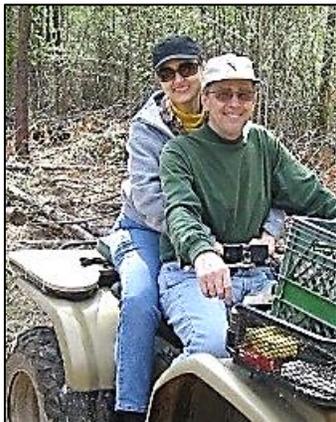




Meet Our Volunteer

Meet Jo

Jo is a Volunteer Long-Term Care Ombudsman who has served residents of nursing and assisted living facilities in Harris County for 13 years.



Volunteer Ombudsman Jo and her husband, Ken.

How did you first hear about the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program?

Prior to joining the Ombudsman Program, I met a long-term care ombudsman who was assigned to a facility where my mother had a short-term stay. I was able to see the first-hand role he played in assisting residents and their families. Investigating and resolving complaints, educating residents of their rights, and providing a voice for those unable to articulate their needs appealed to me.

What do you do as a volunteer ombudsman?

A key ingredient in my ombudsman work is gaining the trust of residents and helping them understand that what they have to say is important. I consider this some of the most valuable work I do. I also work with residents and family members to help with problem solving and understanding residents' rights.

Who or what inspires you to keep volunteering?

I'm inspired by those I serve.

A positive attitude while dealing with adversity is an attribute I admire. While serving as an ombudsman, I've seen this attribute in action many times while helping residents and their families.

Why have you continued to serve residents during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Many residents have no one to advocate on their behalf.

Knowing that I can serve in that role for some of the residents with a genuine need is my motivation. COVID has changed my normal routine of serving as an ombudsman, but I have confidence it will resume.

Who has been your biggest supporter as a volunteer long-term care ombudsman?

My husband is very supportive of my involvement in the Ombudsman Program which allows me to devote whatever time I feel is needed to visit, educate, and help resolve problems for residents.

What would you say to someone considering volunteering as a long-term care ombudsman?

Volunteering as a long-term care ombudsman has been a rewarding experience for me. I encourage you to research this volunteer opportunity and see if it might be a good fit for you as well. If you enjoy meeting people and have a helpful nature, that's a good start. Add to that the ability to advocate for others together with listening, negotiating, and utilizing problem-solving skills, or a willingness to learn these skills, volunteering as a long-term care ombudsman may be the right fit for you. Try it. You'll be hooked in no time!

When you are not volunteering as an ombudsman, what else do you like to do?

I enjoy learning new things, staying socially connected, and being of service to others.

In addition to serving as a volunteer ombudsman, I serve on the architectural control committee in my Houston neighborhood. My husband and I also work to preserve native animals and plants and support animal rescue groups.

For More Information About Volunteering

Email or call Pat Borgfeldt, Ombudsman Developer, Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman. Pat.Borgfeldt@hhs.texas.gov or (512) 438-2545.