

---

# *Press Release*

For Immediate Release

Contact: Andrea Elkin  
703-264-9481  
andreae@cec.sped.org

## **Prairieville Student to Receive International Award for Students with Disabilities**

**ARLINGTON, VA, March 26, 2013**—Charles Jackson “Jake” Hebert, 20, persevered to learn to communicate through technology. Because of his achievements, Jake will receive a 2013 Yes I Can! Award from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) at the Yes I Can! Award Ceremony on Friday, April 5, at the Grand Hyatt in San Antonio, as part of the CEC 2013 Convention & Expo.

CEC is an international membership organization composed of special and gifted education professionals who work to improve the quality of life for individuals with exceptionalities and their families through professional excellence and advocacy.

Each year, the Yes I Can! program recognizes the accomplishments of 21 students. Awards are given in seven categories: academics, arts, athletics, school and community activities, self-advocacy, technology, and transition. CEC is proud to honor Jake with this award in the technology category.

“The Yes I Can! Awards were developed to recognize the accomplishments of students with disabilities who have achieved remarkable things,” says CEC President Christy A. Chambers. “Jake is most deserving of this award for his hard work and perseverance.”

Jake has undergone extensive therapy and training to learn to communicate and work more independently due to blindness and cerebral palsy. Through many strenuous approaches, Jake never gave up hope, got upset or lost his sense of humor. In 2006, a technological approach worked! Since that day, Jake’s Yes I Can attitude has propelled him, allowing him to be more independent and take part in general education classes.

For the past year, Jake has worked as a disc jockey for a weekly online radio show and goes by the handle, DJ Bad Monkey. The power to provide music to his fans keeps a smile on his face every Saturday.

“I have enjoyed every minute of our journey, the successes and failures, but how lucky am I to still be involved with him to see his joy and his pride and his knowing that he persevered where many would not,” said Melissa Hill Bankhead, Jake’s teacher. “You sometimes get a chance to know why you have chosen the profession you have. I was granted my chance through Jake.”

For more information about CEC’s annual convention, please visit [www.cec.sped.org/convention](http://www.cec.sped.org/convention). For more information about the Yes I Can! Awards, please visit [www.cec.sped.org/yesican](http://www.cec.sped.org/yesican).

###