

SPREADING THE WORD: SDMNY EDUCATES A VARIETY OF STAKEHOLDERS

Among our many goals (and, as well, our pleasures) is reaching out to a wide variety of stakeholders to educate them about SDM, SDMNY facilitation and, most recently, the new SDMA law in New York. Sometimes it's just a general introduction to the concept of everyone's right to make their own decisions, and how SDM can make that possible for people with I/DD, but often it's also focused on the ways in which a particular group of stakeholders (people with I/DD; family members; provider agencies, judges and court personnel, attorneys) can utilize SDM in their lives or work. The last two weeks have been good examples of both.



Haldan Blecher, Kris Glen, and
Alison Morris, the Co-Chair of the Disability Rights Committee

Last week Founding Director Kris Glen and OPWDD attorney Haldan Blecher (who is currently drafting the implementing regulations for the new law) presented a webinar for the New York State Bar Association (NYSBA) to more than 100 enthusiastic attorneys. Kris explained SDM, gave SDMNY's history and accomplishments, and spoke about how attorneys could participate in our current OPWDD implementation grant. Haldan explained the statute, the process of writing and receiving comments on the regulations, and the interface of the new law with existing OPWDD regulations and practices. The overall response was extremely favorable: a sample evaluation wrote "Well done and a timely topic! A great webinar!" Since the presentation, several attorneys have already reached out to us for more information on how to become involved.



Karen Rosenthal, Joan Cornachio, and Oscar

Meanwhile, SDMNY Associate Director Joan Cornachio and Mentor Karen Rosenthal gave a presentation to a different group of stakeholders, staff and administration at The Center for Family Support, and families. They were accompanied by one of our Decision-Makers, Oscar (see Good News [9/10/21]) who described his experience with SDM facilitation, the benefits of his SDMA and especially the confidence that it gives him and his parents about the support system he has created that will be there for him when his parents no longer can be. Linda Schellenberg, Senior Director of Community Services for CFS organized the hybrid presentation (zoom and live), and after it concluded she sent Karen and Joan an email saying:

"Wow what a wonderful session! You both wonderfully reviewed Supported Decision-Making and covered all of the concerns/questions in such an amazing way! Thank you so much for bring your knowledge and expertise to CFS!!"

WE LOVE INFORMING PEOPLE ABOUT SDM AND OUR WORK, AND ARE HAPPY THAT THEY FIND IT VALUABLE TOO!