

向下紮根・往上結果

——中小學在萬佛聖城三十年的經驗——

法界佛教總會董事釋近梵

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育良小學、培德中學創辦人宣化上人，中國東北吉林省人。幼年家貧失學，至十五歲始入私塾讀書，由於體會出讀書貴在「專心」之訣竅，在兩年半的時間即學貫四書、五經等古書及十餘本醫書。有感於自己書讀得太晚，貧窮人家甚至沒有受教育之機會，因此自十八歲（1936 年）開始，在自家創辦公益學校，免費教導鄰近三十餘位貧苦兒童讀書。這是上人創辦義學之始。

1962 年上人由香港赤手空拳到美國弘揚佛法，初期住在一個沒有窗戶的地下室中，自稱「墓中僧」，待緣而化。1968 年應華盛頓州立大學師生之請，開設暑假楞嚴講修班，九十六天後結業時，五位美籍青年請求剃度出家，隨後到臺灣受具足戒，這是法界佛教總會在美國建立僧團之始。由於上人德行感召，追隨者逐漸增多，僧團日益壯大，分支道場亦相繼成立。

上人有感於世風日下，道德漸趨淪亡，唯有提倡教育，才能振衰起敝，挽救世道人心。因此於 1976 年，在三藩市國際譯經學院成立育良小學，顧名思義，就是要培育優良的兒童。學校以「孝」為宗旨，目的是要教育幼童做人的根本道理，尤其在西方國家，提倡孝道是最契機的方法。

一開始，只有八位 4 到 8 歲的兒童，校長則是上人的美籍在家女弟子易果參（Terri Nicholson），教職員則包含了幾位比丘尼。「創辦學校這個理念既新鮮且令人振奮；我們不但幫助把佛法帶入西方國家，還建立學校，教導孩子們如何做個好人。」在慶祝建校三十周年的書上，易果參如此回憶著。

1978 年學校遷入距三藩市北部 110 英里，清淨寬廣，占地 488 英畝的萬佛聖城。繼而於 1981 年成立培德中學，以「忠孝」為宗旨，除了孝道之外，進一步教育學生忠於國家，對己盡責。學校除了加州政府規定的正式課程外，並以中國「孝、悌、忠、信、禮、義、廉、恥」古八德來教導學生，使他們將來能成為

卓越的公民，進而影響整個世界的風氣。瑜珈市的市民知道有育良、培德之後，逐漸地把子女送來就讀，學生人數因而增多。爲了讓學生專心課業，1982 年開始採男女分校制。

除了正規的學術課程外，佛學課、打坐課、道德課，都是本校最具特色的課程。學校以中文爲第二語言，弟子規、論語等儒家思想，是教導學生的主要素材，讓學生在做人處事、待人接物方面有行爲之準繩。並每年參與北加州中文學校聯合會所舉辦的學術賽，如演講、作文、翻譯、書法、繪畫等等不同的項目。此外也參加中國文化常識比賽，學生在這些比賽中，除了學習更廣泛的常識外，更能拓展視野，與其他學校學生做學術交流。課外尚有國樂、舞龍、舞獅、書法、太極拳、民族舞蹈等極具中國傳統文化之社團活動。

陳曼億是畢業生嘉凡的母親，她說：「中國文化的薰陶，是我和許多家長送孩子來聖城求學的另一個主要原因。她們有許多是第一次觸摸中國樂器，第一次學習中國舞蹈。看著這些孩子漸漸地在優質的傳統文化洗禮下，越來越有屬於中國女性的典雅氣質，心裏就有說不出的感動。嘉凡最大的收穫之一，是代表學校參加中國文化常識比賽。這個寶貴的經驗讓她常常津津樂道，反復回味。這個經驗已爲她的人生寫下豐富的一頁，也把她的中文和中國文化常識，帶進了另一個讓她無比欣慰的層次。」

自 1992 年起，上人以「老吾老以及人之老，幼吾幼以及人之幼」的悲懷，指示學校每年在春季舉辦懷少節，邀請鄰近學校學生約四百人同樂；在秋季則舉辦敬老節，邀請社區內的老人到萬佛聖城內，由學生表演各項節目，並提供美味可口的素食來招待嘉賓。這兩項活動讓學生們身體力行「敬老懷少」的美德，已受到瑜珈市民衆的肯定與響應。暑假期間則舉辦青少年夏令營，每年以不同的主題和課程，讓青少年能在佛教道場體驗不同的生活方式，深受歡迎。

教育是最神聖的工作與使命，而老師是教育成敗的關鍵。老師若能以身作則，必能教育出品學兼優的學生。上人以自身創辦義學的經驗，提倡義務教學，因此於 1992 年招募義務老師，成員有出家人與在家人，他們有些完全不受薪，有些則支領基本生活津貼而已，他們不會爲要求加薪而罷課，成爲本校特色之一。現在義務老師分別來自美國、英國、西班牙、中國大陸和臺灣、馬來西亞、

越南、日本、南美等地，越來越多的老師願獻身於這項神聖的工作。

現任法界佛總會會長的比丘恒實法師說：「要學佛，首先要做個好人，所謂『人道盡，佛道成。』因此修行佛道始於良好的人格，這正是二十一世紀教育當務之急。在學校，我們不要求學生教條口號要應答如流，也不要求他們背誦經典。我們只要求他們尊師重道、報答親恩。這種孝順之德乃為大智大悲之本。我曾在育良小學教三年級，自忖這算得上是我修行中最艱鉅的一項任務。學生無時無刻不在考驗我的耐心，每一堂課莫不迫使我將創意和想像力發揮到極點。」

美國籍的比丘恒順法師，自 1994 年即在男校任教，他說：「根據上人的辦學指導願景，我發現要灌輸學生做好人的基本道德，就首先要自己修行。例如，如果我對人不高興或發脾氣時，就難以教導學生之間和睦相處。老師以身作則很重要。」又說：「很早我就發現，面對學生，自己必須保持一個標準：即完全誠實，敞開心胸。如果你要邊帶個假面具，邊隱瞞甚麼的話，他們會很快看穿。在教育學生向善的同時，也培養自己的內在道德——我認為這是個人修行與栽培品德的最好方法了。」

在童年時憧憬著做幼稚園老師的比丘尼恒音法師，當她來到萬佛聖城後，她的夢想一一實現了，現在更肩負著女校校長的重任。她說：「在萬佛聖城，孩子們可以保持他們的純真，並不會因為做一個自己想做的人而受到嘲笑。這是一個年輕人學習與同學、家人及大自然和諧相處的地方；是一個年輕人深深以人類幸福與地球安寧為己任的地方。因此，在他們長大成人後會成為改善社會的一股動力。」因為恒音法師致力於教育的誠心，現在她的父母葉祖堯博士夫婦在退休後，也來到萬佛聖城做無私的奉獻。

葉教授夫婦在萬佛聖城，盡己所能，在多方面貢獻他們的經驗與智慧。他們說：「當家庭教育普遍的缺乏時，想要有效的教育出有用之才，學校不得不雙管齊下，品德與學術並重。但要這樣做實在是相當困難，不但教材得大篇幅的修整，要找能做學生榜樣、有愛心、有品德的師資更是不易，絕對不是有幾千學生的公立學校在短時間內辦得到的。育良小學與培德中學就是一所品德與學術並重的學校。學校的老師都是極富愛心的修行人，絕大多數都是義務老師。」

在馬來西亞高中教數學與物理的顏亞日，已經擔任義務老師十六個年頭，並

曾任男校校長，他說：「一九九二年，我妻子帶了四個孩子來萬佛聖城。上人看到孩子們，對著妻子微笑，說孩子們可以念這裏的育良小學。妻子天真地問：『那我丈夫在馬來西亞怎麼辦？』上人回答：『他可以來當義務老師啊！』我們立即幫孩子們註冊上學。來年，我來學校擔任義務老師。」現在顏老師的子女已紛紛從大學畢業，或取得碩士學位，或已成為合格教師，小女兒今年即將從培德女校畢業，並已得到太平洋大學之獎學金。「這是我從未想像會成真的美夢！」義務老師制度徹底改變了顏老師及其家人的人生。

西班牙籍的葛西亞老師，在五年前，帶著妻子和兩個未滿六歲的兒子來到萬佛聖城。他說：「大約十六年前，我來到美國。很快就意識到這裏的教育系統，並不比西班牙的優越。我常常讀到關於毒品、打群架、少年懷孕，及校園中設置金屬檢測器等。並且問題不只在於學生，教師們走出教室要求提高薪水，而學生則被丟在一邊沒有課上。」「當好像看不到希望時，我卻發現了宣公上人辦學校的遠見。他完全看清了現今教育系統的問題所在，並提出了他的解決方法。這裏沒有什麼火箭科學，只是純粹的直覺性智慧。」這是年輕的葛西亞，以及他出生於中國新疆的妻子張敏博士到萬佛聖城的動機。

根據創辦學校的理念，以及絕大部份義務老師熱心的投入，培德中學期許每位畢業生都能夠達到四種教育目標：

1. 具有良好的品德，和諧的處世態度，以及領導溝通的能力；
2. 透過打坐及其他靈性的教導與學習，啟發內在本具的智慧；
3. 在學術方面發展各人的潛能和人文、科學、藝術方面的才華；
4. 具有全球性的宏觀胸襟，去欣賞和尊重不同的文化和宗教。

良好的教育環境，以及明確的教育目標，吸引了有心的家長們把子女送到萬佛聖城來接受教育。一位家長陳果崙說：「美國友人問我，怎麼捨得讓兩個女兒去那麼遠的地方讀書？我說：『萬佛聖城有清淨幽美的環境，注重道德教育，又有佛法、中文、打坐課程，這種完美的教育是別處找不到的。爲了她們好，有些東西是須割捨的。我們的小孩即使現在和我們在一起，上大學時不也多半要離開我們嗎？她們不過是提早幾年離開罷了！』」

1991 年朱建和居士放棄了外交官的工作，偕妻子帶著年僅兩歲多的女兒，開了九天的車，從東岸華府橫越美國來到萬佛聖城當義工，主要是讓女兒接受良好的教育。他說：「每一位育良小學和培德中學學生都是最幸運的天之驕子，因為他們能夠在最清淨、最重視品德的環境之中，培養完整的人格並接受優良的學術教育。」現在女兒已經就讀東岸之大學，他回憶說：「回顧這十幾年來，果凡在育良小學和培德中學的求學生涯，她不僅學到尊師重道、戒殺護生、與人分享等為人處事的觀念與良好習慣，也度過了沒有毒品暴力種種染汙的青少年時期。我們經常聽到人家說，果凡小時候總是鎖著眉頭，現在可是常帶微笑的開朗女孩了。」

2007 年畢業的劉親智同學，是父母在 1994 年把他從馬來西亞帶到萬佛聖城，從幼稚園到高中，接受一系列的完整教育，父親做義工，母親則在學校幫忙行政工作。他以優良的成績與表現，得到普林斯頓大學四年全額獎學金。去年他在大學裏首度成立佛學社，開始分享他從小到大所學習到的佛法，目前有十餘個同學加入。這是畢業生把自己所得到的體驗，擴大到校外的成果。他的父親劉德福居士說：「宣公上人常說讀書是爲了明理，不是爲了名利。我們希望孩子們真真實實地朝這個方向走。我已經虛度了大半輩子的工夫，不希望孩子們再步著我的後塵，走那麼多的冤枉路。想到這裏，不禁爲自己在 1994 年所做的抉擇而慶幸。」

2007 年也是培德中學意義重大的一年，學校通過了美國西部院校協會（WASC）的嚴格評鑑，成爲全美第一所佛教立案的合格高中，畢業生的成績將被全美各大學院校所接受，並可簽發國際學生簽證。學生在此薰陶和訓練之後，畢業生已有多人進入加州大學柏克萊等各分校、史丹福大學、哥倫比亞大學、普林斯頓大學、麻省理工學院等名校就讀。有些學生於完成學業後，即回到母校加入義務教師的行列。

事實上，育良小學和培德中學是超級迷你學校，從幼稚園到高中大約只有一百七十人，但是投入教學的老師卻超過四十位，大家齊心協力爲教育而努力。這種特殊的教育環境，不但讓學生受到佛法的薰陶，也學習了中國儒家的思想，並且不和現代學術脫節，培育出更健康的下一代。這種教育，表面上似乎是教育了學生，事實上還教育了老師和家長，也會教育更多有緣的人。

學生的來源已逐漸擴大到美國各州及加拿大，以及亞洲的中國大陸、臺灣、香港、新加坡、馬來西亞、泰國、菲律賓，還有歐洲的西班牙、法國、荷蘭、比利時、盧森堡等國家和地區。這些分佈在世界各地的學生，將會把所學帶回去。誠如義務老師陳威宏所說：「我們的學校雖然規模不大，人數不多。但是每一位學生就好比一顆種子，只要盡心盡力地培植他們，將來每一顆種子都會變成一棵大樹；當這些大樹開花結果時，也將是百千萬億新種子誕生之時。」

Planting the Root Down Below, Producing the Fruit Up Above

A Thirty-Year Experience of the Elementary and High School of City of Ten Thousand Buddha

Addressed by Shi Jin Fan
of Dharma Realm Buddhist Association
at the Second Buddhist Forum on March 29, 2009.

Venerable Master Hsuan Hua of Jilin, Dongbei China was the founder of Instilling Goodness Elementary School and Developing Virtue High School. Because his family was poor when he was young, he didn't attend school until he was 15; and from there, he realized that the key to studying is "concentration". And so, he was able to learn all Four Books, Five Classics and read various Medicine books in 2.5 years. Because he himself started school at a later age, and knowing that poor families couldn't afford to send their children for schooling, at age 18 (in 1936), he established a school at home for the 30 or so children around his neighbourhood, and he taught for free. This was the start of Venerable Master establishing a free education.

In 1962, the Venerable Master empty-handedly came to America from Hong Kong to propagate Buddhadharma. In the beginning, he lived in a basement without any windows, calling himself "Monk in the Graveyard", and waiting for the right condition to transform. In 1968, he started a Shurangama Sutra Summer class that was requested by the students of Washington University; and 96 days later, 5 Americans requested to shave their head and leave the home life under the Master, and later receiving the complete precept. This was the start of the Sangha community of Dharma Realm Buddhist Association. Because of the virtue of the Master that had inspired many, followers had gradually increased, the Sangha community was expanding day by day and eventually, the branches were established one after the other.

At that time, the Venerable Master felt that the moral values of the society is worsening day by day, and moral ethics is gradually perishing. And the only way to save the value of this world is to advocate proper education. And so, in 1976, he established Instilling Goodness Elementary School at the Buddhist Translation Society located in San Francisco. The name of the school means to instill goodness to the children. The school emphasizes "filial piety" as its principle. Its aim is to teach children the foundation of being a human being a young age; especially in the Western countries, promoting filial piety is the most basic way.

In the beginning, there were only 8 students (age 4-8). Terri Nicholson, an American laity, was the principal of the school; and the staffs were few Bhikshunis (nuns). "The idea of establishing a school was new and inspiring; not only could we help bring in Buddhadharma in the Western world, we could also build a school to teach children to be good." This was Terri Nicholson's comment during the 30th anniversary of the school.

In 1978, the school was moved to City of Ten Thousand Buddha. It is very clean and big about 488 acre, and is located just 110 miles North of San Francisco. And in 1981 Developing Virtue High School was established, with "Loyalty & Filial" as its base principle. Other than filial piety, the next step in teaching the student is to be loyal to their country and to be responsible on their own action. The school, other than teaching the courses regulated by the government of California, it also teaches the Eight Virtues "filial piety, brotherhood, loyal, trustworthy, propriety, justice, incorruptibility, humility" from the Chinese classical to the students, so that they'd come out to become a remarkable citizen in the future, and influence the world. The town's people of Ukiah, when they heard about instilling goodness and developing virtue, started sending their children to the school; and the number of students gradually increases. In 1982, to encourage the students to focus more on their studies, the girls only school and boys only school were established.

Other than the regular curriculum, the school also teaches Buddhism, Meditation, and Moral & Virtue classes. The school uses Chinese as its second language. It also uses "The Rules of Being a Student" and the "Confucian Analects" thinking as its main source for teaching material; so that the student would be provided with a proper ground rule in how to treat other people and deal with things. In addition, every year, the school would also participate in the competition organize by the Chinese School Association of California. The competition includes public speech, essay writing, translating, Chinese calligraphy, drawing, etc. Furthermore the school also participates in the competition on the general knowledge of Chinese Culture. These competitions help the students to develop and increase their view by making academic exchanges with students from other schools. Other extracurricular activities of the school includes, Chinese musical band, dragon dance, lion dance, Chinese calligraphy, taichi, folk dance and other Chinese cultural activities.

Chen ManYi, the mother of an alumnus Jia Fan said: "Learning Chinese cultures are one of the few reasons why other parents and I send our children to study at the City of Ten Thousand Buddha. For a lot of these kids, it would be their first time to touch a Chinese musical instrument, their first time to learn Chinese folk dance. Watching these children slowly learning traditional Chinese culture, I see that they're starting to show more and more of their Chinese elegant feminine side. And I truly appreciate that. Jia Fan's biggest achievement was to represent the school to compete on the general knowledge of the Chinese Culture. She would always bring up this precious moment over and over again. This experience is an important page of her life and it also brought her Chinese knowledge to another level."

In 1992, the Venerable Master, using the idea of "Honouring all the elders as we do with our own parents, caring for all children as we do with our own child", instructed the school to hold a "Cherishing Youth Day" event in the spring, and invited the students of neighboring school, 400 of them to participate. And in the fall, the "Respecting of Elders" event was held. The elders in the town were invited to attend this event at the City of Ten

Thousand Buddha. The students performed for them and wonderful delicious vegetarian dishes were served to all the guests. These two activities give the students a personal experience of the wonderful virtue of "Respecting Elders and Cherishing the Youths"; and both are received and highly accepted by the town's people in Ukiah.

Every summer, a summer camp is being held; and each year the theme and activities are different. The camp gives young people a chance to experience a different lifestyle in the monastery. And it is quite a popular camp.

Education is the most sacred work and mission, and teachers are the key to the success or failure of it. If the teacher would set a good example, then the students would come out great, excelling both in conduct and academic. The Venerable Master used his own experience in starting and providing free education, had promoted voluntary teaching; that's why in 1992, he started recruiting voluntary teachers. The staffs were comprised of left home people and lay people. Some of the staff would completely not take any salary, while some would only take what's needed for their own basic expenses. They wouldn't go on strike because of money - a distinct feature of the school. Currently, volunteer teachers come from different parts of the world - US, England, Spain, China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Vietnam, Japan, South America etc. More and more teachers are willing to devote themselves in this sacred work.

Current appointed Head of Dharma Realm Buddhist Association, Reverend Heng Sure said: "If we want to learn about Buddhism, the first thing we should do is to be a good person. It is said: "If one does his best as a person, he has already accomplished the path to Buddhahood." That's why, to cultivate the path to Buddhahood, one must first have a wholesome characteristic. This is in fact the highest priority of education in the 21st century. In the City (City of Ten Thousand Buddha), we do not require the students to be fluent in all sort of dogmas, nor do we require them to

memorize and recite the sutras. We only require them to be respectful to all elders and teachers, to repay the kindness of their parents. This kind of filial piety virtue is the foundation of great wisdom and great compassion. I once taught the Grade 3 students of Instilling Goodness Elementary School; considering it, I could say that it was the most difficult assignment in my cultivation. The students were testing my patience at all times; and every class, I was forced to bring out my creativity and imagination to the extreme point.”

An American Bhikshu, Dharma Master Heng Shun, supervisor of the boys school since 1994, said: "According to the Master's instruction in the prospect of running the school, I discovered that to instill the fundamental virtue of goodness to the students, one must first cultivate. For example, if I lose my temper or was mad at someone, it would be hard for me to teach the students to get along with each other. The teacher must first set an example." He also said: "In the beginning, I've also discovered that to face the student, one must maintain some certain standard, such as complete honesty and openness. If you would have wear a mask and conceal things from them, they would quickly see through it. By educating a student to be good, we would also nurture our inner virtue at the same time. I think that this is the best way to cultivate and train our own moral characteristics.

Bhikshuni Dharma Master Heng Yin longed to be a pre-school teacher when she was a child. When she came to the City of Ten Thousand Buddha, her dreams came true and she is now the principal of the girls school. She said: "In the City, the children are able to maintain their purity, and they wouldn't be ridiculed for being what they want to become. It is a place for young people to learn how to get along harmoniously with their peers, family and mother nature; it's a place for young people to learn how take upon themselves the responsibility of keeping mankind happy and earth peaceful. And that is why, when they grow up, they will be the voice and strength to move and improve the society." Because of Dharma Master Heng Yin's devotion and sincerity towards education, her parents Dr.Ye Zu Yao and his wife, after retiring, came to City of Ten Thousand Buddha and offer their

time and devotion.

Dr. Ye and his wife, with all their best, have contributed their wisdom and experience to the City of Ten Thousand Buddha. They said: "With the lack of home education, if one wants to have an effective education so that we can bring up proper children, the school have no choice but to work on both areas, moral character and academic. However, this is extremely difficult task. Not only must the teaching material be completely reorganize, to look for a role model for the student, a teacher who is compassionate and with good moral characteristic would not be easy. And it's definitely not easy to set up such system in a public school with thousands of students in a short period of time. Instilling Goodness Elementary School and Developing Virtue High School are the schools that emphasize in teaching both moral characteristic and proper academics. The teachers in the school are cultivators who are filled with compassion, and most of them are volunteers.

Yan Ya Ri, a Malaysian High School Math and Physics teacher, has already been teaching voluntarily for 16 years. He was once the principal of the boys school. He said: "In 1992, my wife brought our four children to City of Ten Thousand Buddha. When the Master saw my children, he looked and smiled at my wife, telling her that the children can study at Instilling Goodness Elementary School. My wife naively asked: "How about my husband in Malaysia?". The Master replied: "He can come as a volunteer teacher!" So, at that time, we quickly registered our children to attend the school and the following year, I came to the school and became a volunteer teacher." Now Mr. Yan's children have graduated from University; receiving Master's degree, or becoming qualified educator. Their youngest daughter is graduating this year from Developing Virtue School, and she will be receiving a scholarship from Pacific University. "This is one dream that I wouldn't think would come true." The voluntary teaching system definitely has changed the life of Mr & Mrs. Yan's family.

Mr. Garcia from Spain brought his wife and two young sons to City of

Ten Thousand Buddha 5 years ago. He said: "About 16 years ago, I came to the United States. And I quickly realized that the educational system here is not much more superior than what we have in Spain. I always read about drugs, fighting, teenage pregnancy, and metal detectors in school campuses. Also, the problem is not just the student; the teachers would walk out of class and ask for higher salary, while students would be left on their own with no one teaching them. When I felt that there was no hope, I came across the Venerable Master's foresight in setting up a voluntary school system. He truly saw clear the problem of today's educational system; and he brought up a solution for it. There's no nuclear science here, it's just pure and direct enlightened wisdom." This is what motivated the young Mr. Garcia and his wife, Dr. Zhang Min from Jaing Xi China, to move to the City of Ten Thousand Buddha.

Base on the philosophy of establishing the school, as well as the overwhelming majority of enthusiast volunteer teachers who put all their hearts and effort, Developing Virtue High School hopes that every graduate would able to achive four kinds of educational goals:

1. To have a good moral characteristic, harmonious manner in dealing with other people, as well as great leadership and communication skills;
2. Through meditation and other proper intellectual guidance, they are able to bring up their intrinsic wisdom.
3. Through academic teachings, they are able to develop their potentials in the aspects of humanities, science and arts.
4. To have a global broadminded aspiration so that they could admire and respect all cultures and religions.

Having an excellent environment and also a clear education goal attracted a lot of parents to send their children to the City of Ten Thousand Buddha to receive their education. One of the parents, Chen Gwo Lun said: "My friends asked me, how could you be willing to be apart from your two daughters by sending them to such far place to study? And I told him: " The

City of Ten Thousand Buddha is the most beautiful and serene place; it emphasizes on teaching moral characteristic, and it also teaches Buddhism, Chinese and Meditation, and you'd never able to find these kinds of education anywhere else. For their own good, there are certain things that I'm willing to let go. Besides, our children, even though they're here with us right now, when they are going to attend University, most of them would have to leave us. So, they are only leaving me slightly earlier. That's all."

In 1991, Zhu Jian-He left his job as a diplomat, accompanied his wife and a two-year old daughter and drove for 9 days from Washington to come to City of Ten Thousand Buddha to become a volunteer. It is mainly because he would like his daughter to receive a good education. He said: "Every student from Instilling Goodness Elementary and Developing Virtue High School are the most fortunate children; because they are able to develop their character in a wholesome environment that values moral characteristics and high academic standards." His daughter is now studying in a University in the East Coast. He recalled: "Over the past 10 years, my daughter Gwo Fan, when she was studying at Instilling Goodness Elementary School and Developing Virtue High School, not only did she learn how to honor her teachers and elders, refrain from killing and protect lives, and knowing how to work with other people in a proper conduct, she was also free from the exposure to drugs and violence. We used to hear from others that, when Gwo Fan was young, she always had a frown on her face; but now, she always has a smile on her face and she's an easy-going and bright girl."

Liu Qin Zhi, a graduate of 2007, came to the City of Ten Thousand Buddha with his parents from Malaysia in 1994. He attended school here since kindergarten, receiving a complete education here at the City. His dad works as a volunteer and his mother helps with the administration work in the school. With his high academic grades and excellent performance, he has received a full four-year scholarship at Princeton University. Last year, he started a Buddhist association in the University and has shared what he learned since young, and there are now over 10 students who have joined. This is one of the achievements of the graduates from the City, where they'd

take their experience and expand it outside the scope of the school. His father Liu De Fu said: "The Venerable Master always said that we study because we would like to understand the theory and not because of fame. We really wish that all children would truly walk through this direction. I have already wasted most of my lifetime, and I do not wish that my children would walk the same path again. I am really glad about my decision in 1994."

Year 2007 is also Developing Virtue High School's most important and memorable year. The school has finally been approved by WASC strict evaluation. And it is the first qualified American Buddhist High School. The grades from the graduates are now being recognized by all Universities, and the school is allowed to issue student visas for international students. The students, after going through our training and education, most are able to enter Berkeley University, Stanford University, Columbia University, Princeton University and MIT. Some students, after receiving their degree came back to join the volunteer teaching program.

In reality, Instilling Good Elementary and Developing Virtue High school is really a mini school. From kindergarten to high school, there are only roughly a total of 170 students; but there are about 40 teachers and everyone is doing their best to work as one for the school. With this kind of special environment, not only would the students receive Buddhist teachings, they would also learn the Chinese Confucian thinkings; and yet, the education they received would not be apart from present day learnings. The school is cultivating and training an even more healthy next generation. This kind of teaching, from the surface, looks like it's an education for the students; but in reality, it's also teaching the teachers, parents and others.

Currently, the students are from various places; from different states in the US, to Canada, Asia -- China, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines; as well as Europe -- Spain, France, Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, etc. These students from different parts of the world would in

the future take what they've learned to their own country. A volunteer teacher Mr. Chen Wei Hong said: "Even though the scale of our school is not big, and the numbers are few, but every student is like a seed. If you put your effort to nurture them, in the future, each seeds would become a big tree; and once the flowers of these trees open and become fruits, then it would be the birth of hundreds, thousands and millions of seeds."