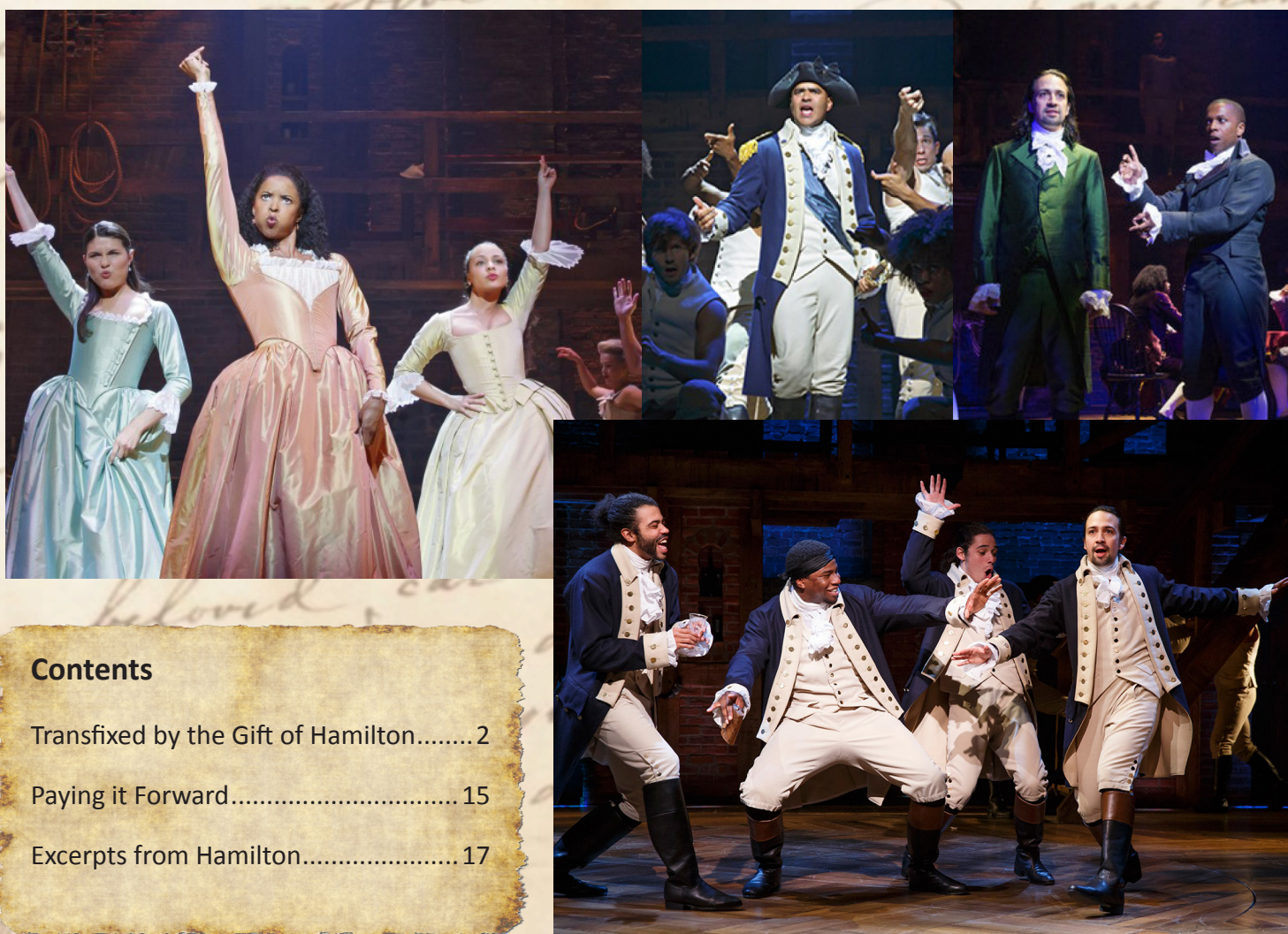


ISSUE 10

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ODYSSEY ORACLE

SPECIAL HAMILTON EDITION



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TRANSFIXED BY THE GIFT OF HAMILTON

Thanks to American Family Insurance for an incredible gift: 30 donated tickets for Odyssey students to attend Hamilton for free! We were so thrilled to share the “hottest tickets in town” with our students and alumni. Demand was great, so we held a contest asking our 450 alumni and 30 new students to submit in writing why they wanted to go. We also asked them to submit photos and reviews describing their experience at the show. Over the holiday break, students who attended Hamilton found ways to give back to the community.

There are many “Odyssey moments” in Hamilton: a reference to Socrates, quoted lines from Shakespeare’s Macbeth, phrases from the Declaration of Independence, and comments about the Federalist Papers. Like Hamilton, Odyssey covers American history through a critical and multicultural lens, conscious of the hypocrisy of founding fathers who espoused liberty for all while owning slaves, yet simultaneously aware of the visionary nature of our country’s democratic ideals. Thanks again to American Family for making it possible for Odyssey students to be “in the room where it happened”—attending Hamilton at the Overture Center and feeling like royalty, though not like King George!



First thing first, I would like to thank Odyssey and American Family for allowing my daughter Neveah and me this opportunity to see *Hamilton*. It must have been a sold-out show because the house was full! We were seated on the balcony where we had a great view of the play. *Hamilton*

was very catchy, so catchy that the person next to me was singing almost word for word. All of the rapping and rhyming kept me interested. *Hamilton* retells a story you heard before but in a different perspective, a very funny, entertaining, upbeat perspective. Most of all, it is art at its best form of expression!

My daughter Neveah, who is in Odyssey Junior, was very excited to get to go to *Hamilton* and tells

me how much she really likes plays. She says it seems like Alexander is in a war that he is trying to get out of. She really enjoyed all of the singing and dancing, and she appreciated all the hard work the actors put in. Neveah is a little scared of heights and our seats were pretty high up there, but she didn’t let that stop her from having a good time. I asked her if she would go to something like this again, and she said she would love to.

(Tina Marie Martinez '20)





I was blown away by how history and hip hop could come together to deliver a spectacular show. It was clever, and the scenery, the lighting, and the sound were well put together. The company did a phenomenal job to providing something for everyone. War, love, history, comedy, and music immersed the crowd from start to finish. For me, this surpassed my expectations and might actually be my favorite next to Phantom of the Opera. King George's powerful entrance into the scene and witty remarks were delivered at just the right time, so theatrically humorous. My son and I loved it!
(Sandra Zintzun '19 with son Juan, Odyssey Junior)

First, I just wanted to say thank you for this opportunity! I couldn't be more grateful than I am now.

The music was the first thing that blew me away. From the beginning with the intros, I was so intrigued by the voices.

I loved how Alexander Hamilton was portrayed as a young man with so much passion towards change. He said, "I will lay down my life if it means we will be free."

Alexander came from humble beginnings, losing his mother and becoming an orphan. He didn't

let his beginning determine who he would end up being. I was inspired by this because life doesn't roll out a red carpet for anyone. We have to make the choice to become someone to be proud of.

It was sad to see that over the years, work became more important to Alexander than family and ultimately caused him to betray his wife. At the same time, I empathized with Alexander because we all make mistakes trying to get to the top.

Once Hamilton met his demise, the people around him could do nothing but respect his hard work and push for a great country. His wife, Eliza, kept up his memory with hard work of her own.

The cast was beautiful and gave a great performance. I left feeling like I have what it takes to make my own journey memorable. I also thought, "What can I do to be remembered?" Thank you all for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. **(Kayasia Blake '19)**



Hamilton was such an amazing musical. My son and I had an incredible time seeing it. The story of Alexander Hamilton was inspirational. Just think: he overcame poverty, his mother's death, the absence of a father, and leaving his home to come to America at such a young age. He worked so passionately to create the liberty and freedom that we now know; it is nothing short of miraculous.

When I ponder his accomplishments and character, I am in awe of his altruism, his honesty and integrity, and his drive to persevere through adversity to achieve a successful campaign against King George and fight for our freedom as well as creating a great nation that could stand on its own.

Beside every great man stands a woman. Eliza chose Alexander for his ideals. I was astonished to learn that she lived for fifty years after his death, seeing him in the eyes of the hundreds of orphans that she helped raise in the first orphanage in our nation that she founded. She suffered and sacrificed so much for this nation, shared her most memorable years of married life and child rearing with her husband's passion to make this country great, often getting less time with him than she deserved.

Together, Eliza and Alexander made a difference in the foundation of our nation. They were a part of each other's narrative. She was a strong, intelligent



woman who loved deeply. He was driven, passionate, and determined to create a new world where people were treated with fairness and justice through the support of a fair government.

I can't begin to express how blessed we felt to be in the audience because we understand that so many could not be. The people who could be served most by this story and could have experienced such an impact are the same people who likely could not access it for reasons of equity:



those of us who struggle to put food on the table and gas in our cars, to keep our homes warm and our bodies clothed. Thank you so much for the generous donation of these tickets. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that my son and I will not soon forget. It sparked a flame inside of us that reminds us that we can do anything we put our minds to. We cannot do that without the support of community members like you. Thank you for helping facilitate a lasting memory for us and a renewed belief in ourselves and what we can achieve in this life. **(Jamie Lovely '14 with son Talen)**



I am so thankful for being given the opportunity to see *Hamilton*. I had anticipated going to see it for a long time, and it was so great to savor the moment and enjoy the entire experience.

I was dropped off at the theatre so as to not have any stress taken away from the experience by having to figure out parking and accumulating any stress on the way in. I was so excited that I asked to take a selfie with one of the ushers! When I got to my seat, I was excited to see Ron, a friend of mine! (I did not know that he was a current Odyssey student.)

The show began. *Hamilton* was magnificent from the beginning to the end! The music, the dancing, and the storytelling blew my mind. I was a child full of wonder that Friday. I left the theatre thinking representation matters A LOT! The story being told by a lens of color meant so much to someone like me. American History never included “me” in a way that was relevant or empowering. American History (my history) never mattered to me from a humanities framework because my part of that history reads inhumane, especially at the hands of white men. I did not previously have an ear to hear the accounts of Washington, Hamilton, Madison, Jefferson . . . I did not previously care . . . but this *Hamilton* play gave the founding fathers souls that I never presumed they possessed because Lin



Manuel was able to tell the story in a language that I could understand, in a way that I would care, in a way that I could see the contributions of the founding fathers, in a way that was relevant to someone like me.

My last thought (out of many) was Maaan! What could it be like if we could expose young people to experiences like this on a regular basis? How much more could they learn if they could hear their relevant language, see themselves, and care enough so that they could not only read about the events, places, and people, but that they may also see and embrace the souls of history? How powerful would that be?

Thank you so much again for the amazing *Hamilton* opportunity. **(Ozanne Anderson '08)**



Clap, clap, clap: a standing ovation for the lyrical genius and musical experience for this amazing show, *Hamilton*. Every waking moment was filled with stage rotations, dance numbers, beautiful voices, and great costumes. Seeing this well-oiled machine of fully colorful cast members made up of both men and women, mostly men of color, can move you from optimism to inspiration. The show almost felt like getting in a time machine taking you back to the history with twists, turns, and rewinds, a journey that keeps you fully engaged and gives you that “can’t take your eyes off the screen” experience.

The crowd stands, and everyone is excited, hands clapping, whistling going forth, and a standing ovation as the show comes to an end. I look around and see that the crowd is dominantly all white. I look at my row. Only three are people of color, and one of them is me. What a stomach-turning moment. After the show I was appreciative, excited, and in high spirits, but I also felt like I was a foreigner in a foreign place who could easily find himself in danger with all the security guards. I took no pictures of my own and jetted out of there as quickly as possible. One would wonder, how much more impactful could this have been for youth of color to see this show or for more people of color to be able to even afford such an experience? Well, if we are invited, will the environment be more inclusive? Will it be done in a way that we can feel more welcomed and safe?

I treated this moment as if it was normal and just walked out of the theater. I had been to other shows in the very same building and didn’t go through this out-of-place feeling. How could I have such a profound experience with genius and, in a moment, shift to a sour, anxious sensation? The importance is for me to see more family, more people that looked like me, in the seats and sharing in these great moments.

(Ron Burford ‘20)

I have to start off by saying that this play was all that I envisioned and more! It exceeded my expectations.

I learned things that I did not know about these characters because they only tell you certain things in high school. I did not know they were such powerful revolutionaries and how involved they were with the changes that were brought about in this country.

I left feeling sad, uplifted, upset, but proud of the things that were accomplished. You would think Alexander Hamilton was the favorite character, but it was his wife, Eliza Hamilton, who stole everyone’s hearts and souls.

There were many Odyssey moments, but one that stood out was when Eliza’s sister Angelica told her that Alexander was like “Icarus.” We learned about Icarus in Odyssey.

I would like the donors to know that this was one of the most amazing experiences that I have ever had, and I am forever grateful for having had this opportunity bestowed upon me. I’m filled with so much gratitude after witnessing such a breathtaking piece of art. Standing ovation!!!

(Catina McAlister ‘11)



I clicked the upload button to submit my last paper of the semester (in my Master's of Social Work program at UW) as I left the house to see *Hamilton*. What an amazing, end-of-the-semester gift to see this acclaimed Broadway hit! As a graduate student who is a low-income single father, I do not get out much.



Seeing *Hamilton* was an awesome experience. As soon as the show started, I was glued to the stage. The captivating performance had an awesome, accurate story line and gave very clear visuals with their clever song choice. I loved how much detail they could pack into the performance with songs so beautifully written to tell the story.

I have always been a visual learner, and seeing this performance helped me to better understand the full story of Alexander Hamilton, not just for his contributions to our country, but on a more personal level, really understanding his marriage and him as a father. Before seeing this, I had never paid so much attention to the smaller details of his life.

I cannot remember the last time that I went to a show, movie, theatre, or any entertainment venue. Seeing *Hamilton* was an immense pleasure. As someone who is deeply passionate about politics, I appreciated the homage to Hamilton as a little-known figure in American history who played a tremendous role in shaping our young new democracy. The racial diversity of the cast and the mashed-up genres of music captivated me. For example, hearing the actors sing or rap and use modern, urban language dusted off the cobwebs of the history portrayed and made the story lines resonate within me.

I loved seeing such a diverse cast! I personally left this show feeling like I could do anything with hard work, dedication, and sacrifice. These are similar life lessons my grandmother (Juanita Wilson, Odyssey '07) always taught me. It doesn't matter how you start or where you start. As long as you always work hard and never stop learning, you can be and have whatever you want. I also learned that no matter how hard you work, never forget to take time for your loved ones. How often do

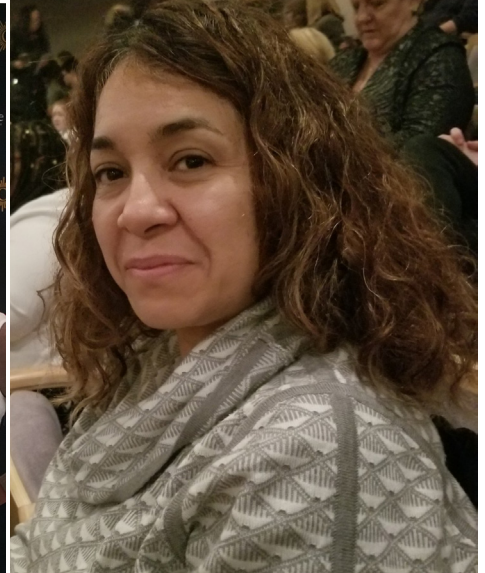
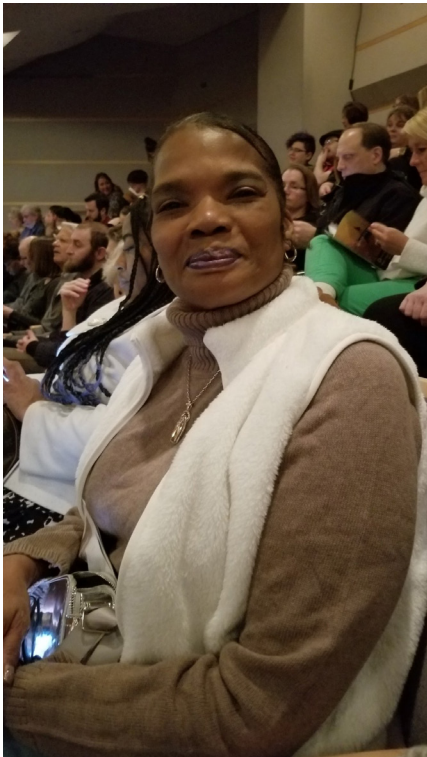
we all get wrapped up in our own lives and distracted from the small moments that have the potential to be intimate memories to have with our family? Once we lose someone, we can never rewind and get time back.

As I sat in the marvelous Overture Center with thousands of others, I marveled hearing others around me talk about how many times that they had seen *Hamilton*. In the past, I would often read with great interest the stories and reviews about the latest Broadway shows. Because of your generosity, I can honestly say that I was able to attend one of the best. Thank you so much to American Family Insurance and the Odyssey Project for this opportunity.

(Brian Benford '07)



I would really like to thank the Odyssey Program and American Family donors for this opportunity. It was truly an experience I will not forget. **(Isis Bernard '14)**



First of all, I want to thank the people of American Family Insurance for making it possible for us as Odyssey students to witness this spectacular show. I loved the

The start of the play sent chills throughout my core. The people leading and performing in a Broadway musical were variations of the skin color brown.

My eyes refused to blink. I did not want to miss the story of Hamilton told through music, R&B, and soul.

This historical moment has elevated my commitment and responsibility to re-write the narrative and not throw away my shot!

Thank you for opening up a new window during my academic journey! **(Char Braxton '06)**

We really had a great time. I thank American Family Insurance for the tickets. It was a wonderful gift that I will treasure forever.

The message, the music, the dance, and the rap: everything was amazing. **(Denise Hardnett '05)**

show because the actors are full of energy. With their wonderful voices, they make their audience feel different emotions. For example, I could feel joy with the arrival of Hamilton's baby and sadness with his death. I felt happiness with Hamilton's wedding but also anger when he betrayed his wife. We could see that she forgives him and feels many other emotions. And what to say about the Overture Center? It is beautiful! I really enjoyed the show. **(Carmen Tinajero)**



First and foremost I would like to say that was one of the best shows I have ever seen. I loved watching the rap battles they would have on stage as well as breaking the third wall and interacting with the



audience. It was truly a marvelous show. I loved the way they took us through Alexander Hamilton's life. I learned more about what made Hamilton, well, Hamilton. I had learned about him at school, and we also touched a little bit on his Federalist papers, but going and seeing this show, I feel like I dived right in and learned so much more in depth about his life and his characteristics as a person. There are so many elements of his life that I didn't know until now.

I also loved that the show provided both sides with a good and proper rationale for what they did. I feel that too often we see one side portrayed as the enemy and the other as the heroes of the story. I felt it was somewhat different in this show. It wasn't so black and white, the south is bad and the north is correct, as so many times it has been illustrated to me. Although I don't agree with many things the south did at that time, we could see that they had a rationale for why they wanted to keep a more limited form of national government and why they had certain policy positions that we still see to this day.

After watching the show, I could not stop thinking about how little I knew about the founding of the nation. I think before I had known the basics of what happened and, of course, I knew about Alexander and the implications and impact he had on the founding, but I knew nowhere near the extent that he did. I feel that a lot of the times we learn something, especially in History, and we say ok, that's that. Those were the events that unfolded and now we are here. To dive in and learn more in depth and have a bigger peek into Alexander's life and the founding of the nation helped me piece everything together a little better and have a deeper understanding of said events.

I would like to let the donors know that this special gift that they have given me has allowed me to watch

and learn something that I otherwise wouldn't have had the opportunity to go to. I would like to express my gratitude. This was a very generous gift, and I had so much fun going and watching *Hamilton* as well as learning more about his life, and for that I thank you. This was such a good show (and their voices were absolutely fantastic), and I had such a good time. **(Yael, Odyssey Junior, with parents Victor '18 and Marisol '17)**

Thank you for all the people who made it possible to go to see the show. It was very nice, and it was my first live musical show. If the show is at least 10% true, I feel only a few people made the decisions about this country. That's why we have many problems unsolved: the people who have the power to make decisions usually decide for their own benefit. That's why we all have to become more involved in politics. **(Victor Rojas '18)**

Hamilton was an awesome performance. The cast was very professional. I was so impressed with the stage but most importantly the ability of the singers to do a show like that.

I went home thinking of politics and the importance of learning more about history. I learned about Alexander Hamilton's life and death, the prints he left with his life, and his courage to fight for what he thought was right.

I had Odyssey moments during the show. Definitely one moment was the gift of education that was given to him by his generous community. They were able to see his talent and help him to get out of poverty, which made it possible for him to become an important person for North American history. Also, I saw the power of words and writing that changed his life and also mine.

I would like the donors to know that without their generous donation, I would not have been able to attend to this show. A performance like this is very important for me because it motivated me to not give up and to keep fighting for what I think is right. I need to keep finding ways to use writing to help my community. Thank you so much.

(Marisol Gonzalez '17)



There are great church functions, awesome concerts, and inspirational plays; nevertheless, there is nothing like a good musical. Lin Manuel Miranda, keep dreaming and don't ever stop writing. What a musical! The story, through poetry, the art of dance, OMG the voices, the music, the lyrics were absolutely phenomenal. Seven stars to this musical! I was blown away. It was excellent, remarkable, and brilliant. What a creation woven into reality: astounding, amazing, magnificent. I am so elated, inspired knowing you can be a nobody and become somebody; you can come out of nowhere and go somewhere. You never know who's going to write your story. This was good, very uplifting, inspirational. "History has its eyes on you." I honor the ten-dollar bill, Alexander Hamilton and his legacy.

This musical was so joyful and delightful, above superior. My favorite part of the show was the song and dance of "The Room Where It Happens"—the signatures, declarations, documents, decrees. I wanna be in the room where it happens. I am still bubbling. I had a wonderful time. Thank you, American Family

Insurance and the UW Madison Odyssey Project.
(Yolanda Cunningham '12)

I think what I got out seeing *Hamilton* first was just the makeup of the stage, and how the moving floor added to the ability of seeing the play as real. It added to the way the actors appeared life-like as they ran across the stage from one scene to another.

To hear hip hop in the form of education, I learned so much about that era that was unknown to me, and hip hop made it clear and emotional.

I also took away with me an understanding of revolution as much different than I had prior to entering the Overture Center. To me, people are still revolting against the lack of freedom, poverty, unemployment, lack of education, homelessness, the economy, racism, sexism, and all the other isms, lack of health care, ignorance, abuse of any kind, and the list goes on. The revolution against these obstacles to life should not end until the world, I mean the world, is rid of them.

Thanks for allowing me to share my thoughts.
(Munroe Whitlock '13)





After being blessed with tickets for the Broadway play *Hamilton*, I left the show with an entire new perception of the music. My kid and I have listened to *Hamilton* almost three to four times a week in my car, and the soundtrack did only so much for me. To actually see the actors performing to the music gave me a better understanding of the storyline. It was amazing. I'd definitely see it again! Seeing the show allowed me to fill in the blanks and gave me a much better understanding. Many people I know had seen the performance without even listening to the music. To be familiar with the music, and to have it performed right before my eyes, was like a foggy day driving with the windows misty, but as soon as I turned on my wipers, I was able to see clearly. The soundtrack was the foggy windows, but the show was my wipers! I can't say thanks to American Family enough! I had a blast!!

(Albert Watson '08)

I attended *Hamilton* this afternoon, December 8th, and it was incredible.

I was first awed by the blending of voices during the first song. As a singer myself, hearing the harmony that was so on point was music to my ears. I was blown away. The microphones captured everyone's voice evenly and perfectly; kudos to Nevin Steinberg (Sound Design).



I was then surprised by the diversity of the cast; the inclusiveness of various cultures gave my heart joy. Throughout the play, I became a little lulled by the slower songs from time to time but then quickly perked up with the faster songs, which gave the play more energy.

My favorite song overall was in the Second Act: The Room Where It Happens. I was glad it was sung a couple of times.

My third favorite actor was Thomas Jefferson, played by Warren Egypt Franklin. I loved the tone of his voice, which was unique and made me smile throughout the second act of the play.

My second favorite actor was King George, played by Neil Haskill. He was like a box of chocolates; I didn't know what to expect. His voice along with the dialogue and movements made his character hilarious.

And my Emmy goes to Roberto Sinha. He was not only the conductor for the ensemble, but he also played the keyboard throughout the entire play. He was flipping the pages of the music, directing, controlling the tempo, and playing the keyboard all at the same time. I found myself watching him

at times when I should have been watching the play. He was impeccable.

Lastly, deep down on the inside I wondered if *Hamilton* was as good as people were saying. Well, that mystery is solved: it is! The hype over *Hamilton* is well deserved.

Thank you to American Family Insurance for donating a gift such as this to the Odyssey Project. If not for your donation, we would not have had such a wonderful experience.

(René Robinson '08)

Thanks, American Family and the UW Odyssey Project, for the opportunity to attend the *Hamilton* Broadway production. There was never a dull moment. We enjoyed this phenomenal show, from the spectacular singing and dancing to the historical narrative with a classical, comical, hilarious hip hop twist. This is one of those shows we could watch again and again. *Hamilton* was just that good. **(Lawana Diagne, with daughter Amari)**



As far as entertainment goes, *Hamilton* was spectacular, incredible; it moved the crowd. The singing, the choreography, the humor, and the acting were impeccable. It was history made entertaining and contemporary, with a twist of hip-hop. The actors, at the risk of being stereotypical, seemed made for their parts. It wasn't the original Broadway cast, but you couldn't tell.

I noticed and wondered why the tickets read "minimum age of attendees 10 years old." Let's just say in the words of Kosmo Kramer (Michael Richards of Seinfeld fame), "they let the expletives fly" e. g. M. F., S__T, etc. "Not that there's anything wrong with it."

As for Alexander Hamilton the man, one of our nation's "Founding Fathers," let's just say "he was complicated." He was a bastard from maternal French and paternal Scottish ancestry, precocious, an orphan, a self-proclaimed revolutionary, educated, semi-bigamist, adulterer, possibly with his sister-in-law and another man's wife, a native New Yorker, a Christian, and a Constitutionalist. He was self-absorbed, arrogant, and narcissistic, a martyr, the founder of the nation's financial system, our first Secretary of the Treasury, and the man whose face is on that \$10 bill in your pocket. I came away with the thought, "This Hamilton was a wild dude, so why didn't we know about this cat before?" Maybe we did: his name was Malcolm X, absent the womanizer element. People seemed to either hate Hamilton or they loved him. When it came to women, let's just say he was prolific. He was close in spirit and loyalty to the nation's first president, George Washington.

Finally, the most mystifying and ironic part of Hamilton's exciting roller coaster ride of a lifetime was his demise and the similar demise of his son, Phillip. His duel with the Vice President Aaron Burr was reminiscent of "I could shoot someone in the middle of 5th Avenue and..." because Burr was never charged with Hamilton's death.

I am so glad I went to see the stage play *Hamilton*!!! **(Muhammad Abdullah '19)**



Seeing the musical *Hamilton* was an incredible experience! Seeing the musical live with all of the wonderful, suave, exuberant, multicultural actors and actresses, together with rap lyrics, was intense!

For me, “Hamilton the Musical” had multiple, vibrant storylines. Almost every scene was played with a fast pace and up-tempo music. The song “World Turned Upside Down” boldly describes the battles and exploits of the revolution and the personal sacrifice and insight it took to create our nation. It felt so realistic, so captivating, that it was like you were with them, making history.

The musical told the stories of how our founding fathers debated, fought, worked, and sacrificed to achieve the American dream, and the strength and perseverance of the women who sacrificed, endured, and thrived while living in the shadows of their husbands. Of course, there is the main character...Hamilton! It seemed as if he could see the future of our country and his death. We were witnesses to his tenacious pursuit to fulfill all of his aspirations before his demise and to leave a lasting legacy, which he did, but his achievements came with high personal costs.

The song “Alexander Hamilton” told the story of Hamilton’s early life. He was poor and a bit of a rogue with swag, who was desperate to achieve his dreams of success and purpose in life. For me, his fervor, his family, and his urgency to fulfill his legacy before his demise took the play to an entirely different level.

I still find myself singing and humming “I’m Not Gonna Throw Away My Shot!” While the song was so relevant to Hamilton’s life, being a poor immigrant in a new world, willing to do whatever he needed to, not just to succeed but to make his contributions to making the United States a better place for all, it feels so very relevant to our lives today in so many ways. It was incredible!

I believe that Hamilton’s theme is inherently true for all of us then and now. We are immigrants,



descendants of immigrants, and Native Americans who are proud people who simply want better lives for ourselves, our families, and our communities.

I believe that at some point in our lives, all of us dream of succeeding, making a difference, and creating and leaving legacies. Those ambitions, like an unquenchable thirst or a seemingly unfathomable hunger, propel us forward because we, too, want to make our mark. At times we are desperate in our search for the meaning of our lives before it’s too late and our lives are over.

For me, the rise, fall, lifelong zeal, and personality of Hamilton and his ongoing relationship and juxtaposition with Aaron Burr tied the entire play together exquisitely and was played out in the scenes from “Your Obedient Servant.”

Hamilton, who started out poor, worked very hard, overcame adversities, and was resolute in his resolve to achieve the American Dream of being successful in all areas of his life. He succeeded and left a lasting legacy for himself, his family, and his country, as told in the last scene with the song “Who Lives, Who Dies, Who Tells Your Story?”

Hamilton was bold, beautiful, powerful, inspiring, uplifting, educational, passionate, melodic, and infused with brilliant colors and newness, befitting today's society and all of our cultures.

It was a very, very special occasion for my daughter Sidney and me to attend this musical together. We will treasure this memory for a very long time. I was so very proud to be able to take her and share this awesome experience with her. Throughout the play, her smile was beaming, and she was bouncing in her seat!

The story of *Hamilton* reminded me of the struggles and achievements of a lot of the students in the Odyssey Program, myself included, and the legacies we want to leave for our children.

I could identify with the feelings and emotions in



every part of the play, and, again, it was amazing! Thank you very much, again. I'd see again and again. **(Bruce Moore '18)**



First, I'd like to say my dad (Bruce Moore) and I want to thank you and American Family donors for allowing me to attend *Hamilton*! Seeing *Hamilton* the musical was absolutely amazing, and it couldn't have been a better experience!

This was a major moment that my dad and I will never forget. It was an amazing daddy-daughter date!

It was the most amazing, beautiful, and breathtaking play I have ever seen in my life. Since I already knew most of the songs, we were singing them the whole time. By the time I left the Overture Center, I felt very lucky that I got the chance to go to *Hamilton* the musical. I learned a lot more about our country's history and the Constitution.

Some of my favorite songs are "Alexander Hamilton," "The Schuyler Sisters," "The World Turned Upside Down," and "You'll Be Back."

Thank you again! **(Sidney, Odyssey Junior)**

PAYING IT FORWARD: AMERICAN FAMILY ENCOURAGES ODYSSEY VOLUNTEERISM

As part of the donation of tickets to “Hamilton,” American Family asked that Odyssey students “pay it forward” by volunteering in the community. The American Family Dreams Foundation notes, “We believe that social impact doesn’t start or end with a check. So we focus on bringing our mission – to inspire, protect and restore dreams – to life in our communities. We do this by combining financial support with volunteerism, creativity and expertise. And that leads to greater accomplishments, collaboration and a better future for all.”

Here are just a few of the ways Odyssey students who saw “Hamilton” volunteered:

I volunteer with Abuse Journals as an online mentor for women’s healing or struggle with domestic violence and abuse. I also volunteered with Odyssey Junior and helped an Odyssey parent with her seven-month-old son while she attended church. I volunteer and work at DAIS (Domestic Abuse Intervention Services). **(Denise Hardnett)**

I believe in volunteering. When I was younger, my grandmother took me to visit the sick and shut-in. We would read scriptures, sing songs, and give encouragement to people. It was very rewarding to see their faces light up! She taught me the value of giving back. Helping others comes naturally for me. Now I love volunteering for Wisconsin Public Television, feeding the homeless, and fundraising for local organizations. I will always give back!
(Char Braxton)



I volunteer for a woman named Katie who created an opportunity for people to bake cakes for people at the YWCA, DAIS and Porchlight. We make them for the women or the children and deliver them. I usually deliver to DAIS because it’s close to my job.
(Catina McAlister)

We collected donations for a food drive for Sun Prairie Sunshine Place. This semester we will volunteer at food concessions at UW athletic events and fish fry for Sun Prairie band boosters, also concessions for Sun Prairie wrestling events. My son Juan has volunteered time at Westside Elementary in Sun Prairie introducing youth to Ultimate Frisbee. **(Sandra Zintzun)**

I volunteered with the Tenant Resource Center. I also volunteered with the Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra’s Music Makers and with the Madison Youth Choir as a parent tour chaperone. I volunteer share rides to Madison bus south transit terminal for Walmart workers in need of transportation. I give rides for the Monona Woods community or people in the Fitchburg area who need transportation to the bus terminal due to the holiday bus schedule changes (buses not running). My daughter Amari also volunteers as a teen helper with Music Makers. **(Lawana Diagne)**

My volunteer work is teaching Spanish for free to my Odyssey classmates. I already did an eight-week series of classes, and I'm just looking for a free space to continue volunteering my time to teach Spanish and Latin culture. I teach Spanish to Odyssey Junior children, too.

(Marisol Gonzalez)

I paid it forward last semester with United Way of Dane County, Champions of Change, packaging baskets for the community at Warner Park and the Mallards stadium. **(Yolanda Cunningham)**



I plan to be a volunteer at the Multicultural Center with the child care section **(Carmen Tinajero)**

In my role as Community Investment Consultant for the American Family Insurance Dreams Foundation, I focus primarily on community relationships, our agency owners, and the Dreams Foundation Grant Program. Partnering with the UW Odyssey Project for “Hamilton” was a natural fit for American Family Insurance. Connecting individuals with the arts and literature to help improve their writing and critical thinking skills in an effort to further their education and find meaningful work resonates with our organization. Increasing access to the arts for those who would otherwise not have an opportunity is just a small step towards equity, but the UW Odyssey Project’s programs remove other obstacles in order to create a multi-generational community of inspired and resilient individuals.

When reading Odyssey students’ reviews of “Hamilton,” I was inspired. Many students reflected on the topics of inclusion, representation, and equity as some of the primary takeaways from their experience. But it also gave me a moment to think about how I can continue to be an authentic partner, both personally and professionally, in advancing those same themes. Experiences like this should not be the exception but the rule in our communities. Specifically, Ron Burford’s review has challenged me to reflect upon how I can create a more inclusive environment that is both welcoming and safe.

The “Hamilton” Oracle is absolutely amazing. The differing perspectives and insight on the experience is a tapestry of something special. Kudos to the Odyssey staff, and the students. Thank you to all who attended and shared their experiences with us!

Noah Salata



EXCERPTS FROM HAMILTON: LOOK FOR ODYSSEY MOMENTS

Hamilton's 'Odyssey' from Adversity to Fame

From "Alexander Hamilton":

Aaron Burr: How does a bastard, orphan, son of a whore and a Scotsman, dropped in the middle of a forgotten spot in the Caribbean by providence, impoverished, in squalor, grow up to be a hero and a scholar?

John Laurens: The ten-dollar founding father without a father got a lot farther by working a lot harder, by being a lot smarter, by being a self-starter . . .

America's Fight against Britain

From "My Shot":

Hamilton: A colony that runs independently. Meanwhile, Britain keeps s****in' on us endlessly. Essentially, they tax us relentlessly, then King George turns around, runs a spending spree. He ain't ever gonna set his descendants free, so there will be a revolution in this century. Enter me! . . . I am just like my country, I'm young, scrappy, and hungry, and I'm not throwing away my shot.

From "You'll Be Back":



King George: You say the price of my love's not a price that you're willing to pay. You cry in your tea which you hurl in the sea when you see me go by. Why so sad? Remember we made an arrangement when you went away, now you're making me mad. Remember, despite our estrangement, I'm your man. You'll be back. Soon you'll see. You'll remember you belong to me. Time will tell. You'll remember that I served you well. Oceans rise, empires fall, we have seen each other through it all, and when push comes to shove, I will send a fully armed battalion to remind you of my love!

Women's Argument for Inclusion in 'Equality'

From "The Schuyler Sisters":

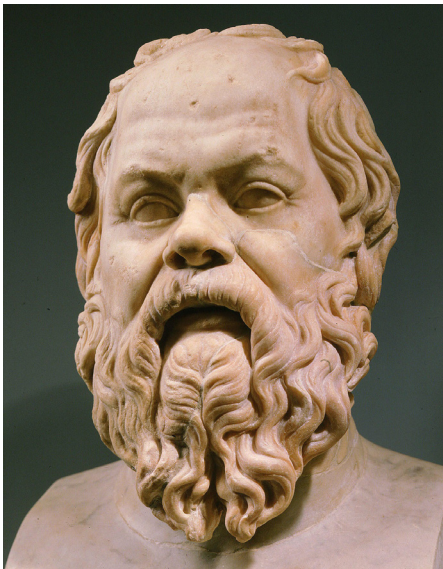
Angelica: I've been reading 'Common Sense' by Thomas Paine. So men say that I'm intense or I'm insane. You want a revolution? I want a revelation. So listen to my declaration: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal.' And when I meet Thomas Jefferson, I'm 'a compel him to include women in the sequel!



The Value of Immigrants

From "The World Turned Upside Down":

Lafayette and Hamilton: Immigrants. We get the job done.



References to Socrates and to the Federalist Papers

From "Non-Stop":

Hamilton: I practiced the law, I practically perfected it. I've seen injustice in the world and I've corrected it. Now for a strong central democracy, if not, then I'll be Socrates, throwing verbal rocks at these mediocrities. . . .

Burr: Who's your client?

Hamilton: The new U.S. Constitution. . . . A series of essays, anonymously published, defending the document to the public. . . .

Burr: Alexander joins forces with James Madison and John Jay to write a series of essays defending the new United States Constitution, entitled the Federalist Papers. The plan was to write a total of 25 essays, the work divided evenly among the three men. In the end, they wrote 85 essays, in the span of six months. John Jay got sick after writing five. James Madison wrote 29. Hamilton wrote the other 51.

. . . How do you write like you're running out of time?



Thomas Jefferson vs. Alexander Hamilton and a Congress Divided

From “Cabinet Battle #1”:

Washington: Ladies and gentlemen, you coulda been anywhere in the world tonight, but you’re here with us in New York City. Are you ready for a cabinet meeting? The issue on the table: Secretary Hamilton’s plan to assume state debt and establish a national bank. Secretary Jefferson, you have the floor.

Jefferson: ‘Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.’ We fought for these ideals; we shouldn’t settle for less. These are wise words, enterprising men quote ‘em. Don’t act surprised, you guys, cuz I wrote ‘em. But Hamilton forgets his plan would have the government assume state debts. Now, place your bets as to who that benefits: the very seat of government where Hamilton sits.

Hamilton: Not true!

Jefferson: Ooh, if the shoe fits, wear it. If New York’s in debt—why should Virginia bear it? Uh! Our debts are paid, I’m afraid. Don’t tax the South cuz we got it made in the shade. In Virginia, we plant seeds in the ground. We create. You just wanna move our money around. This financial plan is an outrageous demand, and it’s too many damned pages for any man to understand. Stand with me in the land of the free and pray to God we never see Hamilton’s candidacy. Look, when Britain taxed our tea, we got frisky. Imagine, what gon’ happen when you try to tax our whisky.

Washington: Thank you, Secretary Jefferson. Secretary Hamilton, your response.

Hamilton: Thomas, that was a real nice declaration. Welcome to the present, we’re running a real nation. Would you like to join us, or stay mellow, Doin’ whatever the hell it is you do in Monticello? If we assume the debts, the union gets a new line of credit, a financial diuretic. How do you not get it? If we’re aggressive and competitive, the union gets a boost. You’d rather give it a sedative? A civics lesson from a slaver. Hey neighbor, your debts are paid cuz you don’t pay for labor. ‘We plant seeds in the



South. We create.’ Yea, keep ranting, we know who’s really doing the planting. And another thing, Mr. Age of Enlightenment. Don’t lecture me about the war, you didn’t fight in it. You think I’m frightened of you, man? We almost died in a trench while you were off getting high with the French. Thomas Jefferson, always hesitant with the President, reticent—there isn’t a plan he doesn’t jettison. Madison, you’re mad as a hatter, son, take your medicine. Damn, you’re in worse shape than the national debt is in, sittin’ there useless as two s****. Hey, turn around, bend over, I’ll show you where my shoe fits.

Washington: Excuse me? Jefferson, Madison, take a walk! . . . Hamilton!

Hamilton: Sir!

Washington: A word.

Madison: You don't have the votes.

Jefferson/Madison: You don't have the votes. You're gonna need congressional approval and you don't have the votes. . . .

Washington: Winning was easy, young man. Governing's harder.

Hamilton: They're being intransigent.

Washington: You have to find a compromise.

Reference to Shakespeare's Macbeth and an Example of the Power of a Comma

From "Take a Break":

Hamilton: My dearest, Angelica, 'Tomorrow and tomorrow creeps in this petty pace from day to day.' I trust you'll understand the reference to another Scottish tragedy without my having to name the play. They think me Macbeth, and ambition is my folly. I'm a polymath, a pain in the ass, a massive pain. Madison is Banquo, Jefferson's Macduff, and Birnam Wood is Congress on its way to Dunsinane. And there you are, an ocean away. Do you have to live an ocean away? . . .

Angelica: My dearest Alexander, You must get through to Jefferson, sit down with him and compromise, don't stop 'til you agree, your fav'rite older sister, Angelia, reminds you there's someone in your corner all the way across the sea.

In a letter I received from you two weeks ago, I noticed a comma in the middle of a phrase. It changed the meaning. Did you intend this? One stroke and you've consumed my waking days. It says 'My dearest Angelica' with a comma after 'dearest,' you've written "My dearest, Angelica." Anyway, all this to say, I'm coming home this summer. . . . and I just can't wait.



Secret Political Deals and Quid Pro Quo

From “The Room Where It Happens”:

Jefferson: Well, I arranged the meeting, I arranged the menu, the venue, the seating.

Burr: But no one else was in the room where it happened. . . . No one really knows how the parties got to yesssss. The pieces that are sacrificed in ev’ry game of chesssss. We just assume that it happens. But no one else is in the room where it happens. Meanwhile Madison is grappling with the fact that not ev’ry issue can be settled by committee. Congress is fighting over where to put the capital. It isn’t pretty. Then Jefferson approaches with a dinner and invite, And Madison responds with Virginian insight:

Madison: Maybe we can solve one problem with another and win a victory for the Southerners, in other words, a quid pro quo. . . .



Factions

From “Washington on your Side”:

Jefferson:

Ev’ry action has its equal, opposite reactions. Thanks to Hamilton, our cab’net’s fractured into factions. Try not to crack under the stress, we’re breaking down like fractions. We smack each other in the press, and we don’t print retractions. I get no satisfaction witnessing his fits of passion. The way he primps and preens and dresses like the pits of fashion. Our poorest citizens, our farmers, live ration to ration as Wall Street robs ‘em blind in search of chips to cash in. This prick is askin’ for someone to bring him to task. Somebody gimme some dirt on this vacuous mass so we can

at last unmask him. I’ll pull the trigger on him, someone load the gun and cock it. While we were all watching, he got Washington in his pocket. . . . This immigrant isn’t somebody we chose. . . .

The Power of Writing

From “Hurricane”:

Hamilton: I wrote my way out of hell. I wrote my way to revolution. I was louder than the crack in the bell. I wrote Eliza love letters until she fell. I wrote about the Constitution and defended it well. And in the face of ignorance and resistance, I wrote financial systems into existence. And when my prayers to God were met with indifference, I picked up a pen, I wrote my own deliverance.

Allusion to Icarus

From “Burn”

Eliza: In clearing your name, you have ruined our lives. Do you know what Angelica said when she read what you’d done? She said, ‘You have married an Icarus. He has flown too close to the sun.’ You and your words, obsessed with your legacy. . . . You forfeit all rights to my heart. . . . I hope that you burn.



Legacy

From “The World Was Wide Enough”:

Hamilton: Legacy. What is a legacy? It’s planting seeds in a garden you never get to see. I wrote some notes at the beginning of a song someone will sing for me. America, you great unfinished symphony, you sent for me. You let me make a difference. A place where even orphan immigrants can leave their fingerprints and rise up. I’m running out of time. I’m running, and my time’s up. . . .

From “Who Lives, Who Dies, Who Tells Your Story?”



Eliza: I put myself back in the narrative. I stop wasting time on tears. I live another fifty years. It’s not enough. . . . I raise funds in D.C. for the Washington Monument. I speak out against slavery. You could have done so much more if you only had time. . . . Can I show you what I’m proudest of? I establish the first private orphanage in New York City. I help to raise hundreds of children. I get to see them growing up. In their eyes, I see you, Alexander. And when my time is up, have I done enough? Will they tell my story?