



For immediate release
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Ohio Student to Receive International Award

Arlington, Va., Jan. 15, 2018 – Madison (Maddie) Ward, of Harrison, Ohio, will receive a **2018 Yes I Can Award** from the **Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)**.

During the school day, Maddie uses hearing assistive technology (HAT) to hear her teacher and classmates more clearly. When it became clear that her HAT configuration needed modification, Maddie participated in developing and implementing a solution. She taught her classmates how to use a pass-around microphone that would help her hear them in class and explained why she needed them to use it. She also fielded questions from her classmates about the new technology with ease. When the microphone was a success, she articulated the reasons why and helped in persuading her district to make the trial a permanent solution.

Through her self-advocacy, Maddie discovered the power of helping others. She has reached out to younger students who need supports similar to her own and spoke on one occasion with a kindergartner who did not want to wear hearing aids. Maddie shared her own experiences with HAT and offered advice on how to deal with feeling different at school.

The Yes I Can program recognizes the accomplishments of 12 students with exceptionalities in six categories: academics, arts, school and community activities, self-advocacy, technology, and transition. CEC is proud to honor Maddie with this award in the technology category.

Maddie will receive her award at the Yes I Can Award Ceremony on Feb. 9 at the Tampa Convention Center in Tampa, Fla. as part of the CEC 2018 Convention & Expo.

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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 www.cec.sped.org.