

# ODYSSEY ORACLE

## VOICES AND VISIONS



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# EIGHT YEARS FROM NOW

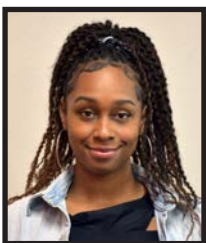
*Students were asked to imagine a day in their life in spring 2031.*



Eight years from now, I will be 40 years old with two beautiful children and a loving wife. We will have a house somewhere in the

Midwest surrounded by a white picket fence so my dog can run freely. During the day, the sun peeks from the clouds just enough for me to cook some burgers and brats for dinner. My wife will be sitting in her favorite chair on the deck with a massive glass of wine making fun of how burnt my burgers are. My kids will be inside with their faces buried in their phones and ears plugged with air pods. As the sun sets, my wife complains about it being cold out now and goes inside to relax with the kids and wait for the food to be served. Meanwhile, my dog and I are still outside while I finish my beer and put the grill out.

I gather the food, and my dog and I join the family for dinner while eating my perfect burgers. I watch NBA highlights and try to explain to my wife who made the NBA play offs, as if she cares. Then we clean our mess and go to bed in our beautiful home. **(Jonathan Booe)**



I envision my life with teenagers, Straight Boss Mom! I run my business called Elocomption. I am in my own home that I own in my nice warmer cozies, home with my big fancy L-shaped couch with bright, beautiful, full pillows

looking out my big window. My flowers start blooming and plants are growing. The big laundry room and all my beautiful artwork is all around the house with beautiful family pictures all around. My



Husband/Wife cave has a nice cute little bar and a spot for me to do yoga or meditation.

I picture life a lot freer due to my kids being older and less dependent. I picture bank accounts full. I am running my group home, taking care of guiding my young women out of foster care and setting them up to grow. I am showing them the way, teaching them self-worth and love so they don't get fed to the wolves. I picture having my husband guiding me and holding me close, providing for me and protecting me, making me feel safe. I picture getting a nanny for date night because I am still going to be young. I picture my daughter and me being the best of friends, doing mom and daughter dates. I picture my life happy, not so dull. I am fully blossomed. I am so ready for the future. I am seeing these dreams that will come to life. I see me really showing my smile so free and real boss. I picture myself telling my kids that this mom didn't give up—didn't I tell you so? **(Kiana Sims)**





March 2031, I am achieving one of my goals as a father. Three of my sons finished college, and now they have a professional career. What a joy for Carmen and me to have achieved part of our dreams. Now all that is left is Alex, my youngest son. He is still in high school, but we are sure that he will also finish it.

I am already 49 years old, and now I'm speaking and writing much better English. I finished my plumbing degree, and now I am the owner of my own company. Part of this I owe to the UW Odyssey Program that helped to open my mind so that I could carry out my dreams. **(Fredy Carcaño)**



If we talk about how I see myself in March 2031, by this time I will be 46 years old. I see myself waking up at 6 a.m. in optimal health, emotional health, physical health, economic health. Minutes after getting out of bed, I prepare a hot ginger tea with a little honey and lemon juice. I take my cup of tea in my hands and go to sit near the window to be able to enjoy my tea and the clarity of the morning. After this, I get ready to do my yoga practice or some mindfulness time that nourishes my physical and emotional health. By the time 7 a.m. strikes I will take a bath and then start the day with the activities. For this moment, I envision myself being an educator to give classes for future doulas, where in this curriculum I can implement maternal and child health issues, mental health, reported trauma, and mindfulness coaching. By then, I see myself accompanying more women in their path of being a mentor in areas in which they could work as a doula.

I visualize myself full, conscious, free of prejudices, happy with the family I have, grateful for the opportunities and experiences of life, celebrating



the successes of my children. I visualize myself being an agent of change to continue collaborating with my Latino and Indigenous community. It is possible that I do not have the same energy as at this moment, but I wish that the knowledge that I am acquiring can be transmuted, creating that synergy of creating changes. Among all these aspects I see myself happy, taking more breaks in the day to appreciate the little things that each day offers. I can drive and lower the car window a little to feel how that fresh spring wind brushes my face. On my return home I visualize myself having a harmonious dinner with the rest of my family. If possible, I hope and wish that the rest of my companions have a happy life to be able to coincide from time to time in our day.

**(Maricela Martinez)**



We'll start getting up, getting ready for work, waking up my kids, and maybe help them get ready for school. Then I will go down to eat breakfast with everyone. Then we will head to drop them off at school and me to work. I have a long busy day at work. Then I pick the kids up from school, feed them, and then probably end the day with watching a movie with them. Then I get them ready for school the next day. I see myself as a very responsible, respectful, and kind person trying to do my best in life and helping as many people as I can. **(Gael Rodriguez)**



In eight years, I will be a homeowner with a white picket fence. My children will have their own room; they will be comfortable. Everything in the house will feel like a home to us. I would have graduated by then with my RN license. I will be the owner of an assisted living place. I picture myself owning a couple houses or duplexes with elderly people inside of them.

A typical day would be waking up around 5 a.m. and getting myself ready for the day. I will drink a warm cup of coffee, take a deep breath in, and wake my kids up so they can get ready for school. We will all leave the house around 6:45 a.m. I will do my drop-offs and go to my business. The day at the job might consist of different things, but I will go in with a smile because I came from the bottom up. **(Tameia Allen)**



Eight years from now, I picture myself being so happy and at peace, a successful registered nurse (RN) loving what she does, hopefully married to a loving and supportive husband with one more child, owning my own vehicle and house. Just finally I am at peace, living in my essence. **(Gabrielle Brown)**



In eight years, I'm stressed, but a good kind of stressed. I'm working at the dining room table again on what feels like a never-ending pile of homework, although I'd rather that than go through any more notes from my editor on my next book. Sure, that deadline may be quickly approaching, but man, their notes are brutal.

However, I'm a bit distracted by a very fussy little one in my lap. Apparently, her daddy and big brother are simply not moving fast enough with dinner.

The house is chaotic, but it's filled with giggles and comfort. The smell of good food and soft music plays in the background while our youngest steals her big brother away to torment our poor old dog, who just wants to take a nap.

Finally, after a few minutes of quietly watching the kids, I'm reminded to "please move the library" off the table. Dinner is finally ready. **(Kaitlin Birdsall)**



I am married to my fiancée, living a good life together, enjoying life together. I hope to be traveling and enjoying married life with my wife and hope to have met all my wife's family by then in Kenya and Tanzania. It will be a nice day when we travel to Africa. We will be living together in a nice apartment in Madison or someplace warm because we are both tired of the cold winter weather. I will be fully retired to enjoy the life that I want to be enjoying. Hopefully, by then I will have had my knee surgery so that I will be able to walk without limping. Wherever we will be in life, we will be enjoying cooking, music, and each other as lifelong partners, and we will be spending time with our grandchildren. **(Tyrone Hudson Sr.)**



Eight years from now, I envision myself being a successful business owner, homeowner, and holder of a Ph.D.

I envision myself totally free of all financial debt. I envision myself carrying out my divine calling of being a youth mentor and an advocate for fair justice. I don't envision life ever being perfect, but I do envision it being a lot better than it has ever been for me.

In eight years, I will be 54 years old. At this age, I would be looking forward to enjoying seeing my children be successful in their own lives. I would have a healthy balance in life which would include daily exercise, a balanced diet, healthy relationships with friends and family, and continued involvement with the UW Odyssey Project.

My daily routine would be to be up by 5 a.m. As my feet touch the ground, I would place my hand on my wife (Rebecca, who would still be sleeping), and I would always give thanks to God for another day of life. After that, I would grab some coffee and proceed to do some exercise at my home gym. After my exercise, I would take a shower, get dressed, then wake my wife up so she can start her day right alongside of me. While she is getting herself ready for the day, I would start checking emails and getting ready to start my workday.

Once my daily work was done, I would come back home to unwind and relax after whatever life had thrown my way that day. This would consist of maybe a swim in my indoor pool, some dinner, and some intimate time with my wife. Before I would go to bed, I would send each one of my kids a text to let them know I love them, give my wife a kiss on the forehead, and I would give God thanks once for all he has done for me throughout my life. Then it would be a good night. **(Mark Español)**



8 years from now, the sun is shining, and it's going to be a beautiful day. As I open up the window, I can hear the birds chirping nearby. I pour myself a cup of tea and head to the front porch. Here I relax to start to plan my day. Since spring is approaching, it would be a great time to start the garden. Off to Home Depot I go, picking up seeds, dirt, and some flowers. Next to Home Depot is my favorite sandwich shop, so I stop for a bite to eat. The weather is amazing; it's such a great day for a walk.

I found a park nearby, so I parked and walked for about 30 minutes. On my ride home I turned on the jazz station, sunroof open, so I can feel the sun on my skin. I didn't feel like gardening after all, so I enjoyed the rest of the day lying on a blanket in my backyard, practicing with the sound bowls.

After practicing with my sound bowls, I grab my computer to log into Zoom. I have three sessions scheduled for today. In these sessions, we will be meditating and healing with sound frequency. My store is closed for today, so all sessions will be held via Zoom. **(Sarah Branch)**





All these years I have envisioned the best for my family, so eight years from now that is what I will have. First, I want to see my son graduating from high school and starting his university career.

And for me, I want to continue working as a labor doula, and for that time, I would like to be able to be training new doulas who can continue supporting many moms in our community who otherwise don't have someone who can accompany them during the journey of pregnancy, labor, and postpartum.

To become that person, I want to continue studying and preparing myself. One of the reasons I am here is that I want to improve my knowledge in Health and Wellness Science in order to be able to become the person I want to be eight years from now. Language has been a big barrier during my journey. Being in Odyssey has helped me to overcome that barrier because now I feel more confident with English. It is not easy for me, but I am sure that eight years from now, I will be much better if I keep up with my continued learning. **(Aida Inuca)**



Every morning I embrace the warmth I receive from my son. I hear the soothing sounds of water running down the streams on my 30 acres. Chai green tea brewing is brought to you by the hands of my favorite spiritual guru, "Wealthy rising Ms. Antut." Cheek bones spread like jam on bread as I greet one of my Ros'crete alumni edus at the crack of dawn.

Doves and love every day.  
Reminding me why I sacrificed  
My funds for the time  
Time to create  
Time to look inward  
And understand who I am  
And where I'm going.

Yoga, guided meditation, nature, herbs, we welcome you to a new perception on your healing journey. Ros'crete Wellness Retreat. **(Monel Antut)**



In eight years, I will be settled in my house, newly built just for my son and me. I'll have my BSN and a strong career in labor and delivery and postpartum period. My son will be nine and still sweet as can be. I'll be happy! I'll be successful! I'll be helping mothers bring in their other half into this world while healing myself. I'll be healed. **(Sinetra Wilson)**



March 2031, eight years from now, I have six credits from UW Madison to open up my continued education for my (BSW) bachelor's of social work. I have started my own business of home health care with not many clients, just about four or five. Maybe I am a grandmother, but I'm not sure. I am buying an amazing home that I'm never home for because I travel with my job a lot. Anyway, hopefully by then I'm married to this loving man of mine. **(Lavinia Miller)**





In eight years, I envision myself owning a five-bedroom home with a fenced-in back yard with a pool and firepit/bar area. I possibly see myself having a fourth child, hopefully married, traveling

the world with my family and having a thriving business. I would love to also own property in Florida to be able to vacation there and also stay there during the cold season with my family. When we are not there, we rent it out as an Airbnb.

I see myself having at least five steady sources of income and a bachelor's degree in social work, working with children who have troubled families. I see myself attending my children's middle/high school activities and planning to soon send them off to college in the next few years. I just see success, bliss, and happiness. I can't wait to see the next eight years unfold. **(Keely Nelson-Gray)**



Honestly, it is hard for me to picture or predict what will have happened to me in eight years. But I look at my life with wisdom rather than fear. . . . I hope eight years from now, I have gained more inner wealth and inner realizations. This would mean I'm happier and my mind is peaceful no matter what my external conditions are.

Also, I will have continued working on my writing skills as well my English skills, and now I'm doing a different type of job—a job I enjoy doing and that is something that gives back to the minority communities. I'm 50 years old, and I'm wiser. I'm also teaching Dharma in Spanish to the Latino community. I kept working hard and achieved a higher education, and I'm inspiring others to do the same.

So this whole time I have been thinking about what is it that I want to do with my life as far as a career goes. And when this assignment asking "where do I see myself in eight years?" came along, I did



not know what it was that I wanted. However, now I know what I want to do. So, to answer the question, my career idea is to become a therapist within the field of mental health. There is a great need for a Latino male who can treat immigrant Latino males who are suffering with mental health problems such as traumas, anxiety, depression, anger, and so many more untreated mental issues. I would love to help my community with this issue so that substance abuse can be reduced and so these males can receive the services they so desperately need.

As an immigrant Latino male, I know for fact that it is very challenging for a macho man to seek for help, especially mental health! It is very hard to expose oneself with a mental health issue because it is not culturally acceptable for Latino males to be weak. And more importantly, the cost and trust for a therapist is hard to find, especially for a Mexican man.

I want this to be my legacy to my life. I want to dedicate my life to study and serve my people to overcome the hardships of mental health. I want to be able to help to heal mental health and the negative causes trauma gives us every single moment of our lives.

Again, eight years is a long time, but I hope I gain the tools I need to live an everlasting and happy life. **(Saul Naxi)**



Eight years later.... March 2031, sits a wiser Dominique. Accredited with a bachelor's, working on completing her master's. Sipping Coffee and responding to the many donors who have contributed to my established and innovative nonprofit program. A program that I am passionate about elevating to a national status. A program that targets and serves youth and young adults from under-privileged circumstances. Providing resources and opportunities for growth, developmental guidance, and support for inclusion.

Graciously navigating through motherhood raising my two preteens, now 10 and 12 years of age. Maintaining an open line of communication through a safe zone built from unconditional love and a trusting relationship we have formed as mother and daughters. As I lead by example, my girls get to witness my continued resilience and determination of pursuing a higher education. Setting myself up for success, they emulate my actions as a reaction towards their own aspirations.

Finally settling back into my daily routine upon my return from a two-week cruise to celebrate 12 years of marriage, I become engulfed in my emotions. Reflecting back on what my life once was. A ship lost at sea treading unfamiliar waters. To now a guided and progressive yacht on a controlled and guided journey full of support. All I must do is sit back and enjoy the scenery as I navigate the routes mapped out for me. **(Dominique Smith)**



Springtime in Texas, the best season ever. In the normal day of my life, I wake up at 5 a.m. My daughter is 12 years old, and I have to make sure she is getting ready for school and that my five-year-old son is ready for kindergarten!

After a lot of schooling, I finally earned my master's degree in nursing, and I have to get ready for my early morning shift. Bosses can't be late! I've

earned enough money to buy my children and me my dream home! It's a four-bedroom, 2 1/2 bath, modern ranch-style beauty. Everything comes from the hard work I do each day.

After my shift, I go to the gym and blow off steam, while my children do their extracurriculars. Once we're home, we eat a lovely meal that I prepare, and then we unwind and prepare for the new day ahead. We are happy, content, and loved. I am happy, stable, and a great mom. **(Tiara Smith)**



Thinking about this question gives me a chance to analyze my goals. I will be 52 years old. I pray that I stay in perfect, healthy condition. I would like to see myself financially independent with good qualifications with an excellent

degree. I really enjoy my job at Monona Grove High School. I think it's challenging and exciting. I have a steady work life that I am grateful for. I'm in my fifties and have a growing family. I would like to open my own business doing hair and nails (more like a female barber) or a décor designer. I see myself traveling more, maybe even residing in another state, living on the waterfront. I know there are a lot of challenging obstacles out there that will be in the way. But I am going to push them out of the way to be a better person in those eight years. **(Curtrice Foster)**





# FINDING A VOICE: EDITORIALS



Why do we have to fight to learn? You see stories like this everywhere, and everyone's heard the old man's tale of "I walked 15 miles in

the snow with no shoes uphill to get to school." When we hear it as a joke, we laugh! But when you hear countless stories of being raised with no money, no running water, miles away from places that can help you achieve your dreams, who's laughing now?

People should not have to fight tooth and nail for an education that will only help better their quality of life. And what happens when they complete their schooling and hopefully graduate with the degree they need and/or want? If you live in the United States, you face crippling, life-altering debt. How do you get out of debt? You need better paying jobs. But what happens when the promotion at your job isn't applicable to you because you're missing a singular degree to your name? That degree is something that will take you years to achieve, money you don't have, time you don't have because you may have kids to feed, and two jobs already while bills are racking up along with your anxiety. . . .

As of 2022, over 75% of new jobs require some type of college degree while only roughly 40% of potential applicants have one singular degree. This leaves only a mere 30% of jobs available that only require a high school diploma. Two out of three places of employment will require a degree.

I can tell you from experience, I am 32 years old and it was only less than a year ago I was able to find a job that didn't require me to have a degree or the necessary prior work experience. They took a risk bringing me on. . . .



As it stands, you are more likely to save money by getting your education abroad than to go to school in your home state. This means you would need to uproot your life for an extended period of time to a completely new country to get your education rather than to do so in the comfort of the same familiar four walls and family and friends surrounding you. It was not that long ago when states still offered more cost effective if not even free options for education. What happened to this? We need to reevaluate! . . . **(Kaitlin Birdsall)**



"Teach your son not to sleep with women they don't want to mother their children, or build with." Too many children are being born from lust or the "heat of the moment." Too many kids are growing up without their fathers (and some mothers). The effect of not having a present father really takes a toll on a child mentally and emotionally.

Trust me, I know. I don't think it's 100% the man's fault, but I do believe they play a big role in how children grow up, how they perceive things, what they believe in, etc... **(Gabrielle Brown)**



Rent is so expensive that minimum wage workers need three roommates or four jobs to afford a two-bedroom

apartment. We are being victimized by making living expenses extremely high, rising mortgage interest rates, and building all these new homes, making it impossible to rent without you having a credit score of 650 or higher, or income must meet three times the rent. This limits the housing options, making it unavailable to families and other individuals. When our job doesn't pay us three times the amount, working an eight-hour shift, we become rent boarders, spending more than 30% on household rent, making it impossible to live.



We as Americans should not have to go homeless or deal with a situation on becoming homeless with all this land and buildings they are building. Millions of people under the age of 30 were able to leave the nest and live on their own. The majority of them were forced to move back with their families while the young adults that are looking for housing have no chance. There's no singular root of the rental price surge. The economy is still rattling the battle of this pandemic and this perfect storm of high rising prices; that's not stable. The worries of not being able to afford housing make it hard for some people to handle today's reality. Why wait to see what's on the other side? Prioritize a financial move and make the most sense out of your situation, even if it costs you your pride.

**(Curtrice Foster)**



Imagine being raped, then, after time goes by, you're expecting. Imagine not having rights over your own body because they banned abortions. This forces legacies on families who are not ready or, in fact, were abused into conception! Breaking families, hurting our women, and bringing children into broken homes

is not saving our children. Banning abortions is not keeping our little ones safe! Men get to roam freely planting their seeds with no rules or regulations. Mothers growing the seeds go through all the pain and changes, yet we women get no say so over the life that we've created! Let's be careful, ladies: stay protected, and most of all, STAY BEAUTIFUL!

**(Geresa Homesly)**



**Hunger Hurts All Around the World**

There are so many countries where they are starving due to the shortage of food, due to war or weather. Some countries have dictators that are in charge of when and where food goes in their countries. Here in the United States of America, we have the resources to help the world by asking the restaurant industry to stop wasting food by throwing it away. Rather, they can donate it to help fight hunger. Here in the USA, we are fortunate to have food pantries in every state and cities that help with food once or twice a month, but families are still struggling to know where their next meal is going to come from. Children are going to bed or school hungry because they don't have enough food to eat.



The government can do more to help fight hunger here in America, but instead they want to take away the little help we get from them. Hunger is a problem everywhere because there is a struggle for food. In the USA, the cost of food keeps going up every day and around the world because of weather, global warming, or war that keeps people from being able to have food to fight starvation and to survive. People are dying from starvation all around the world every day.

Help fight hunger worldwide.  
**(Tyrone Ozea Hudson Sr.)**



As many of us know, America is trillions of dollars in debt, as we currently are going through inflation as we speak. It is imperative that we elaborate on the fact that as individuals we are also suffering from our own personal debts just trying to make ends meet for ourselves and our families. One of the biggest debts Americans face is Federal Student Loans. Some Americans who took out loans to continue their education 25+ years ago even still struggle paying off those debts to this day. I have seen it firsthand working for a Student Loan Servicing company where borrowers accrued up to 30 dollars in interest on their student loans DAILY, making it

nearly impossible to pay them off throughout their lifetime.

Education is such a huge part in ensuring individuals can obtain a good career. I cannot fathom how unfair it is to take on such a huge debt just to obtain knowledge that we should rightfully have without the high costs of higher education. If we did not have access to this education, the world we know now simply could not go on. We would not have doctors, teachers, scientists, and the list goes on. All of these careers are essential to daily living to ensure the safety and education of our people. As I understand nothing in life is free, I do believe that more resources for people to attend college at a lower cost or even more programs to allow education free like the Odyssey Project would be essential and would make a huge impact.

**(Keely Nelson-Gray)**



Imagine being 17 and waking up each day faced with an expiration date on the care you are deemed to receive: not being afforded the luxury of a comfort zone, a place where you can go back and receive the love, support, and guidance you need to grow. Imagine worrying about where you will live, how you will survive, or where you belong. These things would weigh

heavily on the average adult, let alone a teenager still in high school who should be focusing on prom or higher educational plans.

On average, 100,000 youth are released from secure and residential facilities each year. Although there are programs to supplement the basic care needs, the funding is stretched thin and only covers an acute amount of the economic expenses they are sure to face. With no security, these youth are more likely to engage in criminal activity as a means of survival. This is why I am so passionate about creating a safe



haven for youth and young adults in transition that provides them with the necessary resources and guidance to navigate through life as responsible and productive citizens.

Growing up I remember stating “I can’t wait until I am 18,” not realizing exactly what that statement actually meant for youth transitioning through a fostered system of care. It is a system that is limited with resources to remain a consistent staple in the lives of many young adults who relied solely on that support. What happens when those resources run out? Where can these young adults turn to? More funding needs to be poured into helping the many youth and young adults who are transitioning into society alone. An economic outlet that would subsidize as support could be through an additional tax credit that allows them to net more of their gross pay. They would have more finances to allocate towards basic economical expenses. This will create a sense of financial stability on their own. Most of the time half the battle is won through the weaponry of residual income.

... I am passionate about changing the system and focusing on the bigger picture. Youth and young

adults in transition are faced with time restraints and adapting to a non-traditional lifestyle. I would like to see a safe haven of resources that prepare them for a healthy and stable lifestyle outside of the system. They need economic relief that allows them a sense of financial independence and security. With these types of resources of support, we are sure to see a decline in the number of youth and young adults indulging in criminal activity, economic hardships such as homelessness, and a lack of self-worth for themselves and others.

**(Dominique Smith)**



Broken teeth, bad back, mental health! No money! What do you do? What do you see? What if you are an immigrant child with parents who didn’t have health insurance, who were here illegally in the USA? All my parents knew were home remedies, or go across the border to see a doctor for dental if it was an emergency. I remember my dad going to an herbalist because he didn’t have insurance, or scared if he did go to the doctor, not knowing if it would be okay if he went, automatically thinking ICE was going to get them.



We need to make changes to help immigrants, illegals, or anyone who is not able to receive health insurance. We need to educate and help them get health insurance. The government makes illegals pay child support, but no health insurance. Teeth are used to eat, talk. Our backs are used for walking and moving. Mental health is needed for peace of mind to function in our daily lives. Health insurance should be free like in Canada. Our society would be a little happier, less stressed. Free health insurance, please!

**(Roxanna Sobrevilla)**





A mother is the first teacher and caregiver, doctor and protector, maid and personal chef for her children. She is also tired, burnt out, and fed up and hurting. Despite feeling alone and overwhelmed, many mothers are criticized when they express the need for a break from their kids. "She's always trying to get rid of her kids." "What kind of mother does that?" are things too often said about moms by people who will never understand what it really takes to be a mom. Most of the people who say "pick better partners" to single moms ignore the fact that there are married "single" moms who have husbands that feel their only responsibility to their family is to make money.

I think it's past time to make space for moms to express when they feel discontented and tired because only truly responsible, caring, good mothers spend enough time with their kids to be

tired of them. So, the next time you hear a mom say she is tired of her kids, please do one of two things: ask how you can help, or keep in mind that you don't know what she's going through. Think kindly of her and move on with your day.

Signed,

A tired of these damn kids mom (**Mya Whitson**)



Imagine your 14-year-old daughter comes to you teary-eyed and face redder than a tomato, telling you the most heart-rattling thing. She's pregnant. She was terrified and not ready to have a child, and she asks for an

abortion. Women, young girls are protesting and fighting over their own rights. There are women forced to carry their dead babies until delivery, or young girls physically struggling to grow a fully developed fetus. Men should not be allowed to choose for women.



In June, Roe v Wade was overturned, creating fear and panic in women who live in states that prohibited abortion. Lawmakers need to focus on the children already born stuck in foster homes and abandoned on the streets. We should focus on lowering adoption fees and conducting strict background checks, protesting and protecting women's rights. Her body, her choice, but he shall fight together with her because "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

-MLK Jr. (**Sinetra Wilson**)



### Let's Get to Know Each Other

How can the medical system and the patients get to know each other? This important answer is missing inside the small room at the clinic, at the hospital, or when a nurse might visit a family at their house. In this encounter, the medical practitioner is listening to the patient, taking notes, and prescribing medicine to be taken by the patient.

On the other hand, many times in my experience, I learned that losing our roots is easy because throughout history many forms of oppression, white supremacy, and other social constructions have been present in our lives, pushing us out of thoughts that remain as memories of our ancestors, forgetting our own history. Then we end up not knowing who we are in the present, and along the way this can affect our wellbeing.

These two ideas show us the important piece that we are missing in this interaction between the doctor and patients during their encounter. One of the biggest forms of oppression that promotes the loss of dignity in the community loses is the medical system. The patient's concern is addressed without valuing the patient's history. The time the doctor spends with patients is minimal, making it impossible to know the person's whole world or the pain the patient might be carrying on his/her shoulder which could be the cause of her health condition.

The system created rules and regulations to treat patients as numbers but not as humans. Doctors are not trained to see patients as humans but trained to see illnesses and conditions. In the case of women in labor, they are trained to deliver babies with forceps, and they are trained to cut the belly if

forceps do not work. They are trained to minimize the power and wisdom of a woman's body and artificially inject medicine in her body so the mom cannot feel the pain of labor.

In this small room where the doctor and patient are talking about the mom's concerns, it is important that the doctor take the time not just to diagnose but also to listen mindfully to her/his story. To get to know each other, it is important that the medical system creates activities together with the communities. So we all can learn that when we are at home, our grandma used to drink valerian tea for sadness, or chulku herb tea for high pressure, or that my parents used guinea pigs (as X ray) to diagnose an ill person. This kind of narrative is important for our communities and deserves to be listened to by the doctors.

Only this way we can all recognize that we all are humans and we can be treated as such and not as pathogens. . . . We all can contribute to this transformation/change, not because we have to but because it is our social responsibility to our community. As my grandpa used to say, we all come with a purpose: we all can contribute with a grain of seed toward having a better life for our future generations. **(Aida Inunca)**





# CREATIVE CORNER

## MORE SONGS OF OURSELVES



### Song of Antoneah

I am Antoneah  
The second of three daughters  
The first of my family to birth twins  
But now the mother of four boys  
Raised by a strong black woman

I am now finding my strength  
I am funny and outgoing but yet seclusive  
I am Antoneah. **(Antoneah Armour)**



### Song of Jonathan

I am Jon...  
The oldest of four men and  
The first to attend college  
Among my mother's sons.  
I am Jon...

A student to life still striving to  
Graduate.

I am Jon...

A flawed man who embraces his  
Imperfections and never expects  
Perfection.

I am Jon...

A black man in America who's  
Defying the odds.

I am Jon

A son and a brother of proud  
Odyssey graduates.

I am Jon! **(Jonathan Booe)**



### Song of Geresa / Blystique

I am Blystique...  
 Black and beautiful and unique!  
 Crown on my head, bow to my feet.  
 Stay ahead and keep it neat.  
 Time for magic from a Nigerian queen

Hand me a seed, watch as I turn it  
 Into a little me! **(Geresa Homesly)**



### Song of Roxanna

I am Roxanna  
 The goddess of dawn,  
 The mother of three,  
 The one trying to get her  
 degree,

Now that she is happy and free.  
 Screaming, "I love me!"

I am the daughter of  
 Ignacio Sobrevilla and Lilia Gallegos  
 Origin from Sinaloa, Culiacan  
 The oldest of 8, three brothers, five sisters  
 I am brown and proud!  
 I am Latina. **(Roxanna Sobrevilla)**

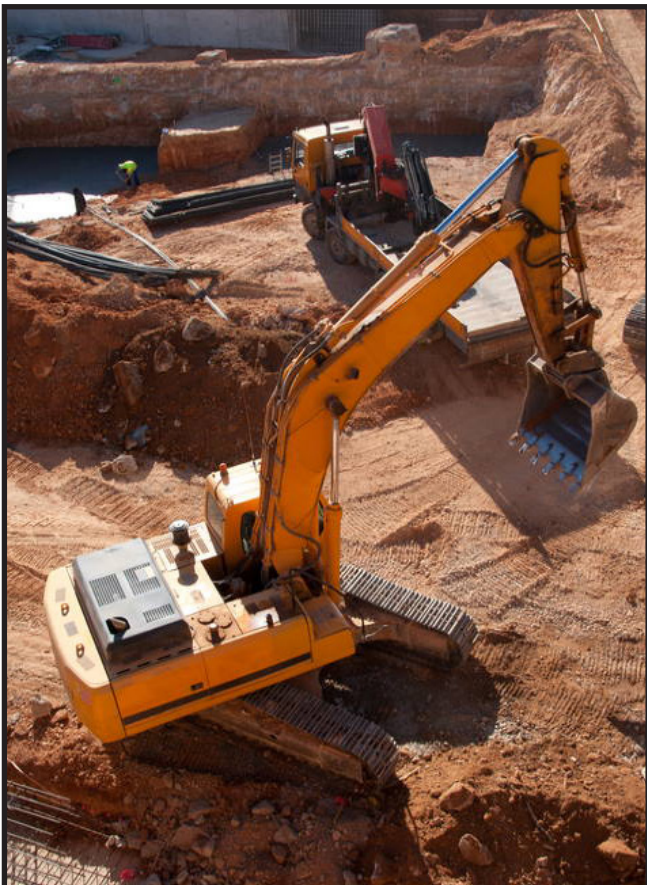




## MORE METAPHORS AND POETIC MUSINGS

Odyssey is an oasis  
 As I walked through life  
 Hungry for knowledge  
 Thirsty for community  
 Burned by the blazing sun  
 Of unrealized goals and ambitions  
 I felt so tired and ready to give up  
 And just when I felt all hope lost  
 I found Odyssey  
 My oasis.  
**(Mya Whitson)**

I am a royal bloodline  
 My upbringing is one of a kind  
 Just like a peasant's kin  
 I have one objective  
 To win.  
**(Monel Antut)**



Odyssey is a construction site.  
 Emily is the architect and foundation.  
 The teachers are the contractors and assist  
 in shaping the minds of the students.  
 We are the raw materials that undergo  
 the transformation for the finished product!  
**(Amanda Willis)**

Pain can be so rewarding  
 While love can be so damaging  
 And crying can be so soothing  
 Yet happiness can be so lonely.  
**(Jekeiria Booker)**

Life is a camera.  
 Focus on what's important,  
 capture the good times.  
**(Lupita Valerio Aragon)**

She is an early bird, rising like the crack of dawn.  
Arising to prepare breakfast, luring the kids out of the house.  
Both she and the bird will work a full day.

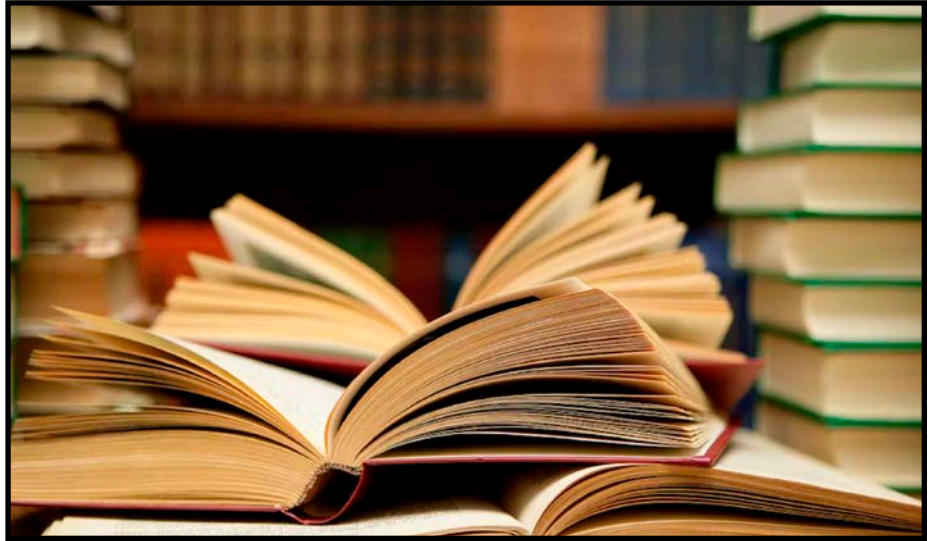
**(Geresa Homesly)**

Odyssey is a book  
full of stories and characters  
that come together  
to create one big story.

**(Guadalupe Valerio Aragon)**

Odyssey is a picnic  
A variety of interesting things  
Comfy and social  
Yet quiet and local  
Treats of different flavors  
30 in total

**(Andrea White)**



Odyssey is a box of crayons  
We are all together as one  
And we make things happen together  
We all are the same, just different  
Colors.

**(Zykia Wilson)**

Odyssey is a tree.  
The roots, leaves, branches,  
family that keeps growing.  
Maple, oak, pine, palm, and weeping willow trees,  
different but work together,  
Beds, chairs, and cabinets built together.  
Odyssey is a tree,  
a family tree.

**(Roxanna Sobrevilla)**

