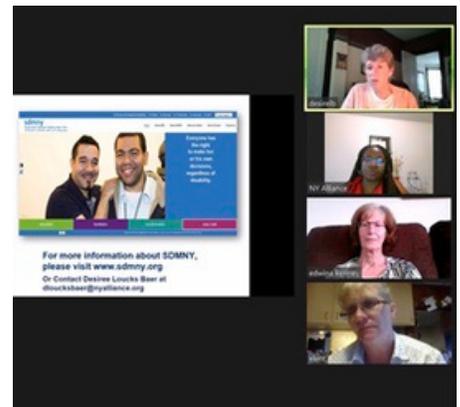


# SDMNY Launches New Initiative with AIM Services

AIM Services is a large provider agency located in Saratoga Springs; among its services is Self-Direction, a Medicaid funded program which allows people with I/DD to exercise independence in selecting the services and supports they need. Committed to “preparing {participants} to take full advantage of Self-Direction by giving a variety of opportunities to make decisions and learn about the relationship between decisions and consequences”, AIM sees supported decision-making (SDM) as a practice to be integrated throughout its organization, and is partnering with SDMNY’s Capital Region site to begin that work.

This week, SDMNY offered information sessions about SDM to AIM clients via ZOOM, and next week it will train a number of AIM employees as SDMNY facilitators. Desiree Loucks-Baer, who is leading the initiative for SDMNY says “This is an exciting opportunity to comprehensively incorporate what we have learned over the past four years into an organization that is deeply committed to the right of all people to make their own decisions, and the values of self-determination, autonomy and inclusion.”



**Chris Lyons, AIM’s President is equally enthusiastic, noting that**

*“The independence of the individuals we support is at the core of our mission at AIM services. Thus it was easy to identify the powerful synergy created in partnering with SDMNY to provide our dedicated staff with the skill set designed to broaden the horizon of self-determination. Everyone can and should exercise our right to make our own life choices. Although self evident to us, this path can be challenging for some. However, self-determination through supported decision-making and the right to take reasonable risks lie at the center of human dignity and self-esteem. We must avoid at all costs the well-intentioned desire to substitute our judgment for the judgment of others.”*