

Selkirk Student Honored With International Award

Arlington, Va., March 1, 2020 — In February, **Stormy Stevenson** of Selkirk, Manitoba, received the **2020 Yes I Can Award** from the **Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)**.



A senior at Lord Selkirk Regional Comprehensive High School, Stormy was born with a long list of challenging health issues that she continues to live with today.

Stormy spent the first 10 years of her life in and out of the hospital, and, at the age of 5, nearly passed away due to a sepsis infection. As a result of that infection, she became totally deaf, and she learned sign language in order to communicate. It took five years for her health to stabilize, at which point she received Cochlear Implants and began to learn to speak again.

“For her, failure is never an option. Her motto has always been ‘I can find a way’ and she certainly has shown that there are ways to adapt the traditional classroom to help achieve her goals,” says Louella Groot, who works with Stormy at her school and nominated her for the award.

Once she entered high school, it didn't take long for Stormy's outgoing personality to connect with the teachers in the Visual Communications department. Together, she and her teachers began to find ways to use the technology available to assist her in completing work for all her courses. Whenever a new assignment was given, Stormy worked with her teachers to find a way to incorporate technology to help her share her knowledge of the content with the class. Due to Stormy's inability to read or write, the use of technology has helped her articulate her opinions on many topics, outcomes, and issues covered in her high school classes.

In the words of Stormy, “even if I can't read or write, that's not stopping me from doing the things I love. I'm sure there's some people out there who can't read or write, but that doesn't mean they're not really smart. It doesn't mean they can't learn or anything; they can. They just have to find their own way and believe in who they are. And the important thing is, don't give up.”

“Working with Stormy over the past years has been not only been a lot of fun, but also very inspiring. Her enthusiasm to be at school learning about new ideas is contagious and having her in the class helps make everyone expect more from themselves,” says Louella. “She never shies away from hard work, and we have been able to cover some advanced topics and demonstrate her understanding through the use of technology.”

CEC was proud to honor Stormy with this award in the Technology category 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.

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.

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