

## AN SDMA SIGNING WE WERE LOOKING FORWARD TO, AND HAPPY BIRTHDAY MADDY!

Every SDMA signing is cause for celebration, recognizing all the hard work that Decision-Makers, their Supporters and their SDMNY Facilitators and Mentors have put in over many months. And, of course, we celebrate the increased autonomy and self-determination that the Decision-Makers have gained, and the freedom from discrimination that New York's SDMA law promises them. Sometimes, though, there's something about a prospective Decision-Maker that makes them stand out, so that when they complete our facilitation process, we take special notice. Decision-Maker Maddy, who recently signed her SDMA, was one of those we had our eye on from the beginning.



DM Maddy with her mom and Supporter Kristin, Facilitator Meghan, Supporter Chloe, Supporter Brenlee with "baby Luxton", Supporter Kelly, and Mentor Jenna

SDMNY Associate Director Joan Cornachio says:

*"Maddy is a wonderful young woman, a horse woman no less. I was the contact person for Maddy and her mom when they initially reached out to SDMNY, and I remember her enthusiasm and kindness, and her smarts. I remember thinking how SDMNY would reinforce everything she already had inside of her."*

Joan was (as usual) right on the mark.

Maddy is, in fact, a "horse woman" whose favorite activity is riding her horse, Kid Rock. She lives with her family in Watertown, Jefferson County, located on the Northern border of the state, at the junction of the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario, proving our point (Good News [4/12/24]) that SDM and SDMNY facilitation are truly statewide! She enjoys playing the guitar and reading, loves country music, and recently took a trip to Nashville. She volunteers at Samaritan Medical Center, and in the children's room at Flower Memorial Library. And, both timely and important, she turned 20 just this Wednesday!



Maddy with her horse, Kid Rock



Maddy with her therapy horse, Cherokee

As Joan predicted, Maddy found that the facilitation process went well and credited her facilitator, Meghan, especially for helping her think about and choose her supporters. She intends to use her SDMA as she moves into adult life, calling on those supporters for advice and guidance when she is unsure about a decision. And, she affirms, "Supported Decision-Making is important because it allows me to make my own decisions and have a voice."

Maddy was the first Decision-Maker that Meghan facilitated, and she confirms everything that Joan first saw in December 2022. She says:

*"Maddy is one of the most spirited, fun, kind-hearted people I have ever met. She always has a smile on her face and she is just so joyful. Working with her and her mom over the last year or so has been one of the most rewarding experiences I have been a part of... Hearing about the things in her life that bring her such happiness- her love of horses, music (primarily playing guitar and singing) and the love of her family- I am so thankful to have met such a beautiful soul and to have helped her in this SDMNY journey."*

We wish Maddy a slightly belated Happy Birthday and we're so glad that SDMNY was able to "reinforce everything that [Maddy] already had inside her" and give her the tools for a full and inclusive life.

### CONGRATULATIONS TO MADDY AND HER SUPPORTERS AND THANKS TO FACILITATOR MEGHAN!