

CELEBRATING TWO MORE LONG ISLAND SDMA_s

Continuing our round-up of year-end SDMA signings, we want to highlight two more from our Long Island site, with appreciation to Michelle Flood for providing us with the information and the wonderful pictures.

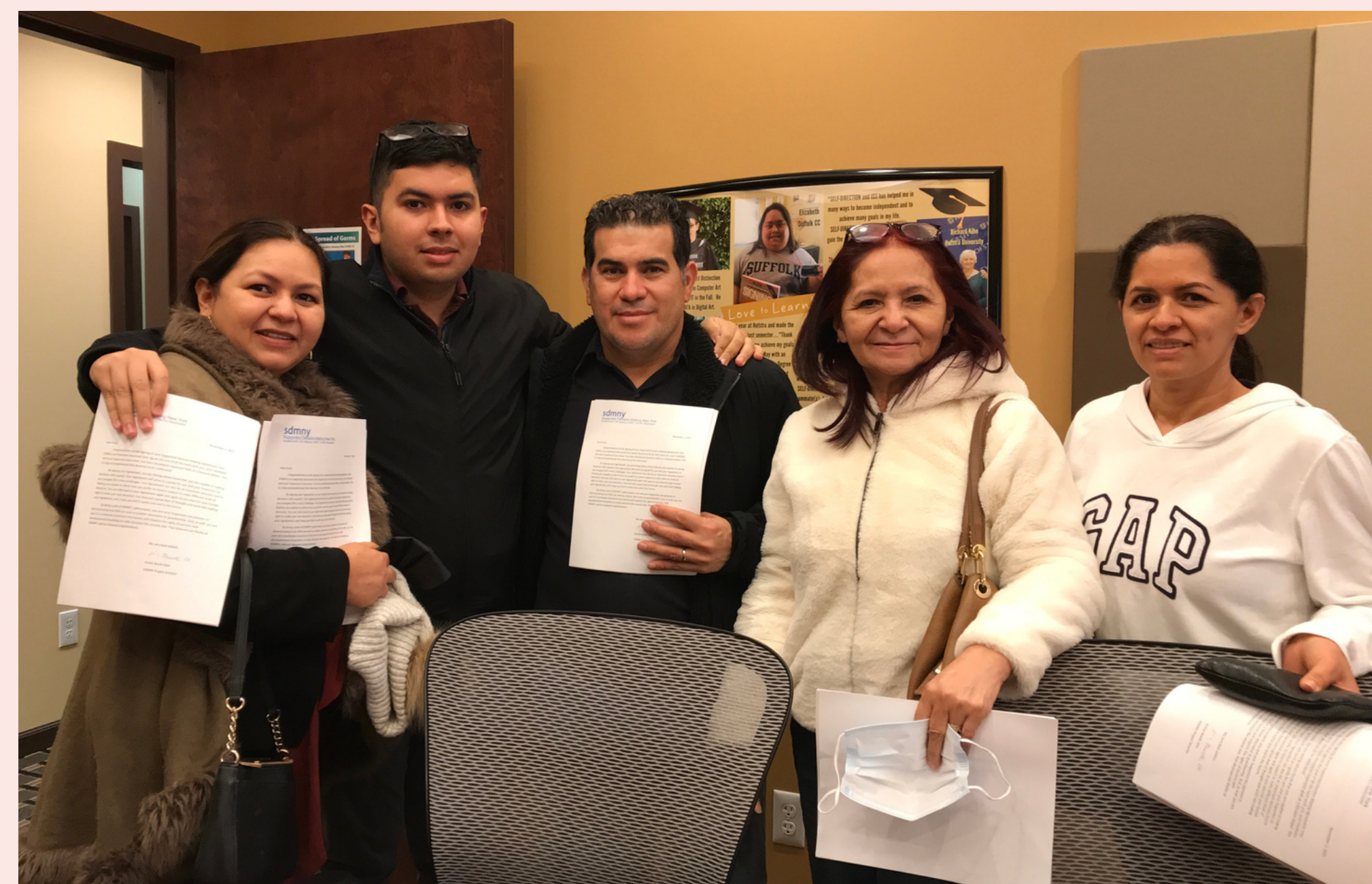
Arianne, who is 19, lives in Bayshore, works part time at Old Navy, and volunteers at the Argyle Theater in Babylon, which is not surprising since her favorite activities involve anything with singing, dancing, and theater. Although her SDMNY facilitation took longer than expected (could Covid have had anything to do with that?), Arianne is thrilled to have a team of supporters, family and friends, to help her with her life decisions, with her as the leader in all the decisions she makes. When asked why SDM was important to her, she answered that “it’s because I want to be in charge of myself, but I like knowing I always have help when I need it”.

Her Mom, who is one of Arianne’s supporters, says

I didn't really understand it at first but after learning about this I am so happy that something like this exists for Arianne. She has so much going for her and understands so much, guardianship would not be the right choice, but she does need assistance. [SDM is important because] [i]t empowers people with disabilities by giving them an option to manage their own lives while at the same time having the support they need when they decide they need it.



Arianne and Supporters at the celebratory luncheon after her SDMA signing



Erick y sus apoyadores orgullosos (Erick and his proud Supporters)

Another Long Islander, Erick, provided a first for SDMNY; his SDM facilitation and signing ceremony were our first real bi-lingual effort. Not only is Erick to be congratulated for all the hard work he did in getting to his Agreement; his facilitator Minette says that he was invaluable to the whole process as the only person, beside his stepfather/Supporter, who spoke English, and did all the translation when his stepfather was not available.

SDMNY provided a professional Spanish translation of the SDMA, and Erick also interpreted during parts of the bilingual ceremony: Erick read the Notice to Decision-Makers (an acknowledgment that starts every SDMA and ensures that the Decision-Maker fully understands the SDMA they are entering into) in English, and his supporters read their attestations (including their recognition of Erick’s right and ability to make his own decisions, and their commitment to support him in doing so) in Spanish. We are told that his grandmother/abuela cried at the end of the ceremony—tears of happiness and pride, we’re sure!

CONGRATULATIONS/FELICIDADES TO ARIANNE, ERICK, THEIR SUPPORTERS AND FACILITATORS!