Meet 2020 Yes I Can Award Recipient Baharnaz Alimohammadi

Meet Baharnaz Alimohammadi, a high-school sophomore and recipient of the 2020 Yes I Can Award in the Arts Category.

Baharnaz was born with hearing loss and struggled to learn how to speak for the first years of her life, making it difficult for her to fit with her peers. After months of speech therapy and receiving her first hearing aids, her speech began to develop from there. Shortly after, she found her love of classical music through cartoons and the radio, eventually idolizing the great opera singers.

When Baharnaz entered elementary school, she joined her school’s general choir program and – with the help of hearing aids and an FM microphone – was able to flourish alongside her classmates. She quickly became one of the strongest singers in her choir, landing solo after solo, which has continued over the years and into the present.

Today, she sings in her school’s advanced choir program, has won the yearly talent show at her school 5 times in a row singing her favorite operatic arias, and is currently trying out for America’s Got Talent.

Please join us in celebrating Baharnaz and the 11 other Yes I Can Award recipients at the CEC 2020 Convention & Expo in Portland, OR! The Yes I Can Awards Ceremony will be the Third General Session on Fri., Feb. 7, from 8-9 a.m.

Watch Baharnaz perform at her school choir show!

Download the App for #CEC2020
The CEC 2020 Convention & Expo is only 5 days away, and we can’t wait to see our amazing community in Portland! As you gear up for the big event, CEC’s mobile app is your convention planner.

With more than 450 sessions to choose from, you can use the app to build your schedule, find the sessions that interest you, receive updates and alerts about on-site happenings, share photos, learn about socials and networking opportunities, and more.

Download the app!

Your Chance to Comment on Proposed Revisions to CEC’s Bylaws

CEC’s Bylaws require that members receive a summary of proposed amendments to the Bylaws and have a 60-day period to comment.

Those wishing to comment on the proposed amendments should submit them to president@cec.sped.org or to the Council for Exceptional Children, 3100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 600, Arlington, VA, 22201. All comments will be provided to the Board of Directors. The comment period ends March 2, 2020.

View the proposed revisions!

Policy Highlights

Analysis Shows Federal Share of IDEA Costs Will Decline in FY 2020

A U.S. Department of Education estimate for expenditures for Fiscal Year 2020 shows that the federal share for IDEA services has decreased to 13 percent. Read more.
Meet 1 of our Yes I Can recipients, gearing up for #CEC2020, and more

Educators for Excellence Releases Results from Teacher Survey

Last week, Educators for Excellence released the results of Voices from the Classroom 2020, a nationally representative survey that captures views and opinions of public-school educators from across the country. Read more.

Upcoming Events

**CEC 2020 Convention & Expo**
Portland, OR | February 5-7

**Alaska CEC 2020 Statewide Special Education Conference**
Anchorage, AK | February 15-19

**Montana CEC Conference**
Missoula, MT | February 19-21

NovaChat® 5 by Saltillo

The next generation of NovaChat® 5 is small but mighty for confident communication. Stop by booth #206 at CEC 2020 to check out the cool new features!

News

**AI in the classroom: Reframing ed tech to save teachers time and reduce workloads:** A January 2020 report from McKinsey & Co. estimates that existing
artificial intelligence applications can save teachers 13 hours a week.

$5,000 Retention Bonuses for Good Teachers Can Up Reading Scores, Study Finds: A recent study published in the Economics of Education Review journal revealed the positive effect selective teacher bonuses could have when it comes to keeping high-performing teachers in high-needs schools.

New assessments needed to identify gifted students among underrepresented groups: Experts suggest including the assessment of factors like soft skills and interests can be a better metric for the capacity to develop "gifted" behaviors valued by employers.

More Teacher-Preparation Programs Are Teaching the 'Science of Reading,' Review Finds: The number of teacher-preparation programs that teach reading instruction aligned with the greater body of cognitive research has increased significantly over the past seven years, according to a new review from The National Council on Teacher Quality.

How scaffolding lessons can strengthen critical thinking development: According to a 2019 Harvard Graduate School for Education study, scaffolding can be an extremely useful tool for educators looking to design lessons that help students think and work more independently.

Report: States enacted more than 200 CTE policies in 2019: Last year, states increased focus on career and technical education (CTE), with 41 states voting on funding-related actions and policies supporting CTE approved in almost every state, according to a report from Advance
CTE, the Education Commission of the States, and the Association for Career and Technical Education.

**As public schools grow more diverse, school board elections are largely determined by white voters:** A study of people who vote in school board elections in four states finds they are generally less diverse than the student populations they represent.

**Polarized Environment Shapes Policy Debates on Key K-12 Issues:** How have private school choice and "right to work" laws driven political donations from teachers' unions and education reform groups? New research tries to answer that question and finds some surprising results.

**More Trustees Fear for the Future:** A new poll shows trustees have increasing concerns about costs to students and the financial sustainability of their own institutions as well as the entire higher-education sector.

**Flexible Seating: Collaboration Catalyst or Classroom Disaster?:** Popularized by social media, new classroom arrangements are all the rage in K-12. But experts and educators caution there is more to it than just moving desks around.
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https://cec.informz.net/informzdataservice/onlineversion/pub/bWFpbGluc3RhbmltISWQ0TEwMDI1MA==