

The Council for Exceptional Children is an international community of professionals who are the voice and vision of special and gifted education. CEC's mission is to improve, through excellence and advocacy, the education and quality of life for children and youth with exceptionalities and to enhance the engagement of their families.

The Yes I Can! Awards honor students with disabilities who excel. These awards celebrate the achievements of children and youth with disabilities; encourage these individuals to seek their highest potential; and increase public awareness of the abilities, aspirations, and personal qualities of those with disabilities. Nominations may be made by teachers, principals, related service providers, friends, and parents. The nominator does not need to be a CEC member. The Yes I Can! Awards Review Committee will select winners from the following categories:

- *Academics*
- *Arts*
- *Athletics*
- *School and Community Activities*
- *Self-Advocacy*
- *Technology*
- *Transition*

Award Benefits

Each Yes I Can! Award winner will:

- Be invited to attend a special awards ceremony and celebration at the MS-CEC 2018 Conference in Tupelo, MS.
- Receive two nights' accommodations at the hotel in which the awards ceremony will be held.
- Receive a letter of congratulations from the CEC President.
- May be called upon by CEC to share his or her story to promote the Yes I Can! Awards program and to generally advocate for children and youth with disabilities.
- Each individual nominated for a Yes I Can! Award will receive a Certificate of Accomplishment. Certificates are sent to the nominator, not the nominee. Braille and large-print certificates are available; please see Section B of the nomination form.

Eligibility Requirements

- Candidates must be 2–21 years of age when they are nominated.
- The nominee must have an identified disability.
- Each candidate may be nominated in only one category.
- International nominations are accepted.
- Posthumous nominations are not accepted.

Award Selection Considerations

- The Selection Committee looks at not only the student's achievements but also the severity of the student's disability in relation to his or her achievements.
- In the event of a tie, additional weight will be given to the nominee from a CEC member or unit.

Rules and Instructions for Nomination

- Each candidate may be nominated in one category only.
- Nominations may be submitted in hard copy or digitally. All materials submitted become the property of CEC and will not be returned.
- All nomination materials (including supporting documentation) must be submitted together.
- Each candidate must be nominated by one individual (e.g., teacher, principal, related service provider, friend, parent). The nominator does not need to be a CEC member.

How to Complete and Submit the Nomination Packet

- The nomination packet is divided into six sections. To facilitate review, the nomination packet should be organized as follows:

Section A. Nominee Category Sheet

Section B. Nominee Information

Section C. Nominator Information

Section D. Background Information

Section E. Supporting Documentation (including two letters of recommendation)

Section F. Additional Documentation (optional but encouraged)

- Complete the entire nomination form, providing specific information about the nominee. The more complete and detailed the information, the better. Make sure you provide information that addresses the nominee's achievements in the category in which he or she is nominated.
- Double-check that the nominee's name is spelled correctly on ALL materials, as it will be printed on his or her Certificate of Accomplishment.
- Nomination packets must be postmarked by July 15, 2018

If Submitting Hard Copies:

- Submit four collated copies of all nominations materials and one 5" x 7" high-resolution color headshot photo of the student to MS-CEC (see address below). The photo must be print-quality. Please write the student's name on the back of the photo.
- Place each nomination packet in a separate softbound folder (presentation folder, file folder, or spiral or loose-leaf binder).
- Include a table of contents as well as tabbed and titled dividers for each section. Please label the sections by information type. For example, the first label should read "Nominee Category Sheet."
- Put the nominee's name and award category on the front of each nomination packet.

If Submitting Digitally (on CD or DVD):

- Submit one disk with the complete nomination packet to MS-CEC (see address below). Each section and piece of supporting material should be saved as a separate file.
- Supporting materials (e.g., newspaper articles) must be scanned and included as images or PDF files.
- Please use the file name to clearly label each section and all supporting materials (e.g., "John_Smith_Section_A.doc" or "John_Smith_Recommendation_1.doc").
- Please include one high-resolution color headshot photo of the student in JPG, GIF, or TIFF format. The photo must be print-quality.
- Be sure to label the CD or DVD with the nominee's name and award category.

All applications, whether submitted in hard copy or on disk, must be typed using a 12-point font. Handwritten forms will not be reviewed.

All nominations must be postmarked no later than Nov. 30, 2016.

Mail to:

Debbie Hubbert

472 Mt. Vernon Avenue

Jackson, MS 39209

(601) 960-5307 (work)

dhubbert@jackson.k12.ms.us

Section A: Nominee Category Sheet

Name of Nominee

Please check only ONE category of achievement.

ACADEMICS – achievement in a particular subject area such as math, science, reading, social studies, language arts, or foreign language, overall academic achievement, or a high level of achievement on standardized tests.

ARTS – achievement in a particular medium such as music, art, drama, dance, or written expression.

ATHLETICS – achievement in a particular athletic activity through a setting such as intramurals, Special Olympics, physical education classes, or after-school athletic activities.

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES – achievement in organized activities at the school or community level through groups such as school-based clubs/activities (yearbook, theater, debate, tutoring, peer mentoring, social service) or community-based clubs/activities (volunteer work, Boy/Girl Scouts, places of worship, service, cleanup campaigns).

SELF-ADVOCACY – achievement in assuming practical responsibility for oneself, using knowledge of legal rights, advancing one's goals, or effectively obtaining appropriate accommodations for oneself or others.

TECHNOLOGY – significant achievement through the use of assistive and adaptive technology devices and equipment (computerized or otherwise).

TRANSITION – achievement in mastering activities that lead to successful experiences in the areas of a) work, b) vocational training, or c) independent living.

If "TRANSITION" was selected please select a category

Please ensure that ALL information provided in the application is current as of July 2018. CEC uses information on the nomination form for all future correspondence and publicity.

Section B: Nominee Information

Nominee (Full Name)

Address

City

State

Zip

Gender

Birthdate

Age

Nominee's Disability

Parent/Guardian

Home Phone

Work Phone

Cell Phone

Parent/Guardian Email

Nominee's School

Nominee's Grade Level

School District

School Phone Number

School Fax Number

Principal Name

Principal's Email

Please check this box if a Braille or large-print certificate is needed.

Yes. A braille or large print certificate needed

Section C: Nominator Information

Nominator (Full Name)

Address

City

State

Zip

Home Phone

Cell Phone

Work Phone

Fax

Email

How do you know the nominee?

Are you a CEC member?

If yes, please provide your CEC#

Yes

No

If this nomination is being made by a CEC State/Provincial Unit or Division, please indicate the state, province, or division name.

How did you hear about the Yes I Can! Awards?

Nominator's Signature

Date

The Certificate of Accomplishment will be sent to the nominator, not the nominee.

Section D: Background Information

Responses to the questions below must be typed and double-spaced in a 12-point font. Please use 8.5" x 11" white paper with one-inch top, left, right, and bottom margins. Handwritten forms will not be reviewed.

1. Background Information

A. Describe in 150 words or less the challenges this student encountered prior to his or her current accomplishments (e.g., difficulty with reading).

B. Describe in 150 words or less the current type of special education services provided to the nominee (e.g., general education class with special education consultation, inclusion, special education classes).

2. Describe the student's accomplishments in the category in which he or she is nominated.

(Consider creativity, innovation, and significance of the student's accomplishments to the individual and others.)

A. Describe in 150 words or less the student's achievements and accomplishments. You can add appendices demonstrating examples of the student's achievement.

B. Describe the setting in which the accomplishments occurred (i.e., home, school, community, work).

C. Describe in 150 words or less the impact of the student's accomplishments on him- or herself and others.

3. Systems Supports

A. In 100 words or less, describe how your community or school system supported this student.

For publicity purposes, please include the following information.

Nominee's Local Newspaper

Address

City

State

Zip

Phone

Fax

Email

Section E: Supporting Documentation

1. Nomination packet must include two letters of recommendation.

One letter must come from a professional educator (e.g., teacher, principal, school administrator, counselor, consultant, educational assistant). The second letter may come from an educator or other individual who knows the student well (e.g., teacher, principal, counselor, parent, student).

The letters should state why the student deserves the award, particularly in the area in which the student is nominated, and any obstacles the student has overcome.

2. Suggested supporting documentation for each category:

- Academics—school transcripts, report cards, accelerated programs, academic awards, work samples, statement of change in student's academic achievement.
- Arts—copies of artwork, event programs, CDs or DVDs of music, dance performances, drama performances, and so on.
- Athletics—awards, teams participated in, statements from athletic directors or P.E. teachers.
- School and Community Activities—record of activities, statements from activity leaders, certificates, awards.
- Self-Advocacy—statement of how the student educates others (teachers, students, community) on their needs or the needs of others with disabilities; examples of the accommodations the student has requested to enhance learning and accessibility.
- Technology—record of technology used, how it has impacted the student or others, skills the student has learned through technology use.
- Transition—employment history, performance reviews, certificates, awards, statement of achievement from employers/coworkers/teachers/coaches/transition officers, record of progress made in acquiring work, vocational, or independent living skills.