



“You can do anything you want to as long as you put your mind to it.”

—Karen Somers

No Excuses

Karen Somers has a killer serve when playing tennis. It's a sport she loves and is really good at. Another thing Karen is really good at is driving.

What makes this friendly and optimistic 34-year-old woman different from most people? It's not that she lives with disabilities; it's that she doesn't make excuses.

While she was growing up, her mother, Nina, urged Karen to try things that she wanted to do, even when others believed it wasn't possible—things like roller skating, cycling, tennis—and driving.

Karen came to Rochester Rehabilitation's DriveOn program for a driver evaluation and one-on-one driver training. She has Cerebral Palsy (CP), and wears an orthopedic brace on her left foot.

DriveOn's excellent personalized instruction proved to be an advantage in building Karen's confidence so that she could pass her driver's test.

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“In addition to the skills you learn during one-on-one instruction,” says Karen, “the instructor also offers to go over any questions you might have before taking your road test. The driver specialist also recommends the correct adaptive device and shows students how to use it.”

One of the first places she drove to was Midtown Athletic Club where she’s played tennis since she was 14 years old. Karen has set and achieved many goals. Karen stays busy networking, volunteering, and playing sports. According to Karen’s dad, David, driving has motivated Karen to get out and do things others wouldn’t have thought she could achieve. “Karen has a lot of independence because she drives. She visits friends and goes to work. People with disabilities need to know that it shouldn’t stop them from driving,” adds David.

Karen earned her associate’s degree in human services from Monroe Community College, and is employed as a teaching assistant at Generations Childcare in Rochester.

Karen’s advice to young people who want to drive is: have a positive attitude. “You can do anything you want to,” says Karen, “as long as you put your mind to it.”

To learn more about DriveOn, please call **585.271.1894** or toll-free at **1.877.823.7483**, or send an email to info@driveonrocks.org.



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