

APRIL 2023

# ODYSSEY JUNIOR

# ORACLE



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Thanks to the following staff and volunteers of Odyssey Junior:

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Adventurers: Angie Bazan, Leigh Button, Brian Benford ('07)

Interns: Summer Kleppek, Sasha Kryazh, Zawadi Ozulamoi, Jayvon Davis

Volunteers: Mary Wells ('07), Amy Basel, Jerome Flowers, Gloria Heiss, Ella Rogers, Tala Fawwaz Shaibi

Badger Volunteers: Junhyuk Son (Will), Trista Anderson, Jenna Wagner, Megha Brahmbhatt, Anna Ravis, Caley Wilson, Colin Hemme, Tooba Ahmed, Aanika Parikh, Sydney Urben

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# MUSIC LESSONS WITH THE UW MEAD WITTER SCHOOL OF MUSIC

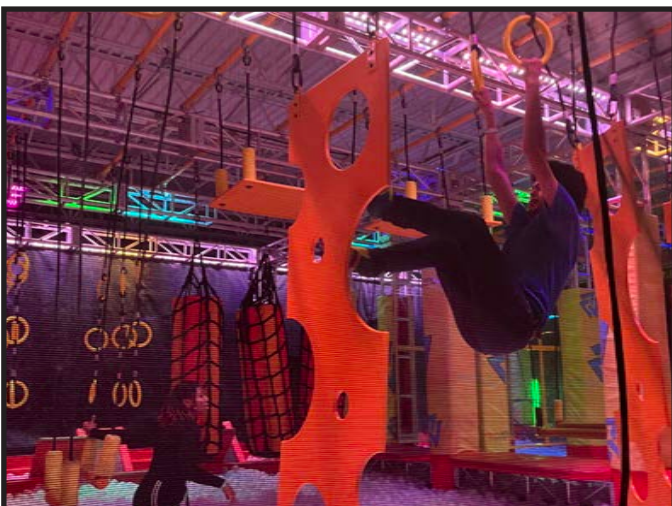
Odyssey Junior has continued music lessons with the UW Mead Witter School of Music on Tuesday nights! Our students have signed up for violin, guitar, piano, tuba, and voice lessons with our wonderful instructors: Karen, Leo, Carrie, Kevin, and Angelos. Music fills the halls of the UW Partnership Space while adults and youth enjoy the drop-in tutoring hours (5-7:30 p.m.) every Tuesday evening. We're also excited that many of our juniors will be headed to the UW Summer Music Clinic, where they will get to expand and perfect their skills over the summer months.





# URBAN AIR TRIP

On March 30th, the Adventurers went on an enrichment field trip to Urban Air. They were able to play laser tag, ride around in gravity-defying bumper cars, and zipline throughout the facility as well as enjoy pizza and snacks together throughout the night. Lead teacher Angie heard a lot of “This is the best field trip ever” and “Why don’t we do this all the time?” from our teens.





# DRUM POWER WITH YOREL LASHLEY

On February 15th, the Explorers welcomed guest Yorel Lashley, founder of Drum Power. Drum Power is a drum and dance experience for young people where they are actively encouraged to develop valuable social-emotional skills through the exploration of African cultural traditions. The Explorers' drum circle let every student lead the beat while experimenting with different drumming techniques. Many students will continue their learning this July at Drum Power Summer Camp!





# MADISON CIRCUS SPACE COMES TO VISIT

*Our partners at the Madison Circus Space came to visit our juniors on March 15th. The Explorers and Adventurers got a chance to learn how to juggle, yo-yo, hula hoop, and try new tricks with our talented, acrobatic guests!*

*Some words from Explorers on the Circus visit:*

The most fun part was the circus, and I liked the hula hoops. **(Emily)**

The thing I had the most fun with was the Diablo at the circus. It is like a yo-yo and then you use a string to make rotations and you can throw it up and catch it if you want. **(Fabian)**

My favorite part was probably el diablo. **(Irie)**



I liked balancing the trash bags. **(Kai)**

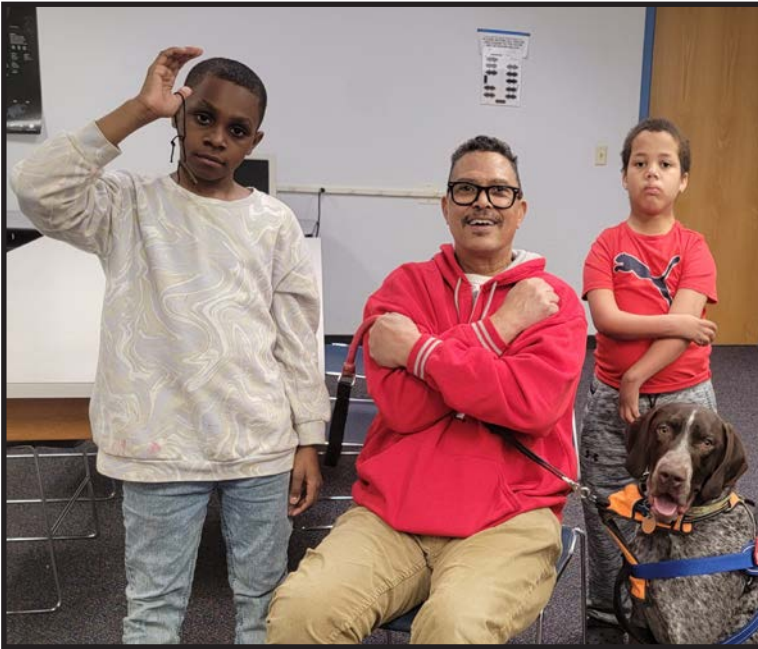




My favorite was the hula hoops and throwing them into each other and catching them. **(Lexi)**

My favorite part was racing with Duke. **(Princeton)**

I liked the hula hoops. **(Rylan)**



I liked ping pong and I liked the water. I liked el diablo, but I could not catch it sometimes. **(X'Zayvion)**

The most fun part was when we did the circle and the hula hoops! **(Emprizz)**

The most fun part was doing the hula hoops! **(Zaria)**





# ART COLLAB WITH TERRENCE ADEYANJU AND CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

Through April 25th, we continued our art collab for juniors with Cultural Connections during drop-in tutoring every Tuesday evening! Our guest artist, Terrence Adeyanju, is an artist impacted by incarceration (and brother of an Odyssey graduate) who is passionate about working with kids and believes in using art to become the best version of ourselves. We also took this opportunity to channel our students' creative talent into making our new Odyssey Junior T-shirt!





## BABY BADGERS

The Baby Badgers have made a lot of group art projects this semester, including a dot art rainbow, a big roll-up poster of paint and stickers, and even some scrap-paper crafts!





**OVERHEARD IN BABY BADGERS:**

“She’s a baby!” Pointing to Ocean. **(Priya)**



Our littlest Baby Badger is not so little anymore! She is walking around the classroom and even tries to jump on the trampoline. **(Ocean)**



“Ocean! Sister!” Dream has shown Ocean how to hug. **(Dream)**

“I’m going to do your hair and make it pretty.”  
Playing with Miss Ellie’s hair. **(Dream)**



“Can we read this one?” He loves to look at books, especially ones about Pete the Cat. **(Dynast)**





“Get me, get me!” He loves playing chase in the movement room. **(Ramzi)**

“Mmmmm.” He really enjoys blueberry muffins. **(Bear)**



“Baby? Bottle, too.” She is so kind, she shared a baby doll and bottle with Priya! **(Keziah)**





“Roar!” She loves to take rides on our big stuffed tiger. **(Narai)**

“Yellow?” She always wants to talk about colors! **(Riyah)**



“Mico!” Our bilingual Baby Badger, she likes pointing to animal stickers and naming them in Spanish. **(Luna)**





# SCOUTS

## ***YOU MATTER, LITERALLY ARTS APRIL VISIT***

On April 5th Scouts explored a brand-new book called *You Matter* by award winning illustrator and author Christian Robinson. In his own words, Mr. Robinson said: “Creativity allowed me to be in charge, to make my own rules, and create my own little world on paper. We didn’t have a lot growing up, but I at least always had a pencil, paper. I couldn’t control the circumstances around me, but I could at least, you know, decide what I wanted on that piece of paper, what sort of world I wanted to create.”



The Scouts created their own self portrait in response to the book. Each child chose their own face outline from different skin tones of construction paper. Then, they assembled their own face on the outline by choosing from various eyes, noses, mouths, and ears. The Scouts especially enjoyed designing their own hair styles from a variety of paper strips provided for the project.





For the music activity, the Scouts learned a jump rope chant based on some of the phrases from the book. Mr. Robinson wrote the book, in his own words, "for anyone who isn't sure if they matter," so the jump rope chant starts out with those words. The Scouts did a fantastic job learning the chant. They also accompanied themselves while reciting the chant by playing percussion frogs. Here is our jump rope chant:



For anyone who isn't sure if they matter,  
For anyone who isn't sure if they matter,  
You do, yes you do! You do, yes you do!  
I do, yes I do! I do, yes I do!  
You matter, I matter, every one of us matters!  
You matter, I matter, every one of us matters!





**OVERHEARD IN SCOUTS:**

I like pepperonis on my burger. My mom put recipes in there. **(Aiyanna)**

I wanna do it by my own self. **(Aiyanna)**

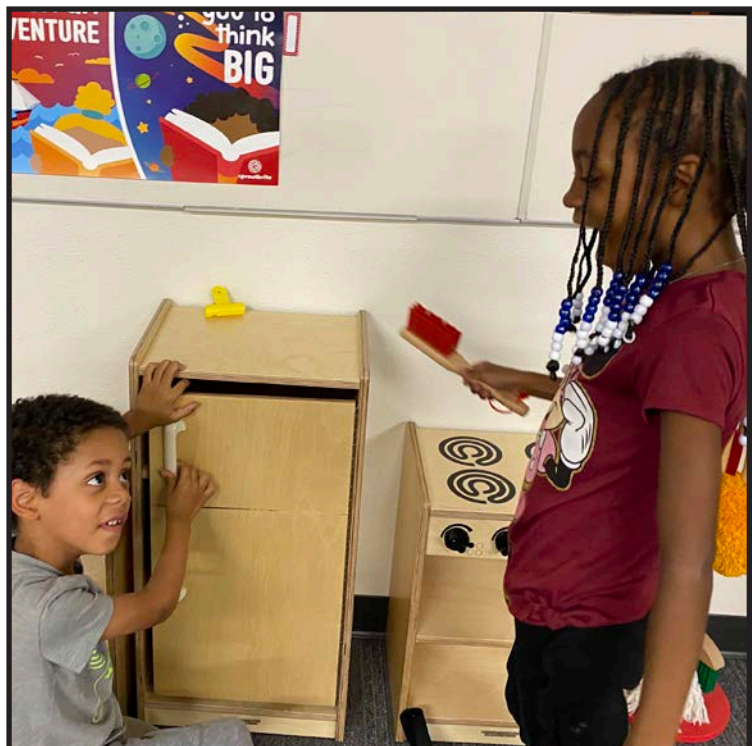


These are my eye colors because I like them. **(Majesty)**

I want French fry hair. **(Majesty)**

I'm the biggest dinosaur. THE KING!!  
**(Rexley)**

Nobody wants to see that. **(Zola)**





# EXPLORERS

## STOP-MOTION ANIMATION PROJECT

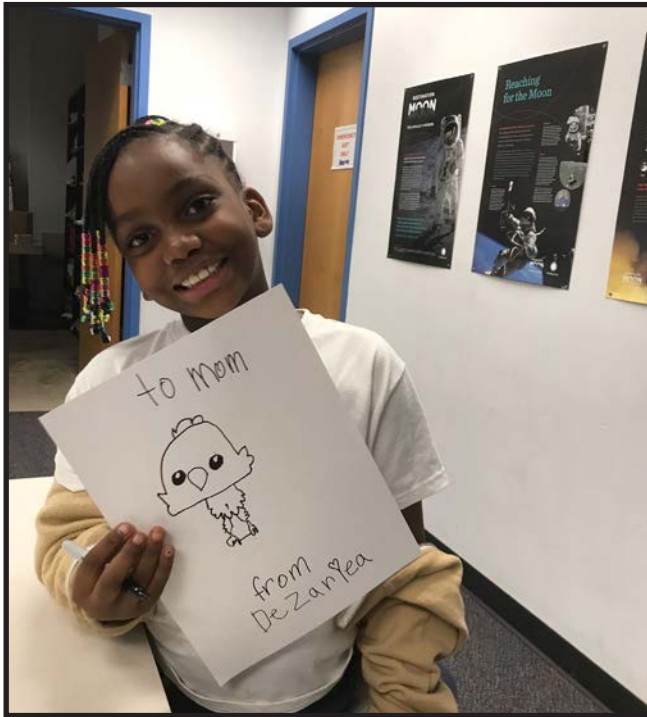
Nate Clark from Madison's Central Library visited the Explorers for two weeks in March to develop their own stop-motion animation videos. The theme was dreams and students stretched their creativity to amaze and entertain. The culmination of the project was a surprise movie-viewing party with popcorn and treats, which students loved.





## WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT ODYSSEY?

I like the food, my friends, and Mr. Ron. And all the teachers! I liked it when Mr. Ron read a book to me. **(Cielo)**



I like Odyssey because the teachers are nice! I like that we get to do fun projects. My favorite project is the one that we are doing right now (self-portrait). **(De'Zaria)**



I like how there are a ton of different projects that we do. I like all the art projects and all the people, and I like all the teachers! Oh! And I like myself. **(Emily)**

Odyssey is great! My favorite part was the animation class. I liked drawing the things, and then I put my hand in, and I did not know you could put your hand in! And then I made a recording and said something. **(Emprizz)**





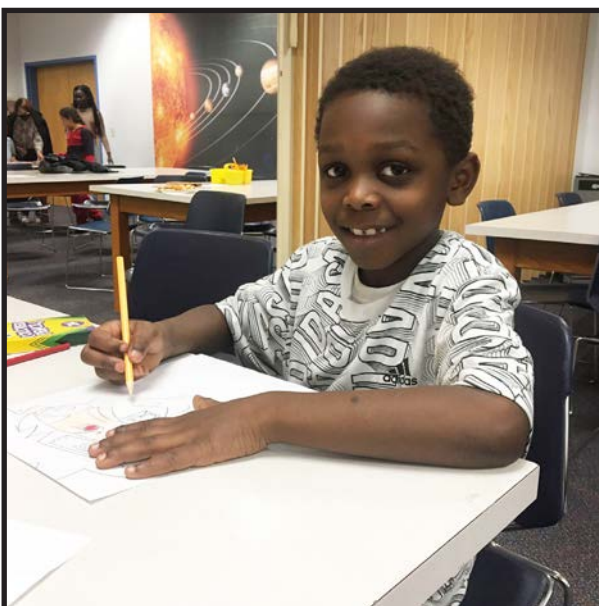
I like the free food! I like playing games at Odyssey. I liked the ping pong game! I want to play with soda next time.

**(Fabian)**



I like the games and probably the things you can do, like reading books and when they read books it's kind of like they're teaching you something but not really. I like reading to the dogs. My favorite game was sharks and minnows. **(Irie)**

I like a lot about Odyssey! But mainly the activities. My favorite was the animation class. I made a Pokemon journey! That's all I'm saying. **(Kai)**



My favorite part of Odyssey is the games. I liked the game where we jumped over the jump rope. Yeah! It was fun. **(Legend)**



I like that you can go here after school and make friends. I like this activity (self-portrait art project), and the circus. I liked that we got to use all the different types of tools!  
**(Lexi)**



Odyssey has good games, and if you're done with all your work you can play soccer! In the evening when you come for dinner you can talk with your friends. **(Omarion)**

My favorite part of Odyssey is the art projects. I liked them all. They're fun and I like art. **(Princeton)**



I like the games. I liked the musical chairs that we just played. I also like the food! **(RJ)**



It's super fun! I liked it when we did those moving videos. I also like Duke! **(Rylan)**



I like Odyssey because it's fun! My favorite part was when we went to the circus. It was really beautiful and I learned new things. **(Zaria)**

I like the games at Odyssey. I liked the ping pong game. **(X'Zayvion)**



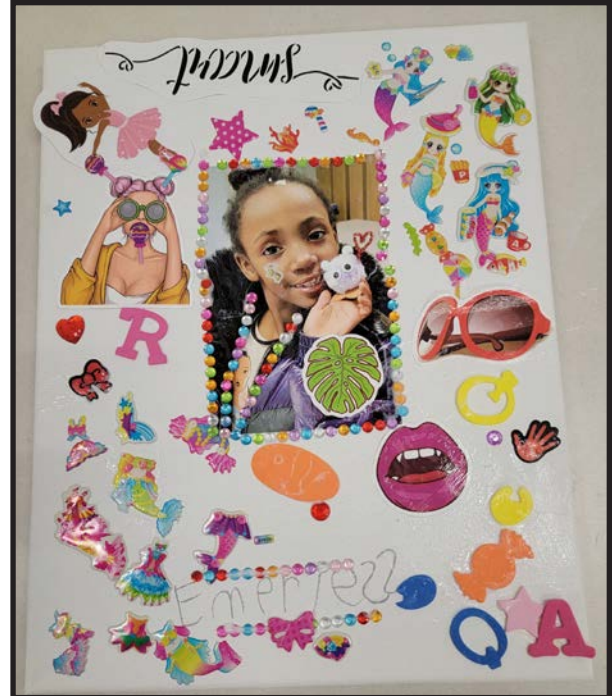


## EXPLORER ART PROJECTS

I'm putting a black little girl in a tiara and a ballerina dress because I used to be a ballerina and it reminds me of me! And I also put life is good because my life is going good! And I also put a soccer ball because I like soccer. I wanted to put a basketball because I play basketball too, but I couldn't find anything! And I put macaroons because I love macaroons. And then I have vibes in a peanut butter jar because I love peanut butter! I put a camera because I love taking pictures, and De'Zariea gave me "Just swing it" 'cause I swing it! And I put a pig because they're so cute. And I put princess because my mom calls me princess! And I put French fries because I LOVE French fries. And I start each day with a grateful heart. I took it from Mr. Ron but it's okay because he's okay with that. And under my picture it says dream because just dream! **(Cielo)**



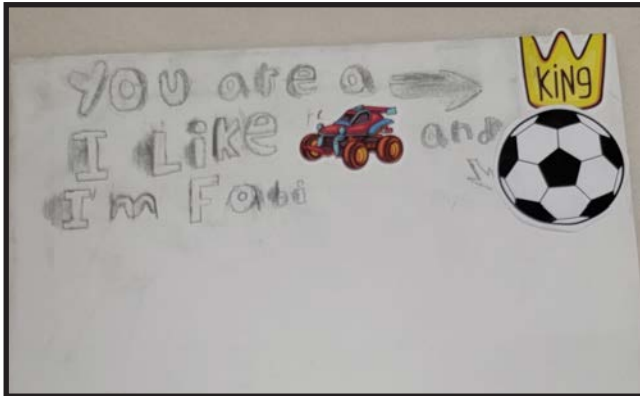
Look, I put a bow on the mermaid! I like all kinds of gems around and like a headband. And I wrote my name and I'm going to put this like a tattoo because I'm smart like the sticker! So my mom can see it and I can trick my mom that I got a tattoo hee hee. **(Emprizz)**



I like it because I'm cool, I'm powerful,  
I love my family, and I'm just peachy!  
**(De'Zariae)**



My art project is how I describe myself and how I see myself and all the good things about me! I am awesome, I am beautiful, I am cosmic, I am cool, I am Mexican, I like coffee, and I enjoy the little things! **(Emily)**



It's going good! I'm just doing bubble letters and shades. **(Fabian)**

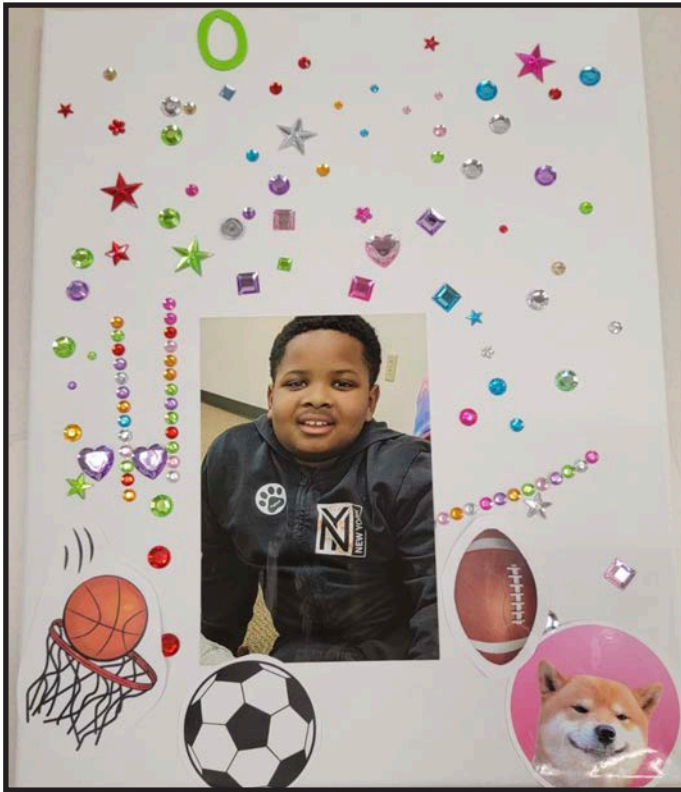
My art project has a lot of books and really cool artifacts and basically, like, sculptures. I really like seeing the world and all the mountains and I thought it was really cool. All I can say is that I'm not a nerd, but I put a New York sticker on my art project because it reminds me of my sister. **(Irie)**



I'm putting anything on my art project! I put a Wooper pokemon on my art project. **(Kai)**



I picked the galaxy and “go west” and a rubix cube and planes and peace signs and basketball because I like basketball. I picked them just ‘cause. They’re cool. I am kind and I like basketball. **(Legend)**



There are these other things that I did and I'm adding some pictures. I put soccer and basketball and football because I like sports. **(Omarion)**

I put that I'm awesome, cool, and creative. I describe myself as energetic and happy. **(Lexi)**

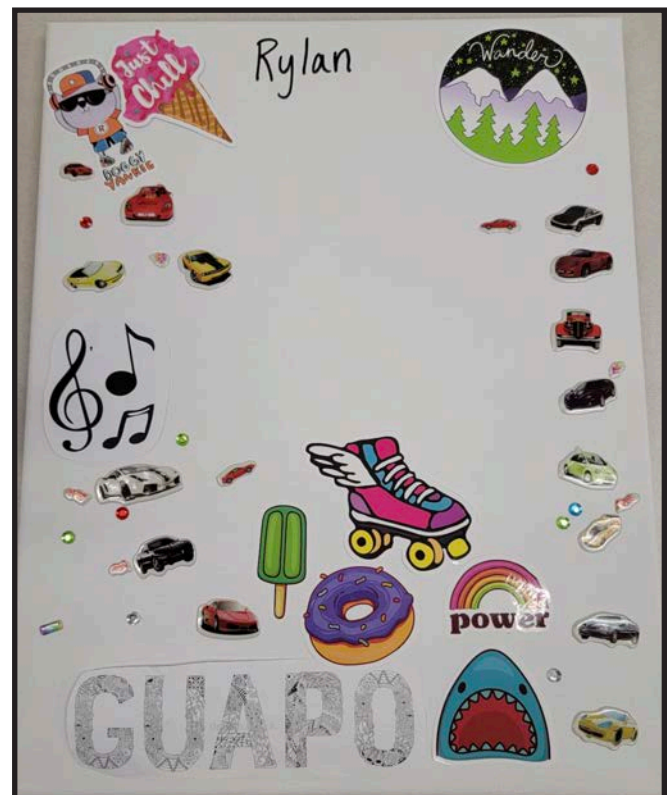
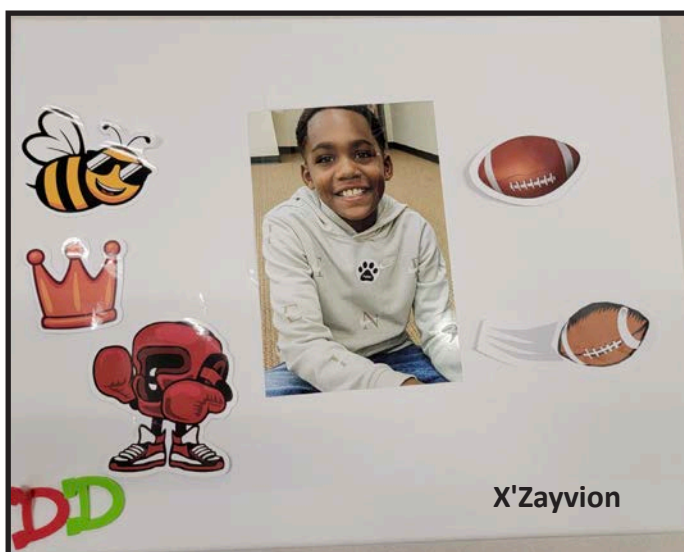
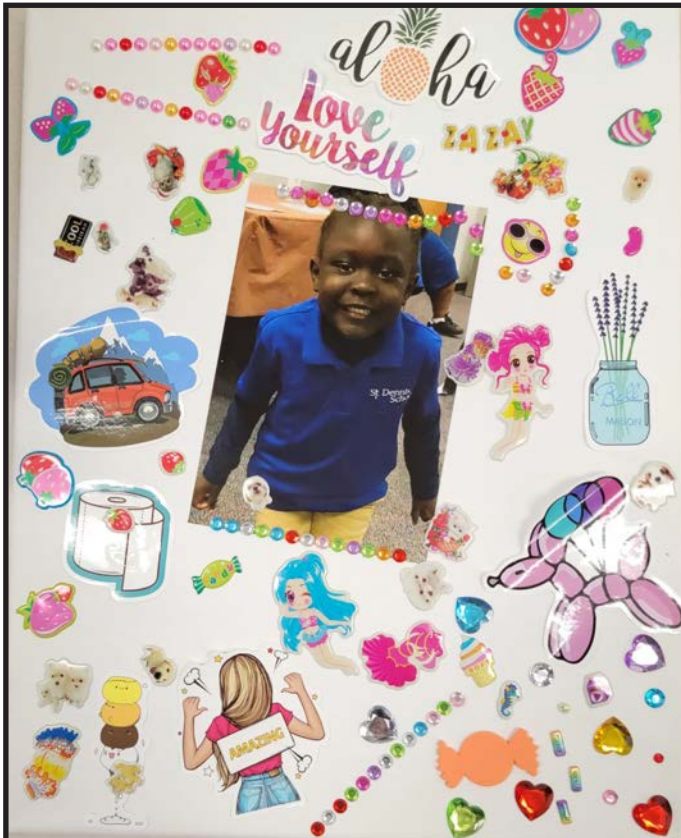




I put the Mexico flag because my uncle is Mexican so I have just a little of Mexican in me. I put travelling stickers because I like to travel. I like to go to LA, Texas, Chicago, Milwaukee... and Florida! Sometimes I be going to New York but now I don't. Be happy! I like being happy. (RJ)



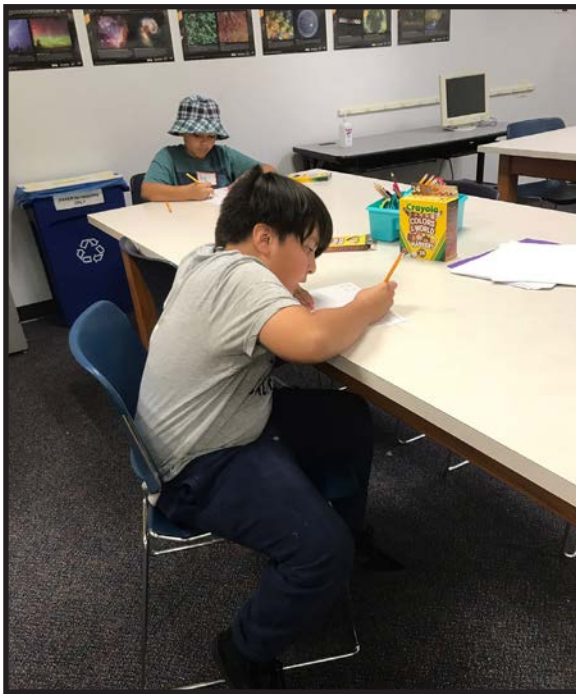
Doesn't mine look cute? So I like it because I like animals, outer space, and I love Odyssey! (Zaria)





**FABIAN'S POETRY SUBMISSION TO MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY'S WE READ CONTEST:**

Mountain where snow is on the top  
Open the window  
Vibe in the air  
Igloo of mountain snow  
Now relax  
Go to the mountain



Forward you go  
Open the door to smell the air  
Right for all the  
World  
All of us go  
Right and left  
Down and up

The world is great  
Over the world we go  
Growing like a plant  
Earth is big  
The world is great  
Here we go  
Everywhere you go is great  
Right now is great





# ADVENTURERS

## THE POWER OF MUSIC

*Choose a song that speaks to you—What is it about that song that you connect with?*

2Pac – Changes. It talks about slavery and how people are treated different because of their skin, and the challenges you face for being black. **(Quone)**



I like Cocaine Woman by Lucki because it speaks about having an attachment to someone who is toxic. Music has impacted me in ways that make me a person. **(Eli)**



Camelot by NLE Choppa because he is talking about how people hatin'. **(Zion)**





Amor de Siempre by Cuco. When I first listened to this song, it brought back memories from the past and the lyrics were connected to my life. I still listen to it nowadays. **(Israel)**



Violent Crimes – Kanye and Shut Up My Mom’s Calling – Hotel Ugly. I just like the tune. Violent Crimes tells about men being savages and monsters. **(Talaya)**

Snowchild – The Weeknd. The song is about the singer’s life before the fame and money, and how he still valued it. **(Yahmor)**





*Choose a song that sends a message—What is the message? How do you know? How successful has this message been in bringing about change?*

Childish Gambino – This Is America. It’s about the violence and how people don’t pay attention to it. They’re too busy on social media to pay attention to others. **(Alex)**



Passenger – Let Her Go: “You only heed the light when it’s burning low, only miss the sun when it starts to snow.” I think this song has some meaningful lyrics. He’s saying sometimes you don’t know what you have until it’s gone. **(Asia)**

NBA YoungBoy – Graffiti. The messages that are shown show how you come from the bottom to the top. **(Quone)**



Count On Me because it’s about being loyal to your friends. **(Zion)**

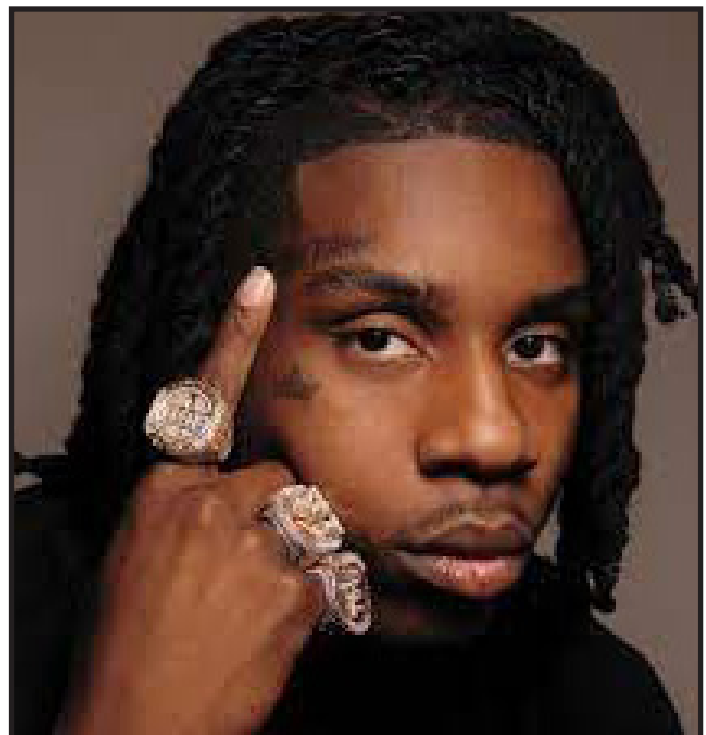


24 Songs by Carti. It's a song about learning about life on your own and explaining that the singer has been alone all his life. An example in the lyrics is "I fell on my face, I got up on my own." **(Eli)**



Melanie Martinez — Dollhouse. The message is about how people or families act different in public than in private: "Look at my mom, she's got it going on, you're blinded by her jewelry, when you turn your back, she pulls out a flask and forgets his infidelity." **(Yahmor)**

Polo G — Wishing for a Hero. The song talks about black people and police brutality. **(Michael)**





*What is the power of music? How does it get that power, and can it ever change/be taken away?*

You give power to music by listening to it. Some music gives a message. You can take power away by avoiding it or not listening. **(Alex)**

It can have actual meaning and describe someone's feelings. It gets that "power" when somebody can deeply relate to that song, and I don't think it can be changed. **(Eli)**



Music has a lot of feelings that can get to you. It really gets to you if you listen closely to the lyrics or instruments. I think that it can't be taken away. **(Israel)**

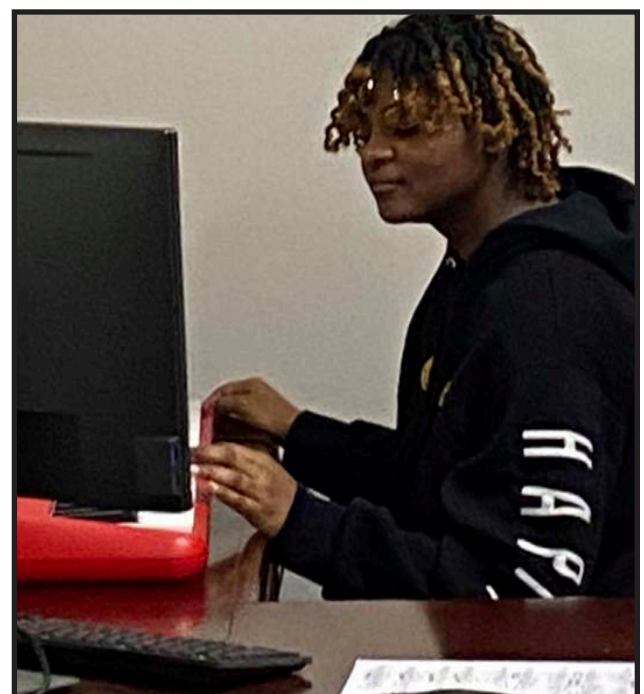
"It has the power to emotionally, morally, and culturally affect society"

– savethemusic.org. **(Asia)**

Music can be changed if your perspective of things changes. **(Talaya)**

Music can make people feel many things. **(Yahmor)**

Music comes in many forms, and it has the power to connect to a person. As long as people keep listening to that song, it can't be taken away. **(Michael)**





## ODYSSEY FINAL REFLECTION

*At the beginning of the program, we defined Odyssey as being “a journey.” What has your journey in Odyssey been like? What have you learned? Have you, your thoughts, or your goals changed?*

I liked listening to one of our guests, the realtor. It surprised me—The difference in numbers related to buying houses. **(Alex)**

Nothing. Nothing changed. **(Talaya)**



I think Odyssey is fun and I’ve been able to communicate with more people that I had never talked to before. I’ve learned about some things that I didn’t know about, like news. I find it helpful to talk about things I don’t hear anywhere else much. **(Asia)**

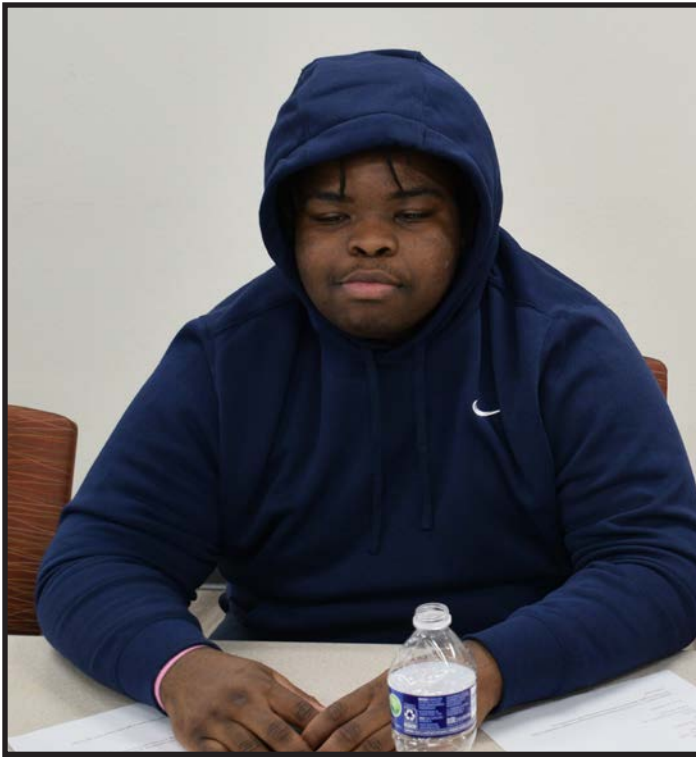
My socializing skills got better. **(Israel)**

I know I learned a lot but I don’t really remember what I have learned (sorry). **(Eli)**





I have learned about social justice, and I have accomplished most of my goals. **(Symone)**



Taught me more about life. **(Quone)**

My journey has been really fun. At first I wasn't sure if Odyssey was for me, but now I feel like one big family. **(Yahmor)**

I have matured and been more involved. **(Michael)**

I have learned a ton about social justice. **(Zion)**





*What is your favorite memory from Odyssey?*

Going to Urban Air! I really liked playing laser tag with some of my classmates. **(Alex)**

Urban Air field trip. **(Talaya)**

Maybe trips. **(Asia)**

Urban Air. **(Israel)**

Field trips. **(Eli)**

Going to Urban Air. **(Symone)**



When me and Zion raced and I beat him. **(Michael)**

Michael. **(Zion)**

More description of quality between whites and blacks. **(Quone)**

All of them. I've never had a bad day at Odyssey. **(Yahmor)**





*What would you tell next year's students about Odyssey?*

Be enthusiastic! **(Alex)**

To ask for more field trips. **(Talaya)**

To be prepared. At first, I had no idea what this place was, and also didn't know I'd be coming every week. **(Asia)**

It's cool, be yourself and have fun. **(Israel)**



Be open! Be yourself! Make friends! **(Yahmor)**

Do work and eat all the food. **(Michael)**

To get off phones. **(Zion)**

Come and learn. **(Quone)**



It's a fun experience and enjoy because it goes by fast. **(Eli)**

That it's educational and fun. **(Symone)**





*Any kudos or thank yous you would like to give?*

Thank you to Angie and Leigh for teaching us. **(Alex)**

I would like to give a thanks to Angie and Miss Leigh. **(Talaya)**

Thanks for the journey. **(Israel)**

Thanks for the free food and giving me this opportunity. **(Eli)**



Thanks to all the staff and Bri. **(Symone)**

Kudos to Jay, he does a lot. **(Yahmor)**

Myself, Zion. **(Michael)**

Michael, Yahmor, Miguel, myself, Andy, Chris, and Juan. **(Zion)**

Thanks for helping every time I need it. **(Quone)**





## ALL STORIES

*Arts & Literature Laboratory was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities grant for a project called ALL Stories. ALL Stories brought experienced poet Sasha Debevec-McKenney to Odyssey to share her expertise in writing and storytelling as well as assist and encourage our teens in crafting and publishing their own stories and histories. Our Adventurers learned from the author about their own unique genre and style. Through study and creation, ALL Stories aims to lift up, expand, and celebrate the stories of our nation.*

*How did your story begin?*

I was born in Madison, Wisconsin. My parents immigrated here from Mexico, and I was named after my grandpa.

**(Andy)**

I was born in Madison, Wisconsin. My parents immigrated to the U.S. from Mexico. **(Juan)**

Ethnically and culturally, I am Mexican. Both of my parents immigrated to the USA when they met and started our family. **(Chris)**



I was born in Madison, Wisconsin, but my parents are from South Sudan. My name means heavenly, or a place of eternal happiness. **(Zion)**

I was born in Wisconsin, and I was named Antanasia (which a lot of people get wrong) and all of my siblings have names that rhyme, but mine is the only one that doesn't rhyme. There's really not too much I know about my family history. **(Asia)**







I was born in Madison, WI on April 27th, 2011.  
**(Miguel)**

I was born in Sacramento, California. My dad named me after the Hebrew translation of "God's love." He died when I was two.  
**(Yahmor)**



I was named after a soccer player who is very famous. We still talk about him, me and Dad, and he inspires me. **(Zinedine)**



I was born in Wisconsin and I was named after my grandfather. **(Alex)**

Mi mama and mi papa, my parents, named me after a Bible verse. It's special to them and for me. **(Israel)**

I was born in a hospital in Madison, Wisconsin. The story behind my name is my father chose it because he liked it. **(Eli)**





*What is your story? What has happened to you so far in your life that you want to highlight? A challenge? A surprise? A change?*

A challenge or change in my life so far is high school because it is new. **(Andy)**



I play basketball. I've sort of dedicated a whole lot to it. I started when I was two years old and just fell in love with the game. I really want to make it to the NBA. It's the one career I think is right for me. I don't even care about the money you get paid, even though it's nice! I just want to play among the best in the world and travel the country doing what I love. **(Zion)**

I broke my shoulder while wrestling. I thought wrestling was over forever, but like a boomerang, I came back. **(Zinedine)**

I think something that has happened to me recently was getting really good grades in school and really achieving stuff in the classes I used to struggle the most in. **(Eli)**

I play soccer and this past year my high school team won the state championship. It was hard and took tons of work. **(Juan)**



I bench 135. **(Chris)**

I went to Mexico. It's a new and important moment in my life. The first thing I learned was that in Mexico, there are colonies. I had not been in Mexico, so I hopped in a plane without my parents and went there. **(Alex)**

I have competed in the spelling bee. **(Michael)**

After my dad died, my mom went into a deep depression, but after she looked at me, she knew she had to keep going for me and for my dad. She managed to raise me successfully, but I wish he didn't die. Being a single mother is hard. **(Yahmor)**

I got invited into AVID and I don't know if I've been accepted yet, but I'm proud of myself for being considered. I think if I got into AVID it would be a great opportunity for me to pick new skills and grow old ones further. **(Symone)**



*What makes your story unique?*

I play an instrument—Bass. **(Andy)**

I don't like onions. **(Miguel)**

Even when I knew my shoulder broke, I still wrestled for the rest of the round I was in, and I didn't quit until he or I won. **(Zinedine)**

Living life and getting through the day.  
**(Israel)**

I have low self-esteem and I'm lazy. **(Eli)**



My story is pretty similar to others, so I don't know. **(Yahmor)**

I got an Xbox with my own money. **(Michael)**

Not everyone got invited to AVID, so I think I'm very lucky. **(Symone)**



My story is unique because my soccer team beat everybody, and we were the best.  
**(Juan)**

I visited my mother's hometown in rural Mexico. **(Chris)**





*What part of your story are you most proud of?*

I am bilingual. I can speak Spanish and English. I can talk to Latinos and Americans, so I see and think in two different cultures. **(Andy)**

I'm proud of my parents for raising such an amazing son. My dream team would be the Golden State Warriors. **(Zion)**

Making it to high school alive. **(Asia)**

I never quit till the end. With everything I do. Like my mother said: "I didn't raise a quitter." Me and my brother don't quit, even when we know we can't go on. We prove to ourselves that we can maybe finish. **(Zinedine)**

I'm proud of the amount of work my soccer team put in to win. **(Juan)**

Buying my Xbox. **(Michael)**

I'm most proud of the middle. **(Yahmor)**



*How does Odyssey influence or fit into your story?*

Odyssey gives me a different perspective about other people and their stories. **(Andy)**

I'm not sure. I guess it's like it's part of another story. **(Asia)**

Odyssey gave me home with the gift cards. **(Michael)**

I don't think it does at all. **(Yahmor)**



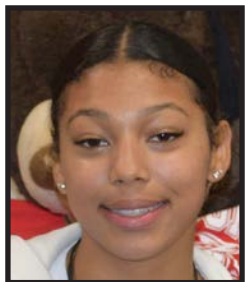
## COLLEGE CORNER

*On March 21st, Odyssey Junior hosted a college workshop on Financial Aid literacy and wellness. We had guests from UW Madison, Madison College, and East High School come to guide our students toward understanding their financial aid packages and highlight what the pathway toward paying for college looks like. Our speakers also presented on scholarship opportunities, FAFSA, and federal student grants.*

*What did you think of the College Workshop?*



It was really helpful and helped me make a decision for next year—I'm going to MATC to study culinary arts. I was originally going to go straight to Texas for culinary school, but learning about scholarships and financial aid helped me decide to stay more local. If I do it here, it's basically free. That way if I decide to transfer to school in Texas, I'll be able to save money and already have a lot of experience. **(Jayvon)**



It was really good—I signed up for a bunch of scholarships after that. It made me more aware of my FAFSA, like I knew what I was doing, but I didn't know how much they award you. I didn't even know it came with a letter. After that I went back and had way more clarity, especially because FAFSA can be so confusing. **(Alejandra)**

*What are your plans for the summer?*

I'll definitely be getting a summer job somewhere—Not sure where yet, but most likely in food service for the experience. I'm planning on going to a culinary college, and I kind of want more experience in the industry. **(Jayvon)**

I will be working at MSCR this summer as an Assistant Director. I already have experience with the organization from working with them last summer, but it looks like this year I'll be more of a behavior support teacher—It's Pre-K to fifth grade. The director mentioned that he'd like me to be his eyes and ears, which sounds like a big responsibility. I'd also like to travel to Texas this summer since I have family there. **(Alejandra)**



I was thinking of getting a summer job, maybe at a fast-food place or just anywhere, really, I'm not picky. I mean, money is always a good thing, but another thing is that I recently volunteered at Culver's through my school, where we bring our orders to people's cars. So I thought, hey, if I can do this as a volunteer, I might as well try working here. **(Zawadi)**

*A few of our students and alumni will be heading to college this upcoming year, and each of our seniors will receive a laptop and a \$1,000 scholarship voucher from Odyssey to be used at the institution of their choosing. We hope they head into their journey informed and ready for whatever comes next!*

*In the fall, where will you be headed?*

I'm heading to MATC, they have a culinary arts program. I was originally going to culinary school in Texas, but I realized it's a lot cheaper to go to school here, and MATC has a really good program. It's also still close to home, but I can have my own space to do my own thing. I realized also that if I want to go transfer somewhere else, like if I complete a program here, I can always choose to go to Texas later. **(Jayvon)**



I want to go to MATC and do their phlebotomy program. I filled out my FAFSA and everything and spoke with my counselor. MATC wasn't originally in my plans, I had a big list of schools, but my counselor told me that it was really important that I know for sure what I want to do before I make a decision. **(Alejandra)**

*What made you choose your major, or the area you're interested in studying?*

In middle school, we were talking about things we wanted to do for college—And I remember thinking that's like, so far away, I didn't even know what I wanted to do. But I thought about it, I was looking around and there are so many things to choose from, but, well, I have to have a job that pays a lot of money but is also one that I actually really like. So, what if I chose something that didn't feel like a job because I actually really like it? So, I really like cooking. And there are so many chefs that are successful and passionate, who enjoy their jobs also, and I think I'm going to aim for that. **(Jay)**





We went to a lab, I think when I was a freshman, and we were talking to the medical technicians that worked there. I ended up asking a bunch of questions, and I'm in Health Pathway doing anatomy and biology, and they talked a lot about different jobs. Apparently phlebotomists are in really high demand right now, and one of them said "I can really see you being a bloodsucker," and I just really took interest in it after that. It's not necessarily a major, you get a certificate, but the good thing is I can always come back to school after that. It's a short amount of time, and I can jump back into school and get a job, so I'm not too worried about that. **(Alejandra)**



Well, for a long time I've been saying that I want to do something medicine-related. Maybe something like urology, or another doctoral path, but for now I think I'm still set on that. My younger brother Kingston has autism, and just growing up with him and seeing the differences in how his brain works compared to someone who's neurotypical is really interesting, and that on its own made me want to do more research about it. **(Zawadi)**

### INTERVIEW: ZAWADI VOTES!

*You voted for the first time this year! How did it go?*

Honestly, at first I was really scared, just because I thought I wasn't prepared enough. But then once I actually got there, everything went really smoothly, and it was a nice experience.

*When you say you weren't prepared, did you feel like you didn't know the candidates, or you weren't familiar with the process?*

It was more so not knowing the process, I just wasn't familiar with it.



*Once you voted, how did it feel? Did you feel like it was an important thing to do?*

Honestly, I think voting is really important. For me, it feels as if I get a say in what happens.