

Nazizi llana

LIFE SPAN

Time at Agency: 5 Years

Position: Advocacy Services Coordinator

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Commitment to advocacy on behalf of those affected by DV: Naz started at a time when Life Span was expanding criminal legal advocacy services, particularly in the re-engaging of the Skokie courthouse where we previously had a consistent presence. They jumped right in, scheduling meetings with key players, and in no time began collaborating with the YWCA and working with prosecutors and social workers daily. Naz spent their time building relationships, standing up with survivors, and educating the regularly rotating assistant state attorneys that were assigned to the DV courtroom in Skokie. As Naz worked with victims, they also advocated within Life Span to ensure best practices for working with marginalized survivors, raising awareness about best practices, and sharing many resources along the way.

- Personal qualities that reflect in their ongoing commitment to ethical, peaceful and respectful work with others: *Naz is a thoughtful, caring and empathic leader who has an activist spirit. They are not afraid to challenge the status quo and encourage others to engage in learning while gently and effectively challenging non-victim-centered thinking and behavior.*

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Ways in which they instill a spirit of advocacy in others: *Naz is a fierce advocate, but also a leader within Life Span and a well-respected colleague. They have a calm and thoughtful approach with an amazing ability to challenge others to look at different perspectives.*

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Experience that demonstrates a broad commitment to social justice: *Naz took interest in a case where a survivor was charged with murdering their abusive partner. As they became involved in that case, they developed relationships with many grassroots organizations and immersed themselves in learning about this specialized advocacy. As a*

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result, they started spearheading a specialized project on serving criminalized survivors with the support of leadership. The project continues to expand is particularly effective because of Naz's expertise in criminal advocacy and because of the reputation and relationships they have working with all players in the system.

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Creativity in building the domestic violence movement within a social framework: They have developed specialized training on criminalized survivors while pulling in various experts, survivors and grassroots organizations to partner. This development of partnerships has led to increased capacity for the organization and increased learning for all staff.