



WISCONSIN BOARD FOR PEOPLE
WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

October 2019



Opening the Door to My Community

My name is Alisha Cloutier, I'm 36 years old and from the Green Bay area. I have lived on my own in an apartment since 2012 and I really enjoy the community I live in! Some of my favorite things to do are watch movies, listen to music and play games on Facebook. I really love to quilt, and I go to my church every Tuesday to meet up with people and quilt. I don't drive and I can't walk long distances so it's hard for me to get to church on Sundays since public transportation can't help me get there. I really don't like feeling like a burden on people and asking for rides. Being independent is part of what makes me who I am.

I recently started a new job at Fazoli's and I would say that I am a "Jack of all trades" there. I help by cleaning tables, prepping food in the morning, making breadstick and pretty much everything except taking food orders. I love working there because I get to meet lots of new people and my last job was at a desk, so I was inactive. After working at Fazoli's for a few months I have started losing weight because I am always running around. Before working at

Fazoli's I worked at Innovative Services for about 10 years. Innovative Services work with adults/children with disabilities. They manage homes and offer living situations and I worked as the receptionist and had to do a lot of problem solving since it was complaints or just general customer service.

I am currently signed up for long term care and supports through Family Care and Care Wisconsin is my local provider. With only a few hours of support a week I can live on my own and get to where I need to be. Unfortunately, public transportation only runs until 5 or 6 pm six nights a week so I feel limited in the things I can participate in, in my community. While I am grateful for the supports after being on the waiting list until I was 29, I wish I had other options for transportation because it is my biggest barrier to being in my community. Care Wisconsin will be closing its doors soon, so I am in the process of switching to a new Managed Care Organization. The uncertainty of this change has me stressed because I have had so many staffing changes already in my life and it always takes time to get back to normal. Relying on public transportation means I can only go where the bus routes go and it's not available on Sundays. I would like to work more hours but if transportation only runs till 8:45 pm on the weekdays and till 5:45 pm on Saturday, I'm very limited in the hours I can work.

For people without a strong connection to family it can make things easier but there are so many people without those supports and the system isn't always focused on anything other than the basic needs of people. The community is open 24 hours a day 7 days a week, but services are only available for certain times. I should be able to connect with my community when I want to!