

SHE'S BACK!

Stephanie Penceal joined SDMNY as Project Coordinator just before the Covid pandemic began, evicting us from our offices and sending us into the new world of “remote” work. We couldn't have been more fortunate as she became an indispensable member of our small team, seeing us through the end of our DDPC grant, and then through the “bridge year” when we celebrated the new SDMA legislation and the OPWDD implementation grant. And while that grant was a great step forward for the ability to deliver SDM facilitation to everyone in NY who wants it, it also made Stephanie's job much more bureaucratic and farther from the actual people whose lives we were changing.



Stephanie Penceal

We reluctantly said goodbye when she took a new position at a foundation that “enhances the financial capability of all Americans” (or, as we might say, facilitates financial literacy) a field which she had previously enjoyed and in which she was very successful. We were, however, able to maintain a small connection through a limited consulting arrangement that allowed us continuing access to all her wisdom and knowledge of SDMNY. As our internal structure evolved, including the need for a half-time Facilitation Coordinator, Stephanie also came to a personal decision about the need for greater work-life balance, and the stars aligned. So Stephanie is now doing some consulting on grant writing, and is back to the hands-on work of signing up Decision-Makers and then coordinating the facilitators and mentors with whom they will engage on their way to their SDMA. We couldn't be happier.



Stephanie in the basket of the balloon

Stephanie also reports some fabulous adventures during the past two years, including checking off one of her big “bucket list” items— taking a hot air balloon ride in the Rocky Mountains while on her yearly trip with her hiking group, which she describes as both “terrifying” and “amazing.”

Here's what she says about her return

“One of the most meaningful accomplishments of both my professional and personal lives was being a full-time member of the SDMNY team when the SDMA legislation passed. I am grateful and humbled to return as the Facilitation Coordinator as we build and test a service delivery system to bring SDM and SDM facilitation to everyone in NY who wants it. Onward!”

We are thrilled to have Stephanie back as a member of our team as we continue to promote and advance the right of everyone to make their own decisions, regardless of disability.

WELCOME BACK STEPHANIE!