

SDMNY RETURNS TO ITS BEGINNINGS

Every year (except, of course, during the pandemic) the New York Alliance for Inclusion and Innovation (“the Alliance”, formerly NYSACRA) holds a major conference at Lake George, this year with more than 600 attendees. The conference, which just concluded today, holds a particular and special place in SDMNY’s history; this is where it all began!

This year’s conference theme was “Reconnect, Recollect & Reimagine”, and it couldn’t have captured our relationship with the Alliance more perfectly. SDMNY presented on our amazing accomplishments over the past several years (“Re-Connecting”) and we were able to recount the history that brought us to this moment (“Reflecting”).

A video from SDMNY Founding Director Kris Glen (click below to view) told the story of her first meeting with then-NYSACRA Director Ann Hardiman at the conference in 2015; the history-making call in the summer of 2016 that brought them together to form SDMNY in response to a DDPC RFP for a project to design and test SDM as an alternative to guardianship; and the powerful collaboration that has existed ever since. She also remembered how a presentation on SDM at the first conference after SDMNY was awarded the grant led to facilitating a wonderful self-advocate from Rochester to his SDMA, and then celebrating the termination of his guardianship and restoration of his rights—our first! (Good News [4/9/2021])



Naomi Brickel and Ann Hardiman

SDMNY’s new Director, Naomi Brickel, joined Ann in the project of “re-imagining” where and how our work will go from here. Naomi said “Now we begin the next stage, building on the successful history of SDMNY’s first 6 years...We’re excited to scale the project to a statewide implementation - developing an infrastructure for SDM in NYS [with the] goal over the next two years to ensure that SDM facilitation is a service that finds a natural home in the OPWDD system and is known and available to all.”

Ann reaffirmed her, and the Alliance’s “excite[ment] at working to spread the word about supported decision making. Our work from the beginning has been driven by the need for an alternative to guardianship and an option that reflects and supports the person with IDD in the way they want to be supported. It is heartening to have lots of interest in supported decision-making, after the session at the conference!”

We are grateful for, and proud of our collaboration with the Alliance, and for the opportunity, once again, to engage with so many stakeholders who we hope will help us move forward with the work that started at beautiful Lake George 8 years ago. We join in Naomi’s sentiment:

"What an amazing conference and opportunity to introduce potential collaborators to the next stage of our SDMNY work!"



Site of the Alliance Conference, The Sagamore Hotel, Lake George, NY