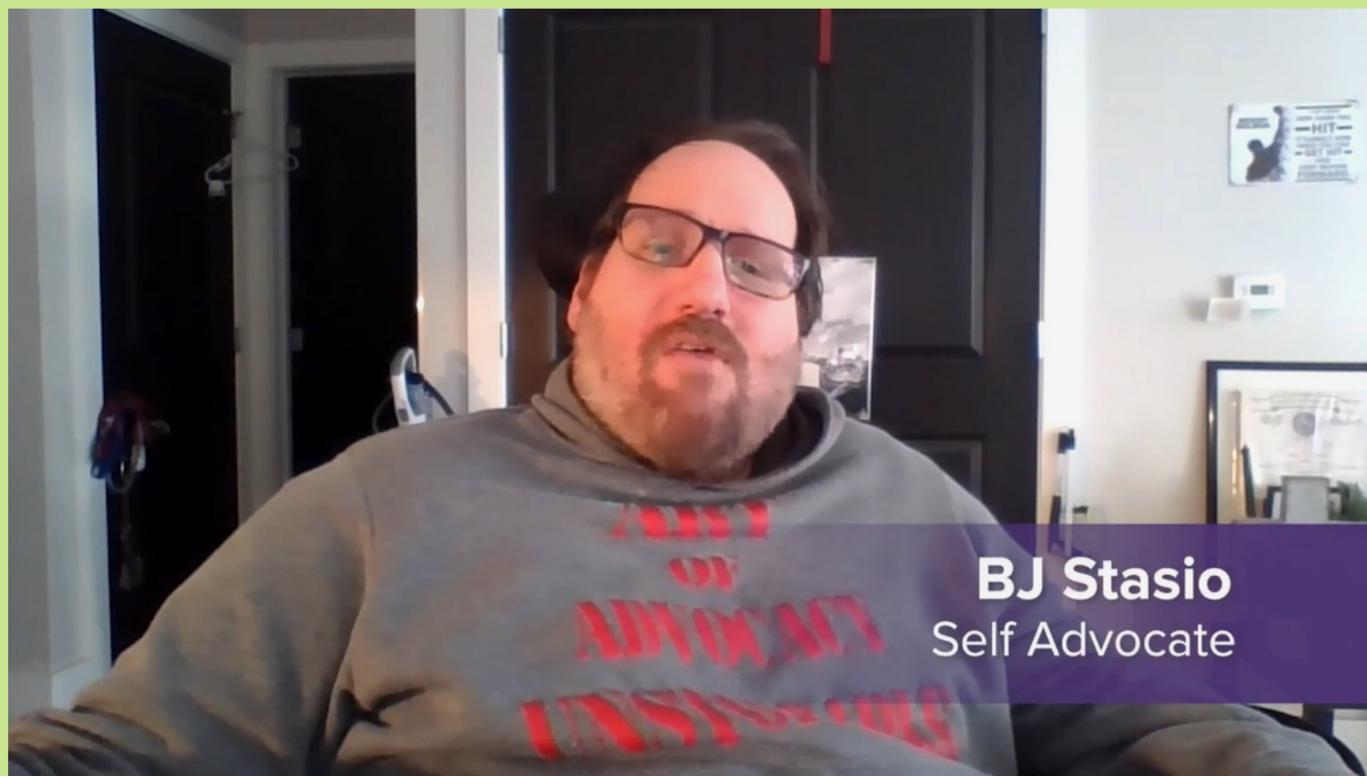


NEWS, AT LEAST SOME OF IT GOOD

It's almost impossible to be alive in New York (or anywhere) now without constantly thinking and/or worrying about the Omicron variant of Covid-19. The bad news is how much more contagious it is—we all have friends and co-workers who have gotten it, with varying degrees of misery— but the good news is that if you have been fully vaccinated, you're almost certainly not going to end up in the hospital, or worse, and you *will* get better. Of course, it's best not to catch it at all, which means we all need to go back to wearing high quality masks (not just decorative ones) at least until Omicron subsides.

It seems like ages ago that Anna, one of our wonderful Decision-Makers, made a video that we shared with you on why it was so important to be very careful, to socially distance, and to wear a mask—when that was all we had to protect ourselves, our loved ones and our community. Now, of course—and thankfully— we have the vaccine, so we were excited to see a terrific video by B.J., a leading Self-Advocate and SANYS stalwart, that OPWDD has put out encouraging everyone in the community to get their shots. You can see the video by clicking [here](#).



We were also cheered to learn what an excellent job OPWDD has done with the individuals it serves, whether that has involved arranging home vaccinations, or bringing vaccinators to IRAs (Individual Residential Alternatives), with now a remarkable 93% of people in residential settings vaccinated, well above the state average.

In the video, BJ says that it's important to get vaccinated, because that's the best way to get back to normal, and "Normalcy is good!" We couldn't agree more. So please do what you need to stay safe, and encourage others as well.

HERE'S TO A RETURN TO NORMALCY, AND THANKS B.J AND OPWDD!