ADVOCACY

SUCCESS STORIES

ALICE'S STORY

IRIS'S STORY

DREW'S STORY

RAJIV'S STORY

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RAJIV'S STORY

RAJIV IS A DEAF QUADRIPLEGIC WITH A GREAT JOY FOR LIFE, AND ONE VERY AGILE TOE.

By all accounts, Rajiv Roots is your typical 25-year-old. He loves Wayne's World, his flat screen television, and the UConn Huskies. His face lights up when you ask him about his favorite football team (the New England Patriots), and in an instant, the big toe on his left foot whirrs across the keyboard as he smiles and presents the word "champions" on his computer screen.

The speed with which he can type with one toe could rival the fingers of a text-obsessed teen.

It wasn't an easy fight. Rajiv spent over five years defending his desire to live on his own before he decided to call RCIL to guide him in his advocacy. With RCIL's assistance, Rajiv is able to maintain services from several other agencies, including assistance with transportation, accessibility, and personal care aides, on top of trying to continue his education and gain steady employment.

You'd be hard pressed to find someone with a more uplifting spirit than Rajiv. His outlook on life rings true at least in part due to the efforts of the staff at RCIL:

Anything is possible and everyone can do it. Don't take no for an answer.

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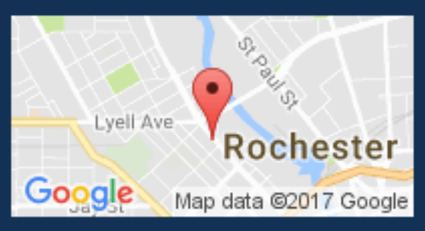

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IRIS LOVED HER HOME. UNFORTUNATELY, SHE FEARED SHE MIGHT HAVE TO LEAVE IT.

But of course there's a happy ending: RCIL was there when Iris was running out of options. They visited Iris in her home and assessed the two-story floor plan and her inability to navigate the stairs indoors and out. "RCIL was there for everything," she said. "Without them, I don't know how much longer I could have stayed here."

The 100%-accessible housing was made possible by the ACCESS to Homes grant that RCIL helped her get. Through RCIL, Iris also found people who wanted to assist her grandson Rasheem, who uses a power wheelchair to navigate the home.

Iris's house now has a completely flat floor plan, which helps her to move throughout it easily, and to enjoy life to its fullest with Rasheem.

"The kitchen is my favorite place," Iris laughed. "I call him the magic chef. He loves to cook, and he can really get around," she said.

And thank to RCIL, so can Iris.

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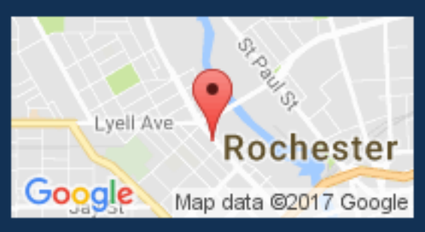

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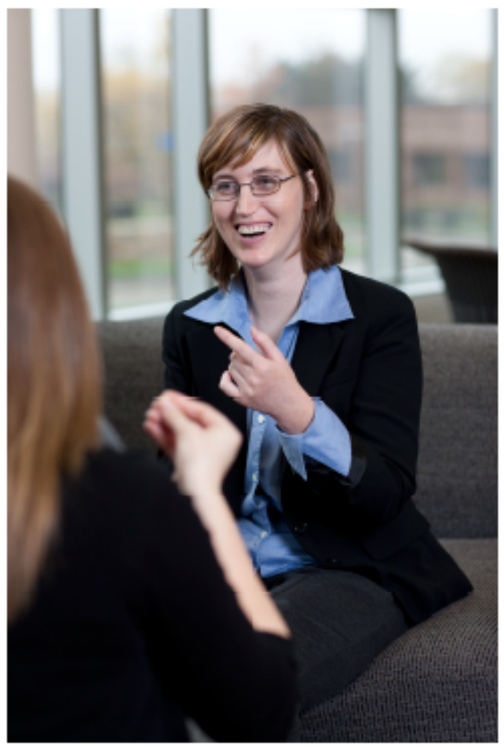

ALICE WAS BORN WITH CEREBRAL PALSY. SHE'S ALSO DEAF. THANKS TO RCIL, SHE'D LIKE TO MAKE YOU DINNER.

For some people, cooking is a chore. But not for Alice. Macaroni and cheese, mashed potatoes, pancakes - bring it on. And she cooks it all with one hand.
"As a child I never had to cook or do laundry or other household chores for myself, so becoming independent was a daunting challenge," she said.

One of Alice's primary goals was to make her home a place where she could live independently, and learning to cook was high on her list of priorities. Erin (Alice's Independent Living Specialist) worked with Alice to find creative solutions to challenges in the kitchen.

Alice moved to Rochester very much alone in 2007. But by her second year here, she had secured her own apartment, and three years later she graduated with a certificate in deaf studies from the Rochester Institute of Technology. It's been a long journey, but the reward has been great. Today she is a confident young woman living with a great deal of independence, and she'll be the first to tell you she couldn't have done it without the Regional Center for Independent Living.

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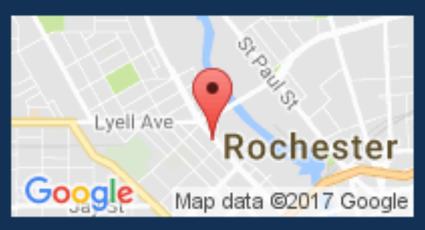

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