

## Michigan Student Honored With International Award

**Arlington, Va., March 1, 2020** — In February, **DeAnte Vaughn** of Ypsilanti, Mich., received the **2020 Yes I Can Award** from the **Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)**.



DeAnte, a 1st-Year Young Adult student at Eastern Michigan University, was born premature, weighing 15 ounces with a length of approximately 6 inches. Since birth, DeAnte struggled to “catch up” physically and cognitively.

A talented drummer, keyboardist, organist, and synthesizer player, he currently plays at church and with the “Know Obstacles Band,” which was featured in a recent interview on WXYZ Detroit Channel 7 and performs around the Ann Arbor area at various venues.

DeAnte enrolled at Pioneer High School in Ypsilanti, Mich., as a sophomore and, with emerging social and emotional capacity, has grown into a young man who is always respectful of classmates and adults. Over the past two years, DeAnte increased his reading and math proficiency levels by more than two grades, and is now a leader in the classroom, Adaptive PE, Athletics, and Music.

Wendy Minor, the school social worker at the high school, says, “DeAnte is one of the nicest students in the entire building and is the model student in class and at community worksites. DeAnte came to Pioneer from a very small school program. Becoming a part of things in an intimidating and very large traditional high school can be a daunting task, but one that DeAnte was up to.”

“His unflagging positive orientation to everything, good humor, bright smile, and willingness to be a part of things served him well. He very quickly made friends, and this led him to be involved in athletic and artistic activities beyond the scope of school.”

The efforts DeAnte makes to show the best of himself and to develop the skills that will allow him to be independent are applied to everything he does, and his drumming is no exception. DeAnte seeks excellence and takes pride in his accomplishments, first among them being how he relates to others and the good will he spreads.

CEC is proud to honor DeAnte with this award in the Arts category. He received the award at the Yes I Can Award Ceremony on February 7, 2020, at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland, Ore., as part of the CEC 2020 Convention & Expo. The Yes I Can program recognizes the accomplishments of 12 students with exceptionalities in six categories: Academics, Arts, School & Community Activities, Self-Advocacy, Technology, and Transition.

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The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is the professional association of educators dedicated to



advancing the educational success of children and youth with exceptionalities that accomplishes its mission through advocacy, standards, and professional development. Learn more about CEC at [cec.sped.org](http://cec.sped.org).

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