

MAY WAS A GREAT MONTH FOR THIS DECISION-MAKER AND HER FACILITATOR

For many, May is a month to celebrate achievements and to look forward to new challenges, and that’s exactly what this past May was for both Decision-Maker Dylan and her facilitator, Fateema.

Dylan is a proud member of the LGBTQ community who lives in Johnstown, New York, and who signed up with SDMNY in October 2023. She and her first facilitator made a lot of progress, but the facilitator was unable to continue through the SDMA signing, so in January of this year, her mentor, Fateema, stepped in to complete the process. Although all of Dylan’s supporters are family—her parents, an aunt, and two cousins—and very supportive of the process, there was a logistical challenge involving time zones that they were able to solve collaboratively. Dylan’s aunt and cousins, Lydia and Lianne, live near Dylan and have been an important and helpful presence in her life, but the aunt Heather was traveling in Greece, even as Dylan’s mom and dad were joining Phase 2 and 3 meetings from California. The solution? Meetings for everyone at noon, Eastern Standard Time!



Dylan at the Beyoncé concert

Dylan celebrated her SDMA signing on May 29th and says of the facilitation process, "First, I am grateful for this process. I am so thankful for my supporters. I had a wonderful experience, and I am so proud of myself for completing this goal." That wasn't the only highlight of the month; she also celebrated her 22nd birthday and had the thrill of attending a Beyoncé concert (we're SO jealous!) about which she reported, "I want to add Beyoncé because she is a successful Black woman that I look up to. I want to be just like her." Dylan looks forward to more changes this summer as she plans to move from her current residence, get her driver's permit, *and* a job!

Beside Dylan’s success, Fateema also had a big achievement to celebrate—her graduation from the Queens College School of Psychology with a master’s degree in Educational Psychology! When she joined SDMNY as a mentor in 2023, Fateema had finished her 2 years of coursework and was in the first of two half-time years of internships. She managed to combine her outstanding work as both a mentor and sometimes facilitator with her job as a school psychology intern at schools in Glen Cove and, more recently, Uniondale. And now, as SDMNY moves toward the end of its implementation grant, Fateema will be looking for a full-time job in a school for people with I/DD, the fulfillment of her hard work and of her dreams.



Fateema with her diploma

As these two wonderful young women set forth on the next chapters of their lives, we take pride in their achievements, celebrate their successes, and wish them their very best lives.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DYLAN AND HER SUPPORTERS, AND CONGRATULATIONS AND THANKS TO FACILITATOR FATEEMA!