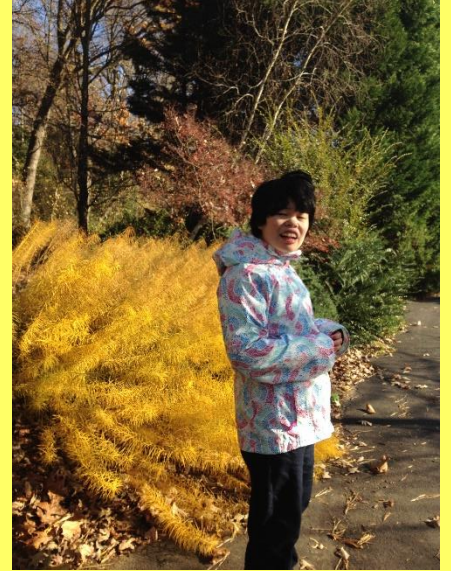


August Waiting List Story- Meet Erina!

My name is Erina and I am happy to meet you. I am 26 years young and a really happy person! I have lived in Fairfax most of my life with my two younger sisters. When I came here in 1993, we realized that because I have a significant intellectual disability, I was eligible for a Medicaid Disability Waiver. We got on the waiting list then and have been waiting for help for a very long time.

For now, I am able to use an EDCD Waiver that gives us a little bit of help, but my mom still takes care of all my life skills most of the time. Sometimes my sister helps, but she is getting ready to be a fulltime college student soon and will be gone every day. I hope she will still be able to help on the weekends some. We also have a neighbor who helps out sometimes, which is important because I actually need a lot of help.

I do a great job of walking on my own, but I have seizures and need help taking care of my daily needs. I am not really friendly and have sometimes wandered off with some reason, so someone needs to be with me all the time. Anyone who knows me knows that I have no fear, so I can sometimes be a little too adventurous. That is getting harder on my mom. I am getting bigger and stronger still and she seems to be having more trouble. Last year she sprained her thumb trying to take care of me and it took months to heal along with a lot of trips to the doctor. It reminded us we always need to be so careful. We got reminded of that again when I fractured my finger a few months ago. Mom was in the other room and I can't talk, so I haven't really been able to tell her or the doctors what is going on. We've been to the doctor a lot and it finally seems OK now.



Usually, though, my mom is able to make life really fun for me. She gets me ready every day for work at MVLE. The county helps pay for my help there, but I pay for my Metro Access rides. It is \$13 a day for me to get to and from work and sometimes they don't come. Sometimes I ride around for hours. If I had a Disability Waiver, we would have other transportation options.

Mom isn't able to go to work much. My dad left and my mom is my only guardian. She is really brave, but I know she has to work too hard with me and my unpredictable schedule to be able to work as much as she wants. She would



also like to see her family. They are all in Japan and since I've been born, she hasn't been able to go to see her family and friends when they had life changing events such as weddings or funerals. I hear her say she worries about her dad. He is 85 and alone, but I can't go with her to see him and she doesn't have a way for me to stay safe here while she goes. We feel a little trapped.

I try to stay busy, though. When I am at home, I love to watch Barney and Thomas the Tank Engine. Gordon is my favorite steam engine. He is big and blue! My mom gave me a picture of him and it makes me smile and laugh every time I see it. I am asking you to value my laugh and all that my family and I give to our community. We need a Disability Waiver now so that I can be safe, my mom can have a break

and take care of her dad, and so that we can all have a better life.

I would like you to remember that each of the more than 10,890 people on the Waiting List have a story and need your help.

You can change their futures, too! Please fund the waiting list for Waivers! End the wait, start a life.