

Waiting List Story February 2016: Meet Allie

My name is Allie and I am 18 years old. I live in Fairfax and I've lived here my whole life. My life, however sometimes feels different than other kids in the neighborhood because I have a genetic disability. When I was young, I did not develop as my other neighborhood friends did. I took a bit longer to walk, talk, write and perform other tasks. I had to go through a lot of testing and I saw lots of doctors. My geneticist was pretty convinced I had a genetic disability but he was never able to figure out exactly what. Neither were the other two geneticists I saw later in life. All I know is that from a very young age, I felt different.



In many ways, I'm like a lot of teenagers you may know. I love my siblings, I adore Broadway musicals, and I can swim like a fish. At home I love to listen to music and do research on my favorite Broadway actresses. I would love to be in a Broadway show but my mom has had trouble finding a good theater company that would work with me. For now, I go to as many high school productions as I can. This is fun but it often makes me long to be part of a theater group. It looks like they have so much fun up there.

I have a lot of anxiety. I worry about how people will accept me. This has made life hard at times. I feel different and left out, like I don't quite fit anywhere. My parents have looked really hard for help. I was denied eligibility for Waiver years ago, but now I've been on the five years. I have received some funding for people on the waiting list so that my parents

social companion for me, yet we never know if that funding will be available year. My parents are always anxious about the limited funding and rush to the day the application is due. These outings have been crucial to my and well being. When I don't get out, I can be hard to live with. My frustration sometimes I take it out on my family.

I wish I had my ID Waiver. Then I could have someone help me navigate my help to integrate me into everyday life around me! I want to be independent. I and want to be like my neighborhood friends. I want to do the things they do. I born differently yet it is hard to accept at times. I have gifts, too. I am incredibly compassionate, have a stellar memory and good with technology. I am very nervous to think about life after school. I know most of my neighborhood friends are heading off to college next year. I worry about what will happen to me when they are gone. Who will be my friend? Who will help me? What will I do? It is all very scary to imagine.



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In the meantime, my parents keep reminding me to focus on my talents and work hard at school. I do work hard and do all my homework independently. My teachers are proud of the progress I have made. When I am older I would like to work in a hospital or in the medical field. We are working to get me involved with Project Search, an internship that gives young adults with disabilities real work experience. I hope to do this program after I leave high school. I hear a lot of the kids get hired there after the internship. I know I will need a lot of support but I am hopeful that my dream of working in a hospital will someday work out.

I have lots of friends on the waiting list too. Please think of us. The future is a bit scary for us to think about. None of us want to leave high school because we just don't know how we will fit in. You can change their futures, too! Please fund the waiting list for ID and DD



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