

# SPREADING THE WORD ABOUT SDM AND SDMNY FACILITATION

As our “bridge year” (March 1, 2021-Feb. 28, 2022) was drawing to a close, we didn’t know if we would be able to continue providing SDM facilitation, so we had to stop doing information sessions for prospective Decision-Makers, their families, and other stakeholders. With the *great* news about our soon-to-be-signed OPWDD grant (see Good News, [Dec. 17, 2021]) we’re now again able to “spread the word”, and we’ve begun doing so in the last few weeks.

First, on January 26 we held a general information session, hosted by our partner AIM Services that was attended not only by interested families, but also by staff and administrators from other entities. We were excited by the enthusiasm we heard from everyone who attended, including representatives of Lifetime Assistance, a provider agency in Rochester, and Future Care Planning, a care coordination organization (CCO), both of whom we hope to partner with under the OPWDD grant.

Equally energizing was the session for prospective Decision-Makers held last week, that included three enthusiastic and inspiring AIMS clients, Dwight, Kyle, and Marina.



Dwight, 46, lives in Ballston Spa, and volunteers with Meals on Wheels. He understands the importance of decision-making, saying that “decisions are a reflection of me”, and was so revved for the information session that he brought a prospective supporter with him!



Kyle is 35, and lives in Queensbury where he volunteers for a local ambulance service. He loves music, dancing and bowling, and thinks it is really important to be able to make his own decisions.



Marina is 21, an avid downhill skier who uses the bi-ski, is working toward independence and hoping to move to a supportive apartment. When we asked her what brought her to the session, she said,

*“a lot of decision-making is hard... I like the idea of decision-making being fully on me, but running it by someone and asking for help.” “With supported decision-making I can say, these are my worries yes I want to go out there by myself, will you help me do this in the safest way possible.”*

SDMNY Site Coordinator Joan Cornachio conducted the information session with Self-Advocate and SDMNY Decision-Maker Jessica Campbell, who shared how she was using SDM and her SDMA in her own life. Joan reports that she was deeply impressed by how Dwight, Kyle and Marina all valued self-determination and autonomy, and says that, by the end of the session, “it was clear that participating in the SDMNY process would further enhance those values and give them a set of tools to be the central voice in decisions that concerned them.”

We look forward to welcoming them to our community!