

Illinois Student Honored with International Award

Arlington, Va., February [XX], 2026 – Kyle Abplanalp of Park Ridge, Illinois, received the 2026 Yes I Can Award for School and Community from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Kyle will be honored this March along with other Yes I Can recipients at the CEC Convention and Expo in Salt Lake City, Utah.

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.

Kyle is on the autism spectrum and also has celiac disease. After his diagnosis, he was able to access essential supports to enable him to thrive and succeed. He is highly involved in his school and community.

Kyle has been in Boy Scouts since Kindergarten and is currently a Star Rank BSA. He frequently volunteers his time at Feed My Starving Children and the Summit Retirement.

Kyle's schedule keeps him moving. He has been a member of the Park District's Riptides Swim Team since first grade and participates in the Lincoln Middle School Cross Country Team. He plays the violin for the Lincoln Middle School Philharmonic Orchestra. Last year he stepped out of his comfort zone to audition and rehearse for a dancing and singing role in the school's production of *Matilda*. This year Kyle has really enjoyed participating in Aceing Autism, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping children with autism grow through the sport of tennis.

Kyle is a highly committed student and community member.

"Neither the academic or social aspects of school are easy for him, but he works harder than any kid I know," shares his nominator.

Thank you to Einstein Advocates for sponsoring the Yes I Can Awards.

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/>.

