometry clinic, which is scheduled to serve its first patients in rural neighborhoods in California in June.

Free Clinics Suspended but Patients with Chronic Diseases Are Getting Delivery of Medicines

In the recent months, many planned free clinics were suspended due to the pandemic. Many US Tzu Chi volunteers worried that patients with chronic diseases would not have access to medicine and that their conditions would worsen as a result. Volunteers who speak Spanish contacted patients to see if they need medicine resupply. Doctors provided the prescription so volunteers can mail the medicine to the patients, making sure that



Director Su Yusheng (second to the right) and Vice Director Kenneth Liao (left) donated five hundred “reopening reassurance” boxes for local clinics, giving medical staff PPE so that the clinics could reopen.

their service to the poor did not stop.

Dr. Victor Cheng and Dr. Stephen Deng provided prescriptions based on the patients' history. Although the pandemic has stopped volunteers from holding free clinics, doctors in the TIMA still cared for the patients in rural villages.

Dr. Shirley Chen, Dr. Chen Zhengxiang, and several volunteers checked the list and the addresses. They packed not only the needed medicine but also PPE and the blessing of Dharma Master Cheng Yen. Through the consideration of the volunteers, the package contained treatment for both physical and mental ailments.

Protecting Front Line Workers with Boxes of Love

On the other hand, ever since shelter in place in New York, elective surgeries were put to a halt, putting limitations on medical consultation for those with ailments other than the coronavirus. On the 20th of May, Tzu Chi donated five hundred boxes of PPE to local medical organizations to assist family doctors and other clinics into reopening safely and serving the people once more.

Each box contained fifty KN95 masks, five goggles and five face shields in hope that medical professionals can continue to fight for the health of patients while taking personal safety into account. Tzu Chi's New York headquarters raised money



Because the free clinics in rural cities were forced to stop, Dr. Shirley Chen (center) and Chen Zhengxiang (right) of TIMA packed PPE and medicine together along with other volunteers and delivered them to patients with chronic diseases.



The “reopening reassurance” boxes contained masks, goggles, and face shields. Tzu Chi volunteers gave these boxes in hope that clinics could reopen safely.

to buy PPE for firefighters, and the Tzu Chi foundation in Taiwan also joined in, continuing the chain of love from Tzu Chi volunteers all around the world.