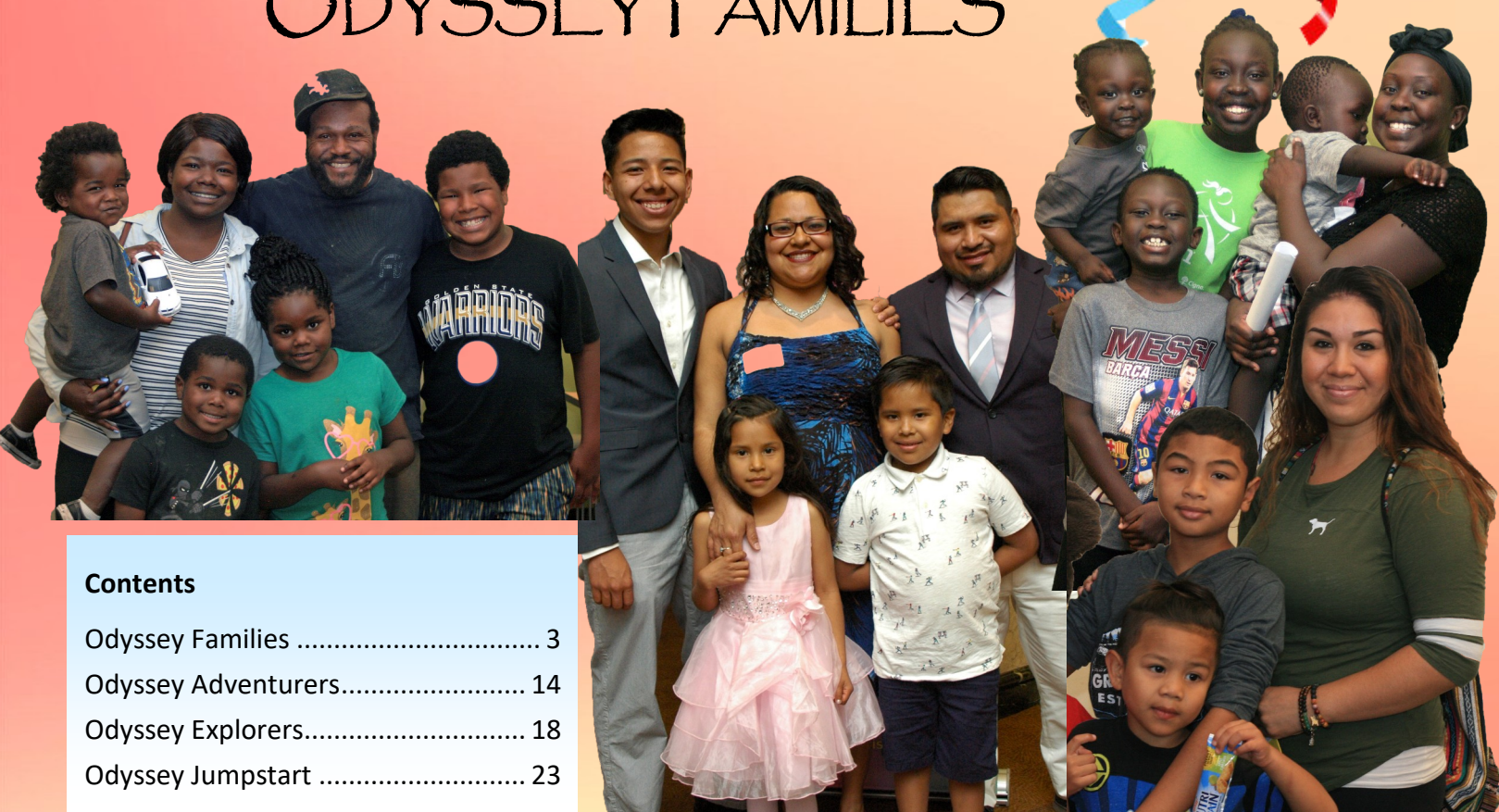


# ODYSSEY ORACLE JUNIOR

## ODYSSEY FAMILIES



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Thanks to the following staff and volunteers of Odyssey Junior:

Odyssey Adventurers/Goodman South Madison Library, grades 6-12: Karen Dreyfuss, Mackenzie McDermit, Leigh Button, Albert Watson '08, Lucia Chikowero '14

Odyssey Explorers/UW Space Place, grades 1-5: Chris Wagner, Marisol Gonzalez '17, Stephanie Bernard, Shannon Huberty, Max Lenz, Milli Lau '14, Kyisha Williams '17, Mary Wells '07

Odyssey Jumpstart/Headstart, ages 2-K: Cassie Mattie, Erendira Giron Cruz, Lilibeth Alvarez, Fabiola Garcia, Karla Holguin, Paula Noyce, Stephanie Vitaioli (cook), Mary Wells '07, Amy Basel, Literally Arts (Jamie Henke, Jessica Courtier, Stanley Salley '07), Madison Reading Project

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# ODYSSEY FAMILIES

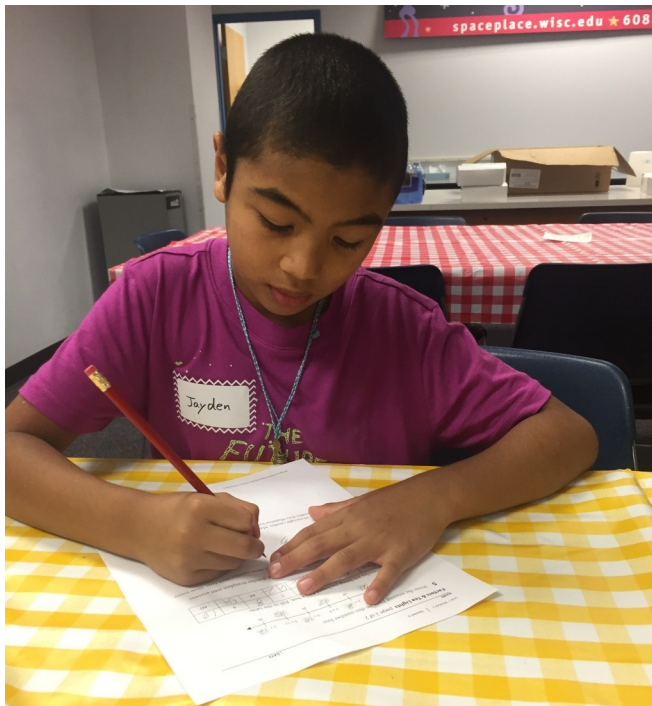
From Alice:

My dearest sons, you two are my greatest blessings. Because of you, I am an even better person today. I strive to do better for you and see to it that you do what's best in your own lives. I know life doesn't always seem so fair, but I promise it's only sculpting you into the men you will eventually become. I hope and pray that being in the Odyssey Junior program gives you the confidence to realize you are important and to use your own voice because people just like you could learn from you and what you have been through. I want people to know that at times my kids don't always seem so sweet, but I'm trying to raise them to be genuinely grateful for what they have and to bring good vibes wherever they go.



My Mom

I love my mom because she supports me and also buys me things I need. She is a loving mom because she takes me places and each year we go to a different place. She also has to get up every day, every minute, and every second to get me things and go to places. My mom is strong because she is a single person. It's hard to be single and pay rent and everything else



and still have time and money for two little boys, Kayden and me (Jayden). We don't have the nicest house, but what counts is we have a pretty nice house. I just want to thank my mom and my family for all their support. My mom also has money for things I need. But sometimes we can get sweets and get other things we don't need. My mom is a loving, caring parent. I mean, she could be mean, but only if it is my brother or me doing something bad like yelling at somebody or not listening and things like that. Also, I broke my arm and elbow, but both times my mom was there for me, and I'm lucky to have a loving, caring mom.  
Love, (Jayden)

From Zataiya:

Zamorah, I am so happy you and your brothers get to experience Odyssey with me. You are such a bright little soul, and your light brightens up the darkest of days. You not only understand the importance of learning, but you actually love to learn as well. I am so proud of you for being the person you are. You are my own daughter, cherished and loved dearly. Keep shining your light, my love. The world needs it.  
Love, Mom



Dear Mom,

Thank you for driving us to Odyssey and dropping us off at Grandma's house. I'm proud of you for being in Odyssey. Thank you for signing us up for Odyssey Junior and letting me be part of the program. My favorite part of Odyssey is learning about Spanish. I like hanging out with my new friends. Love, **(Zamorah)**



From Queeneice:

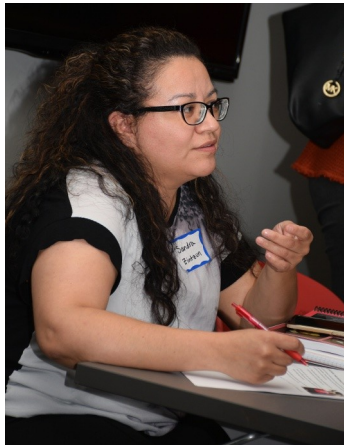
I want my son to know how much I love and adore him. I see him as a bright, smart, energetic, handsome little boy. I hope in Odyssey Junior he gets the gift of meeting other children his age, interacting, learning, and growing with them over the next few months. I want my classmates to know that the days I look rough or tired, the reason I am here is to make sure my son never has to struggle the way I did.



From Hailey:

My son Cole is a very intelligent thoughtful person. Cole cares very deeply for his family and is a great friend to others and is always looking out for ways to help them. I hope Cole uses his time at Odyssey to find greater purpose and understanding of school and to make friends.

My son Isaac is a fun loving out going child who loves spending time with friends and people. Isaac has a love for outdoor sports such as fishing and discovering animals. I hope Isaac gets to meet new kids and find new things to be excited about while at Odyssey.



From Sandra:

To Juan, my oldest son, what a young man you have become—a loving brother, caring friend, the socialite of the group. I couldn't be prouder or more blessed and grateful for your contributions and dedication to your family. Embrace all you are fortunate to have and what you will learn within Odyssey Junior.

To Zinedine, my youngest son, your love of adventure and curiosity make you unique. Through your struggles you will grow strong, and that sense of wonder will flourish. Appreciate the friendships in Odyssey Junior as they will stay forever in your heart.

I have to thank my mom for encouraging me to join the Odyssey program. I have had a wonderful time in this program. I have many memories. I am very thankful for this opportunity. **(Juan)**

Mom,  
I love you because you are amazing at work! And you love us. You taught me how to do art. **(Z, aka Zinedine)**







From Juan Carlos:

I would like to let my kids know that I love them. I feel proud of them and will always be there for them. I hope in Odyssey Junior they meet more people and are comfortable meeting new people. I would like to say that my kids are very friendly and loving. They will talk to you if you let them—they are very talkative.

Dear Dad,

Thank you for picking Aimee and me up at 8:30 pm. Thank you for playing games like “Feed the Hungry Caterpillar” with Aimee and me.

Dear Mom,

Thank you for washing my clothes and Aimee’s clothes. Thank you for making delicious food for Aimee and me. **(Dylan)**

My Mom

My mom is in Odyssey. My mom’s name is Lilibeth. She lets me play with my tablet and gives me candy. She lets me stay up late on the weekends and plays games with me. My mom helps me with my math. **(Aimee)**

From Ebony:

Dear Kenya, Mommy loves you more than life itself. You are such a positive and bright child. When I look at you, I see a strong little princess, like Mommy was at your age. I put you in Odyssey Junior so that you can learn more and see how fun learning can be. Learning and meeting new people can be scary for Mommy even though I’m big, so I know it can be hard for you. But that is a fear I never want you to have. I know that as you get older you’re going to do some great things. I can feel it, Kenya. Never forget how smart, patient, kind, and loved you are. You are Mommy’s shining star. Being your mommy is the biggest blessing God ever gave me. Keep up the good work! Mommy



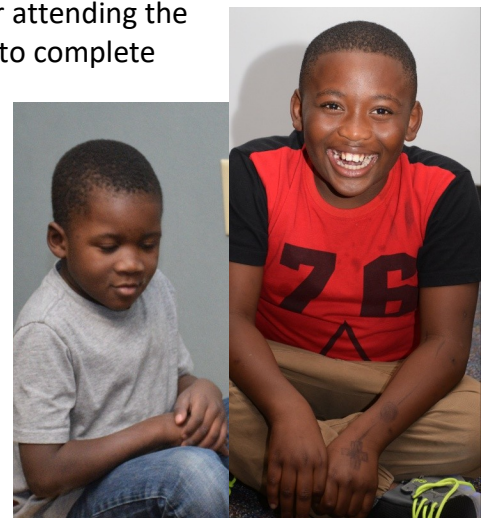
From Erica:

Dear Elijah and Zion, I am so proud of you guys for attending the Odyssey Project with me. This is a journey for me to complete something in life, and you two seeing me pushing every week to complete my work and get to class is motivation for me. I want to show you no matter what you are going through, keep on pushing. Don’t stop trying to push yourself to complete your goals in life. Don’t give up. If you fall down, get back up and try again. In other words, “Don’t stop, get it, get it.”

Hi Mom

This is your son, and I love you. Don’t ever leave, please! **(Elijah)**

From Erannia:







Dear Desiray, I see you as my little baby still, but my big girl has grown to be very intelligent and bright. I hope in Odyssey Junior you get an understanding of leadership and how to deal with certain situations that may occur. I want my classmates and staff to know that my children are my world. They are very smart little girls and can achieve any and everything by putting their minds to it. I also would like to let you all know that they argue every day for no reason at all. LOL



Nadia, my younger daughter, is a very light, funny little girl. I want her to know that she can do anything she wants to if she just tries. I hope what she gets out of Odyssey is a feeling that being away from Mommy is OK sometimes. For both of my girls: reach as high as you can!

From Simone Lawrence:

Elijah- I think you are an amazing person inside and out. I see so much strength in you and know that one day you will be a great part of society's growth. I love you so much and wish that we could find better ways of self-expression. I wish you didn't carry so much weight on your shoulders and could find a way to let me in. I hope in Odyssey Junior that you find a love for knowledge and realize how important education is for your life. I want you to see the beauty in being a young African American boy. I wish you could see how great of a community Odyssey is and that you have a bigger support system then you know. I want people to know how loving you are, how you carry your emotions and keep a calm mind frame—that no matter what life brings you, you keep a smile on your face.



Khali- You are such a sweet person. I am so happy to see your growth and love for life. I know you will grow into an amazing man with so many goals for life. In Odyssey Junior, I want you to find the same love for reading and writing that you have for numbers. You are such a smart child and can benefit from an extra push in reading. You are such a loving person and the kindest little boy I will ever meet.



From Quishanta:

My dear enchanted rose, Blessing, Mommy's beautiful everything, when I was pregnant with you, I prayed to God that He would have control over your life and future because I didn't feel that I would know what to do and didn't want to be the one to mess it up. But when you were born, it was like God had already begun your talents and gifts! When you weren't even one yet, you were already speaking Spanish and translating it, too!

You are not your typical average child, and you are maturing way too fast (but I LOVE IT)! People can tell by the way you speak, act, and carry yourself, and that's been happening throughout. You are beyond your years. I always tell everyone (including all the staff members, students, and others) that you are not an ordinary eight year old. You are wise beyond your years. Blessing, you mean beyond my life and eternity to me!! You have filled up a major part of the hole that was in my heart! I praise God and give Him glory to the highest of gloritivity!



You love and fear God and are not afraid to speak and tell about Him. When you draw, you're not ashamed to include Him in some of your drawings and show and tell people about Him! You even remind me, your daddy, and some other family members what God likes and does not like! You are my best friend, my life, my world! If this world ever hurts you, I'll be your champion.

Since you started Odyssey Junior, I want you to get everything that it has to offer. I want them to take you on a new and exciting journey that you've never been on before. I want you to experience what Odyssey Junior can do and show you, taking you to places you've never been before and expanding your education and mind. I hope Odyssey Junior helps you expand your vocabulary, Spanish, and creativity and lets you see different plays and learn how to write plays or movies, since that's what you like to do, and to advance your drawing skills.



What I want everyone to know about my baby girl is that she's not your typical eight year old, and she is our family's gift from God, the Most High!

Dear Mother,

Thank you for talking me into being in Odyssey Junior. At first I thought the kids didn't like me, but then I was wrong. ¿Who showed me love? ¡You did! Sincerely, **(Blessing)**



From Muhammad Abdullah:

Dear Ruhqayyah, I just thought I would write you this letter to share with you a thought or two. We are just about at the halfway point, and the ending of the first semester of the Odyssey Project. I hope it has been as good for you as it has for me. When I applied for the program, I thought I would have the chance for the first time in my life to embark on this journey of obtaining my post-secondary education, earning a college degree. I have been a parent since I was 18 years old, got married when I was 20, and by the time I turned 30 had six children. While I love all of my children, and wouldn't take a million dollars for any one of you (well, maybe two million—no, not even two, maybe five), I have always found it difficult to manage working, raising a family, and trying to concentrate on school. So why did I facilitate and orchestrate your returning from your mom's in Milwaukee, just to have you attend Madison East High School, when that's what you wanted to do prior? Well, as I said, I just didn't want you to do the typical High School trip—e.g., Prom, Boys, Homecoming, etc.



You know my feelings about Milwaukee, with its violence, Drama & Trauma, failing schools, and the crowded situation and you mom and step-dad's, etc. It was not easy dealing with that reality along with the sad irony of your leaving Madison where you went from Head Start, to Shorewood Hills Elementary, to O'Keefe Middle School, to Madison High School in Milwaukee, one of the poorest achieving education institutions in Wisconsin.

Also, I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge that, as the title of a song by Diana Ross and the Supremes says, "My World Is Empty Without You," so I did what had to be done to make it so. Despite the peace and quiet of drama-free Madison, and the fact that I have a job I love at the Central Library, it's just not the same without you being here.

Once the decision was made for you to return, my hope was that you would become a part of Odyssey as well. I know the days are long and the nights are short, and none of your friends are there, but Emily and her staff put a lot of time and effort into making sure Odyssey Junior has the same degree of challenge, fun, and opportunity as we parents have in the Odyssey Project. So hopefully you will one day look back and see that it was time well spent.



Finally, last spring, when UW-Madison and Madison College were holding their graduations, I saw at least three examples of parents, sons, and daughters wearing caps and gowns and walking across the stage to receive their diplomas together, and I said to myself, "I would like to have that experience with one of my children." If you look at some of the pictures on the walls of the classroom at Odyssey or in the Oracles, you will see the images of grandparents, parents, and children who went on from Odyssey to acquire their Associate's or Bachelor's degrees. I wish the same for you and me, God willing.

Love and Sincerity,  
Abu





My mom is a super inspiring person who signed me up for Odyssey. She was also in Odyssey and graduated with her masters degree in social work. She is someone I look up to each and everyday and inspires me to do good in school. My mom is an amazing role model. **(Zawadi)**

#### My Mom

I love my mom. She was in Odyssey for grownups. I'm very proud of her for graduating and being a counselor. She always has time to spend with me. She helps me with my homework. She feeds me good food, and when I say "good," it is good. She loves me every day since day one. I LOVE MY MOM! **(Zion)**



My connection to Odyssey is my mom and her mom, my grandma. She went here last year.

They made me find out who I am and made me be sweet and kind and do what I have to do to get somewhere, to be something. They want me to be safe and have a house and not be homeless and not die somewhere and I love them for that.. They have hope now and I love them for

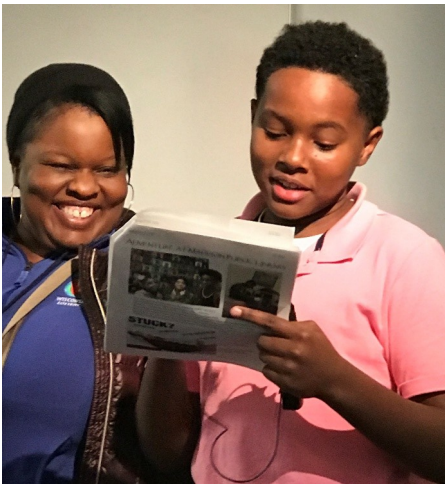
that.. My grandma is a cook and my mom works for what she gets and she loves what she does. I love them for being them and I know they love me too. They want me to be the best I can be. They want me to be me and not let no one tell me what to do. I am really happy to have both of them and love them very much. **(Angel)**







From Yangchen Lhamo:  
My dear Lekmon,  
I would like to thank you for being kind, helpful and friendly to your friends. I enjoy reading notes that you bring home from your teachers. It means a lot for me. Keep up your good work! I love you!



My mom and dad were in Odyssey. The first time they brought me with them to Odyssey, and I got a lot of help on my homework. It inspired me to try Odyssey. Our teacher, Chris, thought I was too mature for the Explorers, so I moved up to join the older kids, which was more fun. A year later, I was found writing this paper.  
**(Shadavien)**

My mom started when I was in first grade. She came home with food. I was stuck at home and jealous. We begged to come to Odyssey. That was in fourth grade. During the semester, my mom was nicer at home. She likes to learn new things. It makes her happy. **(Nyjua)**

Dear Mom,  
I love you, mom. You are the best mom I need! Thank you for going to Odyssey! Love, **(Rasaki)**



Dear Mom,  
Thank you for everything. You are the best mom ever. I love you. At first, I thought I would not fit in at Odyssey, but I fit in. Who always loved me? YOU! Love, **(Jessica)**

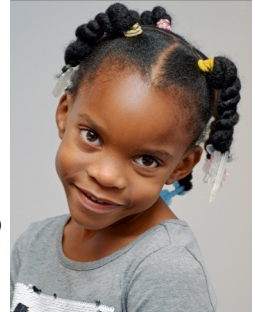
Mom  
I love my mom. She listens to me. She drives me to the park. I miss my mom when I'm not with her. **(Rogelio)**







Dear Mom and Dad,  
You are the best Mom and Dad. I love you guys forever. I'm about to cry because I'm so happy that you love me. I am proud of you for keeping me safe and working so hard. Love you so much! **(Essence)**



My Mom  
My mom is great because she is so nice. I love her secret. I love my mom. My mom gets money. That is why I love her. I love my mom because she is nice. **(D'Angelo)**



Dear Mom,  
I appreciate that you are the best mom in the world and help take care of my brother and sister and me. I enjoy being around you because you help me do my work and buy me clothes and toys. **(Alan)**

Dad  
Thank you for going to Odyssey. I am thankful

for my mom for coming to the Odyssey class and helping me. I am thankful for my dad for helping me do my homework. **(Erick)**



Dear Mom and Dad,  
Thank you for letting me have my friends over when you are at home with me. I love you, Dad and Mom! **(J.T., aka Jameson Taylor)**





**My Mom**

My mom was in Odyssey. I like that my mom is the best because she lets me make slime and open my birthday and Christmas presents. She bought me a bracelet and a ring. She buys me a lot of stuff that I need to be healthy. My mom is kind and helpful. She helps me with my homework, and she loves me!

**(Nakyiah)**

**My Mom**

At Thanksgiving, my mom took me to my best friend's house. I had everything with my best friend. I like my mom because she is sweet. She loves me and makes me feel comfortable. My mom is my mom!

**(Emily)**

**My Father**

My father is a construction contractor. He is also an Odyssey student. ¡Yo te amo mucho! Gracias, Papá, por ser un buen papá. Y enseñarme las matemáticas. **(Alex)**





# ODYSSEY ADVENTURERS





# COMMUNITY BUILDING

One goal we have in Odyssey Junior is to build community, appreciating those things that make us different from one another and finding things that also bond us together. This past month, we have been moving spaces due to the Goodman South Library Renovation and took that opportunity to try our hand at some new skills.

First, music. Thank you to Verge Manyen and Jaime Henke (UW faculty) who shared their love of drumming with us during our very first drum circle. We had fun learning the art of improvising and letting the rhythms find us.

Next, we danced. Huge thanks to Keena Atkinson for sharing her Odyssey journey with us and then bringing us together with a terrific WERQ lesson. We sweated, laughed, jumped, and did our best to follow her energetic lead.



Finally, we cooked! Thanks to Hedi Rudd, Slow Food, and the awesome culinary teachers at Badger Rock for bringing us together around food. Our class worked through several stations to create pico de gallo, guacamole, rice, beans, chicken and veggie enchiladas, and Ruth Allen's special butter cookies. Needless to say, we had an amazing meal and learned many new skills.



It's been a busy month filled with great new experiences we shared as a community of learners.



# GRATITUDE JAR

November is a month we often give thanks. During our community circle, we discussed the power of gratitude and took turns placing notes of gratitude in our jar. We have much to be thankful for in the Adventurers class.

- My faith
- My child
- My health
- My God
- My job
- My mom
- My family
- My dog
- Delicious food
- Everybody around me
- ME
- Friends
- My clothing
- My shoes
- My home
- People who grant me grace
- Thankful for my mom
- Good health



There are many things I value. One of the many things are my friends because they are the people who

inspire me to be the person that I am. If I ever have a bad day, I always go to them to better my day. I appreciate all that they do for me and I always look for ways to thank them. **(Juan)**

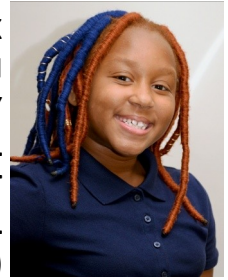




# TEEN THOUGHTS



Just because I am ... **BLACK**  
Doesn't mean I am ... **MEAN**  
Doesn't mean I am ... **UGLY**  
Doesn't mean I am ... **DISRESPECTFUL**  
Doesn't mean I can't ... **RUN FOR PRESIDENT**  
I am ... **A PROUD BLACK GIRL**  
(Kimari)



i met you  
i liked you  
i looked into the depths of your heart.  
the stars aligned as my eyes drowned into your dreamy ones, my lips adrift in yours  
and suddenly, you became my everything.  
no sea, mountain or landmark could ever keep my heart from beating in sync with  
the sounds of your soft chuckles and sighs, you've blanketed my heart just as stars  
do to the evening sky.  
the faults lie within me for not confessing sooner, i suppose that my mind lies in  
with that of a late bloomer;  
maybe it's because the only bloom i've known is the bloom of the flower that  
you've come to call your smile. (Jenni)



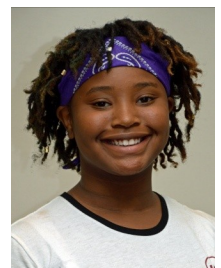
I want to play the new Call of Duty because I really like the old ones with COD Black Ops 3 being my favorite because of the campaign mode. Although I really did like the Call of Duty WWII. Zombies is my favorite level of all time though because it doesn't make me rage like multiplayer and it is really fun. I mainly like it because you kill something that is fictional and that people think it'll actually happen someday! I really want COD 4 because I heard the game is really fun and I want to play it with my friends. And the zombies that you kill are like Nazis and people that died that became zombies and I would not be ready for a zombie outbreak. (Elijah)

I like Odyssey because I meet people from lots of different schools and talk with them.  
(Kamoria)



I like to wrestle. Everytime I wrestle in a match, I win, except for once this year and last year. My record was 10-1 last year and 10-1 this year. I hate when my opponents talk trash. I practice everyday but not on Fridays.  
(Nasier)

I love Mexican food and I cook tacos. I make them with meat, lettuce, onions, tomatoes, and sour cream. Taco Tuesday. My brothers always eat up all the meat. My mom doesn't like them, but I do. (Nyjua)





# ODYSSEY EXPLORERS





# PUPPET MAKING

Did you see the puppet your Odyssey Explorer made in class on Wednesday? Not only did each child create a unique puppet, they also gave them names, personalities and adventures!

Puppet's Name: Master Scarecrow

My puppet is a scarecrow. He lives in a haunted house. He likes to scare people. My puppet also likes to hypnotize people. One day, he hypnotized a whole country. **(Alex)**



Puppet's Name:

Rainbow Unicorn

My puppet is a unicorn. She lives in a rainforest. My puppet likes to stick out her tongue. Her superpower is that she can become invisible. My puppet ate candy every day, and she couldn't stop eating. Then she was full. The bad guys came after her. She turned invisible. That's how she catches the bad guys. **(Aimee)**

Puppet's Name: Marvin

My puppet, Marvin, is a police officer. He lives in a big, big, big, big mansion. My puppet likes to go to outer space. Marvin's superpower is laser eyes and strength. One day, my puppet will own \$1,000,000,000,000,000, a red Lamborghini, a white hover board, and a space shuttle. **(J.T., aka Jameson Taylor)**



Puppet's Name: Jiam

My puppet is a pig named Jiam. Jiam likes to run. Jiam's superpower is flying. One day, Jiam went to the store. **(Zamorah)**

Puppet's Name: Roxy

My puppet is a golden puppet who lives in Madison, WI. Roxy likes to dance. One day, my puppet will be famous for flying and fighting. **(Desiray)**



Puppet's Name: Lil Red

My puppet is a rich dude and a rapper. Lil Red lives in a mansion in New York. He likes to sing. My puppet's superpower is helping people. One day, Lil Red will be the best rapper in the world. **(R.J., aka Rasaki)**



Puppet's Name: Jeff

My puppet, Jeff, is crazy. He lives on the streets. He likes to annoy. One day, Jeff met Billionaire Bob, and they became family. **(Z, aka Zinedine)**



Puppet's Name: Billionaire Bob

My puppet is a billionaire and lives in a big, big, big mansion. He likes to spend money. His superpower is giving money to homeless people and loving/caring. At one time, my puppet was a homeless person, but he started a job, and then he started a company. From there, he went on to be a multi-trillionaire. Then, he met Jeff, a homeless person, and gave him 20 trillion dollars. They became family for life. **(Jayden)**



Puppet's Name: That's personal info!

My puppet is a long-nosed ferk. He lives on Mansion Hill. My puppet likes to chop money in his room. His superpowers are super speed and strength. One day, my puppet will go to heaven.

The rest is personal info. P.S. This is copyrighted (sued for 1,000,000 bucks and in jail for 40 years). **(Zion)**



Puppet's Name: Alex

My puppet, Alex, is a dog with two feet, not four. Alex lives in a house and likes to play soccer and football. His superpowers are flying and super speed. One day, my puppet will be a billionaire. **(Alan)**







Puppet's Name: Amira

My puppet is a human who lives in a house in Madison. She likes to eat ice cream. Her superpower is unicorn power. One day, Amira ate a rainbow because she thought it was candy! **(Nakyiah)**

Puppet's Name: Sally

My puppet, Sally, is a sock. She lives in a castle and likes to play. My puppet's superpower is lasers. One day, my puppet will fly. **(Essence)**



Puppet's Name: ibols

My puppet is a rabbit. My puppet lives in my home and likes to play with me. His superpower is strength. One day, my puppet will be a friend. **(Erick)**

Puppet's Name: Blue Velociraptor

My puppet is a blue dinosaur. It lives in Jurassic World. It likes to eat people. It has magical powers. One day, it chose not to eat other people because it liked them. **(Rogelio)**



Puppet's Name: Rockstar

My puppet, Rockstar, is a warrior. He lives in a castle. He likes to run. Rockstar's superpower is fire. **(D'Angelo)**

Puppet's Name: Mia

My puppet is a girl named Mia. She lives at my house and likes to roller skate. Her superpower is sparks. One day, Mia will go to my school and turn me into a princess. **(Emily)**



Puppet's Name: Tallantid

Tallantid is a monster. He lives in a house and likes to do shows. His superpower is showing off to people. One day, my puppet was on stage, and he was happy. On that day he did a show, too. **(Cole)**





# RHYTHM STICKS

Music Teacher Jan Vidruk brought Odyssey Explorers the joy of music. We learned how to use rhythm sticks in different ways to create a beat. Can you guess how these rhythm sticks were made and who made them? If not, ask your Odyssey Explorer!





# ODYSSEY JUMPSTART





# SNOWY DAY

“My own hands can make the world that’s in my mind.” ~Langston Hughes

*What do you like to make or do with your hands?*



Jamyla: “I can play with toys and Barbies and Barbie cars. I can play with a snowball.”

Nadia: “I like to draw.”

Zaria: “I like tracing my hand.”

Zayden: “I like to play video games!”

Kayden: “I went to make a snowball. I want to hold it.”

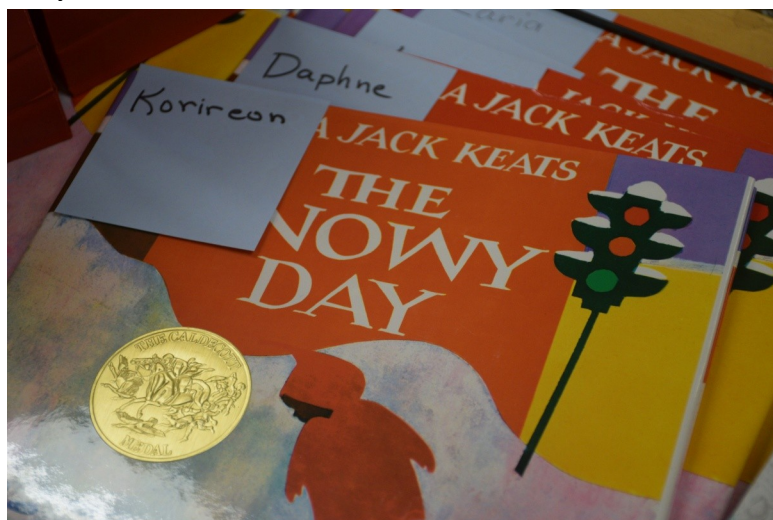
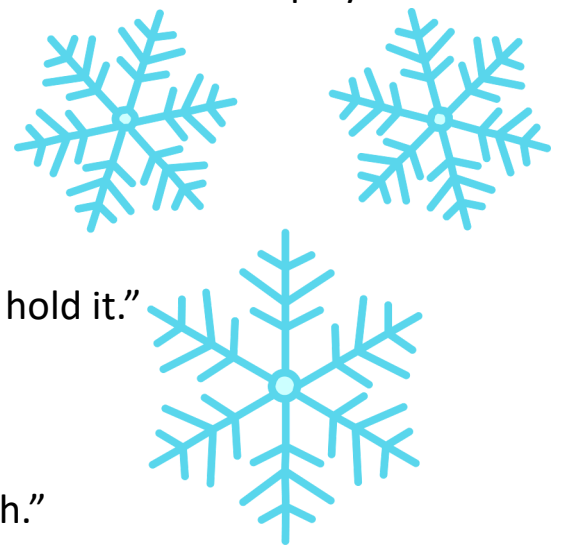
Jabari: “I can eat with my hands.”

Kas’Myr: “I can play on the monkey bars.”

Isaac: “I can go fishing for real fish and fake fish.”

Gemini: “I can play with a hover board and play with a helicopter.”

Ricky: “I can play on the monkey bars, carve pumpkins, pick an apple, and play with toys.”





# TEN ON THE SLED

