

## A NEW BEGINNING, AND WELCOMING A NEW SDMNY STAFF MEMBER

Last week was the final week of our “bridge year” funded by the Ford and Taft Foundations and The FAR Fund, to whom we are SO grateful. Although we couldn’t possibly have imagined it a year ago, this week marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter of our work to advance and protect the right of everyone to make their own decisions regardless of disability.

Thanks to a very significant grant from OPWDD, for the next three years we will be continuing to offer free SDM facilitation. We will continue to develop and refine materials for the facilitation process, for facilitator and mentor training, and for supporters, including ongoing “capacity building”, that draws on empirical research and on-line videos from our Australian colleagues.

But there is so much more. We will be designing and piloting a demonstration project that, going forward, would allow OPWDD to deliver facilitation services to everyone in New York State who wants them, using facilitators from a variety of sources, including provider agencies, the private bar, graduate professional students who receive academic “fieldwork” credit, volunteers, etc. Consistency, accountability and transparency would be ensured by a central Facilitation, Resource, Training and Education Center (FTREC, rhymes with Patrick) that would be responsible for all facilitator training, mentoring, and creation and dissemination of a variety of educational materials on SDM. And, we will continue working on the curricular project (see Good News [10/22/21]) that we hope will introduce SDM into transition planning in both public and private schools.

Because this is a much bigger and more complex grant than we’ve had before, we will be adding additional members to our intrepid core staff, and today is an opportunity to welcome our new Contract Administrator, Dana Ingraham.



Dana worked with Hunter College’s PRIDE Health Research Consortium as Administrative Coordinator, co-founded and serves as Director of Operations for Broadway Serves (an affiliate program of Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS) and is also a professional performing artist, with credits on Broadway, (including Spiderman!), film and concert dance. A gardener and reader of biographies and poetry, Dana says “ I am so inspired by the work that SDMNY is doing, and look forward to supporting SDMNY’s efforts!”

## THANKS TO OPWDD FOR THIS CONTINUED OPPORTUNITY, AND WELCOME DANA!