

Thai University Awards Honorary Doctorate to Master Cheng Yen

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation

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On October 18, the Chairman of the Council of Naresuan University in Thailand presented an honorary doctorate to Master Cheng Yen in recognition of the work of the Tzu Chi Foundation.

Professor Dr Krasae Chanawongse gave the doctorate, in Social Development, to the Master at a ceremony at the Hall of Jing Si in Hualien, east Taiwan, the home of the foundation. He praised Tzu Chi for its compassion, how it had put this into practice in the world and for the contribution of all its members around the world in helping those in need.

Naresuan University is based in the north of Thailand, with more than 30,000 students. It is a center for training specialists in medicine, hygiene, health sciences, pharmaceutical sciences, social sciences and tourism information and management. It has also specialized in research in natural sciences, the combination of natural and western medicine and the values and lifestyle of the elderly. In 2014, it became a sister college of Tzu Chi University.

The ceremony was held in the international room of the Hall of Jing Si; it was simple and solemn. In his speech, Dr Chanawongse said that Master Cheng Yen had founded Tzu Chi to promote the four missions of charity, medicine, education and humanist culture. The work of charity combines Chinese and Western medicine to care for those who suffer. The education mission produces medical professionals with a sense of compassion; the mission of humanist culture aims to purify the hearts of people. Taken together, these missions create a more harmonious society.



Starting from 2010, Naresuan University sent people to see and study the four missions; on May 22 2014, it became a sister college with Tzu Chi University. Because it acknowledges Tzu Chi's spirit of compassion and praises its combination of medicine and humanist culture, Naresuan worked with the Thai branch of Tzu Chi. In hospital affiliated to it, it started to train hospital volunteers and recruit local people in this field and instill in them the spirit of compassion and Great Love.

For her part, Master Cheng Yen thanked Naresuan University for its recognition of the work of Tzu Chi members around the world. "Through their action in society, they are giving selflessly to others; so this award is for all of them," she said. In 1995, the foundation began to work in the north of Thailand, to assist Chinese who had been stranded there after the end of the civil war in 1949 and their descendants. It built a Tzu Chi school in Chiang Mai in northern Thailand; it started to accept students in 2005. There were six of its graduates at the ceremony in Hualien, among them Liu Zhi-da, who was one of the first to graduate from the school. He is in his

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second year at Naresuan, in the department of English and American language; he was in charge of all the translation at the event.

Master Cheng Yen said: “Time can heal everything. These children from Thailand speak Chinese very well. The Tzu Chi school in Chiang Mai pays great attention to humanist culture and educates its students very well. The fact that Naresuan recruits students from the school is an affirmation of its work. It recruits students from many schools. I hope that there can be many more exchanges between Tzu Chi University and Naresuan University.”

From 2011, Naresuan started to give honorary doctorates, to honor people for their contribution in different sectors. Among them, Master Cheng Yen is the first from Taiwan.

The Tzu Chi Foundation said that Naresuan recruited talented students from many schools, among them the Tzu Chi Chiang Mai school. Currently, seven of its graduates are studying there in different disciplines, including nursing and architecture. In addition, the university plans during this visit to Taiwan to visit the volunteer operations of the foundation and hopes to take back to Thailand its spirit of humanist culture, environmental protection, practicality and spirit of volunteerism.