GLOVERSVILLE, N.Y. - Andrew Carpenter, a student at Transitions of the Fulton County-based The Arc, Lexington, NY, will travel with his family to Tampa this week to accept a “Yes I Can” award from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC).

Andrew is one of only 12 students worldwide who will receive the prestigious award. The presentation will take place at 8 a.m., Friday, February 9, 2018, at CEC’s annual Special Education Convention & Expo.

Andrew, who is affected by Autism, attends Lexington’s renowned Transitions program and is studying communications at Fulton-Montgomery Community College. He enrolled in Transitions after graduating from Gloversville High School in 2015. Andrew says Transitions is helping him learn a variety of skills to prepare for independent living, including organizational skills, managing money, cooking and social skills.

He has thrived.

“So many things are different now. I have more friends than I ever had in high school,” Andrew said. “I have improved my social life and can talk to people with confidence, use the bus, and go to professors for help if I need it. Autism doesn’t define who I am or who I will be. I have so much more to look forward to in my life, and I am only 20. I can’t wait to see what is next for me.”

CEC is a professional association of educators dedicated to advancing the educational success of children and youth with exceptionalities. The “Yes I Can” program recognizes the accomplishments of students with exceptionalities in six categories: academics, arts, school and community activities, self-advocacy, technology, and transition. Andrew’s award is in the transition category.

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Andrew has had an enriching experience since arriving at Transitions in 2015. In July of 2016, he joined Lexington’s immensely popular band Flame as a vocalist after he was overheard singing in the hallway at Transitions. The group, which is made up of people with disabilities, has played on world stages, last traveling to Carpi, Italy, in May 2017 to perform at the 19th International Festival of Different Abilities.
“Everything changed when Andrew enrolled in Transitions,” said Lexington Executive Director Shaloni Winston. “After just a few weeks in this post-secondary program for young adults with learning differences, Andrew embraced the curriculum and gained a wealth of new skills. Through self-advocacy and leadership classes, he learned how to speak up for himself, advocate for his needs, set long-term goals and identify the steps he needs to take to accomplish those goals. He is a true success story.”

About Transitions:
Transitions is a program of Lexington that prepares teens and young adults with autism and learning differences for college, careers and life. This demographic often needs extra preparation before they can live independently and achieve success in higher education and careers. Transitions developed a curriculum crafted from evidence-based programs and grounded in internationally recognized approaches that will set students on the path toward success. The Transitions curriculum and learning environments are specially tailored to give all students equal opportunities to learn and thrive. To learn more, visit or call (518) 518-775-5384, www.transitionsusa.org, or email admissions@transitionsusa.org

About Lexington:
Lexington, a Chapter of The Arc New York, is a private, not-for-profit agency providing a wide range of services to adults and children who are disabled in Fulton and Albany Counties. Created in 1953 by a group of concerned parents, Lexington is recognized as one of the leading agencies of its kind in New York State. For more information about Lexington and its programs and services, visit www.lexingtoncenter.org.