

# The Trip to **Green** Energy Hospital

by Yu-Mei Gao, Photographed by Yuan-Ji Chien



Recommended by the Health Promoting Hospitals and Health Services (HPH), 27 medical professionals from the USA, Italy, Norway, South Africa, Nigeria, Sweden, Finland, Malaysia, and Thailand visited Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital on April 10, 2012, the day before the International Conference on HPH. They were impressed by the practice of energy saving, carbon reducing, medical waste recycling, sorting and reducing, and vegetarian diets in the hospital.

Superintendent You-Chen Chao led a group of Tzu Chi staff to Finland for the 2011 annual conference. He was also invited to give a speech. He used concrete figures to tell all the attendees that not only the hospital building is designed to collect and reuse rainwater, the idea of environment protection is fully implemented by all the Tzu Chi staff at work and in their lives.

The moment the guests stepped into Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital, their eyes were lit up. The large mosaic mural, "Buddha Cares for the Sick", occupied the tall wall in the spacious and sunlit foyer. Dr. Jie-Ying Wu led all visitors with her fluent English, describing about how the hospital implemented energy saving, carbon reducing, medical waste recycling and vegetarian diet. All the

**The guests are visiting the rain collecting channel in the basement. They learned that Tzu Chi buildings are designed with the consideration of environmental protection and energy saving.**

foreign experts learned that putting all these practices into our lives is a successful way for promoting health and achieving a green environment.

The art of Italian architecture is world renowned. Dr. Zortti Raffaele from Italy commented with a deep thought. "The atmosphere of Tzu Chi is relaxing. Entering this environment makes you forget your worry, and feel calm and happy," said Raffaele. He admired how much humanity the Tzu Chi architecture shows. He said that he would share his experience back home and encourage architects from Italy to visit the hospital personally.

American professor of Cardiology, Kenneth LaBresh, says, "We can always see patient-centered care signs in American hospitals. However, I doubt





**Dr. Jie-Ying Wu (left 2) explains to visitors how medical wastes are recycled and sorted by the staff.**

we have really put it into practice. There is no such sign in Tzu Chi hospital, but all the designs and cares are patient-centered.”

The medical experts from Thailand make up most of the group. Thai Health Administer, Somyos Deerasamee stated, “Tzu Chi is well-known of its promotion and practice of environmental protection. Today I come with a learning mind on this visit. I am repenting that Thailand’s most serious flood in 100 years was a result of greed and ignorance of environmental awareness. I hope I can bring this experience back to Thailand and promote Tzu Chi’s notion of environmental protection.”

Malaysian nurse, Mrs. Chun Teik Lan felt disbelief in the entire hospital’s practice of vegetarian diets. She said, “Our hospital used to promote vegetarian diets. It was ineffective and we almost lost all patients.” She was perplexed that though vegetarian diet is implemented, Taipei Tzu Chi still attracts many patients.

Superintendent Chao wishes that all the medical experts from Europe, Asia, Africa and America can take Tzu Chi’s notion of environmental protection about energy saving and carbon reduction back to their countries and put it into practice. Together, everyone makes a bit of effort to protect the earth.