

Carline Theodore

WINGS Program, Inc.

Position: Director of City Based Services

Time at Agency: 8 years

Commitment to advocacy on behalf of those affected by domestic violence:

Carline's advocacy efforts in the Chicago area have focused on improving client experiences and housing conditions. She has collaborated with the Department of Family Support Services (DFSS) and other entities to streamline intake processes and address issues prolonging shelter stays. Additionally, she has worked with landlords to ensure safe and clean housing, successfully relocating clients from inadequate units. Carline has also shared her advocacy skills with her team through various initiatives.

Personal qualities that reflect an ongoing commitment to ethical, peaceful, and respectful work with others:

Carline is known for her calm demeanor and ability to support her team during challenging times. She is deeply committed to improving her clients' quality of life, making herself available to both her team and clients around the clock. Even outside of work, she is constantly thinking about ways to help her clients, often leveraging personal events to make valuable connections for financial assistance, housing, banking, and medical support. Her dedication is evident in stories like returning from a funeral with a new contact who could help clients secure housing, leaving her team in awe of her relentless advocacy.

Ways in which they still instill a spirit of advocacy in others:
Carline's leadership style is characterized by her "all hands on deck" approach, where she actively participates in tasks alongside her staff. With a background in education and counseling, she naturally excels as a teacher and mentor. She emphasizes a cooperative environment, encouraging her team to view situations from the client's perspective and ensuring interactions are trauma-informed. Carline also focuses on professional development, asking staff about their goals and providing opportunities for growth, such as training House Advocates in case management through hands-on experience.

Experience that demonstrates a broad commitment to social justice:
Carline has dedicated 8 years to serving survivors at WINGS. Alongside this role, she mentors teens and college students and fosters a diverse, healthy environment in a before-school program. Before joining WINGS, she developed youth programs, managed services for homeless populations, worked with HIV+ clients, and operated a mobile dental unit. Her consistent encounters with abuse victims inspired her to focus full-time on supporting survivors.

Creativity in building the domestic violence movement within a social change framework:

Carline is a proactive problem-solver who believes in finding solutions for every challenge. She acts swiftly and explains the urgency later if needed. As the dynamics of "the house" change with new guests, Carline customizes programs to fit their specific needs. This has included opportunities to develop culinary skills or further education. She is innovative in program development, often starting new groups and incorporating client feedback to ensure the programs are effective and relevant.



Carline Theodore (left) receives her award from ICADV incoming Board President, Sharon Spinks (left)



Carline Theodore (right) with WINGS Program colleague, April Brayton (left)