

• Appendix 1 •

Tzu Chi Free Clinics

The Tzu Chi International Medical Association (TIMA) was established in October, 1996, consisting of Tzu Chi volunteers and medical professionals from hospitals and clinics all over the island. They regularly held free clinics and conducted free physical examinations for residents of remote areas, street people, and aborigines living in cities. With Tzu Chi's internationalization, overseas branches of TIMA have been established in many countries.

TIMA currently has 17 branches in nine countries, including Taiwan (north, central and south regions), the US (Northern California, Southern California, New York, New Jersey, Phoenix City, and Hawaii), Brazil (Sao Paulo), Dominican Republic (Santo Domingo), Indonesia (Jakarta), Vietnam (Ho Chi Minh City), Singapore, the Philippines (Manila) and Malaysia (Penang). The Northern California branch has a free clinic center in Los Angeles which provides regular clinics and home visits to low-income patients.

Each TIMA branch conducts regular free clinics at fixed sites, or rotates its services among different places. When a branch launches a large-scale free clinic, members from neighboring countries help staff the clinics. In recent years, in support of Tzu Chi's international relief efforts, TIMA members have also held free clinics at numerous disaster areas. This has broadened the scope of Tzu Chi's international medical aid to help more people.

In addition to international emergency medical aid, TIMA implements long-term programs to recruit local medical and non-medical volunteers. The objective is to set up medical stations in areas with insufficient medical resources to provide long-term assistance.

Tzu Chi International Medical Association URL:

<http://tima.tzuchi.net/tima.nsf>