Annual Report 2015
Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation
About Tzu Chi

Founded in Taiwan in 1966, and active in the United States since 1989, Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation is a nonprofit humanitarian organization with roughly 10 million volunteers and donors in 50 countries. Active in charity, medicine, education, and humanistic culture, but perhaps best known for disaster relief, Tzu Chi has provided aid to more than 90 countries worldwide. In the United States, Tzu Chi operates offices, schools, and medical clinics in 27 states.
TZU CHI’S FOUR MISSIONS

CHARITY
Following Tzu Chi founder Dharma Master Cheng Yen’s call to put “compassion into action,” volunteers regularly serve people in need in their local communities, including homeless, elderly, and ill individuals, as well as low-income families and students. Whenever disaster strikes, at home or abroad, volunteers provide both immediate and long-term relief efforts, always delivering relief goods directly to those in need, with two hands and a deep bow.

MEDICINE
Just like the Medicine Buddha, Tzu Chi’s medical volunteers treat the whole person, not just the disease. Even though millions more Americans are now covered by medical insurance, many still lack vision and dental coverage, or have difficulty accessing healthcare due to distance, work schedule, or lack of transportation. Tzu Chi overcomes these barriers through mobile clinics, regular medical outreaches, and multi-day clinics.

EDUCATION
Believing that tomorrow’s leaders should have strong morals as well as academic knowledge, Tzu Chi instills positive values from an early age. At Tzu Chi’s preschools, kindergartens, and elementary school, as well as two dozen bilingual weekend academies, students are provided opportunities to develop both wisdom and character. Tzu Chi volunteers also offer regular character education lessons at several public elementary schools.

HUMANISTIC CULTURE
In this media-over-spawned era, people often are lost in manufactured sensational news, and pursuing insatiable desires. As a Foundation, Tzu Chi is striving to be the cornerstone of the society where positive and inspirational news and messages that transform people’s life, and strengthen families and communities are shared. In addition, the Foundation is also an active advocate of ethical eating and promotes sustainable living. It is the ultimate goal of the Foundation to foster a healthy environment for all physically, and spiritually.
CEO’S NOTE

Whenever disaster strikes, Tzu Chi is there. So when an earthquake devastated Nepal in April 2015, it was a unique and meaningful cause for us: here we were, a Buddhist charity serving people in the birthplace of the Buddha. Volunteers from the U.S. joined those from many other countries in fundraising, and several even traveled to Nepal to help delivering charity distributions and medical care. Moving forward, Tzu Chi will help to rebuild schools damaged in the disaster. Tzu Chi USA is humbly contributing to the relief effort. This example brings up an important question: what does it mean to be a Buddhist charity? When many people think about Buddhism, they envision chanting, meditation, and Zen. These are all fine, but they’re just means to an end, not the end itself. Tzu Chi chooses its path as socially engaged Buddhism—Buddhism in Action. We still cultivate our inner peace, and internal joy, and we do so by actively serving needy people in the community. It’s a win-win.

Coming from this faith-based perspective, our goal in serving—be it in charity, medicine, education, culture, environmental protection, disaster relief, bone marrow donation, or community service—is not simply to ease physical suffering, but to provide spiritual enrichment by serving the whole person. This is how we strive to achieve the three goals of our founder, Dharma Master Cheng Yen, which are to purify people’s minds, bring society into harmony, and free the world from disasters.

We are deeply grateful to all of the organizations and individuals who work with us to help achieve these goals, many of whom are listed in the back of this report, and we look forward to forging collaborations with many more as we stride forward into the future. As you will see, many lives were touched in 2015 by the compassionate actions of volunteers who give without asking for anything in return. We invite you to join us and touch many more lives in the years to come.

Han Huang
Chief Executive Officer
Human beings go through the stages of birth, aging, illness and death, just like the seasonal changes of spring, summer, autumn and winter in nature. There is a close connection between the two. Birth, aging, illness and death are what all of us have to experience; like the seasonal changes, they go in an endless cycle. – Dharma Master Cheng Yen

Birth • Aging • Illness • Death

The Buddha observed that birth, aging, illness, and death are the four inescapable realities of life, and each of these stages brings us suffering. Tzu Chi volunteers strive to ease these sufferings. Around the country and overseas, volunteers provide care to people in need at all stages of life, from young children to those suffering the death of a loved one in the wake of a disaster.
BIRTH (ARISE)

Coming into this world as babies, we begin as blank slates in need of care, love, and attention. As we slowly grow and mature, we need parents and teachers to teach us how to live in this world and set us on the right path. Schools impart academic knowledge; however, we need them to instruct us on morals and values as well. Otherwise, how can a blank slate become a contributing member of society? As most of the school day is occupied with academics and test preparation, precious little time is left for any focus on building strong character. For students from low income families, this void is felt even more acutely, as parents are often working long hours or multiple jobs to make ends meet. But through Tzu Chi’s biweekly character education classes in several Southern California public elementary schools, students have a chance to learn virtues that will guide them through the rest of their lives.

During a lesson on Giving at one school in San Bernardino, fourth grade students were taught that people of any age can give by offering help to others. Later, when the students were asked to share, Vincent told everyone his giving experience. As he and his mother walked into a restaurant for dinner one night, they noticed two hungry young people standing outside the restaurant, begging for food. Rather than continuing into the restaurant, they decided to go back home and cook something from their refrigerator, and give the money they planned to spend on dinner to these two people instead. Vincent clearly learned the lesson: no matter how young you are or how little you have, there’s always something you can give.
Preschools & Elementary

To equip young people for success and pave the way to a brighter future, Tzu Chi provides students with bilingual education and a strong moral foundation at four preschools and one elementary school. The schools, located in Southern California and Texas, offer children high-quality academic instruction in both English and Mandarin Chinese, set in a nurturing environment based on the principles of gratitude, respect, and love.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Opened</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td>Monrovia, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td>Dallas, TX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td>Walnut, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Monrovia, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td></td>
<td>Houston, TX</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Preschool & Elementary Students](chart)
Tzu Chi Academy

Tzu Chi Academy not only instructs students in Chinese language and culture, but also focuses on character development with frequent opportunities to do good deeds. The first school opened in 1994; there are now twenty-three academies spread across thirteen states, as well as ten Junior Academies and Children Learning Classes. Each school gives students a weekly opportunity to nurture their hearts and minds while developing kindness, compassion, joy, and giving.

Character Education

Helping children build a strong moral foundation through effective character education is more important than ever before, but less and less likely to be found in most public schools. Since 2006, Tzu Chi has partnered with schools in low-income communities to provide curriculum focused on the virtues of respect, responsibility, thankfulness, giving, compassion, courage, contentment, emotional management, filial piety, and tolerance. In 2015, these lessons reached more than one thousand students at five elementary schools.
Student Services

All across the country, Tzu Chi volunteers help low-income, underprivileged elementary school students focus on their studies and thrive. Tailored to each area’s individual circumstances, Tzu Chi’s Happy Campus Program provides after-school tutoring, weekend food backpacks, distribution of school supplies, and more. Tzu Chi also provides scholarships to college students to help them achieve their educational dreams.

Tzu Chi Youth Association

The teenage years are a key stage of development, so it’s vital that positive values and unconditional giving are instilled in young people at this early age. In sixteen local chapters of the Tzu Chi Youth Association (Tzu Shao), high school students meet at least twice a month to learn the compassionate spirit of Tzu Chi and apply it through service learning projects led by the students themselves.

Youth Association Participants: Tzu Shao Students

- 573 in 2012
- 618 in 2013
- 843 in 2014
- 866 in 2015
AGING (EXIST)

As we age, we encounter various forms of suffering. Some are unavoidable, some are inflicted, and others are self-imposed. Regardless of suffering’s source, we often need support from others: financial, material, medical, and spiritual. For years, Tzu Chi volunteers have been meeting the material needs of people in need throughout their communities by distributing cash cards, hot meals, fresh and packaged food, blankets, scarves, scholarships, and more. Further, volunteers provide much-needed spiritual care to those who need it by paying frequent visits to senior homes, convalescent and care centers, homeless shelters, blind centers, and more to provide entertainment and companionship. They also regularly visit charity clients throughout the country—both those requiring financial assistance and those in need of company. In recent years, volunteers have also spread their spiritual support to jail and prison inmates—a group in particular need of guidance and support—by donating books, hosting discussion groups, and maintaining regular pen pal correspondence. Kent, a former inmate in Las Vegas, Nevada, was first introduced to Tzu Chi through a study group at his detention center in February 2015. He was given copies of a book by Tzu Chi’s founder, Dharma Master Cheng Yen, as well as one of Tzu Chi’s magazines. Moved by what he learned about how eating animals is harmful to the planet, he started to request vegetarian meals to do his part to save the earth. By March 2016, shortly after his release and just one year after meeting Tzu Chi, Kent was already giving back to the community. Wearing a Tzu Chi vest, he served hot meals to residents of the local blind center alongside other volunteers—deeply grateful for the opportunity and determined to make a positive difference.
Community Services

Tzu Chi volunteers dedicate themselves to serving communities in need by providing compassion and care to those suffering due to poverty, homelessness, and hunger. In neighborhoods nationwide, volunteers regularly visit nursing homes, senior centers, homeless shelters, and other institutions and provide distributions of food, clothing, and blankets throughout the community.

Winter Distributions
Patients, low-income families, and homeless shelter residents served

- $38,360 in cash cards
- 9,002 People
- 2,951 scarves
- 1,395 blankets
- 473 toys & books

Food Banks
Patients, low-income families, and homeless shelter residents served

- 35,170

Hot Meals
Meals distributed to homeless people, hospitalized children, seniors, and parolees

- 71,998
Family Services

Any number of factors can suddenly plunge a family into tough economic times, including loss of employment, illness, family troubles, and disaster. Regardless of the cause, volunteers pay personal visits to families in need to understand their particular circumstances, and to determine whether short- or long-term cash relief is needed. Tzu Chi also offers free tax filing services for qualifying families.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

Taxes Filed for 1,319 Families

Charity Cases

4,021 Families Visited

$148,780.21 Distributed
Inspiration for Inmates

The wise words of Tzu Chi’s founder Dharma Master Cheng Yen—especially as collected in Jing Si Aphorisms and other books—have long provided inspiration and guidance to countless people around the world. As prison and jail inmates are in especially great need of companionship and encouragement, volunteers expanded previous inmate support programs to begin a nationwide book donation and pen pal program in late 2013. As of the end of 2015, 362 inmates have written to Tzu Chi volunteers from 35 states.

from 2013 to 2015
Books Donated: 5769
Letters Sent: 732
Letters Received: 748
Continuing Education

Learning does not end when one becomes an adult; education is a lifelong endeavor. Today, Tzu Chi offers dozens of continuing education classes at sixteen locations in seven states, where community members are invited to learn various practical life skills, as well as techniques of caring for body, mind, and spirit. Through these courses, participants enrich their lives and form lasting friendships.

Senior Home Visits

Senior homes and centers for individuals with physical and mental disabilities can be a blessing for residents and their families. Yet, at the same time, residents can come to feel detached from friends and family and insulated from the outside world. Tzu Chi volunteers of all ages regularly visit dozens of these facilities all across the country to share music, games, and companionship, reminding residents that they are loved, cared for, and never forgotten.

Frequency of Facility Visits

- Monthly: 54
- Weekly or Biweekly: 13
- Bimonthly or Quarterly: 17
- Annual or Semiannual: 7

Type of Facility Visited

- Nursing Home: 53
- Medical Facility: 15
- Special Needs Facility: 11
- Shelter: 4
- Other: 8
Tzu Chi at the United Nations

Tzu Chi Foundation operates on an international level and has representation in the global community, where NGOs and INGOs collaborate to share resources, experiences, and expertise. Tzu Chi brings its organizational, programmatic, and spiritual missions onto the global stage, showcasing the spirit, work, and experiences of its volunteers. Giving a voice to the volunteers will not only expand the reach, influence, and recognition of Tzu Chi, but will also develop relationships and partnerships with other local, national, and international humanitarian actors and organizations, strengthening Tzu Chi’s operational capacities while spreading and cultivating the seeds of love.

15 Working groups
12 Side Events, Panels, and Presentations
8 Press Conferences
5 Exhibits

Ethical Eating Day

January 11th is a compassion and faith-based movement initiated by Tzu Chi to help combat climate change through a vegetarian diet, one that is both sustainable and ethical.

42,000 pledges in 2016
800 pledges in 2015
118 countries reached
ILLNESS (DECAY)

Illness is unavoidable, and it impacts all people at one time or another. Even though health coverage has been extended to millions more Americans over the past few years, many are still unable to afford the high costs of medical care. This is especially true of dental and vision care. Many migrants, especially, are left with few options. In California’s Central Valley, migrant farmworkers grow the fresh fruits and vegetables that feed the nation, but they have little access to medical care to maintain their own health. Lacking medical insurance, surviving on minimum wage or worse, and living without regular access to transportation, many are left to suffer in silence as treatable conditions spiral out of control. To help these people, Tzu Chi’s mobile clinics have been driving from town to town, taking care directly to the communities that need it for more than fifteen years now. In the small farming town of Yettem, the entire Lupercio family was in desperate need of glasses. Mrs. Lupercio complained of frequent headaches from straining her eyes, her younger daughter suffered in her studies because she couldn’t read what was on the board, and her older daughter was filled with anxiety every time she drove to work because struggled to see the other cars on the road. But ever since the Tzu Chi Vision Mobile Clinic visited Yettem in April 2015, the Lupercios’ prayers have now been answered. As Mr. Lupercio told the volunteers “I give thanks to God for this opportunity that’s been given to me and my daughters. My whole family has glasses. We’ll be able to see everything very well. Thanks to God and to you all for helping us.”
Community Clinics

Tzu Chi Medical Foundation operates four permanent clinics in Southern California and Hawaii, providing primary health care, family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, immunizations, gynecology and mammograms, ophthalmology and optometry, vision care, ENT, minor surgery, diet and nutrition consultations, free prescription medications, health fair and outreach programs, cancer and diabetic support groups, dental services, acupuncture, and medical social work. Services are low-cost or free for qualifying patients.
Remote Outreach

Tzu Chi’s seven mobile clinics offer comprehensive medical, dental, vision, and cancer screening services to patients who have no insurance or access to ongoing medical care, the majority of whom have family incomes below 200% of the federal poverty level. Tzu Chi’s three dental, two vision, one medical, and one prostate cancer screening mobile clinics serve migrant farm workers, the homeless, the working poor, uninsured students, and others with barriers to medical care throughout California.

![Mobile Vans Diagram]

**2015 Services Provided at 238 Outreaches**

- **3,506** Dental
- **3,144** Vision
- **2,325** Medical
- **6,451** Prostate Cancer Screening

Major Events

Since first partnering with Remote Area Medical (RAM) on an eight-day clinic event in 2009, Tzu Chi has regularly collaborated with other organizations to hold major multi-day events that serve thousands of patients in need. In 2015, major events in California included the 5th Annual Care Harbor LA in downtown Los Angeles, the 4th Annual Care 4 a Healthy IE in San Bernardino, and the 3rd Annual Healthy Fresno.
DEATH (VOID)

When natural and man-made disasters strike, they leave widespread death and devastation in their wake. But the Buddha taught us that the cycle of life continues on past death. As Master Cheng Yen has said, “Death is the new beginning of birth, and birth is the beginning of death. Birth and death, living and dying, are all part of the same cycle.” After disasters, Tzu Chi volunteers rush in to provide material relief, medical care, and peace of mind to survivors.

In 2015, Tzu Chi volunteers assisted survivors of the earthquake in Nepal and the Ebola epidemic in Sierra Leone, as well as those affected by nearly three dozen local disasters here in the United States. But they do not leave when immediate relief ends. Instead, volunteers remain by the sides of those affected, helping them to carry on into the next stage of their life. Though more than five years have passed since the 2010 Haiti earthquake punished life of one quarter of a million people, Tzu Chi volunteers are still in the country, building schools, feeding hospital patients, and bringing forth a brighter future by educating and nourishing the next generation. For young Alexis Francia, the years before the earthquake were extremely difficult, as she suffered from malnutrition from an early age. Her parents went out every day to bring back food for her and her siblings, but they often returned empty-handed.

The earthquake brought Tzu Chi into her community. She was enrolled in the Happy Campus Program, which provides tuition support, tutoring, and hot meals for students from low-income families. Since then, she has become a well-nourished student who is able to focus on her studies. Where she once longed for a daily meal, she now dreams of contributing her knowledge and skills to make her country a better place.
Continuing Care for Haiti

Since the devastating earthquake that struck near Port-au-Prince on January 12, 2010, Tzu Chi has never left the side of the Haitian people. Understanding that education is the best hope for the next generation, Tzu Chi in 2015 unveiled the fourth school the Foundation has rebuilt in Haiti—Centre Préscolaire Carmen René Durocher in Solino. Volunteers also continued to provide regular afterschool tutoring, rice distributions, and hot meal services throughout the year.

Durocher Preschool
Ground Breaking: October 26, 2012
Dedication Ceremony: July 29, 2015

- 2 Stories
- 9 Classrooms
- 280 Student Capacity

Rice Distributions
29,909 families

Hot Meals at General Hospital
31,869 meals
Ebola Support for Sierra Leone

During the West Africa Ebola outbreak that began in 2014, nearly 30,000 were infected, and more than 11,000 killed by the deadly disease, with more infected in Sierra Leone than in any other country. To respond to this crisis, Tzu Chi teamed up with Healey International Relief Foundation and Caritas Freetown to provide aid to West Africa for the first time, holding relief distributions in March, July, and December 2015. Relief remains ongoing.

Disaster Relief

Natural disasters leave death and destruction in their wake. But Tzu Chi volunteers follow quickly behind, providing compassionate care to those left behind, by providing cash, blankets, and daily necessities to help survivors through the initial period of grief and uncertainty. While the United States was blessed to be relatively free from major disasters in 2015, volunteers still responded to three dozen local disasters in eight states and the island of Saipan, and also helped raise funds for survivors of the April earthquake in Nepal.

Disasters

- Flood: 5
- Tornado: 6
- Mudslide: 1
- Wildfire: 1

Debit cards: 2836
Blankets: 1986
Rice: 29,390 kg
Portable Beds: 1512
Stethoscopes: 700
Blankets: 3530
Shoes: 37,494 pairs
Latex Exam Gloves: 342,000

$686,900
Memorial Services

In Buddhism, death is seen not as the end, but as one stage in the cycle of life, one step on the path to rebirth. Yet even with this knowledge, those who are dying may feel pain and anguish, and pain is felt no less deeply by their friends and family. To help calm the hearts of both the dying and their loved ones, Tzu Chi volunteers often take turns chanting the Buddha’s name for the dying or the deceased as a way to bring comfort and consolation. Volunteers then attend the memorial service to offer their love, companionship, and support to family and friends in their time of need.
Financial Highlights
For the year of 2015

SUPPORT AND REVENUE: (In Thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount (in Thousands)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>25,961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Services &amp; Tuition</td>
<td>2,562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>2,184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE</strong></td>
<td><strong>30,707</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EXPENSES: (In Thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount (in Thousands)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charitable Services</td>
<td>2,337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Services</td>
<td>4,213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>6,007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanistic Culture</td>
<td>2,348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Relief</td>
<td>8,036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Note)</td>
<td>1,544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management and General</td>
<td>2,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENSES</strong></td>
<td><strong>27,234</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Other expenses include the foundation’s environmental protection and community volunteerism projects.