

## FAMILIES MAKE GREAT SUPPORTERS

Most Decision-Makers have loving families, and most choose family members as supporters along with other trusted persons in their lives. But unlike those others, it may be more difficult for family members to put aside the protective roles that they've always had—mom, dad, big brother or sister, grandparent—after all, they've known, and tried to do the best for the Decision-Maker their whole life. Supported decision-making means that, if chosen as supporters, they have to step back, re-focus, and appreciate the Decision-Maker as a competent adult who can make their own decisions with support, even decisions supporters don't think are so great, or with which they may not agree.

Decision-Maker Donald, who celebrated his SDMA signing last week, has a family that has embraced their new roles with gusto. And what a family it is! Donald has 11 siblings, and numerous nieces and nephews (which one supporter says “add up to many!”) Donald is reported to “have the uncanny ability to remember everyone's birthday, not only all those relatives, but so many others who are close to him.” He's 38 and lives in an apartment in Cohoes that he shares with a roommate. He's excited that he'll soon be getting a scooter that will give him more freedom to get out into the community, something he really likes to do. He especially loves going to IHOP for breakfast where his favorite food is waffles with lots of syrup and pancakes with bananas (In case you couldn't guess, yellow is his favorite color!)



*Donald's SDMA signing celebration*

Facilitator Patty notes how important and rewarding it was in working with Donald to explore the importance of family, support and independence” even as “he built self-confidence in himself to speak up and speak out.” A family supporter put it so well,

“Supported Decision-Making is important because Donald has the right to make choices just like us, we all need support from those we trust. We want Donald to know that we will always be there for him for strength as well as support”

**CONGRATULATIONS TO DONALD AND ALL HIS SUPPORTERS, AND  
SPECIAL THANKS TO HIS GREAT FAMILY AND FACILITATOR PATTY!**