

job put on hold # It looked like this would be the year Caitlyn Ballard would get closer to her dream job as an air traffic controller. Instead, the 24-year-old has spent the first weeks of the year crashing at her parents' suburban St. Charles home as she rides out the federal government shutdown. # The day before the shutdown started, Ballard received a tentative offer letter from the Federal Aviation Administration for a job as an air traffic control specialist trainee. And she was already set to start a six-month federal contract job in Washington, D.C., with Science Applications International Corp. for a new communication program used in air traffic, Ballard said. # " It's delaying the six-year dream of mine, " Ballard said about the shutdown. " That's been pretty hard. " # Her parents watch the news every morning, and when she first heard about the shutdown, she figured it would last a few days and wouldn't hamper her plans. Then days started to turn into weeks. # " It started to hit home, " Ballard said about the shutdown. " I can't leave, I can't go to my new job. So every morning we check how far it's going to go. " # Once the government is up and running again, she'll have only a few days to make it to D.C., so her bags are still packed. She's depending on her parents to help her financially. She gave up a part-time job in suburban Chicago because she expected to be moving to Washington. # Without an income, Ballard already has had to dip into her savings to make her \$600-a-month student loan payment. # " I have to