



沙彌尼近耀師請法成立華嚴精舍

Shramanerika Jin Yao Requests Venerable Master Hua to Establish Avatamsaka Vihara



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1970至1990年代，美東大華府地區有位「葉媽媽」，以勸人學佛著稱，因見佛像便拜，又有「葉拜拜」之稱，在當地華人佛教徒圈中，可謂人盡皆知。並且在她多次懇求之下，上人終於首肯在該地成立今日的「華嚴精舍」。這位「葉媽媽」，正是現在萬佛聖城的沙彌尼近耀師。

出生於台灣桃園大溪的近耀師，年輕時在餐廳工作，與比丘尼恒然師出家前既是同事，又是鄰居，兩人經常同去廟裡拜拜。1970年代初，隨家人移民美國，定居大華府地區。為了找尋理想的師父，甚至到印度與尼泊爾住過。後來聽說老友恒然師已在萬佛聖城出家，特地前來探望，才發現上人是一位難求難遇的明眼善知識。

1989年，上人應邀，赴華府參加布希總統就職典禮。當地的善信終於得以親睹上人慈顏，聽聞上人的正法音。為了

From 1970s to 1990s, there was a Mrs. Yeh, known among Chinese Buddhists in the metropolitan DC area for inspiring people to study Buddhism. Her nickname was “Bowing Yeh,” because she always bowed whenever she saw a representation of a Buddha. It was due to her repeated and sincere requests that Venerable Master Hua agreed to establish Avatamsaka Vihara in the metropolitan DC area. Mrs. Yeh is now shramanerika Jin Yao at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas.

She was born in Daxi, Taoyuan, Taiwan. She worked for a restaurant where she was co-workers with a neighbor who later left-home and became Bhikshuni Heng Ran. They often went together to offer incense in a temple. In early 1970, she immigrated to the United States with her family and settled in the metropolitan Washington, DC. She once lived in India and then Nepal to look for a good and wise Buddhist teacher. Later, when she learned that her good friend, Dharma Master Heng Ran, entered the monastic life at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, she made a special trip to visit the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas and discovered that Venerable Master Hua was a good and wise teacher, one difficult to encounter.

In 1989, Venerable Master was invited to attend the inauguration ceremony of President George H.W. Bush. Local Buddhists in the Washington, DC area finally had the opportunity to meet Venerable Hua in person and listen to his propagation of pure orthodox Dharma. Mrs. Yeh repeatedly requested Venerable Hua to establish a branch monastery in the Washington, DC area so more people

讓更多人有機會親炙上人的家風，她一再請求上人在大華府地區成立分支道場。在連續數月打了上百通電話後，終於上人對她說：「滿妳的願。」夫婿和兒子也大力協助找尋合適地點，最後選擇在馬里蘭州波多馬克市成立「華嚴精舍」。

自從皈依上人後，每年必定到萬佛聖城參加法會。上人入涅槃三年後，因俗務纏身，不便成行。不料上人竟在夢中示現，提及許多事情，與在現實生活中遭遇的絲毫不差，醒後立即訂機票前來萬佛聖城。

回首往事，近耀師笑說：「我只打算來兩個星期，可是來了之後，法師問我要不要出家？心想自己年紀不小，就一口答應了。」雖然家人和朋友都很希望她能回到東岸共修，但出家近20年的她說：「出家後很高興，在聖城住得很習慣，不想再回世俗的家。」

每天除了在福居樓參加早晚課之外，午齋後必定到萬佛殿拜〈大悲懺〉。若逢打七、萬佛寶懺等大型法會，她都盡可能全程參加，精進共修。就連三週禪七，她也以八七高齡隨喜參加，不錯過開悟的機會。其餘時間，就是專心念佛，一心期待「花開見佛悟無生，未來畢竟成佛」。

She could learn Master Hua's teachings. She made over 100 phone calls in a few months. Finally, Venerable Master told her, "I will fulfill your wish." Her then-husband and son tried their best to look for an appropriate place. At last, the Avatamsaka Vihara was established in Potomac, Maryland.

She came to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas every year since taking refuge with the Venerable Master. In 1998, three years after the Master entered Nirvana, Mrs. Yeh was too busy to make the trip that year. Unexpectedly, Venerable Master manifested in her dream telling her many things that exactly happened in her real life. After waking up from that dream, she didn't hesitate to purchase an air ticket to come to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas.

Looking back, Dharma Master Jin Yao smiled and said, "I meant to stay for two weeks, but after coming to CTTB, a Dharma Master asked me if I want to leave the home life. I agreed immediately because I was not young anymore." She has been a monastic for almost 20 years now. Even though her family and friends wish she could go back to the east coast to cultivate with them together, she said, "I have been happy since leaving the home life. I am also used to living at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. I don't want to visit my secular home again."

She now attends the morning and evening recitations at the Tower of Blessings where senior nuns stay. After lunch she goes to the Buddha Hall for the *Great Compassion Repentance* ceremony. Whenever there is a retreat or bowing session, she always tries her best to attend full time, cultivating together with others vigorously. During the three-week Chan session, she would show up from time to time even at the age of 87 because she doesn't want to miss the opportunity to get enlightened. She recites the Buddha's name during the rest of her time and sincerely hopes that "When our flowers open, [everyone] may see the Buddha, realize non-production, and eventually become Buddhas."