



North Andover Resident Darcy Rubino Joins Walker as New Director of Family Connections



NORTH ANDOVER, Mass. - Walker, a non-profit leader in special education, behavioral health and residential treatment for children and youth, is pleased to announce a new addition to its staff with the recent hire of North Andover resident Darcy Rubino to fill the role of Director of Family Connections.

An important requirement for the position, Rubino has lived experience with her three children, two of whom have medical and mental health challenges. This background has translated into an expertise and inherent knowledge and skill that will benefit the families of Walker.

A graduate of the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) program at Boston Children's Hospital, Rubino has obtained invaluable hands-on training that has greatly impacted the success of her career, further enhancing her involvement with youth and parents.

A seasoned professional, Rubino brings a fresh perspective to Walker that she developed during her many years of working and volunteering within the field of children's health care. Most recently, Rubino was a Health Information Specialist at the Federation for Children with Special Needs. There, she honed her skills and specialized in identifying, cultivating, and coaching family leaders across the state. Rubino also worked with professionals and parents to maintain and foster meaningful relationships between the two groups.

Previously, Rubino served as a Family Partner at the Lahey Behavioral Health Service. During this time, she assisted in navigating child serving systems, connected peer/parent support and self-help groups, conducted group and individual psycho-education, and trained parents and caregivers.

In collaboration with her new position at Walker, Rubino continues to serve on many advisory boards, committees, and councils such as the Boston Children's Hospital Family Advisory Council, the Boston Children's Hospital Family Education Steering Committee, the Special Education Statewide Advisory Council, the Massachusetts Child Health Quality Coalition, and the Massachusetts State Mental Health Planning Council. Additionally, Rubino is a devoted special education surrogate parent, and has previously served as board co-chair for the North Andover Parent Advisory Council for Children with Special Needs and as a transition-aged youth family support group leader at the Parent/Professional Advocacy League.

As the Director of Family Connections, Rubino is committed to child-centered, family-focused, and strength-based treatment. Rubino is thrilled to help provide a link between families and Walker's administration. While serving as a resource for caregivers, Rubino

will work to ensure that a caretaker's perspective is reflected in Walker's policies, procedures, and implementation.

"Throughout my career, I have dedicated my time and resources to support families impacted by various degrees of mental health and medical challenges," says Rubino.

"Walker's commitment to making families part of the conversation is critical to their record of success with the youth we serve. It is my honor to serve as the new Director of Family Connections and join the estimable Walker team."

About Walker

Founded in 1961, Walker is a leader in special education, residential treatment, hospital-diversion, professional training, and community consultation services for children and youth facing complex emotional, behavioral, and learning challenges. Each year, Walker seeks to transform the lives of nearly 20,000 children and youth ages 3 to 22 in more than 60 communities across Massachusetts. Using evidence-based practices and data-driven interventions, Walker's professionals partner with these children and youth, their families, and communities to nurture hope and develop lifelong skills. Walker combines clinical and academic expertise with a commitment to strength-based, child-centered and family-driven care so that vulnerable yet resilient children and youth can achieve their potential and meet challenges. Through programming in Needham and Watertown, and partnerships with more than 44 school districts and education networks across the Commonwealth, Walker supports children and youth, their families and communities to help realize a brighter future.

###

