

# OUR FIRST SDMA SIGNING SINCE THE SDMA LEGISLATION SIGNING AND WHAT IT MEANS

It wasn't planned that way, but last week Decision-Maker Ian and his supporters celebrated not only his SDMA signing, but the very first one since New York enacted, and the Governor signed, the SDMA bill on July 26 (Good News [5/27/2022; 7/29/2022]). It's worth noting what this means for Ian, and for all our other Decision-Makers with SDMAs, those who have already signed, and those yet to come.

The legislation doesn't automatically mean that decisions made pursuant to SDMNY SDMAs have to be recognized and accepted by third parties. That "automatic" legal recognition is probably about a year away, since the new law requires OPWDD to draft regulations about what process will be required in order for an SDMA to be recognized. We know, however, how supportive OPWDD has been of our work, as their big grant to SDMNY to implement the legislation shows (Good News [12/17/2021]). We fully expect that the regulations will track the 3-phase facilitation process that we've been piloting for the last 6 years, and also that SDMAs previously made (including Ian's and others that will be signed over the next year) will be "grandfathered"—that is, get the same treatment as SDMAs signed once OPWDD's regulations are promulgated.



*Ian's mom, brother, Ian, and his two aunts*

Ian and his supporters—his mom, 2 aunts and his brother, who all got together in person to celebrate, were still thrilled to be the “first”, not to mention how proud they all are of Ian. Ian himself was pretty excited, especially about his SDMA, which he says he'll use “to make safe decisions, make sure they are appropriate with the help of [his] supporters.” He's 19, lives in Brooklyn, likes traveling, especially to Europe to visit his mom's family, and playing ball with his puppy Ellie (unfortunately not in our photo of the signing!). Last Spring he did an internship at CVS, and he hopes to work with little kids in the Fall. Knowing Ian, they will be lucky to have him!

All Ian's supporters had great things to say about him, and about SDM and SDMNY (not to mention their appreciation for Facilitator Stephanie), including how honored they were to have been chosen as supporters. Aunt Suzanne also highlighted what a close group they all are, saying “[w]ith supported decision making, there is a comfort knowing that we are all here, lined up and ready to help you (Ian) at any time. We understand our role and Ian's wishes for support”. One comment we especially loved, because it's something we at SDMNY have come to believe, is that SDM and SDMAs aren't just for, and don't only benefit people with I/DD, or as Ian's aunt Lauren said, “everyone in the world should have one!” We agree, but in the meanwhile

**CONGRATULATION TO IAN AND HIS SUPPORTERS, AND THANKS TO FACILITATOR STEPHANIE!**