Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

# When You Work to Live an Independent Life

Alecia B. - Mason City, Iowa

***That's Medicaid*** *shares stories of people covered by Medicaid at critical points in their lives, underscoring the importance of stable health insurance coverage in building a Culture of Health.*

**Alecia** was born with Down syndrome, a lifelong condition that comes with physical and developmental challenges. She needs extra help in her everyday life, but her goal is to live as independently as possible. Alecia enrolled in Medicaid through Iowa's Consumer Choices Option, which provides extra support and training for people with disabilities.

The program empowers Alecia to live by herself and pursue the life she wants. She works with a Medicaid-funded coach who helps her develop skills such as cooking, exercising, and other daily tasks. Alecia also has her learning permit and is practicing driving so she can obtain her full driver's license.

Alecia supports herself by working part-time at a local grocery store, and also serves as a member of Iowa's Developmental Disabilities Council.

"I need extra help because of my disability," Alecia says. "Medicaid gives me the freedom to live independently."