Help Them Face The Truth
Amity Starts AIDS Project In Yunnan Province

The following interview was conducted by Newsletter Editor Gotthard Oblau with Amity’s Health Director (Ms.) Li Enlin on March 11 in Nanjing.

Question: According to government statistics, China had 5,157 registered IV cases as of last October. In light of a 1.2 billion-strong population, this is an extremely low figure. Yet, you have recently started an AIDS project. Is Amity keeping its priorities right?

Answer: Those five thousand cases are at the tip of the iceberg. The real figure may be well over 100,000. This is what our health experts estimate. China has no systematic screening program for the AIDS virus. It is only discovered when patients seek medical examination on their own initiative. And even then, many AIDS cases are not discovered due to a lack of necessary equipment. What makes it worse, over 70% of all registered HIV cases have been undiagnosed in one single province, Yunnan, which is a rather poor province in the far southwest, bordering on Burma and Laos. With our AIDS project, we will address this problem exclusively in Yunnan Province.

Q: What makes Yunnan China’s hotbed of AIDS?

A: Drug trafficking. It is very obvious that HIV concentrates in border areas with easy access into Burma. The notorious Golden Triangle is very close by. The entire area is mountainous, poor and very under-developed. With hardly any infrastructure, state control is difficult, and so it is no wonder that drugs are smuggled into China on a large scale. Somehow, they find their way to Guangzhou and Hong Kong, and from there they are shipped overseas. So, in Yunnan’s border areas you have all these smuggling routes, and along them you find a lot of drug addicts. Many use intravenous injections, and because the people are poor, the needles are passed from person to person. This is the most common path for HIV infection in China today.

Prostitutes, of course, is another problem. I have been told that Chinese girls are sold or abducted into Thailand, where they are forced to work in brothels. I know this is hard to imagine, but if you had seen the poverty in the border mountains, you would believe me. Sooner or later these girls contract HIV or a venereal disease, and then they are sent home. The men in their home villages regard them as fallen women and keep using their sexual services. Since nobody has any clear idea about the HIV risk, the virus spreads in no time.

China’s truck drivers help spread the disease, too. In many areas, the major inter-provincial truck routes are lined with little brothels. Usually they are disguised as barber shops or restaurants, but everybody knows their real function. These places are very dangerous breeding grounds for AIDS, and in this way the epidemic is easily carried from province to province. A few years ago, Yunnan accounted for 80% of all Chinese HIV cases; this has gone down to 70%. It’s not that the number in Yunnan has decreased, but that the rest of China is catching up.

Q: What is the government doing to curb the spread of the AIDS virus?

A: Of course, our government is very concerned. A lot is being done in the field of medical research. How can AIDS patients be effectively treated? How can people be immunized against...
Interview with a drug addict in preparation for the Amity AIDS campaign.

Infection? No country in the world has solved these problems yet, and China is ambitious to contribute to the solution. Our experts can bring in their rich experience in herbal medicine. The problem is, however, that all of this research takes a lot of time before it produces far-reaching results. In the meantime, people suffer and die. To prevent a national disaster, we need many more immediate measures.

Q: What short-term measures can curb the spread of AIDS in China?

A: We urgently need an awareness campaign - at least in the most affected areas. We need a type of AIDS education that really reaches out to people and changes their behavior. It is frightening to see how little our people really know about AIDS, especially in those remote areas where the virus is most rampant. Drug addicts need to be told what they are doing when they pass the injection needle around. Most of them have no idea. I remember talking to a young AIDS patient who wasn't even a real addict. Only one single time had he used a communal needle. Because he had heard about AIDS, he put the needle in hot water and wiped it clean before he used it. He thought that would do the job. For this error he ultimately paid with his life. Isn't this terrible? We condemn innocent people to death if we don't take action. Of course, I would never approve of such moral conduct; drugs are bad and need to be eradicated. But these youngsters have simply gone astray, and it is simply not fair to allow them to kill themselves out of sheer ignorance. The same applies to promiscuous sex. People have no idea what they are doing to themselves and others, and the killer virus makes no distinction between an adulterous and a faithful spouse.

Q: The Chinese authorities are very experienced with mass propaganda. Can they simply launch a nationwide AIDS campaign? What hinders them in raising the basic facts about AIDS to their citizens within a few weeks?

A: AIDS is not as simple as politics. In China, AIDS is a very sensitive issue, and a lot of mental barriers need to be overcome. I'll give you an example. Some time ago, our central government issued a decree to make AIDS education compulsory at all universities. But most university presidents were scandalized. 'Our schools are clean,' they claimed. 'There is no need for AIDS education.' They simply did not comply, and the government was powerless. So much for the foreigners' notion that China is a totalitarian country!

In China, sex is still very much a taboo topic. To introduce sex education in schools is a long and arduous process. Chinese teachers feel uneasy and embarrassed about it. The use of condoms, for instance, is a non-topic in public. Young people may hear about contraceptives for the first time in their lives when they register to get married. Then they receive a government-produced leaflet about what is called marital hygiene. If you talk about such things with unmarried people, you will almost certainly be accused of inciting them to try premarital sex. If these taboos affect our urban elite so strongly, how much more so will they be ingrained in poorly educated people in the countryside? How can you teach the girls to resist the advances of drug addicts to practice safe sex? Or how can you prevent AIDS while prostitution is not only rampant but also illegal. You would be accused of encouraging people to break the law! And you tell drug addicts how they can protect themselves against AIDS, people may suspect you of promoting drug addiction.

Q: If this is such a deep-rooted cultural problem, what can Amity do about it?

A: Our project is going to start in three selected counties in Yunnan's border areas. You may find it in a world atlas, but let me tell you their names anyway: they are Longchuan, Dehong Prefecture, and Lincang. All our projects are being studied by the provincial authorities, and we will create local rehabilitation centers, they provide field workers and they even let us use their local radio station.

Q: But how will you approach your clients? How can you win their trust?

A: I can tell you how we will not do it. We will not give them a dressing down. We must not talk to them from a platform of moral superiority, and we should not resort to moral exhortation. It is useless to raise your finger and say 'If you don't stop shooting up, you are going to ruin your health!' People in authority have tried all of this, but to no avail. Ninety-nine percent of all people discharged from the rehabilitation centers go back to their old habits. This has to do with the social environment, perhaps also with the unscientific methods applied in the centers. If we want to change things for the better, we must first face the reality. This means, we can only save these people from AIDS if we teach them safer ways of drug consumption. They must learn to use their own personal needles, for example.

Q: But if the people are so poor, how...
could they afford their own needles?

A: We must find ways to distribute needles free of charge. This, of course, will only work, if it is done discreetly, in an anonymous way. For instance, they could be displayed in village clinics, to be taken freely by all patients. In this way, the drug addicts would not be exposed and stigmatized. As a positive side effect, general hygiene level in people's homes would also be raised. The same should also be done with condoms. Most people would feel too embarrassed to ask for them, especially if they are not meant for contraception. But if condoms can be taken away freely and anonymously, the spread of Aids may slow down.

Q: Provided this goes along with proper education. What teaching methods do you plan to develop?

A: At the moment we are still at an experimental stage. For one thing, we plan to produce a special video for drug addicts. This should be freely accessible in the rehabilitation centers. The addicts may despise their doctors and superiors, but they may take to heart the message of a video which they watch by their own choice. We also hope to reach them through brochures, booklets and wall posters. All our materials must be clear, simple and to the point. The people are not well educated, and we must meet them at their own level. Sketches and entertainment programs will work better than lectures and sermons, practical examples better than theoretical instruction. I myself have composed a little ditty; it tells how this guy called Xiaohu got into drugs, how he ruined his life and how he eventually caught Aids.

But before we can teach people about Aids, we must find out what Aids means to the people. That's why we will start our project with a survey. Within our target area, we have picked one town and one cluster of villages where we will go from house to house. We are going to ask the people what they really know about Aids, how they feel about it and what attitudes they have toward Aids victims. Only when we know the answers to these questions, can we design an effective campaign with an appropriate strategy.

Q: Who will be your field workers and how will they be trained?

A: We plan to mobilize teachers, health workers and local officials. We can use volunteers of all sorts, provided they are trusted by the people at the grassroots. What the field workers need to know about Aids is rather simple and can be learnt quickly. The more difficult task is to teach them the proper teaching methods. These people are used to sitting in meetings and listening to instructions given from a podium. That's the only method they know. Then they would go into the villages to hold their own meetings. And the family heads attending a village meeting would then return home and sum up their words and children for a family meeting. This would be nonsense and lead us nowhere. So, we must show the field workers ways of instruction other than reading speeches from pre-written manuscripts. Before we send them down to the villages we have to prepare them thoroughly - with visual materials, through role-play and all sorts of other things.

Q: To what extent could such a grassroots campaign rely on the existing health care system?

A: This is a thorny issue. Without wanting to blame our medical doctors, I must say that they have so far been of hardly any help. Last December, I attended a government-sponsored conference on Aids prevention in Yunnan. It was a high-powered meeting with many provincial leaders present. I talked to many doctors from county hospitals and asked them, 'If you diagnose a patient HIV-positive, what do you tell that person?' The overwhelming response was: 'We don't tell the patient anything. He or she should never know about this. It would be too depressing, because it is a certain death sentence.' When I challenged them on this, they became very apologetic and said, 'Our job is to take care of the scientific side of the problem. As doctors, we provide a correct diagnosis, we make plans for treatment and keep records for our medical statistics. We would cause a human tragedy if we told an Aids patient the truth.' How could we ever dare do this? - This is what doctors almost unanimously told me, and I was very shocked when I heard it. I said: 'But if you don't tell a young man that he carries the virus, then he may go home, get married and then, without knowing, infect his wife. And she in turn will pass it on to her baby. Or even if he is not yet married, he might already be sexually active and infect his female friend. If the risk of infection is so high, why don't you tell your patients the truth?' They said, 'If we tell them, they may go and infect others on purpose, out of sheer anger or frustration.' But I told them that in countries where doctors are frank with their patients, this very rarely happens.

If Chinese people are never confronted with the reality of Aids in their environment, Aids remains an abstract phenomenon for them. Then it is not surprising that people don't bother about it. I heard people say, 'Aids has nothing to do with me; look how strong and
healthy I am, how could I get infected? This is very lamentable, because this careless attitude will help spread the disease even more quickly. I remember visiting an AIDS patient, a young boy of 19. He was lying in hospital with pneumonia and diarrhoea, but he was not even aware that he actually had AIDS and was going to die.

Q: This attitude on the part of doctors is hard to understand for overseas friends. In the West, people would insist that being told the truth is a patient's basic right.

A: I know. But in China the entire medical environment is different. For instance, a consultation rarely happens in real privacy. Hospitals are usually crowded places. Doctors and patients are surrounded by droves of onlookers - other patients waiting for their turn, relatives, staff, whoever. It is simply not the place to discuss very private matters, and I can understand doctors who do not say too much in order to protect their patients' dignity. Besides, very few people in China have been trained as counsellors or psychologists. Doctors feel helpless when it comes to existential questions of life and death. So they tend simply to avoid the problem. Whether AIDS patients should know the truth or not was recently debated in one of our newspapers. The crucial question was: Who should be protected - the patients or the potential victims of infection?

Q: Why should it be better for an HIV-carrier not to know the truth?

A: Because if he or she knows, others will inevitably know too. And the result will be stigmatization and exclusion. If a rehabilitation client is told he has the virus, his family will soon find out too and perhaps refuse to visit him. Also his peers in the rehabilitation clinic will find out and ostracize him. They may even beat him up. The same would happen in prisons. So if we advocate openness, we must also find ways to educate the public. Risks must not be taken lightly, but not exaggerated either! We must also foster an attitude of sympathy and care rather than fear or hatred.

In the planning of our project I have always insisted that our major objective must be humanitarian. People should learn to look at AIDS like this: If somebody in my own family contracted AIDS, how would I relate to that person? Would I shun him, or would I rather give him the best food to eat? Would I not care doubly for him and do everything in my power to meet all his needs and wishes? We must treat all AIDS patients in this way. Our family values must be extended to the society at large. If we approach our education work from this angle, our project will have the right human touch.

Q: Apparently, you have a special personal commitment to this AIDS project. What makes you so motivated?

A: It is true; perhaps I have spent more mental energy on this project than on any other I have monitored so far. In 1993, I had the chance to attend a world AIDS conference in Uganda, sponsored by the World Council of Churches. In those days, I thought that AIDS was hardly of any significance to China, because I had learned that we had more or less eradicated all infectious diseases in the 1950s. But now I have been working on this project for many years, and each time I go back to Yunnan I feel more alarmed about the speed with which the virus is spreading. If we don't act, certain areas will soon be as badly affected as Africa. If you detect not only one but several AIDS cases within the same village, this is really frightening. I feel it is my humanitarian duty to push things ahead. There is still time to turn things around. Yunnan's border areas are part of our motherland; I have hope for them and their people.
How to Prevent AIDS

This is the text of a leaflet, jointly published by the Amity Foundation and the Yunnan Provincial Aids Prevention Office.

Aids is caused through infection with the Aids virus. It usually takes one to eight years from infection to the outbreak of the disease. Once the disease has broken out, death may come quickly. At present, there is no effective vaccination or cure.

Before the disease breaks out, carriers of the Aids virus look no different than normal, healthy people. But they can infect others.

- The Aids virus can be passed on to others through one of three visible ways: through sexual intercourse, through blood-to-blood contact, or from mother to baby.

- If you enter a sexual relationship with an Aids carrier, you are likely to be infected if you don’t use a condom.
- If you share a needle with an Aids carrier for intravenous drug taking, you are likely to be infected.
- A pregnant Aids carrier can pass the virus on to her foetus.

- No infection is possible through normal day-to-day contacts.
- No infection is possible through eating and drinking together, swimming together, shaking hands, using the same toilet or other ily contacts.
- No infection is possible through mosquito bites or simply through the air.
- No infection is possible through the normal nursing of Aids patients.

How you can protect yourself against Aids:

- Be faithful to your spouse, stay away from pre- and extramarital sex!
- Avoid blood products and blood transfusions which have not been tested Aids-free in a lab! Don’t share needles for intravenous drugs!
- Don’t get involved with prostitutes!
- Don’t use unsterilized or insufficiently sterilized utensils when you pick your teeth or ears or when you have tattoos made.
- If your spouse is already infected with Aids, use a condom to protect yourself.

Anonymous testing:

- If you think you may be infected, please go to your nearest health station for anonymous consultation and testing. Do so without delay!
- Nobody will ask your name or address. You will be given a number, which will also be attached to your blood sample. Nobody will get to know the test result except you yourself.
- Testing can help you, protect your loved ones, relieve you from anxiety, and increase your knowledge about Aids.

Aids Hotlines:

Kunming City (0871) 3132353 3611773
Lincang County (0883) 2122358 2122647 2123132
Fengqing County (0883) 4211054

Fuzhou Churches Initiate Social Services

Amity Sends Support Through Christian Clearing House

Fuzhou’s 200,000 Protestant Christians may constitute only three percent of the city’s population, their presence in society is becoming increasingly noticeable. They do not worship at 2,000 meeting points and 300 larger church buildings of which have been constructed since 1990 but also show a growing commitment to the well-being of society through Christian clinics and kindergartens, homes for the elderly and village orchards. In order to supervise the numerous initiatives and coordinate funding, the Fuzhou Christian council has founded the Aixin Fuzhou Zhongxin, the “Love and Faith Service center.” Funds from the Amity Foundation designated for church-run projects in Fuzhou are channeled through this center.

Church yard filled with children’s songs

One such project is the Christian kindergarten in Yunlong Township, Mingqing County. Housed in a little courtyard building adjacent to the old church in the township center, it started operating in 1990. Three classes offer education for 65 children aged four to six. The two higher classes are taught by teachers who graduated from a county nursery school (a specialized middle school), while the little ones are taken care of by a young Christian volunteer. Two elderly Christian ladies do cleaning and administration work without pay. While the kindergarten charges 60 yuan (US$8) per term in tuition fees (food not included), the Fuzhou Christian Council supplements the kindergarten’s income with an annual 5,000 yuan (US$8,300). Though the government gives no financial support, it has welcomed the church’s initiative and is very supportive in all administrative affairs.

The church has to comply with the state regulation of no religious teaching being allowed in China’s kindergartens and schools. However, the church
hopes to make an impact through the practical witness of the kindergarten as such. Parents get acquainted with the church, and many of the children attend the newly established Sunday school on Sunday mornings. The church is finally leaving the corner of social isolation into which it was forced for so many decades, entering the spotlight of public attention again.

Christian acupuncture on Sunday mornings

The Puqian Christian Clinic is one of five little medical enterprises run by congregations in Fuzhou's inner city. The clinic occupies one large room on the ground floor behind the apse of a large, traditional-style church building. It is open every day from 9 am to 6 pm, but half of its 100 or more weekly patients show up on Sunday mornings before and after the main worship service. All five doctors and six nurses here are Christians and work on a voluntary basis. Some are in their seventies and retired, others are employed by state-run hospitals but give their two free days each week to the church clinic.

The most common diseases treated in Puqian Church are common colds, arthritis, high blood pressure and heart problems. Besides Western medicine, the clinic practices traditional Chinese methods, including moxibustion, cupping, acupuncture and massage, and utilizes over 400 different Chinese herbs.

Patients seeking consultation at the Puqian Church complain that Fuzhou's government hospitals are so overcrowded that each doctor can only spend two to three minutes on patients with minor ailments. Patients need to line up at least three times: for registration, for the calculation and payment of the medicines bill and at the dispensary. In this way, obtaining a cure for a simple cold or flu takes up an entire morning. The Christian clinic, in contrast, offers in-depth consultation without long waiting times.

In addition, the Puqian Clinic is a way out for those who would be too poor to pay 30% of a public-hospital bill out of their own pockets, a requirement under most health insurance schemes in China today. The Puqian Clinic is a non-profit operation, no surcharges are tacked on to medicines and fees are kept to a minimum. If patients are too poor to pay, clinic staff may pay for their patients or waive their bills altogether. That Jesus comes to seek the sick and the poor is not only preached in this city church in Fuzhou, it is practised through example.

A house of learning for the aged

As China develops and its people become increasingly mobile, the elderly, particularly those who live in urban areas, are increasingly left to themselves. Gone are the times when all families could offer reliable shelter and round-the-clock care for their ageing members. As a result, homes for the aged of all sorts, run by many different organizations, are being established to respond to this growing social need.

One of these institutions is the church-run Fuzhou City Home for Elderly Christians. Located in lush green hills away from the noise and pollution of the city proper, it houses 45 elderly people who are between 72 and 96 years old. Because one quarter of the running costs are covered by donations from local churches, monthly fees can be kept as low as 120 yuan (US$15) - a very good bargain for double room accommodation. The Home accepts only Christians who can prove that they have no family member to look after them on a reliable basis. In response to great demand, a third floor has just been added and will be opened soon. Another extension is planned to the east of the building, where foundations for a four-storey house have been laid.

The elderly residents are looked after by ten Christian volunteers, who come out to the Home on three overlapping shifts of two weeks each. Only three employees work on a paid basis. While the gardener/house cleaner earns 300 yuan (US$36) per month, the director does not receive a penny. Qi Yuehan (or "Brother John," as he is called) had to retire from his factory job before the age of fifty because of a heart attack and a broken leg. In this Home for the Elderly, he has found a new life. He is not only the Home's chief administrator but also its spiritual director. He leads most of the daily morning devotions, evening worship and Bible classes. On Sundays, he preaches in the attached church. Ask whether he has received any theological training, he answers with a smile: "Like Jesus, I have learned the skills of a carpenter. I was raised in an orphanage run by foreign missionaries and spent my entire life in the church! Therefore I know how to preach and teach the Bible, though I have never even attended a lay training course."

Many who enter this Home are illiterate. But under the patient and persistent instruction of Brother John, eighty-year-old grannies start to decipher the Bible and, in the twilight of hard and often oppressed lives, find the joy of the empowerment to read the word of God by themselves. "Nobody is too old or too stupid to learn," comments Brother John. "We start with John 3:16 and from there we proceed slowly an step by step until the Holy Spirit opens their eyes to the entire Scripture."
Home Of Hope For Children With Polio
Amity Helped Integrate Schooling And Therapy

The rehabilitation of polio-stricken children continues to be an important focus of Amity's work in northern Jiangsu Province. Rehabilitation of the physically and mentally handicapped is a relatively new area of concern in China, and the Amity Foundation has pioneered in assisting children with polio in Pi County.

As previously reported in the Amity Newsletter (No. 33, 1995), Amity has been co-operating with local agencies in Pi County and with the Norwegian Missionary Alliance to restore mobility to children hit by a rare 1989 polio epidemic. The New Hope Center -- a new residential school for children with multiple forms of paralysis -- has now been opened as a new institution in the county capital, serving more than sixty boys and girls who have been most severely affected by the disease.

In 1989, more than 500 children were stricken with polio in Pi County and the surrounding area, a result of ineffective vaccination procedures in some rural villages. The director of public health at that time was Mr. Zhang Fushi, and he became determined to do something for these children. After retiring from his government position, Zhang conducted an extensive survey of the situation. He then went to government agencies for support and funding. They were sympathetic, but could offer little in the way of either financial resources or expertise.

Zhang learned about Amity through a colleague, and he subsequently met with Ms. Wu An'an in the Social Welfare Division and other Amity staff. They agreed on the importance of the project, and Amity approached the Norwegian Missionary Alliance, which has had similar involvement in Taiwan. After several months of planning, a polio rehabilitation project was started in January 1993, focusing on both corrective surgery and physical rehabilitation. This project continues to provide care for more than 100 children in Pi County.

However, something more was needed for those who had been most severely affected. Zhang Fushi's dream was to open a residential school, which could also become a center for more general residential efforts. Such a school required both expertise and funding, as well as co-operation and support from the local authorities. After almost two years of hard work, the New Hope Center opened at the end of 1995.

The center is the only facility of its kind in China. The students, all of whom are either eight or nine years of age, receive a regular primary school education as well as physical therapy and specialized medical care. They are at school for ten days, and then return home for four day weekends, following the same curriculum as all other schools in the country. Their families pay eight yuan (1 US$) a day for tuition, room and board, and those who cannot afford to pay are subsidized by the school.

Five doctors volunteer their services, and the school also employs three teachers and more than a dozen professional and supporting staff. The children will go through primary and lower middle school as a single class, after which they will be eligible for more specialized forms of education and training.

The New Hope Center also functions as a resource center for Amity's community-based rehabilitation work for those polio victims who live at home and attend village schools. The center has been generously supported by Norwegian Christians and Chinese government agencies at all levels. There are regular visits by specialists in rehabilitation, especially Ms. Alta Kaufmann, who works in Victory Home in Pingtung, Taiwan. She has worked with polio-stricken children for many years. The local government has also helped with the project, and Christians from the nearby church regularly contribute their time, energy and money to help make the school a success.

In fact, the New Hope Center has attracted visitors from all over the country, and many are anxious to develop similar institutions in their own provinces. "It has really become a symbol for all people," explained Zhang Fushi. "Many schools encourage their students to visit us so that they can understand how important it is to provide educational opportunities for all young people in our society." In this way, Pi County's New Hope Center also symbolizes Amity's approach to social development.

Philip Wickeri
On May 14, the Amity Foundation received a national award in recognition of its achievements in the rehabilitation of the blind and the deaf. Together with Amity, 163 organizations and 201 individuals from all parts of China were honored for outstanding contributions toward the support of disabled people in the People's Republic of China. The award ceremony was held at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing and was attended by vice-governors from every province as well as over 200 representatives of the central government. Political dignitaries included President Jiang Zemin, National People's Congress Chairman Qiao Shi and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Chairman Li Ruihuan. The Amity Foundation was represented by Ms. Zhuang Ailing, director of the Blindness Prevention & Special Education Division, who has been in charge of Amity's community-based rehabilitation projects in Yixing County (Jiangsu) and Luzhou Prefecture (Sichuan). This is the second time that the Chinese government has honored its citizens' merits in the field of rehabilitation for the disabled. The first ceremony of this kind was held in 1991.

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Mr. Robert Jaekle, an international expert in community-based rehabilitation (CBR), visited Luzhou Prefecture in Sichuan Province from April 5 to May 17. He was invited by the Amity Foundation to train newly-selected field workers for their tasks in the Luzhou CBR project, which will go into operation later this year. During the six-week training program, the field workers acquired basic knowledge in ophthalmology and in the psychological and practical aspects of rehabilitation for the blind. They also practised the skills they are going to teach to the blind people living in the villages of the project's target area. The project has won support from the Luzhou Prefectural Government, the Sichuan Provincial Association for the Disabled as well as the Sichuan Blindness Prevention Office. Mr. Jaekle, who is sponsored by the German-based long-standing Amity partner Christian Blind Mission (CBM), was also instrumental in staff training and evaluation work at Amity's first CBR project in Yixing County, which is located between Nanjing and Shanghai.

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The Amity Foundation assisted development-related NGOs in the Philippines by purchasing two solar-powered water heating systems from a Chinese company in Shandong Province. The equipment, which was shipped to Amity's Manila-based partner, the Philippine-China Development Resource Center, in June, will be used by grassroots development organizations in their efforts to develop alternative energy resources in the archipelago.

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Three friends of the Amity Foundation were injured - one of them seriously - on May 20, when their car, due to heavy rain, veered from a slippery road in Guangxi Province and rolled down a 30-meter mountain slope. The victims, staff members of the Guangxi Ecological Poverty Alleviation Office, were on their way to inspect an Amity-sponsored Zenia afforestation project in Linyun County. The project was mentioned in our last Amity Newsletter (No. 41) in the article "Rural Projects Expand To Guangxi Province" on page 8. (One of the injured appears first from the right in the accompanying photo.)