

Staff Member Highlight, cont. Christina Spa, Communications Coordinator

The most difficult piece was seeing that information flows would not be in real time, but we still had to respond as quickly as possible. The uncertainty of the time reverberated across all of us and she was not immune. She likes structure in the workplace and that was definitely a period when we were all mostly flying as we built the plane! It did provide her the opportunity to think outside the box and help other members of the team do the same as the world continued to spin at a tilt. Additionally, as a people person the isolation of working from home took a bit of a toll on her. She credits the teamwork and collaboration of all ICADV staff as getting us through those first few months and back into some semblance of routine so we could support our member programs and determine what they needed most to operate.

Discovering the new tools and how to enhance our work and provide more interaction with our members was energizing. Zoom, Microsoft Teams and other tools really made Christina and other staff feel almost like we were still together every day carrying out our mission.

Christina's perceptions overall of that time and continuing forward are that ICADV staff and membership were very creative in using the newer technology tools to support the coalition. ICADV's membership found new ways to provide services, found new strengths and skills within their program staff, and in some cases found that this was not the right work for a few. Despite chaos, tragedy, and uncertainty, the domestic violence service providers in Illinois stood tall, dried their tears, and became a light in dark times. Survivors always had someone answering their calls and a place to stay. Christina has found new energy and a growing passion for the work to end domestic violence after seeing program staff, volunteers, community members, and her fellow ICADV staff members come together to provide services, wherever and however they needed to, during the pandemic.

She feels that doing this work reshapes a person's understanding and perspective of the world and how widespread domestic violence is. Sometimes it is sobering when you realize domestic violence is so close to you, sometimes where you least expect it. She looks forward to growing our social media, publications, and marketing materials so that more people will find a place where they can join us in ending domestic violence. Christina is a valuable asset to ICADV, working behind the scenes with the Board, the Outreach and Public Awareness Committee, the Membership Committee, and supporting other staff in getting our message out of working with and for survivors to build a network of systems that protect victims and hold abusers accountable. Christina truly believes in "One Mission, One Voice" and that together we can make our state, our country, and our world safer for everyone.

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