

VOICES: As a Buddhist, how do you take responsibility for your community?

Members from Texas Joint Territory respond:

I take responsibility for the community by working as a volunteer in my son's school. It is a brand new charter school, and for the first few weeks, the kids didn't even have desks and were sitting on the floor. They have to go to lunch in a separate building, and I go at lunch time to help supervise them. As a Buddhist, I believe that kids are the key to the future, and that by supporting them, I am supporting the community.

— TERRY MASSEY, Dallas

Through studying SGI President Ikeda's guidance, I realize more and more how important "the moment" is; that life is moment to moment, and Buddhism is life. My community is where I am at, at that moment. There are no boundaries. So I try to really see every person I come in contact with — at the grocery store, restaurant, or the lady or gentleman who gives me change at the toll booth — to really see them, to smile and say a few words, even if it is just thank you, from the heart, to refresh their lives, to build bridges of trust.

— EVE GOH, Dallas

I have stayed involved with the children in my area — on my block — and established a good rapport with them. Because I have done this, they come to me when they get into trouble. I also chant for the protection and happiness of everyone in my environment. As a college student, I chant to be in classes in which there is open communication, in which we as students can connect and work together.

— YONWI BELL, Dallas

I take responsibility for my community by trying to encourage each individual with whom I come in contact — even just saying hello to my neighbors or asking people how they are doing. I think, as a Buddhist in this society, starting up a dialogue with people in my community and trying to create an atmosphere of understanding and friendship are most important.

— CLIFF WOMACK, Dallas

I really enjoy taking responsibility for my community by providing childcare support. I have many friends who are mostly single parents and their work schedules do not allow them the time needed to be available for their children either in the mornings or afternoons.

— HELEN FISHER, Dallas