



For Immediate Release

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Indiana Student Honored with International Award

Arlington, Va., February [XX], 2024 – Willow Townsend of Elkhart, Indiana, received the 2024 Yes I Can Award for Academics from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Willow will be honored this March along with other Yes I Can recipients at the CEC Convention and Expo in San Antonio, Texas.

The Yes I Can Awards celebrate and honor the achievements of children and youth with exceptionalities while increasing public awareness of the abilities and aspirations of students with disabilities.

Willow was born blind with minimal light perception. Through the support of her school and access to services and tools such as Braille instruction, adaptive technology, and teachers, Willow has played an active role in her high-ability classroom.

Her dedication to increasing her Braille reading fluency led Willow to excel in the Braille Challenge, a competition for students with visual impairments. She placed first in her state and earned a spot at the National Competition, where she gave an impressive performance.

Willow's commitment to her academics allows her to shine in her high-ability classroom, where she demonstrates remarkable adaptability and determination. Her achievements have given her a sense of pride and accomplishment and have boosted her self-confidence and belief in herself, pushing her to continue to achieve great things in the classroom and beyond.

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is the largest international professional organization dedicated to high-quality education that is inclusive and equitable for individuals with disabilities. Learn more about CEC at <https://exceptionalchildren.org/>.