

the Face of Reform

Kasey Engle's Story – Chickasaw Citizen



March 10, 2015 – The Day our World Stopped

My son, Kasey Engle, was 19, when he had a seizure on March 10, 2015 while attending Oklahoma Christian University in Edmond, Oklahoma. He was rushed by ambulance to Mercy Hospital for treatment. The drive from Keller, Texas, was one of the longest drives of my life. When I reached his bedside, I found him to be in stable and good condition, but we were still very concerned as to why he had the seizure.



The Affordable Care Act Saved My Son's Life

We arrived at the Chickasaw Nation Medical center looking for the cause of Kasey's seizures. The doctor immediately ordered a CT scan. This scan revealed a tumor on the back left side of his brain. We were immediately connected with a neurosurgeon. The surgeon believed, by its appearance, the tumor was malignant. This news shocked and devastated our entire family. We couldn't believe how quickly our lives were changed. The doctors emphasized the importance of removing the tumor as soon as possible. The preferred specialist and hospital required proof of insurance and/or payment prior to performing the life-saving surgery. Because we are Chickasaw, Kasey had filed for exemption from private insurance as the Affordable Care Act allows. He had no insurance, and the surgery, plus hospital care, would cost thousands of dollars. My son needed a life-saving surgery, and we didn't have the resources to save him. We felt helpless and were extremely distressed. Because the situation demanded a solution now, the Chickasaw Nation patient benefit assistant searched for financial medical assistance. She soon found the perfect federally funded program. Kasey qualified for an affordable care act insurance assistance pilot program that would give him BCBS insurance coverage immediately. This special program, with the support of the Chickasaw Nation Department of Health team, allowed Kasey to have the life-saving surgery and covered all other medical costs. It was more than a financial gift. The ACA gave me a lifetime of memories with my son. We are blessed to be Chickasaw and blessed to live in a country that helps others live their best lives. We received more good news when the tumor was classified as benign. The Affordable Care Act saved Kasey's life. He is seizure-free and has returned to college. Kasey is thriving.