

My Life—by Nicci

MY NAME IS KARA JONES, BUT EVERYONE WHO KNOWS ME CALLS me Nicci. I am 23 years old and finished Albert Einstein High School in June, 2004. When they called my name at graduation, the whole auditorium cheered for me. It felt good. While I was in high school I was in the “Sisters”—a mentoring group for young women.

After high school, things went downhill. I was supposed to get help from an agency, but it didn't happen.

Last year, I had a group of friends and family come over for a “Circle of Friends” meeting and we discussed my future and my strong points, although my brothers decided to discuss my weak points, too, even though I told them not to.

I have been taking courses at Montgomery College, and enjoy taking them. I'm also getting help with finding a job from the Maryland Customized Employment Partnership, after being on the waiting list for more than a year. But now, I meet with my counselor every week for tests and other things. Recently, for a job exposure, I visited a store where they design T-shirts and banners. I want to find a job working in T.V., radio, raising money for a charity, or doing my own business.

While in class at Montgomery College, I met a person who works with people with disabilities. While talking, she suggested that I might enjoy a community group that meets on Saturdays and makes video documentaries. I have been a member of the Gandhi Brigade Youth Video Group in Silver Spring, Maryland since November. One of the purposes of the group is make documentaries that encourage people to understand each other and communicate better. This group has welcomed me as a member. I will be shooting my first documentary about two women who use wheelchairs. We will go to lunch and use Metro Access. I am learning to hold and shoot a video camera, and sometimes we attach the camera to my wheelchair using a tripod and duck tape.

In closing, there are still things that I want to do with my life. I want to go on a vacation with an assistant (without my family), learn new things and make more friends.