



Gearing Up For Your Transitions

Alyssa Cowin's Personal Story

Meet Alyssa Cowin the recipient of the 2012 Goodwill Graduate of the Year Award. She began her career as an Operations Support Specialist at the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) in the Office of the Secretary. Cowin aspired to one day become a small business owner.

Q: What are you currently doing now that you have left high school?

A: I am working as an Operations Support Specialist at DHSS in the office of Cabinet Secretary Rita Landgraf. I assist in the areas of Human Resources and Public Relations. A few of my responsibilities are to take photos at events, post pictures on the DHSS Facebook page, shred papers for various divisions, deliver mail, assemble information packets and help with organizing things in the office.

Q: What were your challenges and successes as you went through the transition process?

A: Well, my challenges when I started at DHSS came from not knowing all the people's names or where their offices were! My successes are my award from Goodwill. I'm in the newspaper. I also went to the Governor's Ball as a person with a disability. I feel one of my successes is being able to advocate for other people with disabilities.

Q: Were there any specific programs, agencies or persons which were helpful to you and your family/caregivers during your transition process?

A: The specific programs, agencies or persons are DVR, DDDS, CIS/Renee, Project SEARCH, my parents, Meadowood Vocational, Goodwill and DHSS.

Q: What is your anticipated path for the future?

A: My dream is to have a full-time job with benefits so I can live independently. And also, I would like to have a small business selling the dog and cat toys that I make.