

## March 2016 Waiting List Story

### Meet RONALD

**My name is Ronald and I recently turned 58 years old. I've lived in Northern Virginia all my life and I'm very close with my family. They help me a great deal. I have autism and an intellectual disability and over the years, it has made my life challenging.**

**A few years ago, my sister and her daughter realized I needed a lot more help to be safe and have a good life. I'm so glad they're involved. They helped me apply for an ID Waiver. Though I've been eligible since Virginia created the program in 1990, no one ever told me. I'm told I'm on the urgent waiting list, but it could still be a long wait.**

**My family helped me with the paperwork to get Medicaid and Social Security payments. They've been a lifesaver, because I was recently hospitalized and diagnosed with high blood pressure. Now I have to take several medications and monitor my blood pressure twice a day. My benefits all came together in the summer of 2015, but as of November 1, I lost my Medicaid because I earn too much. I work part time, but with that and my Social Security benefits, I make almost \$900 a month. It isn't enough to pay for my housing, food, medications, or the help I need to survive, but it's enough to take away my supports. This past week I was approved for a housing voucher, but I don't think I will be able to use it because the voucher won't allow me to live with family, but without an ID Waiver I cannot economically or safely live on my own. I'm pretty strong (I once knocked the toilet off the floor just by using it) and I need a really good landlord! Without an ID Waiver, there is no staff to help check on me and my sister needs to do it.**



**Sometimes it feels like I'm living in crisis and I'm scared of what each day will bring. I worked at the Springfield mall for years, but I lost my job when it was remodeled. Then I got a job doing janitorial work at the Tyson's Mall—a job that I really liked. During the holiday season of 2014 while I was working a police officer in plain clothes thought he saw me take a candy bar. He yelled to me, but I was working and rolling my janitor's cart and I didn't hear him. He grabbed me and I didn't understand what was happening. I was really scared. He sprayed mace in my face and no one got me medical help or even told my family and they took me to jail. My niece worked really hard with the lawyers and judge to show this was a misunderstanding and that I didn't do anything wrong. She took**

**off a lot of time from work and advocated for me and today all of the charges were dropped, but I lost my job.**

**Now we try and go one day at a time. Without an ID Waiver, though, there aren't many options or answers, just constant hurdles. I don't know what is going to happen to me in the future, or without my sister and niece. This isn't how I imagined my life. I want to know that I will have some kind of life.**

**I would like you to remember that each of the more than 10,000 people on the Waiting List have a story and need your help, too.**

**You can change my future! Please fund the waiting list for ID and DD Waivers AND SUPPORT WAIVER REFORM! End the wait, start a life.**