

Louisiana Student Honored with International Award

Arlington, Va., February [XX], 2024 – Owen Delatte of Thibodaux, Louisiana, received the 2024 Yes I Can Award for Self-Advocacy from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Owen 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 the achievements of children and youth with exceptionalities, encouraging these individuals to seek their highest potential and increasing public awareness of the abilities, aspirations, and personal qualities of those with disabilities.

Owen excels academically, maintaining a high GPA and test scores and participating in the district's gifted and talented enrichment programs. He's a member of his school's Prep Quiz Bowl Team, Student Council, and Sophomore Class Council Representative. Born with albinism, which has caused legal blindness, Owen learned Braille. He recently won first place in the Louisiana State Braille Challenge for his age group.

Active in his school and community, Owen is a talented musician, playing piano, trumpet, ukulele, and guitar. He also participates in his school's Marching Band. Recreationally he plays basketball with the Biddy Basketball Organization, and in 2018 he was part of the Special Olympics state championship. He also runs track, placing first in the 50-meter and 100-meter runs.

Owen strives to make an impact. He is an active member of the National Organization for Albinism and Hypopigmentation. Prior to the pandemic, Owen and his family coordinated an annual bowling event to raise money for the organization. He is the student representative on the Lafourche Parish School District's Special Education Advisory Committee.

His advocacy extends to those in his community that face similar struggles. He recently educated his city's administrators on the importance of community accessibility improvements for those with visual impairments, which led to the town repainting faded yellow curbs. He received the 2018 Governor's Office of Disability Affairs Youth of the Year Award.

After graduation, Owen plans to apply to Texas A&M to study Mathematics and Music.

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/>.