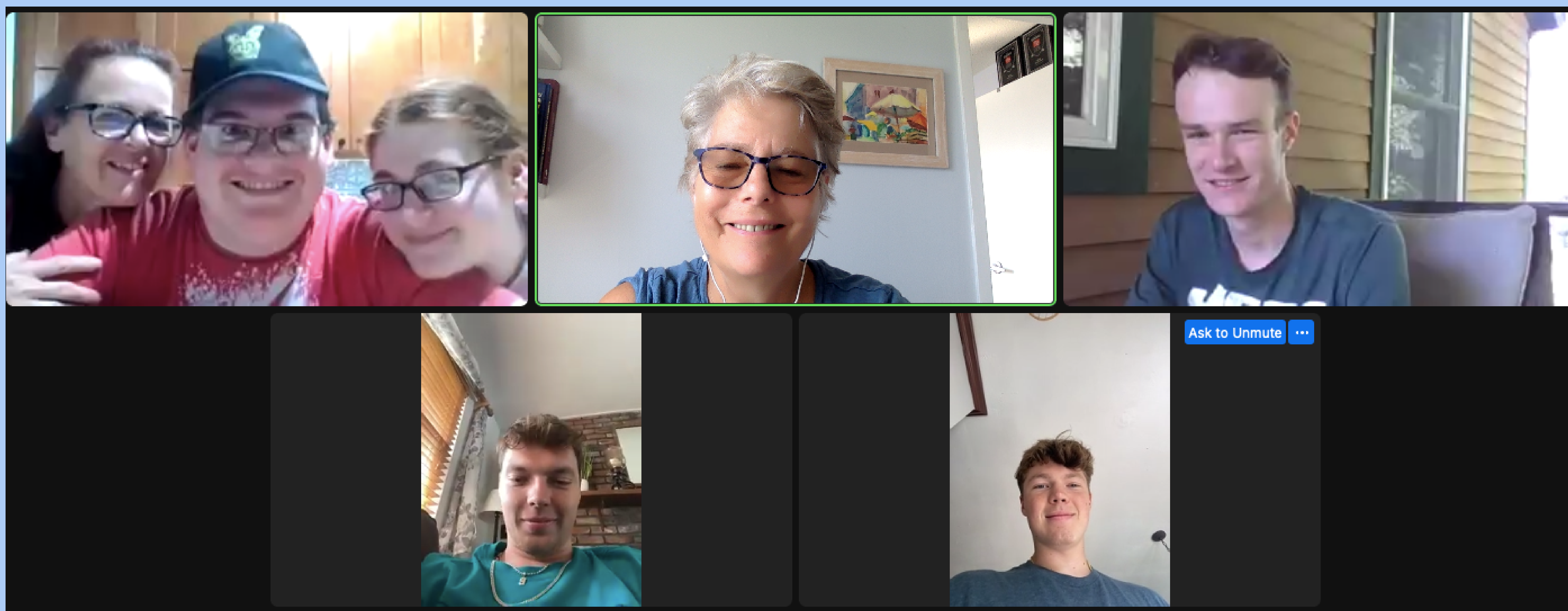


AN UNUSUALLY “YOUTHFUL” SDMA SIGNING AND A PROMISE TO “SPREAD THE WORD”

Last week Cooper, 21, celebrated his SDMA signing with supporters and family at their home on Long Island. He is a kind and thoughtful young man who recently began volunteering at the JCC near his home where he assisted in teaching a cooking class. His cooking skills match up with his dream to one day own and operate a food truck (so popular these days) or maybe even a pontoon boat from which he would sell lobsters and crabs. Sounds delicious, and count us in!

A unique aspect of Cooper's SDMA was the relative youth of the majority of the supporters he chose: three cousins, Cameron, Thomas, and Sean, are all college students, studying history and sociology, civil engineering, and finance respectively, and a fourth, Billy, is a NYC Police Officer. Cooper's facilitator had this to say:

“Cooper, you have a marvelous group of supporters. I have no doubt you will work together to make this SDMA something that lives with you for the rest of your life. You have chosen the largest number of peer-age supporters of all the DMs I have facilitated since 2016. You'll continue to grow up together and see that a lot of the decisions your cousins are working on will be important decisions you will be making in your own life.”



Cooper with his mom Dodie and sister Kate, Facilitator Joan, Cameron (cousin), Thomas (cousin), Sean (Cousin)

The day after his signing, Cooper attended his first SANYS Regional conference on Long Island where he was able to meet other self-advocates who have signed their SDMAs. His experience with SDMNY facilitation has also inspired his 19-year old sister Kate, who is excited to begin the process herself. Enthusiasm for SDM runs in the family: mom Dodie (also a supporter) is the Long Island Regional Coordinator of Parent to Parent of NYS. She says she is looking forward to spreading the word about SDM to family members in the Parent to Parent community and to continue to “bust the myths of guardianship.”

We can think of no better advocates for SDM and SDMNY facilitation than Cooper and his wonderful family, and we look forward to hearing about all the adventures which lie ahead.

CONGRATULATIONS COOPER, YOUR SUPPORTERS, AND FACILITATOR JOAN!