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“I have a dream”, while this iconic phrase (and speech) has followed activists for generations to come, I wanted to focus on a lesser-known quote by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr: "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" This quote focuses on the unity of a community: humanity. It emphasizes how, regardless of background, race, gender, or any other factors, we should all work together to help others. From his quote, I think back to the importance of diversity and unity. Surrounding yourself with different groups of people with an open mind plays a huge role in shaping a community as an individual. SolSolis Orchestra, which I've been part of since elementary school, consists of musicians of all ages and influences. I've grown up under the care of older musicians. The cool older teenagers showed me what to expect: academically, socially, and musically. They were like my older siblings I never had. The wise elderly musicians always cared for me, entertaining me with funny stories and bringing in sweets. Whenever I was lost or had trouble counting, everyone always answered my questions with open ears and a big smile.

SolSolis was a big family who always had my back. Now, as the “cool older teenager,” I strive to foster the same sense of security that I received. Not only do I advise the younger musicians through rehearsals, concerts, and parties, but recently, I was given a special role of translating for a new member. Mr. Fang was a retired professional violinist from Beijing who wanted to play with us despite not knowing English. I guided him through rehearsals. In return, Mr. Fang taught me various techniques and styles, improving my skills and expanding my knowledge. SolSolis has taught me that I grow the most around others with different backgrounds-- and it's in those situations where I contribute the most, as well. Here, I have first-hand seen the importance of empathy, the power of inclusivity, and the beauty of collaboration.

As emphasized by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. we, as individuals, can vastly contribute to the diverse world. By interacting with others, we will not only learn but also find ways to help others learn too. For the years to come, I hope to be able to share my knowledge and interests with others as they share theirs with me too. It is important to note that anything and anyone can fulfill acts of service and kindness. They do not have to be confined to such grand gestures as Dr. King's; they can be as simple as small acts within daily life interactions and activities. Dr. King has worked hard his entire life, advocating for his rights and the rights of other minorities and suppressed groups. I hope as future generations, we can continue to follow in his footsteps, and ensure that we will only advance as a society, not regress.