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ODYSSEY ORACLE

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES



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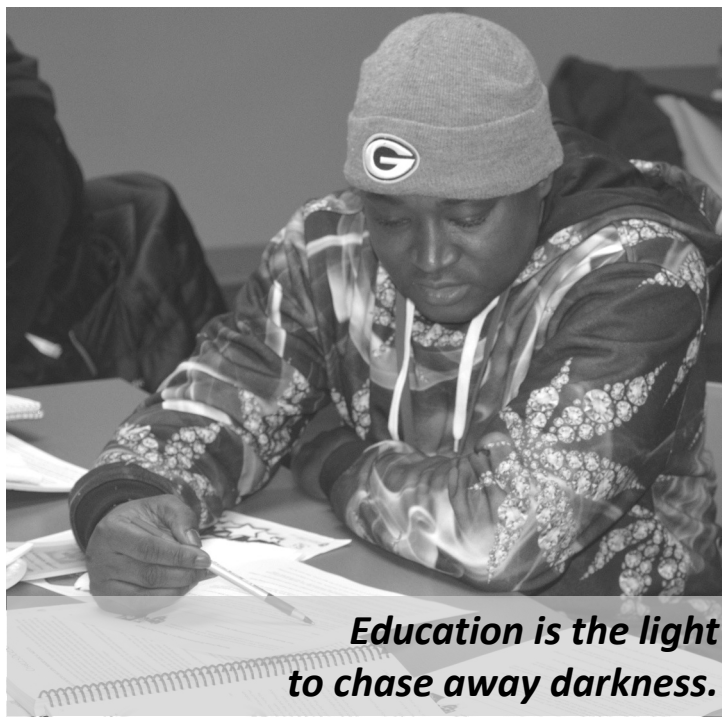
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MAKING A CASE FOR SEMESTER TWO



Having attended the first semester, it is like half of me walked out of the shadowy darkness. For me to completely walk out of total darkness, I must do the second semester. Education is the light to chase away darkness. I believe at the end of the second semester, I will be the light to shine in the darkness.



Alice Ramirez Well, being a part of the Odyssey Project has really put a lot of things in perspective for me. The stories we read are stories that

I've passed on to others and that apply to my life. Being an Odyssey student



Abdourahman Sallah The first evening I stepped my foot in class, I was nervous to see and meet people from different backgrounds and cultures. During the course of the semester, I have learned a

lot about poetry, essay writing, and persuasive speeches, and I have participated in class writings and readings. I always complete and submit my worksheets and take home test on time, and I have never missed or been late for class.

For the past months I have interacted with colleagues and made new friends in class, and we support each other. During the course of the semester, I realized my writing, reading, and speaking abilities have improved greatly.

has really allowed me to feel comfortable and be able to share my own story, even if it's just on paper. Being in the second semester would mean the world to me. It's all a part of reaching my life goal of eventually becoming a nurse and helping others.

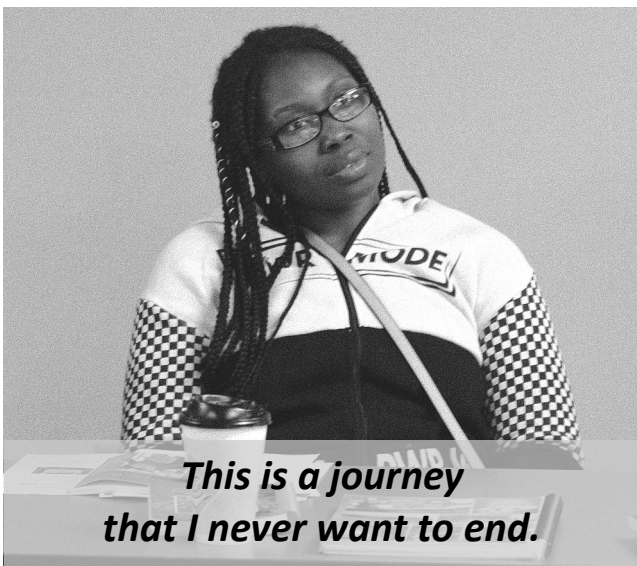




Breonna Hawkins Being in the Odyssey classroom has truly made me realize what dedication means—from completing homework after working hours at a job to showing up to class even when you're tired. In my

past, if I ever doubted myself, I would give up. Being in Odyssey, there really is no giving up or quitting. There is always Kevin calling to make sure you're coming and everything is OK. I haven't been able to make it to a tutoring class yet, but even without that I've cleaned up my writing and know a lot more about punctuation. It's OK to make mistakes, but make sure you learn from them. I would love to be a part of the second semester because, I mean, why stop here? I know that I am a strong reader/writer now, and I have not missed a class or rarely ever been late (OK, maybe late twice LOL). I feel like I've gotten to know so many people.

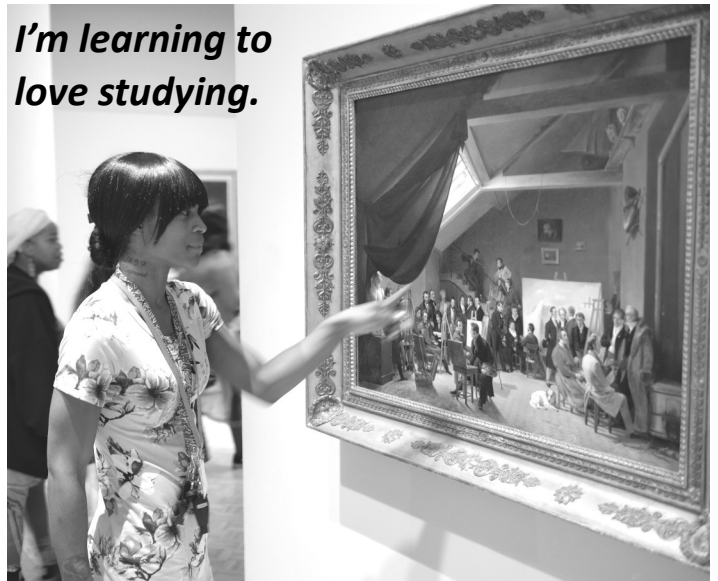
On different levels, I'm learning things I've never once known, learning words I've never known. These past couple of months have filled my brain with so much knowledge that I can share with others. Even after Odyssey, I want to take this knowledge and apply it elsewhere to further my education. This is a journey that I



***This is a journey
that I never want to end.***

never want to end. Odyssey, to me, isn't just a step into the door. I'm literally walking through it into a new space with new opportunities, and from this point on, I'm never stepping back. I know it can only get better from here. I am confident I will be a successful Odyssey student and continue my journey to being a successful woman. Education is power, and this is a power that I never want to let go of.

***I'm learning to
love studying.***



Candace Howard I feel I should continue this class because I'm learning so many different things I probably would have never learned if I wasn't here! I'm currently working on a book about my life, and being at

Odyssey is helping me become a better writer. Learning all these new big words makes me feel a lot smarter than I've felt before! I'm learning to love studying. I now love to read, not so much out loud yet. I'm very dedicated to Odyssey. This class is making me want so much more out of life. It gives me so much hope. I feel beyond blessed to be here, learning from some amazing teachers and students. I feel with this experience, I'll become someone others [like my children] can learn from and look up to.



Carmon Caire I am very serious about going back to school. I love this program very much. I have learned a lot about me since I joined Odyssey. I learned that I have a bigger voice. It has helped me start enjoying writing again. I

didn't think I would write again since the passing of my grandma. August 2008 was the last time I wrote and had my writing published. It was about my grandma being a pioneer of Madison. Thinking about it makes me cry. I miss her so, and my grandfather, too.

I really enjoy being in the Odyssey program. It has opened up my mind to going back to school and using my talents in writing, singing, and theater. I am very excited to be in class. I love this class very much. I want to take all the classes Odyssey has and get into Madison College in a year or so. I am interested in journalism and communications program eventually at the UW, but math is my problem. I want to learn French. I am going to be excited to take Kevin's English class once I graduate.

I really enjoy being a student. It is hard working full time, but I am strong and make it work. I'm learning that hard work and dedication will pay off, and I will be happy while I'm on my journey back to school. I left a stressful job to start another one still doing what I love—teaching. God has blessed me in so many ways. Keeping the faith is what I do, and continuing to work hard is what I was taught to do.



Cheyenne Pete So far this has been an amazing, exciting, and interesting semester. I've met some really great people, and I am so blessed and

appreciative for this opportunity. Since class has started, there have been quite



I learned that I have a bigger voice.

a few bumps in the road for me, but I've dedicated myself to getting my work done, no matter what, and coming to class.

This class has made me open up more with people who once were strangers. I don't open up or write or talk to a lot of people about the things that go on or have gone on in my life. Homework and writing assignments have given me more confidence in my work by Mrs. Emily's feedback and comments. I want to continue to push myself next semester because a year ago I didn't think this would have been possible for me. Now I am here, and I will go harder and continue to gain knowledge and share things with classmates.



I can't wait to see what next semester has to offer!

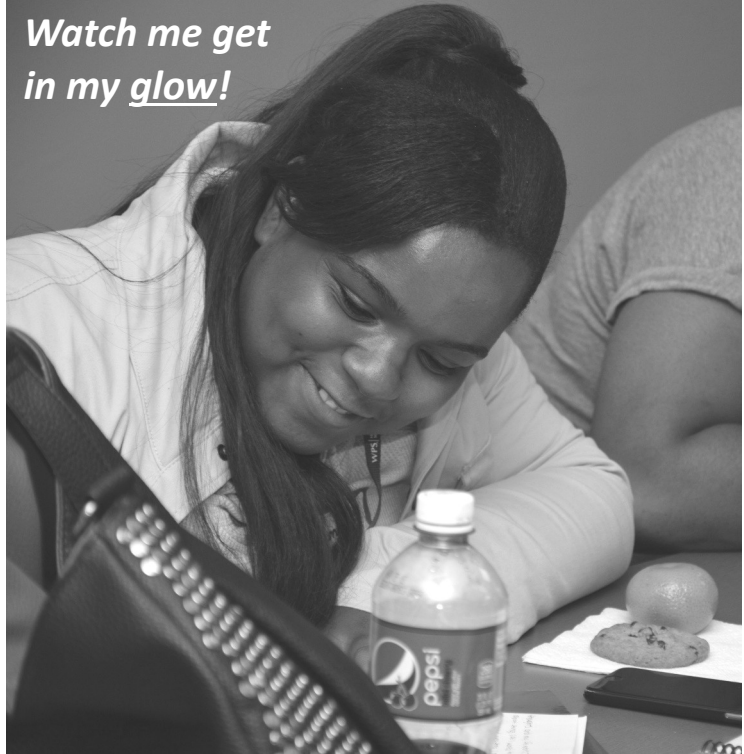
I made a promise to myself that no matter how hard this becomes, whether it's school or life, I will not give up. If I feel myself slipping, at least I know I'm surrounded by tons of wonderful people here. I can't wait to see what next semester has to offer! I also see myself as a writer getting better, but the best has yet to come! 😊



Diamond Clay Honestly, I know I have had a bit of a rough start to Odyssey, not because of the staff, the class, or the work, but because . . . life just keeps on

happening, one thing after the next. I should continue into the second semester of Odyssey because I am aware. It's one thing to know your flaws and not do anything to change, but it's another when you know, reevaluate, and push forward. I know what I want, and now that I know, it's time for me to reevaluate and do better, giving myself another chance to progress. Watch me get in my glow! What I mean by glow is my line of success after actually finding myself. In case life happens again, keep pushing me.

Watch me get in my glow!



Ebony Anderson-Carter When I applied for the Odyssey Project, I was searching for an exit. I know I have the potential to do some very great and creative things, but with no

positive influence around me to push me in a more positive direction, it was hard to put action to my goals and dreams. Because of Odyssey, I have an invisible shield around me—a shield of protection from negativity. “I have homework” or “I need to study” help me not dwell in negativity. I am working to get myself back in school. . . .

I have been granted the opportunity to fulfill an odyssey. So far, Odyssey has built courage in

me to become who I want to be for myself: a nurse. Writing about my past gave me reason to seek therapy to get over issues. My finances are changing. And, most of all, everyone's stories give me motivation to succeed.



Because of Odyssey, I have an invisible shield around me—a shield of protection from negativity.



Erannia Potter My name is Erannia Potter, and my nickname is "Rana." I should continue into the second semester because I really want to finish all my work on time. I started the class late but still

tried to make my work come together. I have gotten a lot of reading out of the class. I have heard different poets and writers in Odyssey. I really have contributed by still attending with all the things I have going on in my life right now. I also have contributed by having a voice and reading out loud. I would like to be a part of the class for the second semester because I tried hard to catch up to complete my work. I also would like to continue so I can pursue my education into Registered Nursing.



I have heard different poets and writers in Odyssey.



Erica Cocoa Gentry Being in this class has enabled me to write more and encouraged me to think about what I'm writing first and then apply it.

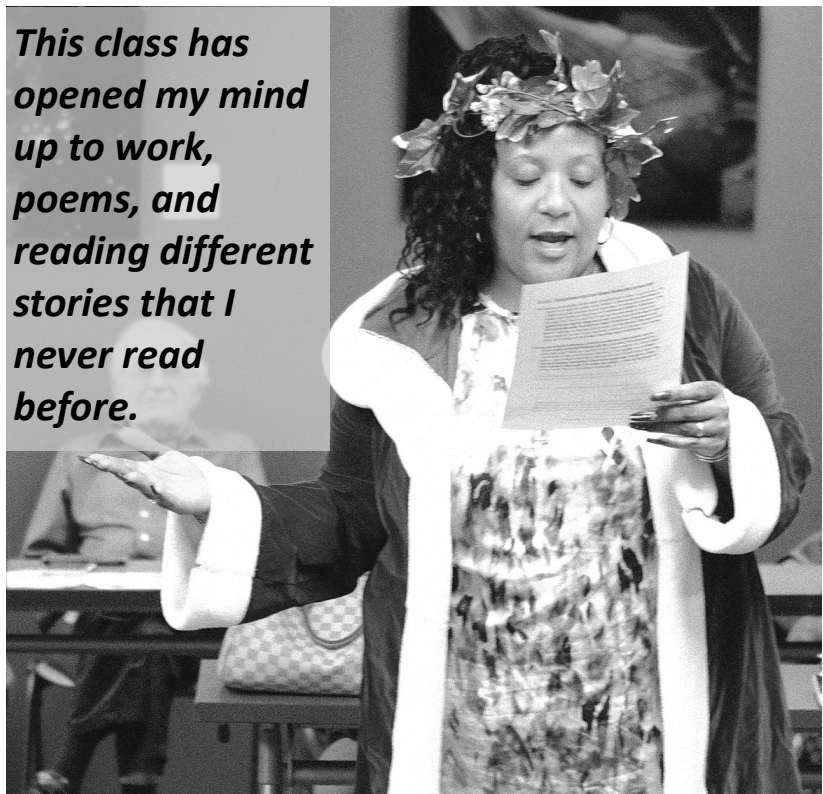
Sometimes it's still

hard to write down what I want to say but easier now than before. This class has opened my mind up to work, poems, and reading different stories that I never read before.

My contribution I've made to the class is voicing my opinion when it's warranted and listening and taking heed of others speaking as well. The laughter that comes after I've spoken about something funny could have very well made someone's day. Even though this first semester has been an emotional roller coaster in my personal life, this class has been

my getaway from the issues I'm going through. They may not know it now, but my classmates, this class, and faculty are getting me through these hard times.

This class has opened my mind up to work, poems, and reading different stories that I never read before.




Galeca McCain

Before starting this class, I was determined. I knew things could/would potentially get hard, but I

promised myself to stay focused. Every possible thing that could have discouraged me from continuing my education has happened, whether it's staying up late trying to complete homework assignments or bringing my daughter to class because I don't have a babysitter, or some days coming to class late because of my work schedule. Even though those things were discouraging to me, every Wednesday at 6 PM I have something to look forward to. I finally feel a part of something again. My parents and siblings are so proud of me, finally seeing me do something that I put off for so long.

Even though times get hard, I try my best to make sure I'm in attendance. I'm learning more, reading stories I would have never had any interest in before. I'm growing!



Hezouwe Walada I remember the first time I walked into Emily's office for an interview. That day I was hoping and praying to be accepted into the Odyssey Project. A couple of months later, I got a call from

her that I was admitted into the Odyssey Project. You can't imagine my joy that day because my life had just rebooted. Today, we are three weeks away from the semester to be over, and I have gotten a lot out of the class. First, I am more confident than ever when I want to talk or participate in class. Second, I am able to write a lot of paragraphs of essays without having my mind blocked. Finally, I am



***I finally feel
a part of
something
again.***

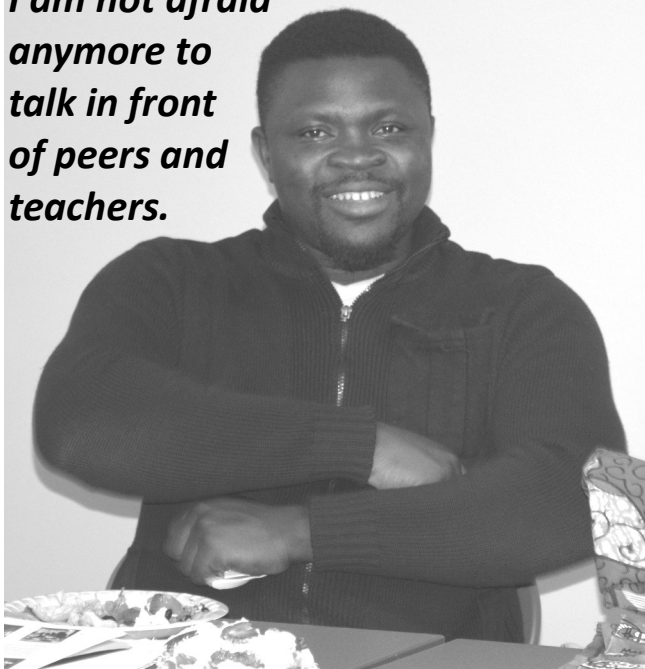
not afraid anymore to talk in front of peers and teachers.

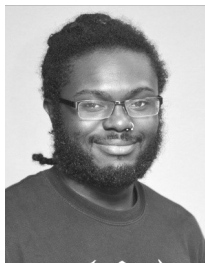
However, I have not only gotten out of the class. I have also made some contributions to the class. For example, I often share some ideas that I have on a subject with my classmates.

Moreover, I come to the class on time and do all my homework. Due to everything that I am learning in class and my contributions, I would like to continue the next semester. Besides, I still have a lot to learn and also I will learn my other three remaining UW credits.

I am really proud to be part of this wonderful project, and I wish to continue.

***I am not afraid
anymore to
talk in front
of peers and
teachers.***





James Horton Jr.

Why stop now? Odyssey has reminded me of how fun it can be to learn. I enjoy the readings we

do. I enjoy the in-class breakdowns of pieces. To be specific, I loved learning about women with the courage to write. I thought I had an idea of what women had to go through in order to give themselves a voice. I didn't know the half of it. They had to write even though their male peers didn't believe they had the intellect to write. I've read Frederick Douglass's book

multiple times, but never have I looked closely at the techniques he used throughout his book. I feel as though through Odyssey my writing can only get stronger. There's so much more I'm looking forward to learning.



Joyce Johnson I, Mother Joyce

Johnson, find the Odyssey Project very challenging and diverse. All of my 29 classmates that I've held conversations with have different religions and

backgrounds, with some born outside of the United States, from Africa, Mexico, Tibet, etc. I'm so happy that I was accepted in July 2018. Emily wrote me a letter, and I also got a phone call.

I felt out of place at first on September 5, 2018. That first day of class, I came with my walker (due to my disability) and found out I that I am the oldest person in my class. I thought I should give up, but I talked to my mentors (Reverend Dr. Peggy,



Odyssey has reminded me of how fun it can be to learn.

Minister Stephanie, and my pastor, Rev. Dr. Marcus Allen, Sr.). They all prayed with me for God to keep me on the right path and told me not to give up. My three adult children and my nine grandchildren said they will be proud of me. Well, I'm even more determined to go to any length to reach my dream, vision, and goal: to

receive a bachelor's degree in the humanities. Even if I am in my seventies, I'll work part-time to help people dealing with drugs or alcohol or to counsel women in abusive relationships or marriages. I believe from Odyssey I can accomplish it all.



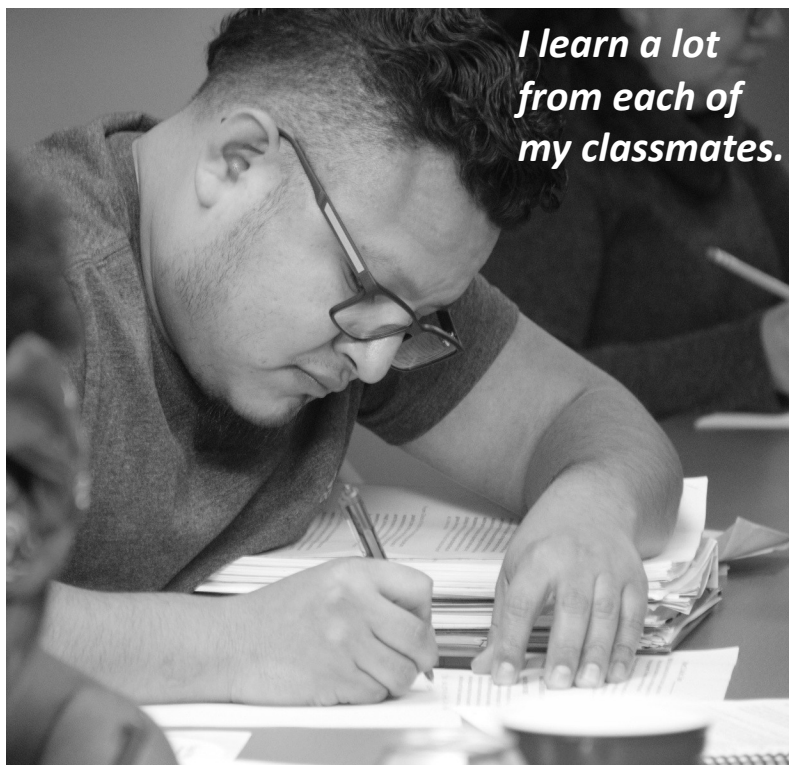
I'm even more determined to go to any length to reach my dream, vision, and goal.


Juan Carlos Abrajan

What I have gotten out of the class is that I have met fabulous instructors. Each class they make it special and

interesting. I've learned a lot. . . . I have contributed in letting my classmates and teachers hear several stories of mine. In particular, I've left them with a suggestion of trying out the Cemita if they ever go visit Puebla.

I would like to be part of the class for second semester because it is a good way for me to get rid of the problems and stress of each day. Also, I have fun being in class, and I learn a lot from each one of my classmates.

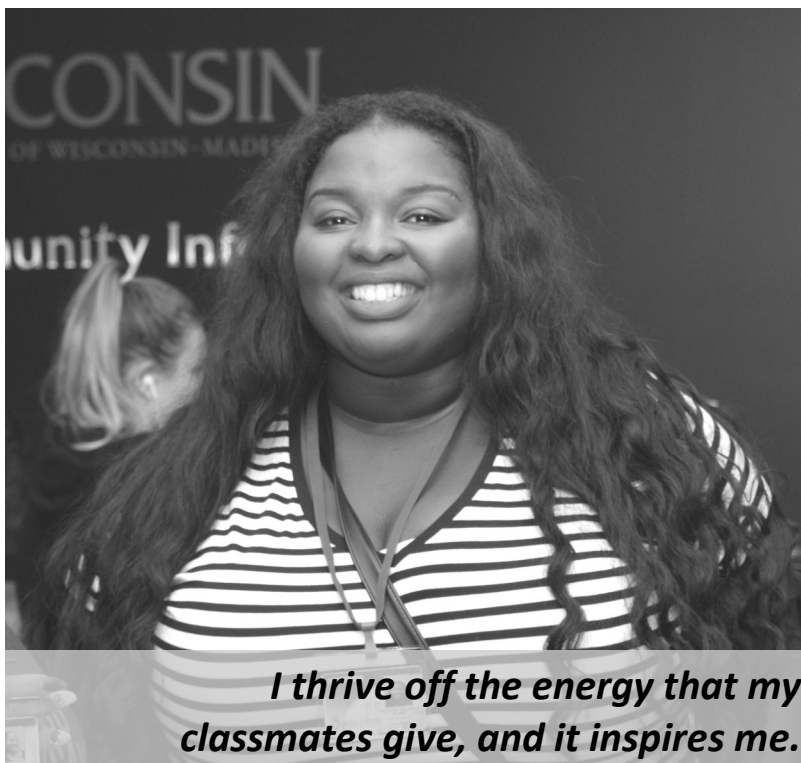


Kayasia Blake When I first started this class, I was very unsure of myself.

I was worried that I wasn't the right fit for the program. I was

worried that maybe I couldn't keep up with the work. As time passed, I became more confident in my work, my worth, and my place in this class. I thrive off the energy that my classmates give, and it inspires me. Hearing stories from others have helped me become humble and unafraid of what others think about me. Going forward into next semester, I want to give more of myself. My shell has broken, and I want to be able to be someone else's

source of positive energy. I want to be able to move to the next part of my life with my head held high and fearless.





La'cee Webster I can confidently say I've grown so much since I've written that essay applying for the Odyssey Project.

Being in Odyssey thus far has made me think and expand my mind so much more. My way of thinking has changed, and I've gained so much more clarity as well. Bouncing ideas and experiences off one another and being so open and honest every class helped me come out of my shell. I can be a very reserved person, but I have a lot to say. Odyssey makes me feel not only like I have a voice but also that my voice is being heard and makes a difference.

I've learned so much. I couldn't get this same support, experience, or even feeling being elsewhere. I am so grateful to have this opportunity and to have met and created relationships with my classmates. I haven't been to school or even got back in the mindset since I graduated from high school. I am still young, and my mind is always wondering. I want to continue my education, challenging myself and learning as much as I can, as well as sharing my knowledge. Being a part of this class second semester would allow me to do so. I want to continue this journey and learning process because it is molding me into a better person overall, as well as guiding me down a path I want to go. Knowledge is power. I want to continue to grow and get better with my writing, preparing myself for this world by being the best that I can be and getting to where I want to be in life. I have dedicated and pushed myself and will continue to do so because I want better for myself. This journey with Odyssey has made it worth it.



My voice is being heard and makes a difference.



J. Luis Pérez-Olguín I believe in hard work. Also, I believe opportunities such as the Odyssey Project, which gives adults an

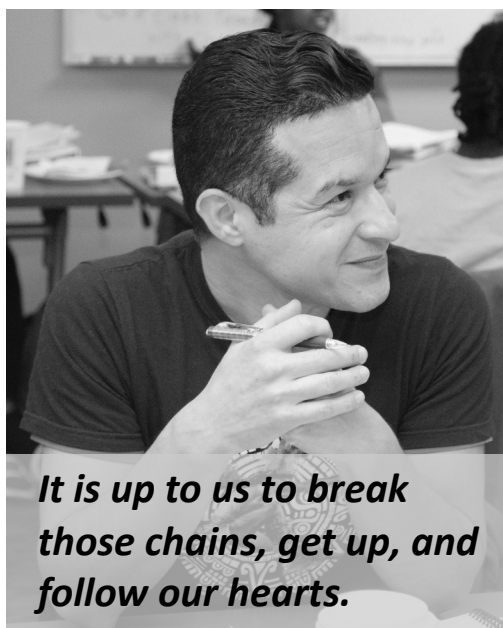
opportunity to a higher education, are very rare. Therefore, I believe my biggest contribution is to be on time, to be at every class, and to take advantage of tutoring. I am a hard worker and a dedicated person who's always looking to improve life. I am a person who thrives every day on becoming a better version of who I was the day before. I have a thirst for learning new things, to improve my vocabulary in English, and to continue looking for that door that is

going to open and take me to my bachelor's degree.

What I have gotten from class is that we all come from caves which interfered in our daily lives. However, it is up to us to break those chains, get up, and follow our hearts.

I want to be part of second semester because I

have proved in the first semester my effort and consistency for this great opportunity to be part of the Odyssey Project. I am looking forward to more reading and learning in the following semester. Thank you for the opportunity and exposure to a broader cultural experience.



It is up to us to break those chains, get up, and follow our hearts.



I look forward to challenging myself to rise to new heights.



Martina Mitchell I know that as a widowed, black mother of three, it is imperative that I continue into the second semester of Odyssey, not only for myself but also for the

example it is showing my children of dedication to the pursuit of your dreams.

What I have gained from the class so far is confidence. The positive feedback I receive from each assignment encourages me to keep trying and aids me in doing better work. I'm not sure yet as to how I contribute to the class individually, but I know all of us as pieces make a whole.

I definitely would like to be a part of second semester because I have enjoyed learning new things and look forward to challenging myself to rise to new heights.



Monica Mims I should continue into the second semester because I'm dedicated to do more and better. This is the perfect path to be on right now.

I've learned more about myself in terms of my writing style, and I've given some serious consideration to my future goals and how to make it real for myself.



This is the perfect path to be on right now.

During this next semester, I'll continue improving my writing and work on finishing my book. After graduation, I want to release my book and work towards my MBA. My job has a real nice MBA program with the UW, and I'll pay almost nothing for tuition.

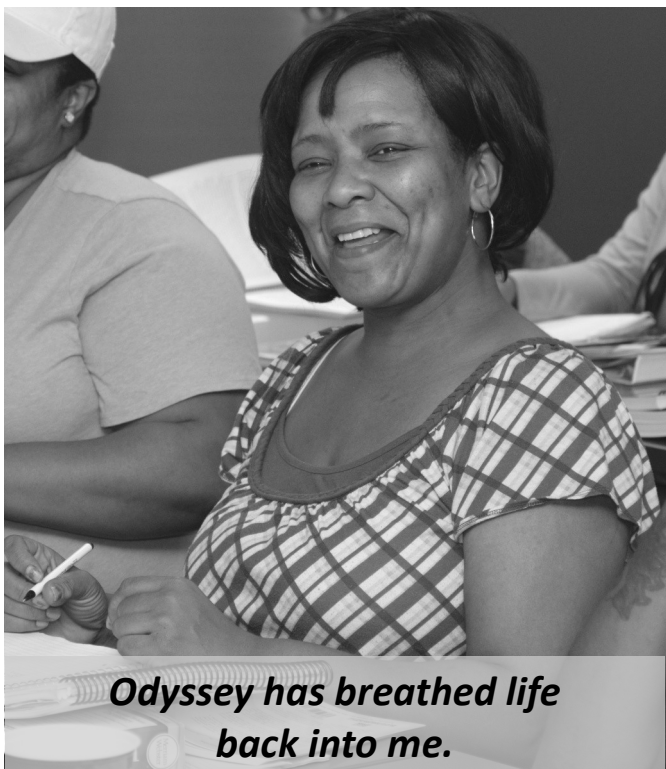
Thank you for this opportunity. I'm looking forward to round two!



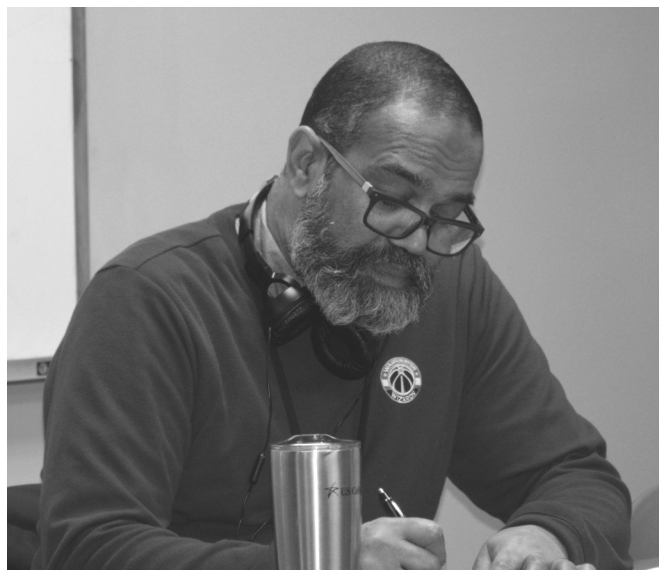
Muhammad Abdullah I have innumerable reasons not to continue in Odyssey. I'm old and tired, and I don't know if I will be able to reach my goal of obtaining a degree because some of the reasons I have in the past last in the present, e.g. children. Trying to stay focused on classwork while dealing with a 15-16 year old is something I had not planned on, but the option my daughter has of living in Milwaukee in a two-and-a-half bedroom house with a pit-bull and seven other people is not something I could live with, so I will hang in here.

I used to live next door to UW housing, and I noticed students, foreign and domestic, arriving in spring and summer to get settled in for the fall semester. I wish I didn't have to work, even part time, and could just focus on going to school. Nevertheless, I will hang on because someone once told me if I let go, I will hurt twice.

Finally, I have a lot of experience with quitting—



Odyssey has breathed life back into me.



***I'm old and tired . . .
but I will hang in here.***

more than I want to think about. I know I am capable of convincing myself that I should just give up and be satisfied with just living out my days satisfied with what I have accomplished with a GED and a lot of nerve, but I am cognizant of the fact that I am one of 30 people selected from a much larger pool of many who weren't accepted. I am grateful for that and appreciate the help and support I get from staff and fellow classmates. I also believe that my staying may motivate others to do the same.



NatuRa Warford Week to week, I feel a bit stronger as class seems a little less longer. Tuesday night I'm thinking about Wednesday's Odyssey class and future dreams. The power I gain as I learn at least one thing, hearing my classmates and alumni speak and sometimes sing. Words mean so much, and the dictionary's on their team. Last week I told Facebook that Odyssey has breathed life back into me right after a beast named Depression tried to consume me. Each week, my mind broadens as my heart does, too. Thank you so much for including me and my view.



Queeneice Creamer I know that I should continue because I am learning more every week, not just from the literature we read but also from my classmates. I look forward to coming and feel bad when I can't. I am proud to be a part of something so special. I've never met a group of people, especially teachers, who are so involved in my success and open me up to new things. I may not be able to participate in everything, but I welcome and appreciate everything that I have learned and experienced so far. I look forward to what the next semester brings.

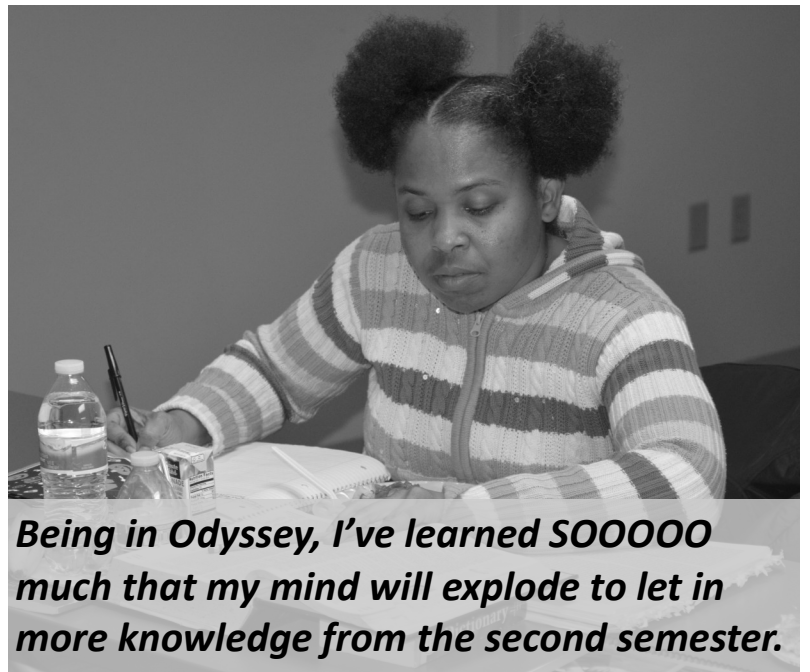


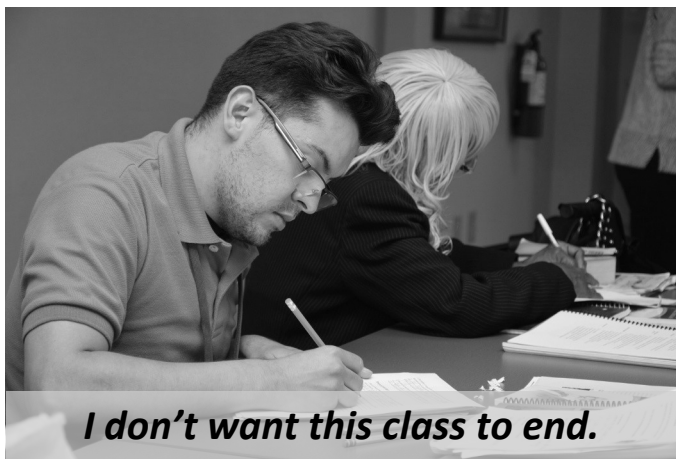
Quishanta Cary When we first talked and you were asking me the interview questions, those had actually kept me kind of positive that I'd actually get accepted (please don't ask—I don't know how). From day one

when I first walked through those doors, I breathed a sigh of "AHHHHH, YES!" This is where my life, goals, and dreams would all start to happen! I knew this is where I belonged! This is where I will feel I'm in school all over again! And, man, does it! Being in Odyssey, I've learned SOOOOO much that my mind will explode to let in more knowledge from the second semester. The teachers that came in, WOW—they make what we have to read interesting and powerful! I met some alumni that I could listen to all night long.

I believe I contributed by coming, sharing, and participating. Also, I turned in just about everything that was given. I AM going to be back and part of the second semester because this is like no other program I've been involved in (besides

when I completed the Readiness Project and graduated to become an official Urban League Member for life). I have seen a change in me with this project that I haven't in a long, long time, and Odyssey has done just that. I am a writer, and I love to read. I am itching with excitement to see what the second semester will bring. So, saying that, I WILL SEE YOU SECOND SEMESTER! THAT'S A PROMISE! 😊





I don't want this class to end.



Ricardo Marroquin Santos The first semester has gone by so fast, and I wish I could go back in time because I don't want this class to end. At the same time, I don't want to go back in time because I can describe myself as a whole different person

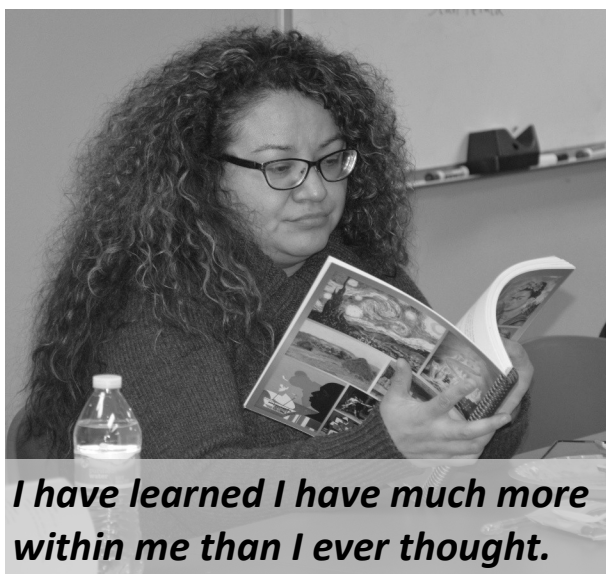
now. For instance, my motivation, participation, and experiences make me want to continue with my odyssey.

As the first semester comes to an end, I can describe myself as a wiser and more mature person when it comes to the reading and writing I've done. For example, I love the "Woman of Courage" essay assignment. I enjoyed the creative and unique ways of writing I can do. I would like to be more involved in UW courses and groups, and I would also like to help out.



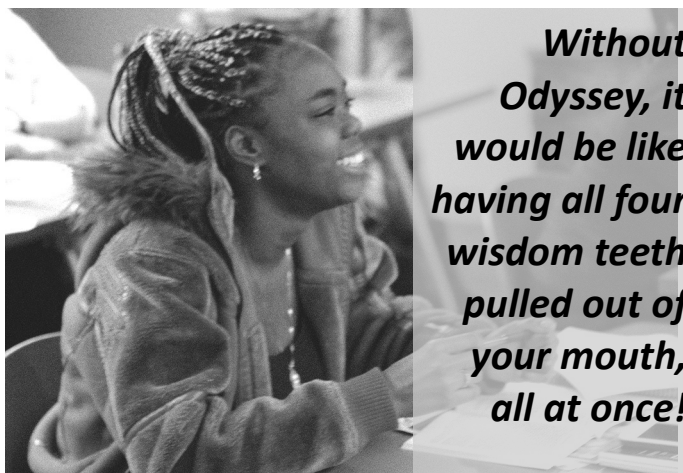
Sandra Zintzun Coming into the program with doubts and excitement, I wasn't sure what I was capable of.

Now, after having finished my first semester and finding my place within the class, testing my limits with everything going on from work, kids, and school as a single mother, I have



I have learned I have much more within me than I ever thought.

learned I have much more within me than I ever thought. Finding the will to continue with so many struggles will be my biggest accomplishment. I definitely will never regret submitting my application. It has opened up so many doors, emotions, and friendships, and it has put my doubts to rest. I am looking forward to the next semester to expressing my voice on paper!



Without Odyssey, it would be like having all four wisdom teeth pulled out of your mouth, all at once!



Savannah Rose Perry Odyssey is God-given to me! I need this program to help continue into the woman I am becoming. My mind is so much clearer, and my thoughts, visions, and dreams are all feeling so much closer. I need Odyssey! I am a new woman born again.

Odyssey has brought me so much joy, peace, patience, and love. Moving on without it is like living life on a plug. If I would have to move on without Odyssey, it would be like having all four wisdom teeth pulled out of your mouth, all at once! Odyssey is one of those doors God opened for me. My struggle has lessened, and Odyssey is my blessing!

**Tchallassi Edoh**

This will be my second semester of the Odyssey Program for the academic

year 2018-2019. I started the first semester in September, and already like magic have done it. It was so far good, interesting, and passionate. The challenges were interesting also. Some days I was very tired because of my busy life and everything around me. But I still kept my hope light on and have a vision for my dream of a better life for my four sweet girls and me.

I am very thankful to have met the Odyssey Program and everybody: the professors, students, and volunteers. I hope to be that good student who achieves my goal and makes the Odyssey Program proud.



I have a vision for my dream of a better life .



I know that I can and will continue my education.



Zataiya Gober I am determined to achieve success. Since Odyssey began, I have noticed that I look forward to coming to class each Wednesday. I have not missed a single class yet despite experiencing some minor setbacks, and some

that were not so minor. But through it all, procrastinating and all, I have managed to juggle a full-time job, being a mother of four, and Odyssey. I can truly say that I feel very fortunate to have been given this opportunity. Going back to school is something that I've wanted to do for a while



Yangchen Lhamo I am a mother of three boys. I am in the ADN nursing program at Madison College, and I also am a part of Odyssey while working 30 hours per week.

This class taught me and showed me that the struggle we go through now will prepare us for success in the future. My contribution towards this class was sharing my story through writing and reflecting on my past life. I recognize struggle as a way of life. I am preparing for future success rather than running away from it.

I would like to be a part of the class for second semester to grow further and build my mindset for growth. I would like to experience different perspectives by reading the works of poets and writers and listening to visiting professors.



I am preparing for future success rather than running away from it.

now. Being a part of Odyssey has solidified that desire for me, and I know that I can and will continue my education. There is an amazing support system here at Odyssey, and I'm grateful to be a part of it.