



Co-Response Training & Technical Assistance Center News

November —

Advocates CR-TTAC News

— 2021

Feature Story:

Meet Our Team: We're featuring members of our talented team!

This month, as the holiday season sets in, we are continuing to introduce you to our **Advocates JDP** team members.

To provide a meaningful introduction, we created some guiding questions for staff to answer. This month, we are introducing you to Sonja Wagner, MA. Sonja is the Co-Response Jail Diversion Clinician for Franklin and Natick.

Meet Sonja Wagner:

What brought you to your role at Advocates?

I was an EMT while I was in college studying biology and psychology and was surprised by the number of people I encountered who were struggling with mental illness and I always wished there was more we could do to help ensure they got the assistance they needed.

As my studies continued, I became increasingly more interested in psychology and decided to go to graduate school to study mental health counseling and rehabilitation. Once I graduated and began practicing traditional mental health counseling, I missed working in emergency response and started to search for a job that would allow me to do both. That's how I found the Jail Diversion Program with Advocates! I am so passionate about helping those in their greatest moments of need and that is exactly what this job allows me to do. I love it!

What is challenging about your job?

It can be discouraging when I see how the system has failed individuals I encounter in the community. I do everything I can once I have the opportunity to work with them but, because the nature of our work is so acute, we often don't know what the end result is for our clients. For instance, I might determine that a client would benefit from a certain level or care or type of program but often don't ever find out if they completed the program or if they benefited from it. I am a worrier so this can be very challenging for me.

What encourages you to stay in your position?

I stay because I see how important it is and how much the individuals we serve need assistance. Services can be so difficult to access and the mental health system can be incredibly difficult to navigate. It is so important to make sure we connect people to the services they need when they need them most.

I also LOVE my co-workers! I have never been part of such an incredible team and am in constant awe of their ability to serve every individual they encounter in such incredible ways. Their consistency and graciousness are some of the qualities I respect the most in them.



From all of us, to all of you ...

Best wishes for a joyous, peaceful, holiday season, filled with love and rekindled hope.

Join Our Team



Independent, Motivated, & Enthusiastic Professionals Wanted

Advocates promotes a healthy work-life balance and offers many generous perks of employment and room for advancement. We are a strong-knit community that values the ideas and contributions of our staff.

Our Co-Response Jail Diversion Team is expanding rapidly and we want you to

join us!

The Jail Diversion Social Worker works in conjunction with the designated police department (s) to provide psychiatric and substance use evaluations to individuals who encounter the police while in crisis.

Do you...

- **Have a Master' Degree in counseling or a related field?**
- **Have a minimum of 2 years of experience in crisis intervention?**
- **Like a fast-paced work environment?**

If so, please email Assistant Program Director **Jenelle Main**, LMHC at

JMain@Advocates.org

