

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Help Little Red Scarf Treat 1000 Children of Heart Disease

Silicon Valley executive Chao hopes to inspire community to engage in philanthropy by inviting everyone to join in helping the 1000th child in rural China

Los Altos, CA -- Sponsored by a Silicon Valley family, Little Red Scarf (LRS), a nonprofit organization in Gansu Province, China, will soon reach its goal of treating 1000 children of congenital heart disease just in time for the annual Congenital Heart Defect Week, February 7-14, 2014.

Congenital heart disease (CHD) in rural Gansu Province is highly prevalent. As many as one in 125 children are born with the disease, but most children in Gansu come from impoverished families and are unable to afford treatment. There are environmental and genetic factors that cause CHD. Children with CHD often die before reaching adolescence. LRS intervenes to give these children new hearts, thus renewing their dreams and hopes of life. Low-income families in rural Gansu receive financial support for heart surgery, post-operative care, and family sponsorships to help children sustain healthy lifestyles.

Since its creation in 2008 in Silicon Valley by high technology entrepreneur Ping Chao and his wife Amy, LRS has been sponsored by the Ping & Amy Chao Family Foundation in partnership with the two best hospitals in Lanzhou to achieve the goal of 1000 treated children. Mr. and Mrs. Chao hope to set an example and encourage the community to join in the efforts of helping the rest of the children in Gansu (approx. 5000 remaining, 1 in 125 statistics).

“By helping the younger generation, we would better the communities where they live, and thus improve the future of those communities,” says Ping Chao, founder of Chao Foundation which LRS is a part of, “our original idea of sharing has developed into a deep conviction to contribute not only our assets with those in need, but also our spirit of philanthropy.”

LRS knows the value of cost efficiency, and has a unique business model to partner with two of the most reliable Lanzhou hospitals. LRS staff graphs, measures, and compares hospital fees according to the five major types of disease (PH, VSD, ASD, F4, Complex) to guarantee high quality surgeries at the best price. The average surgery costs \$5,500 in Lanzhou. In comparison, the median costs in the United States would be ten times greater and five times greater in metropolitan Beijing and Shanghai.

The Chao Family also met with policymakers and institutions to raise awareness and effect change for the problem. Fortunately, the government over the years has stepped in to provide partial subsidies for basic surgeries. In the first two years, LRS visited each family to confirm poverty standards and covered 100% of costs because there were no government subsidies. Since 2008-2009, the government eventually increased its subsidies by 5% increments and is now covering 45% of surgery fees, recognizing CHD to be a part of its “Severe Illness Relief Program” (still only covering basic types of CHD). LRS continues to cover 30% of all surgery fees and the aided family is able to afford the remaining 25%. The average surgery grant LRS sponsors is around \$1,650.

With a 98% success rate (975 out of 995, age range from newborn to 18), surgeries that donations to LRS make possible are not only cost-effective but also assuring because LRS’ mission is to treat family with five star service. Chao has employed four full time staff members under the management of the Chao Foundation’s Executive Director, Nancy Nguyen, to perform patient advocacy, reporting, and tracking with the utmost detail and care. Staff are stationed full time at both

hospitals to guide and protect the rural families who would have otherwise been exploited by the city systems due to their lack of knowledge and education. These poor families are often sent back home to gather enough loans to afford overpriced hospital fees. In the first three years, LRS observed that families would abandon girls in baskets because they could not afford the surgery and the one child policy. Therefore, LRS would set priority to surgeries for girls. LRS has treated 535 girls and 423 boys to date. The team would also find young mothers with CHD; in the past two years, LRS has extended sponsorship to help 37 young mothers receive surgery.

A unique aspect of LRS is its efforts to stay in contact with helped families even after the surgeries. Twice a day for the first month, the LRS sends texts messages to families on post surgery care and nutrition to ensure children are healing optimally. On the LRS website, there are portfolios and daily blog updates with photos of each child so that donors can check directly the impact of their donations and see how every cent of their money was used to save a life. Amazingly the team has not missed one day of posting photos and updates on children in the hospital for the past six years. LRS hopes to share its unique business model and countless data for research and study for doing charity and congenital heart disease in rural China.

Such success and works of the Chao Foundation attracted many interested friends. Initially started by a group of friends, the Chao Foundation began to create an entire network of people who wish to make a positive influence. Currently, the Chao Foundation hopes to connect more people (including and beyond friends) to help these children receive the help they need.

Peng Peng was a boy whose diseased and inefficient heart caused disproportionate growth of the skull and swelling of the limbs. More than five months behind in body development, he sweated constantly and always had a runny nose. All that he was fed was flour mixed with water and noodles that his grandparents cooked for him each day. Peng was never breastfed. In fact, Peng had barely ever met his parents; they both worked all day to afford Peng's surgery fees. He lived in a roofless shack shared by 19 people near courtyards full of garbage and coal dust. When it rained, water flooded his home. These living conditions have worsened Peng's health, but nothing could be done.

On September 28, 2010, Peng received his heart surgery. Sponsorships and donations to LRS greatly lessened its financial fees. After seven days in the hospital, Peng was discharged and sent home to start his brand new, healthy, and normal life with a properly functioning heart.

Similar to Peng's success story, Lina was LRS' first child to attend college last year. Often times, CHD children are stigmatized from society and believed to be cursed. Their stunted growth, low oxygen levels, and cyanosis not only disables them to perform normal activities such as running or walking but also prevents them from attending school with their peers. Last month, the LRS team also visited Dong after six years. Dong was one of the first children to receive surgery. He has completely transformed from a blue, sick boy to a rosy, healthy, very studious, and polite gentlemen now attending school and pursuing an education. He and his family live in gratitude to LRS, and his dream, like that of many LRS children, is to grow up and pay his debt by helping others. [Read more life-changing stories here.](#)

Hongyan is a seven year old girl from rural Gansu, China. Her father passed away when she was young. She had to be carried into the hospital because she had the most severe form of CHD (see her symptoms in the photo of finger clubbing due to low oxygen levels). Her mother did not have enough money for her surgery so they had to hopelessly return home. Her mother had no other choice and told the staff she will marry anyone who could afford and pay for her daughter's surgery.

Hongyan will be the 1000th child which was the goal for the past six years. In a few days, the staff will visit her home and break the news to her mother that LRS will sponsor Hongyan. LRS is inviting

everyone to contribute \$10 to help and celebrate Hongyan's successful surgery. Join the TFISH Facebook page to follow her amazing journey to a new and healthy heart during Congenital Heart Defect week.

To inspire more philanthropic involvement in the Silicon Valley, the Chao encourage the community to take action by helping Hongyan, their 1000th child:

1. During the CHD week and the month of February, the Chao family will match donations up to \$500 for each individual who wish to help the LRS save more lives.
Donate Online: <http://www.tfishfund.org/donate.html>
2. For every new like on the TFISH Facebook page during CHD week, the Chao will also donate \$1. Follow her journey on the Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/tfishfund
3. LRS invites everyone to contribute \$10 to help Hongyan's surgery.

Transparent Fish Fund (TFISH) is a nonprofit co-founded by Ping Chao to ensure 100% of all donations arrive in the right hands to help prevent corruption based on Chao Foundation's six years of on-the-ground experience running the LRS program. As a nonprofit created by donors, TFISH handpicks the poorest possible recipients, trustworthy partners, and highly transparent projects. The Chao family has generously covered all transaction fees on TFISH so that 100% of all donations reach the intended recipients.

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About Little Red Scarf

Founded in 2008, Little Red Scarf provides financial and social support for families whose children suffer from congenital heart disease. LRS's mission is to renew the children's hope and right to a healthy and normal life with donations that pay for surgery fees. For more information, please visit <http://www.tfishfund.org/lrs.html>

About TFish Fund

Founded in 2011 in Palo Alto, California, Transparent Fish Fund is a US non-profit organization established to provide grassroots NGOs in East Asia with credible fundraising, marketing, capacity building resources and support. TFish Fund also facilitates fiscal transparency, encourages development of NGO infrastructure overseas, and works to spread a global spirit of philanthropy. For more information, please visit <http://www.tfishfund.org/>

About Ping and Amy Chao Family Foundation

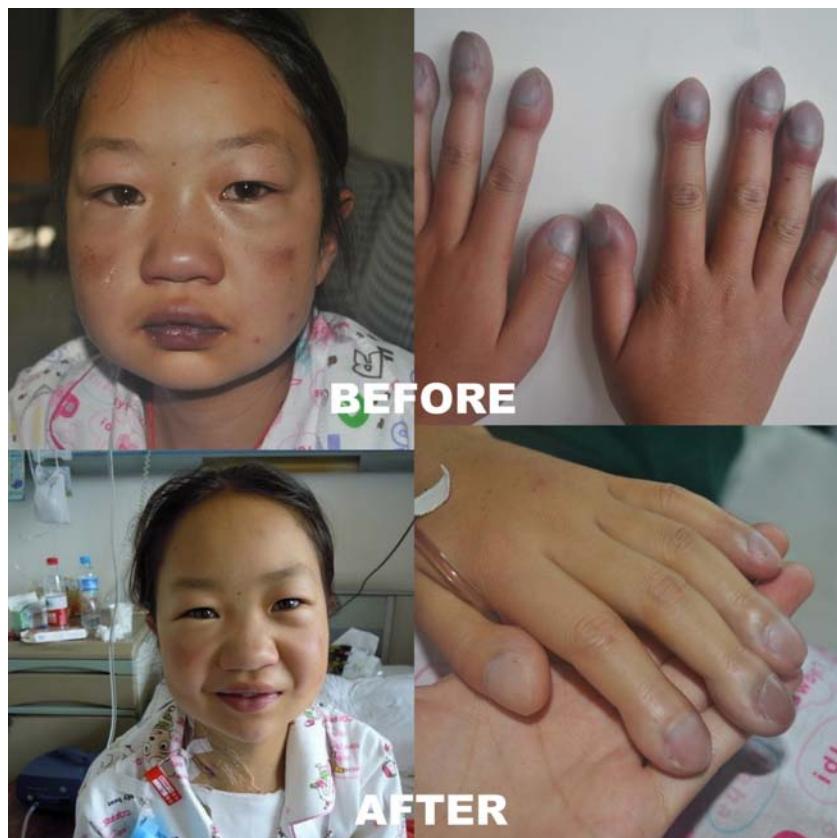
Founded in 2005 by Ping Chao and his wife Amy, the Chao Foundation works to improve the health and living conditions of younger generations in East Asia. Although based in the Bay Area, most of its projects focus on East Asian countries such as China, Vietnam, and Cambodia. For more information, please visit <http://www.chaofoundation.org/>

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Photo Appendix

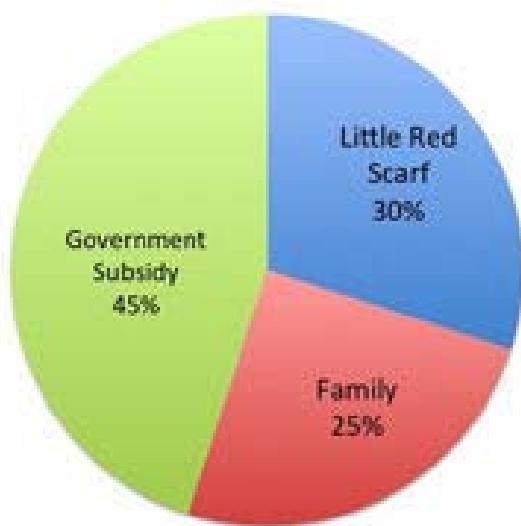
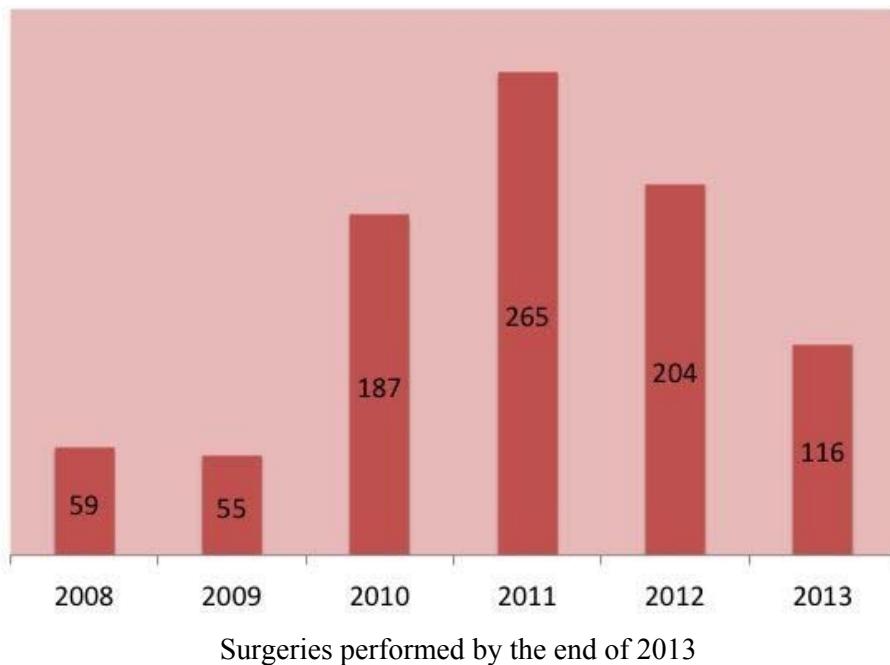


Gansu Province with sizeable minority population, near Tibet and Xinjiang



Pictured is Cunhua's transformation after her heart surgery. Major symptoms included finger clubbing and cyanosis from low oxygen levels that caused her lips, fingers, and toes to look blue. Other symptoms included heart murmurs, shortness of breath, chest pain, syncope, sweating, respiratory infections, under-developing of limbs and muscles, poor feeding, or poor growth, build up of blood and fluid in lungs, feet, ankles and legs. Some children have no signs which makes the disease a silent killer. Children with CHD often die before reaching adolescence.

Number of Heart Surgeries Performed Total: 986



In 2013, Little Red Scarf was able to provide funding for approximately 30% of the cost of each surgery. The rest is provided by the government and the family themselves. Government subsidy has increased from 40% previous years to 45% average. This has decreased the family burden from 30% previous years to 25%.



Peng Peng, 11 months old boy



Yunyun, LRS staff focused on patient advocacy and relationships for long term poverty relief



Child in ICU after successful surgery at Lanzhou Army General Hospital



Family receiving text messages from LRS on post-surgery care, 30 days after surgery.



LRS Staff visits family to verify that they are poor. This family filled their apartment room with garbage to sell for a living. The boy lived in a pile of trash but saw that his home was beautiful.



Lina points to her photo when she was 15, attending the LRS Summer Camp. On the right, she became the first LRS child to attend college.



Last month, the LRS team also visited Dong after five years. Dong was one of the first children to receive surgery and now he has grown into a healthy young man.



LITTLE **RED** SCARF

Congenital Heart Defect
Awareness Week Feb 7-14, 2014
Help Hongyan Receive Surgery
Help Us Reach our Goal: 1000 Children
1 Like = \$1 for Heart Surgery

Help LRS reach 1000 children and celebrate with us by donating \$10.