

Moving SDMNY Forward with Our Mentors

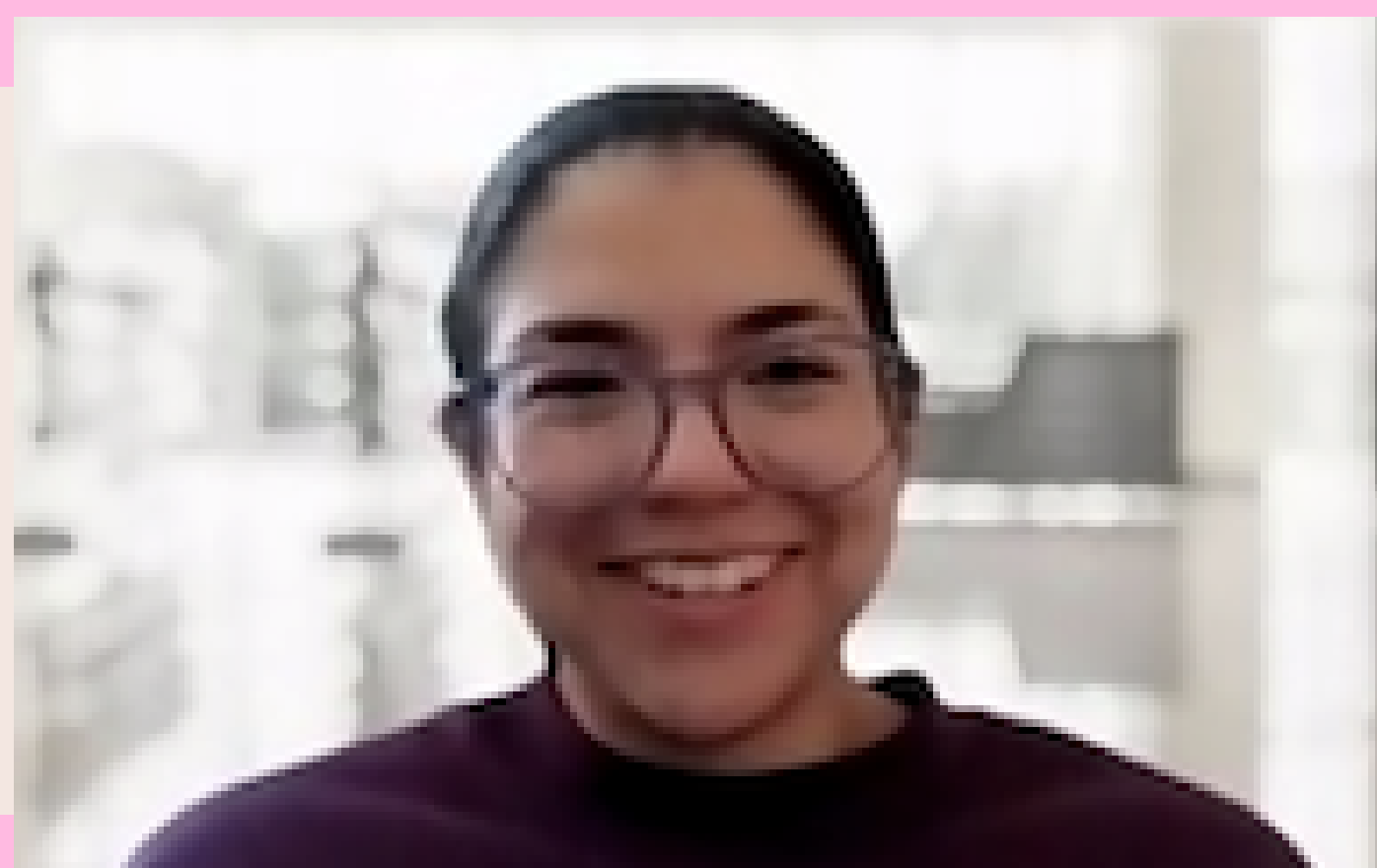
As we continue to work towards the deliverables for our OPWDD funding, SDMNY is fortunate to have an enthusiastic group of salaried mentors to assist. These dedicated professionals were introduced in previous Good News, and today we share their perspectives and enthusiasm as we move into the next phase of scaling up here in NYS. In their own words...

"As a recent hire, I've enjoyed getting up to speed while simultaneously being charged with leading this work into the future. I've had the opportunity to engage with non-profit legal organizations as well as care coordination organizations in diverse pockets of New York State. I am incredibly proud to meet with our decision-makers to help them on their journey to becoming more autonomous adults, and I'm excited for the evolution of SDMNY." --Susan Wexler Cohen



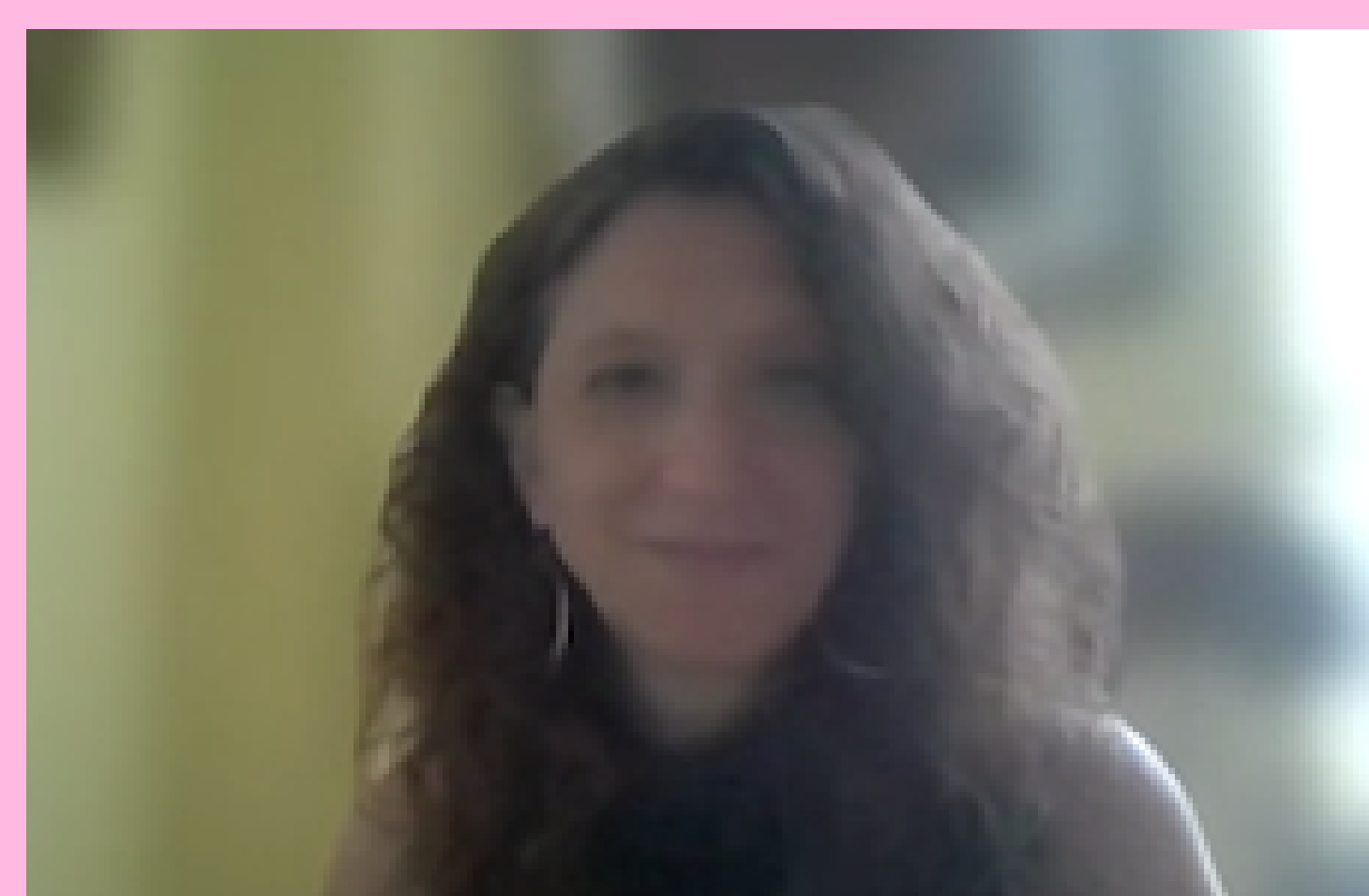
"Getting the word out is a big part of this stage of SDMNY, and I'm excited through my work with the Special Education Working Group to connect my colleagues past and present, including CUNY Unlimited, CUNY's inclusive higher education program for students with I/DD, the Stony Brook LEND program, and District 75." --Jenna Lamm

"Forming part of a groundbreaking project such as SDMNY has been exciting in itself. Our team is amazing, and I've learned so much more about the I/DD world. I'm particularly thrilled to help in the development of easy-read materials for decision-makers. I want everyone to be able to receive the message behind our mission and understand the value of SDM." --Steph Avendano



"Supporting autonomy by becoming a SDMNY mentor has been exciting! I'm currently enjoying Phase 1 with my very first Decision-Maker. As someone who's worked in special education, it's wonderful to work with transition age youth again. I'm also looking forward to contributing to the Working Groups for Special Education, and Outreach, Engagement, and Training. Through this work, as a team, we will grow SDMNY and make it increasingly accessible." --Fateema Villani

"I recently co-facilitated the state-wide Community of Practice (for SDM facilitators). The statewide COP is a unique setting where individuals from all over the state congregate (via Zoom, of course) and learn with and from each other. Over 25 facilitators joined the meeting, some seasoned facilitators themselves, and it was exciting to recognize how far the SDMNY project has come in the last few years. As I move into Phases 2 and 3 with my DMs, I now see firsthand how moving and valuable the supported decision-making process is, and I look forward to hearing others' facilitation success stories in future COPs!" --Aylah Loewenstein



"As someone who was already familiar with the concept of SDM through the disability activist community, it's been incredible to be at SDMNY and learn from my co-workers and from decision-makers themselves about how to move beyond the theory of SDM, to actualizing it on the ground.

I'm grateful to be able to become involved in various pieces of SDMNY's project development: from the creation of Easy Read materials, to outreach/training to spread SDM, and even to supporting development of an IT infrastructure for the project. I appreciate being involved in my own small way in the worldwide SDM movement and excited about doing whatever I can here at SDMNY to help this movement grow!" --Karen Rosenthal

We've got quite a team assembled here at SDMNY! Onward!