

AMPLIFYING THE VOICES OF DECISION-MAKERS

From the very beginning (literally, in the meetings in which we crafted our grant proposal to DDPC in 2016) we have sought to include and lift up the voices of people with I/DD. There were no “Decision-Makers” then although, of course, people with I/DD were informally making decisions with the support of family, friends, provers and others.

Over the next 6 years, more than 100 Decision-Makers have completed the SDMNY facilitation process and celebrated signing their SDMAs. We have engaged them in many aspects of our work, from developing the “Principles for SDMA Legislation” that became the basis of New York’s new SDMA law, to educating stakeholders through presentations on panels, webinars, and at conferences, to their participation in our wonderful videos , and, of course, increasingly serving on our SDMNY Advisory Council.

Now, under the leadership of Mentors Jenna Lamm and Karen Rosenthal, SDMNY is launching a new initiative to increase the involvement of Decision-Makers in every aspect of program development and outreach, the Decision-Maker Alumni Council (DMAC). The formal kickoff will be an information session for all the Decision-Makers who already have SDMAs, **NEXT THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14**. Those who apply to, and join the Council for a first year-long term will commit to participating in 2 hours of activities each month, 1 for the DMAC meeting and 1 for an activity of their choice such as leading a presentation, participating in a focus group, reviewing and providing feedback on SDMNY materials, joining SDMNY for various Decision-Maker events, and more!



Speaking of the DMAC, Jenna said:

“This is one of the initiatives I’m most excited about. The Disability Rights movement teaches us that there’s “nothing about us, without us”. We want to make sure Decision-Makers are meaningfully involved in co-creation at SDMNY. An ongoing, regular group where DMs can lead and provide input on how the project progresses is a great way to encourage a deeper level of participation!”

THE DMAC IS AN IMPORTANT STEP IN LIFTING UP THE VOICES OF DECISION-MAKERS, AND WE ENCOURAGE OUR DM ALUMNI TO ATTEND THE INFO SESSION ON THURSDAY TO LEARN MORE ABOUT DMAC, CLICKING [HERE](https://tinyurl.com/DMACInfo23)!