

CULTURE

Ni sparks burst of sunlight

By CANG WEI

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Ni Xinfu, whose given name is pronounced similarly to “happiness” in Chinese, is spreading joy to people struggling with disabilities.

The 25-year-old has been working at a care center in the Hongshan community of Nanjing’s Xuanwu district for four years. The center provides various activities for physically and mentally challenged people to help with their recovery.

Ni is devoted to helping disabled people because his twin brother, Zhongfu, has cerebral palsy. Though doctors claimed Zhongfu may never walk his whole life, his mother never gave up. She provided massages, acupuncture treatment and medicine every day and, when he was 6, he was able to walk.

Taking care of Zhongfu has also been Ni’s main responsibility since then. He accompanies his brother on climbs of a local mountain and amazingly helped him to become an elite athlete. In 2007, Zhongfu won gold in the long jump at the national Special Olympics.

“I want to help other disabled people just like I do for my brother,” said Ni. “I want to make my own contribution to society.”

After graduating from college as a mechanical engineer, Ni worked for the care center as a volunteer and was elected the director due to his hard work.

Most of the 43 patients at the center have autism or cerebral palsy and cannot take care of themselves. Besides helping them with their daily tasks, Ni decided to help them connect with society and show their value.

A room on the second

floor of the center is called the “mushroom farm” and features numerous storage racks upon which mushrooms are cultivated in plastic bags.

Following Ni’s lead, the patients grow mushrooms, which are sold to supermarkets.

In autumn, Ni takes them to a mountain to collect leaves that can then be made into bookmarks and other craftwork.

The care center also encourages its patients to participate more in sports, including ball sports and track and field, to improve their coordination.

“I want them to happy and at the same time learn how to use their hands to show their skills and integrate into society,” Ni said.

Ni’s daily work is never easy. When he first met Xiao Zheng, an autistic boy, he had to change the youngster’s underwear about eight times an hour.

Ni began to study and sleep in the same room with Xiao. He spoke softly to him, ate with him and was extremely patient. Two years later, Xiao rarely soils his pants and even greets strangers with hugs.

“Many physically and mentally challenged people need lifelong attention and rehabilitation,” said Ni. “I hope that more preferential policies can be made for them to ease their families’ financial burdens so that people can treat them in a more friendly manner. Sometimes, a single smile or a greeting comforts them greatly.”



AUSSIE UPENDED

An Australian wrestler playfully succumbs to a young female student of the Nanjing Youfuxijie Primary School during a demonstration of the sport on Friday at the institution. COURTESY OF NANJING 2014.ORG

Peace and Sport making great strides

Peace and Sport, an organization aiming to achieve peace through sports, has made lots of progress since it was founded in 2007, according to its international forum manager, Ana-Luz Thirifays.

The organization, founded with the support of Prince Albert II of Monaco, has garnered assistance from many countries, organizations and multinational corporations. Every year, in December, Peace and Sport presents awards to people whose work is related to sports and has contributed greatly to world peace.

“Over the years, we have increased our momentum and convinced a growing number of decision-makers and actors worldwide about sport’s unique capacity to foster dialogue and social stability,” said Thirifays. “Many leaders from all over the globe have joined our efforts and now act on our side in favor of peace through sport.”

“Each year we see a growing number of delegates at our international forum and more and more international sports federations have joined

forces with us to develop peace and development through sport programs.”

“We’ve been able to help local stakeholders develop programs in eight countries including Cote d’Ivoire, Rwanda and Burundi.”

In 2007, Peace and Sport was only able to reach 200 young people through its programs, but now it works with 9,200 youngsters.

“I strongly believe that in order to improve the world we live in, we have to invest in our youth who are the future of this planet,” said Thirifays. “It is important that they understand the challenges our world faces and grow with the positive values that will enable them to build a more peaceful society. Sport is a wonderful tool to educate and inspire them.”

In October 2010, Peace and Sport established branches in China and the US to enhance its international influence.

Thirifays said that in recent years China has become a global leader in a range of fields that can play a great role in achieving world peace through sports.

“By building strong and tangible legacy programs around the major sporting events that it hosts, China would be able to show its leadership in this field and have a great impact on all communities involved in the legacy program.”

According to Thirifays, Peace and Sport will try to push the boundaries even further while staying true to its goal.

“We are working to develop new field programs with displaced populations in Kurdistan and Iraq, in cooperation with local players who share our vision and believe sport can bring hope and social cohesion in these areas. We would then aim to extend these refugee camps to other parts of the world.”

“We also aim to hold more Peace and Sport forums outside of Monaco to bring the debate to all the continents and will continue raising awareness so that global leaders recognize sport and physical activity as an investment for society, not just as a hobby or a way of keeping in shape.”

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