

# AN SDMA SIGNING AND A CELEBRATORY DINNER

Last week we featured the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, but this week we're back home in NYC, celebrating another in-person SDMA signing –we're so excited that these are possible once again—with 9 supporters and the SDMNY facilitator, our own Simge Yarayici.



Tara is 20, lives in Staten Island with her family, and is another of our wonderful Cooke School students. She loves hanging out with her family, especially her nephews, and she also loves ice cream! She interned at CVS in the past.

This signing celebration centered on great food. After the signing, everyone sat down to a delicious dinner of salmon, potatoes and beans that Tara herself cooked, and a beautiful ice cream (of course!) cake that her sister and family members brought.



Asked about her SDMNY facilitation, Tara reported that she felt good about the process, and was happy and proud that, as a result, "I know how I can talk to my supporters." Family members agreed on the value of the work they had done together. Her sister said:

"She's always my little sister, so maybe sometimes I don't recognize how grown up and smart she is. And to watch her go through this process was amazing... Tara, thanks for pushing yourself to grow and pushing us all to grow. I think this process really expanded all of our minds of what you're capable of. And now we know you have the framework and the supporters to get whatever you want done. So we're super excited for you."

Tara's mom, another supporter, agreed. She called the process "a natural expansion of [Tara's] growth and development," and noted that Tara "is thoughtful and considerate of how her decisions affect other people. It is interesting to change focus and stop and allow her to take the lead in making a decision..."

Facilitator Simge commented that it "was amazing to witness how Tara opened up more and became more comfortable with thinking and talking about decision-making during the process. She has very encouraging supporters around her who always showed the ways they can support Tara while acknowledging she is in the spotlight as the decision-maker."

**CONGRATULATIONS TARA, FAMILY & SUPPORTERS, AND FACILITATOR SIMGE!**