

ODYSSEY ORACLE

CONQUERING CAMPUS



Contents

Conquering Campus2

Moved by Music 10

Wandering with William Wordsworth... 17

Noticing Nature 21

Loving the Auerbach Love Story..... 29

Alumni Corner 35



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CONQUERING CAMPUS

The Class of 2024 traveled by bus together to the UW-Madison campus to receive UW photo ID cards at the Union South, take a group photo, and tour the newer half of the Chazen Museum of Art.

I remember all the jokes and laughter as we loaded the bus arriving at Union South, waiting in line, connecting with our classmates, some who we have never spoken with, yet everyone's smiling happily, smiling ear to ear, feeling excitement and feeling like a true UW Madison student.

(Mikaylah Harris)

The most memorable moment to me was when we all were looking for a yellow school bus, and this huge Badger Bus pulls up in front of Madison South campus. It was like, wow! We are going out of town. It was so nice and comfortable as we toured to the big UW-Madison college. It was the most exciting feeling of my journey to be inside of UW-Madison as a special student of the Odyssey Project.

Following that, we went to the museum, a place I never knew of. It was very interesting to have experienced all of the Chazen Museum of Art. I



truly enjoyed the statues of Abraham Lincoln. I look forward to all of my memories with my class throughout our journey. **(Kimberly Rodgers)**

It was the second time I've ever gotten to ride on a coach bus. When we arrived to Union South, I didn't know what it was until that day. Being able to go inside for the first time, I was thinking

to myself, this is a pretty cool place, great atmosphere. I had to ask Sarah what this building was, whether it's a classroom, campus, or just where students hang out.

When we got to the Chazen, I never knew that was a museum. I passed through there all the time, and I didn't know that you can actually walk through to the Union. I love going to the Union. When we got inside the Chazen, I was mesmerized and in awe. It was the coolest place. I told myself, I have to bring my kids here. **(Sally Phelps)**



One of the most memorable moments for me was once I actually got my ID (even though I don't like my picture). The feeling of officially feeling like a student at UW, also seeing the excitement and joy on everyone else's faces, was a good feeling.

The museum was also really amazing as well, just the different pieces and the meaning behind them. I really love the screenshots of conversations that were formed into a human, but my favorite was the sculptures involving Frederick Douglass and the evolution in both the pieces. **(Rodney Poe Jr.)**

The most memorable moment for me was our discussion about the two different Frederick Douglass statues. I found it very interesting to compare and notice the differences, from being barefoot to having a cloth/cape, everything was important/significant. **(Carissa Andrews)**

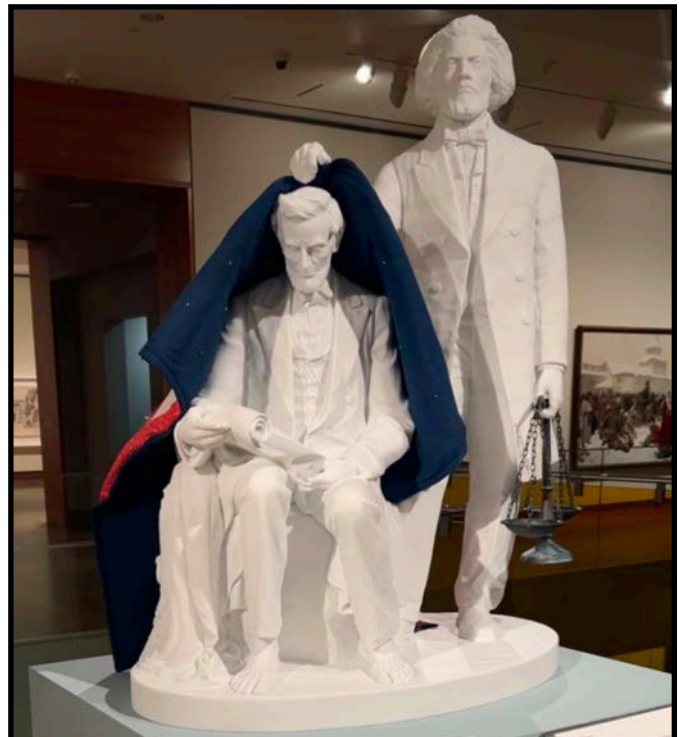
Walking into the Union South campus, I was fascinated by the Abraham Lincoln statues and making memories by taking pictures with my fellow students. I would have loved to have been able to visit longer. **(Andreya Gavins)**

I enjoyed our trip. Living in Madison, I've almost never seen or been aware of the Chazen. I saw

myself and my classmates fill up with pride once receiving our badges. I felt 10 feet tall, though I'm 5'5", placing the red lanyard around my neck, knowing that it's official. I took a picture and sent it to my grandmother with pride.

The only gray cloud of the moment was the Frederick Douglass exhibit. It looked like an afterthought or a slap in the face. Where was the effort or love for what was presented as art to me? Frederick Douglass deserved more. Why even put his name or likeness for this lackadaisical display? **(Jasmine Benson)**

The thing I enjoyed the most from our class trip was being at the Chazen Museum. I loved looking at the art and being able to interpret my first initial thoughts of the art. I honestly love seeing new things and learning new things such as the statue we saw of "The Emancipation Group"—how Lincoln viewed it versus how Douglass viewed it. We analyzed the two art pieces which actually are the same but viewed differently. I want to thank the Odyssey Program for being able to take a trip to Union South campus to get IDs and to the Chazen to look at the amazing art. Also, I forgot that the cell phone screenshot art at the Chazen was superb! **(Dontaeva Acklin)**



The piece that stuck with me was the gorgeous bronze of the maid sowing seeds. This statue was absolutely one of the most beautiful and impactful statues that I've had the pleasure of viewing—the treatment of the fabric in the gown, the lovely and pensive face of the maid, the seeds that are defined and beautiful in their own right. Such a



piece makes me wonder about an alternate reality where black artists had a seat at the table since the onset of this country, and all the great works that could have and would have been produced. Another happy moment was seeing a museum filled with POCs [people of color] - beautiful!
(Lucas Benford)

colorful artwork. A lot of the art was of history. I'm definitely going to take my young boys to see more of the museum. All the pieces have a meaning, and I want to know more about it!
(Aleesha Flowers)

One thing I won't forget is Mr. Gene Phillips getting super serious about not touching the artwork. I won't forget it. It'll forever be a Picasso painting in my head. I also liked the African art that was on display. It reminds me of how minorities were

undereducated and lacked the skills that white artists had. Also, you could tell from the materials and tools used that they more than likely had less to work with. It's like when you're not in control of your writing, someone can interpret it to be anything. Scary thing is that sometimes it won't be accurate.
(Cierra Jackson)

The thing I remember the most is the sculpture of the woman who made herself into a piece of art [Sower in the Field]. The detail was amazing. You could tell she took her time with everything, and I felt everything she wanted us to see. It kind of made me feel like she was standing still in a field throwing seeds. I never really have seen a piece of artwork look so realistic.
(Shanigel Goodwan)

Walking into the South Campus was bittersweet and exciting! We saw other students studying and walking to classes. Walking into the Chazen Museum of Art was so quiet and peaceful. The atmosphere was bright and open, with so many beautiful statues and



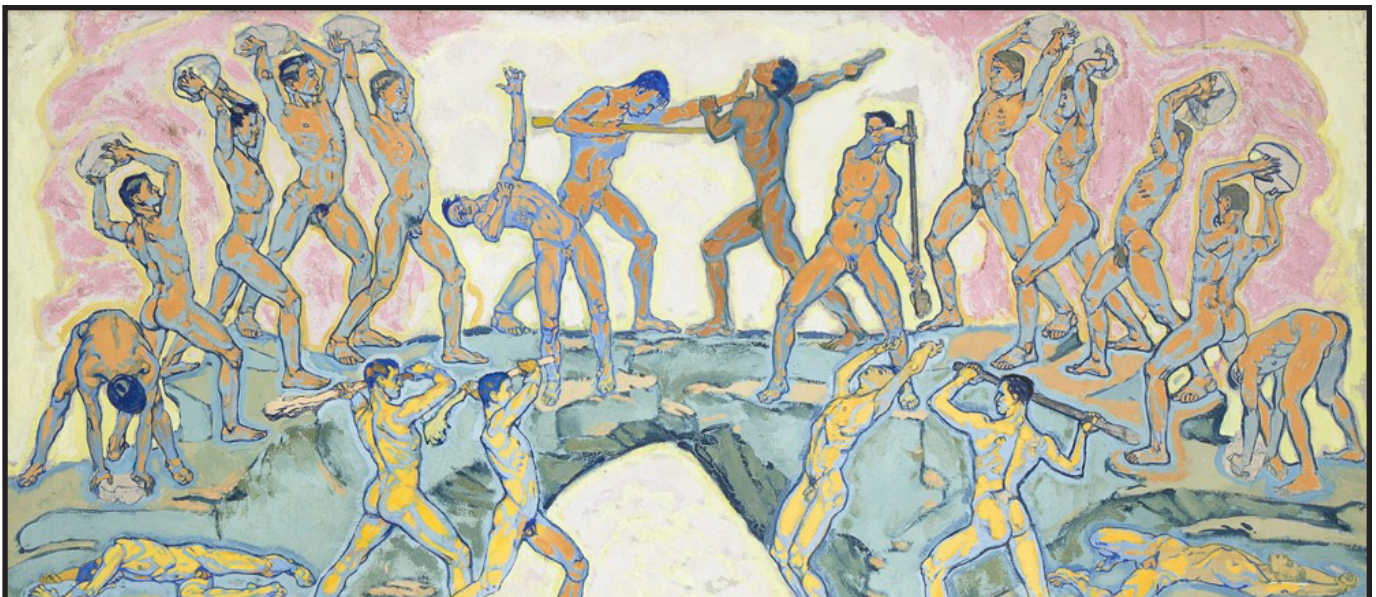
The most memorable moments from our trip to Union South were seeing all the students in school and seeing the man fixture made out of glass and photos. The sculpture of the man was done by his fiancée and showed their conversations when he was gone. This touched me as I have been in a situation where photos and text messages are all that a partner and I had. Receiving a Wiscard, I felt great. This gives me so much hope in the fact that I will be a college student. I actually have a copy of my high school ID cards as a remembrance of how far I have come. I do wish that we had more time for me to have been able to see more. **(Danika Bethel-Johnson)**

The one thing that popped up in my head was the art with the couple with text messages. The Friday after, I took my girlfriend to the Chazen Museum of Art in hope of showing her. The reason why is because before we moved in together, we would text a lot. Then we would reminisce about it. **(Terance Nix)**

My experience on our Campus Trip was very interesting. Seeing all the unique art pieces on display, I took quite a few pictures. Before the year is out, I plan to explore the exhibits more. My favorite one was Fight of the Titans by Koloman Moser. Before reading the title of the artwork, it put me in the mind of slaves working together, but as I looked more into it, they were all male and



naked. It looks as if they are helping and fighting each other from opposite sides. I am going to do more research on the Fight of the Titans so I can better understand the painting. For the most part, my experience at the Campus was wonderful, and I love all the things that I'm learning. **(Endia Walls)**



What I remember about our class trip last week is getting to Union South to get our IDs. Everyone seemed happy and excited to be receiving our school IDs as we all filed into the building in a single file line patiently awaiting our turn to take our picture and receive our ID. The art museum was eye opening to the point that I went right back that following Saturday. **(Isiah Pickett)**



I won't lie, I felt out of place! Even though I know I/we had every right to be there, the only time I really go downtown is passing through or to a party. I was excited to be taking a new next step and to know I was deserving of the opportunity. When we went to the museum, I was amazed with the art I was seeing but also very honored to know that it came from a black person. It was something I never did before, but something I wouldn't mind doing more often. **(Mekicia Davis)**

I had a good and special time on our campus trip. It was so nice to take the bus with all the students and Emily and her staff. Everyone seemed very comfortable, talking to each other while driving in downtown Madison. I really felt being part of a family.

Everything was exciting until I was almost left behind. That would have been a super rough night. The museum was fun! My ID was OK, better than most. **(Rosanna Lopez)**

The Union South stop was quicker than I thought it would be. The ID team was very friendly and fast so we could get to the next stop. The museum stop was very interesting and instructive. I loved seeing the artworks from many countries and learning the story behind them. **(Souleymane Nikiema)**



Being able to go to UW-Madison and get an ID was the best feeling ever, like another thing accomplished on my to-do list. But having to walk the little distance we had to walk was horrid because I'm lazy. Next we set out on an adventure to the Chazen Museum. Being able to experience something like that has been a while. But seeing both of the Frederick Douglass pieces was breathtaking. Seeing both pieces done in two different forms was amazing, and how the updated piece showed how we should have seen it always. **(Tanisha Milligan)**

It was beautiful to see exhibits and pieces highlighting black figures in history. I personally never thought I could travel to a museum in Madison and witness a black figure. It was nice actually being on campus and seeing all the students. It made the experience feel more real. **(Synquar Harston)**

First was probably the feeling of waiting in line to get the IDs. It felt like a big accomplishment. We all joked like school kids as we waited to take the pictures. I also enjoyed discussing both statues, to think and compare the different aspects of both. **(Amanda Von Behren)**

I would like to start off by saying it's been so long since I've been on what we call "a class trip." However, I found myself excited for the experience. This was the first example of Odyssey living out its name of a journey. I was a little concerned about my travel abilities due to my injury and now being forced to walk with crutches.



My most memorable moment was my fear coming to life, having to walk almost a block (just kidding). I truly enjoyed the museum art. I never knew how much of a fan of art I truly was until now. I find myself trying to find time to go back. Thanks for the journey. **(Vernell Cauley)**

What comes to mind is, "Wait, we have to leave?" I was enthralled/fixated by this piece that I saw

out of the corner of my eye. I wanted to linger by it for a minute—not to say I didn't appreciate the tour by Gene Phillips, but there was something about this painting. It looked like a winter scene. I can only vaguely remember what was being conveyed, but I remember Emily telling us how there will be an opportunity to be back in spring to write about a particular piece of art. Overall, the trip to the Chazen set off simmers in my belly that get hotter and hotter every week, which is so promising and pertinent for the writer in me. I want her to wake up from that deep sleep. It's safe now. **(Giana Mason)**



I have a couple moments I am going to remember. When we got on the bus and found our seats, people that were close to each other were talking to each other and getting to know each other. It was a nice ride. When we arrived at campus, we had noticed that we had to do some walking. A couple people were like, "Mannn, we got to walk." That made me laugh because I was thinking the same thing. I dislike walking. We got to the campus to get our picture taken for the ID, and when I got my ID back, it hit me, like this is real. Nunu, you are really doing this. I never thought that I would attend a college course. That was a proud moment for me. That moment I will remember forever.

Another moment was when we went to the Chazen Museum of Art. The statue of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, the detail on Douglass's hair: that was amazing. It looked realistic. A lot of things in the museum were very detailed, like the Chinese women sitting in the circle. There were some screens from phones hanging in one room; all of them said different things. One of them I read talked about how she went through her pregnancy and labor alone. I could relate to that, going through all that pain alone. Not having the person you made the child with be there hurts. That's hard doing alone; that hit home for me because I have been there before. **(Andrea Evans)**



Firstly, being able to obtain a UW student ID is super cool. It feels like a great accomplishment considering the great reputation that school holds. It was quite awkward taking my photo in front of everyone, though, so my photo looks like a mugshot because I didn't smile. That's my own fault, though haha. Seeing the beautiful Urban African Art was definitely my favorite part despite the minimal time we had to really take it all in, so that is definitely something I will need to revisit. **(Mia Cannon)**



I was excited to do this trip because it was our unique time experiencing travel as a group to the campus. When I got my ID card, I was emotional because I felt officially part of the rest of UW students. I appreciate the Odyssey Program and Emily for helping me be part of it. Later, I visited the Chazen Museum where I had the privilege to see majestic galleries expressing different cultures and lives. I was honored to have a picture with Emily, Kevin, and the rest of diversity of Odyssey classmates. **(Blanca Laine)**

I remember when the bus was about to pull off and leave Rosanna and Blanca.

I also remember announcing to everyone that my photo ID picture looked like a mug shot.

But what I remember the most is that every student came and was engaged, especially when viewing Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. I liked how Emily explained the context of the statues and how every question seemed important to her as she answered them one by one. **(Marcy Tibbs)**

Visiting the Union South with my Odyssey class brought back memories of when I worked there many years ago. The Union South has visibly changed. Walking into the building, I first noticed how dim the lighting is now compared to when I worked there. Years ago, I remember it being very well lit up as you walk through the entrance of the building. Another thing I noticed was the people who were coming down the stairway were dressed elegantly. Some women had on dresses and some men had on suits. I wondered to myself what occasion the Union South hosted for these people. That stood out to me because I had never witnessed people being so well dressed at the Union South. People would be casually dressed like they were there for business or leisure activity reasons back when I was a worker there.

Visiting the Chazen Museum of Art, there were two exhibits I found interesting. The first exhibit was the statue of

our former President Lincoln standing with his arm extended over a slave who was kneeling at Lincoln's feet. Lincoln seemed arrogant. It made me feel like Lincoln thought he was doing slaves a favor. The other exhibit was the reverse version of the first statue. The slave was now standing with his arm extended over Lincoln who was kneeling at the slave's feet. Looking at this statue gave me a feeling of equity. I thought of the Declaration of Independence which stated, "All men are created equal." **(Ronald Watson)**



MOVED BY MUSIC

In class while Bob Auerbach played piano, Odyssey students wrote about the role music plays in their lives.



Music is more than just a sound, it's a feeling. Music is vibration—some low, some high. Music has the power to influence thoughts, make us feel emotions as human beings. Music has played a very big part in my life because when I was unable to identify my own thoughts and feelings, music guided me to help identify different feelings.

I feel very strongly about music, and I feel like I can talk about it forever! Such as music influence—music can have a positive or negative impact on individuals' lives, depending on the vibration. For an example, we have a 10-year-old who only listens to drill rap and this influences the kid's life growing up, versus a kid who listens to sound baths, gospel, jazz, and R&B. I enjoy a variety of music and mainly R&B, music that can make me feel emotion. I can honestly say in my years growing up, music has shaped me and helped me get through some pretty tough times. Without music there would be no beautiful ending. **(Dontaeva Acklin)**



Music is my savior! Without music, I honestly couldn't function. I use it as a crutch when I'm sad, to force myself to cry, or to remind myself to be strong. I listen to rock/soft rock, R&B, hip hop/rap, soul... MANY varieties. Music is me. I am

music. We can change the environment when in the room.

I've been brought from the pits of hell with music, and also taken to that sunken place. No matter what the emotion is, it's always very strong and felt strongly. It is an art and a form of expression. I write my thoughts down and turn them into poems or little hymns, sometimes as a self-motivating tactic to make it through the day. **(Carissa Andrews)**



I think that life would be unbearable without music. There is nothing as soothing as a beloved song. Every celebration demands music, and every workday is made easier if accompanied by a merry tune. I seem to recall some thinker

that indicated that music is the most immediate art form as music does not require the kind of interpretation that a painting or a work of literature might. We hear and immediately know if we like the music or not.

A great work of music has filled me with more sublime emotion than any literary work, painting, sculpture ever could. One of my favorite pieces is Dvorak's "Symphony for the New World." It's always such a rush hearing this piece, feeling as if you were on a ship discovering a brand-new world and the promise contained therein. **(Lucas Benford)**





I think everyone's life has a soundtrack. Music can calm a storm in most situations, can educate, can start a movement. Music for me has been my only constant. I love

ALL music: Beethoven's Sixth Symphony, Garth Brooks, Billie Holiday, Jupai, Drake, Al Suvouh. I'm messing up their names. I can think of how music can bring my sisters, mom, and me together after years of being apart.

Music, like gospel, can remind me I'm not alone, and I can do ALL things through Christ, who strengthens me. Or Tupac who tells me to stick my chest out, keep my head up, and handle my situation. Maxwell explained to me through pretty wings that a breakup after 15 years can be beautiful and rewarding, or when I'm listening to Lil Wayne and Drake, I feel that way too.

Music has brought me to and out of so many situations. I need music, and I'm blessed to have it in my life! **(Jasmine Benson)**



Music is powerful. Music has the ability to turn one's mood from happy to sad with just a few key tones. I remember going through a terrible breakup, and all I listened to was heartbreak songs on Pandora. One particular

song in mind was "Too little, too late" by JoJo. It represented the hurt I was feeling but also gave me the power to know everything was going to be okay. I'm a woman who listens to music of all genres. My favorites would be pop, R&B, and hip hop. I feel joy when I hear musical themed songs. "High School Musical" is an entire movie where high school kids break out into songs mid-sentence. These are things I enjoy. Music is not something I could live without. Imagine walking down the aisle with no music, across the stage at graduation, going to a nightclub. Music has so much meaning, and I wouldn't want to live without it. **(Danika Bethel Johnson)**



Music is everything to me. I come from a long line of singers. There's not a song that comes on around my family that we can't make into a giant karaoke session. I had to become an adult to realize not all families stood around and

sang like a huge music group for fun. I come from a household where you're woken up on a Saturday morning to loud gospel music or 90s R&B. I can't remember the last shower I've taken that didn't involve music. My car concert in the morning before work is an important piece of my morning and sets the tone for my day. Some of my darkest moments in life I only had music to turn to; it cleanses my soul. I literally couldn't live without it. **(Mia Cannon)**





Music has played a strong significance in my life. There are no words that I can express on how it truly affects me. However, I'll try!

Music is a dominant force that has power to change any atmosphere. That power unconsciously has affected my mood, attitude, and decisions in life. I can say my parents had a big impact on my love for music. My mom would play music despite any occasion, no matter if she was cleaning the house or just simply cooking dinner. I first discovered the influence it would have on my mind when I first heard hip hop music.

When I was 13, an artist by the name of Snoop Dogg came out with a song called "Sipping on gin juice." It didn't take long until all my friends were found drinking gin and juice, and then I had my first arrest for bringing it into school. Being aware of that power, now of age, I'm careful with what I choose to listen to. Gospel music has been my go-to these days. **(Vernell Cauley)**



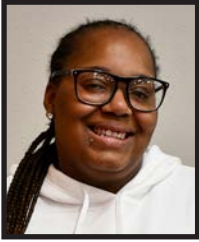
Odyssey! The start to something greater, it's a free degree. Reading old Oracles, I figured it's the place to be. Class every Wednesday, homework every week. Kids, work, and business already got me weak. Life is already hard, is this the place

for me? Two semesters, six credits, it's all free... I'd be a fool to think it wasn't what's best for me. But I guess in nine months we'll see. It'll be graduation time. I ain't worried. I'm doing this for me! So trust me, if it's up to me I will succeed. Odyssey! It's just too good of an opportunity! **(Fataeshia Clark)**



Music means everything to me. I feel all my emotions through music, and it puts me at ease. I write music all the time to escape my everyday problems and to cope with life. Music has

taken on a different meaning for me since my dad passed! All the music I listen to now is music we used to listen to together, and when I really listen to the lyrics, they always tell me I'll be okay, be happy, and keep going! It's so meaningful to me in every way. He left me with secret messages, and I appreciate that. **(Mekicia Davis)**



I personally believe that music is one of the deepest forms of connection there is. When you can't find the words, there's music. When you can find the words, there's music. When you want to sing the words, there's music.

There are times where music is the only thing I need in a certain moment. When I'm listening to different songs, they can be happy or sad memories, maybe the souvenir of a particular person I met and loved at the one time, linked to a specific song. Music is the best way to not forget anything from your past. All in all, music is everything to me. I listen to different types of music: hip hop, jazz, pop, country, gospel, R&B. Music has been a constant companion throughout my life, and I can't imagine a world without it. It's a source of joy, inspiration, and emotional release, and I am forever grateful for the role it's played in my life.

Music is my therapy; it helps me process my feelings and emotions. Music is my best friend who stays by my side through the ups and downs, through highs and lows, and will support me no matter what. It understands me when others fail to. Music means the world to me. It comforts me when I am sad, calms me, and relaxes me when I am anxious, makes me feel high when I am happy. It motivates me. There have been songs that influence my thoughts and life in a way I can't explain.

(Andrea Evans)



Music is food to my soul. It makes me happy and energized! There is some music that might bring up a memory, good or bad. Music to me is needed. I could not go without music, even for a day. I listen to a lot of 90s R&B and love the Blues.

Otis Redding, Marvin Gaye. A lot of that music I grew up listening to with my father.

(Aleesha Flowers)



To me, music is energy. I enjoy different genres. When I feel down, I listen to music to lift me up. I listen to gospel music a lot. Gospel music helps me to focus on the higher power. It lifts me up when I'm down and makes me smile. R&B music is another genre I like. I'm into classical R&B because love was more meaningful and embraced then than in today's R&B music. **(Andreya Gavins)**



I love music. It really can change your mood in ways you never expected. I like all kinds of music: R&B, hip hop, country, rap, even some rock if a song speaks to my soul. I cannot control it. I have had days where I felt like nothing was going right, and I heard the right song saying everything I needed to hear. That's why I love music. There is a song for every occasion. I can be feeling down, and by the time the song is over I'm back to myself. It's really therapeutic. **(Shanigel Goodwan)**



Music, music, music. Music helps me with my emotions, whether I'm sad and am listening to Keyshia Cole, or I'm happy having a good time listening to Sexxy Red, or it's Sunday clean-up day and I'm listening to gospel. I have a playlist for every occasion. It helps me change my mood and express how I feel without talking or writing. Music can turn my whole day around; good and bad music is my outlet. **(Mikaylah Harris)**



I believe music is a form of expression. And at times it is one of the biggest because you have the power to reach people in different ways.

One of my favorite artists is Nicki Minaj. The general public views her as an over sexualized woman, without taking into consideration that she's more than that beneath her layers. Whenever I'm feeling sad and need to be okay with taking accountability for my actions, I play "I Lied" by Nicki Minaj. It helps me come to terms that it's okay to fall short sometimes.

I love all genres of music because it all relates to some part of who I am and where I've been.

(Synquar Harston)



Music is therapy for me. I love when I can relate to a song in general. For that very reason, I listen to all genres of music. Gospel happens to be my favorite because it's helped me through some of the toughest times I've been through in my life.

Music has the power to make me happy, mad, sad, etc. Certain songs have me super emotional. I even have a song that I NEVER play. I can't even hear it being played in a room over from me. I just can't take it. The emotions and feelings just seem to overwhelm me every time. The name of the song is "We Fall Down" by Donnie McClurkin. When it comes to music, it's safe to label me "random."

(Cierra Jackson)



Music plays an important role in my life; it awakes and expresses my feelings and emotions. Music helps me to relieve my sadness and melancholy. When I am listening to music, I feel connected with my loved ones. Music inspires me to keep going ahead in my life and not stop, but at the same time takes me back to my memories to reflect who I am and why I am here.



I love to listen to all kinds of music, but the music that represents me is "Andean Music"; it is an expression of my people's identity, nature, and emotions. I can be in any part of the world, but when I listen to Andean music [from Ecuador], it is like I am in my home, in my community, with my family, with my people.

(Blanca Laine)



Music is vocal and instrumental sounds or both. I love an array of music, almost like the rainbow. My music is almost always on shuffle, but my happy music is Bob Marley's tune "Don't worry about a thing, cuz everything gonna be alright."

Music soothes me, music makes me sad, music hypes me up, or music makes me want to dance! Music brings people together, and it also makes memories and emotions. **(Rosanna Lopez)**





I like music from all different spans of time. What pops out first is instruments, though. I love identifying instruments in the music I hear. I like the contra bassoon. I have a thing for melancholy, robust sounds. I like the oboe and the clarinet as well. There is a kind of music called Klesmer that is so lovely. I like strings the most because they always make me cry. The violin is my favorite, as well as the cello. I find the era of swing and big band enchanting, but I am a self-proclaimed “granny.” I love Benny Goodman and Arti Shaw. Also, I have always been able to fall asleep to classical music. A favorite composer of mine is Chopin. His music is hauntingly beautiful. I could go on and on, but a bucket list item of mine is to learn the piano/compose music. **(Giana Mason)**



Music means healing vibes to me. The way some artists put words to their beats helps calm my nerves. I enjoy listening to 80s and 90s hip hop. I feel like that is when music still had meaning, too. I could really relate to what the artist was singing about. It had purpose. Nowadays I feel like they don’t have music you can relate to. It’s just a bunch of nonsense. Music takes me to a happy and calm place. It keeps me from going off on people. I love waking up on a Sunday morning to slow jams going and cleaning my house. It’s what I grew up on, so I guess I just carried it with me.

(Tanisha Milligan)



To me, music is a food for souls! Music is full of sensations that affect our mood. By listening to music, you can go from sadness to happiness, from being discouraged or revolted to being motivated or calm and vice versa. It’s

therapeutic. I listen to music every day. It is my way to escape from my thoughts, my situation, and my insecurities. It is also a way to dream, to live, to be somewhere by soul. I love soft reggae music and all the different reggaes in general. What would the world be without music? **(Souleymane Nikiema)**



Music means a lot to me in a lot of different ways. Most of the time it helps me relax. It also calms me down when mad. I could listen to a song and turn around and apologize to someone I was enraged at. I like to listen to music

with deep meaning. Music with pain pulls to me a lot. I love music that talks about the ugly. I don’t always like to hear people talk about the good times. **(Terance Nix)**



Music is therapeutic. I like to listen to Christian contemporary music to uplift me when I’m sad, depressed, or when I feel I have no one to turn to. I listen to upbeat music or reggaeton when I work out or when I’m cooking. I listen

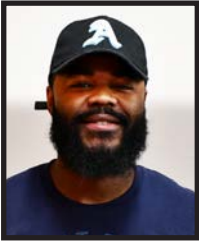
to love songs when I’m sitting alone or lying in bed sipping on some wine to help snooze me.

(Sally Phelps)



Music is everything to me. I listen to music every day, all day. I really mean all day long. While I’m working, I have my air pods in one of my ears with some music going, or if I’m just driving home from the store, I have the music blasting

in the car, or if I’m staying at the gym working out, I have my music. It’s a soundtrack to my life!!! I can’t live without my music. I’d say my music because I love hip hop and rap; my favorite artists are MO3, NBAYb, and Kevin Gates. These artists are a must; every day I listen to them. **(Isiah Pickett)**



Music to me is very important and plays a huge role in my life. My dad is a singer, so I grew up with music being very important. I listen to music when I wake up, shower, and before any event I'm going to. Whatever that is or wherever I'm going, I feel like music should be playing. The type of music I listen to really depends on my mood. If I am sad, I listen to a lot of R&B. When I'm excited or hyper, I listen to rap songs. When I am just feeling calm, I listen to gospel. I feel like I need music every day because I don't like silence. Music helps with whatever mood I'm in. **(Rodney Poe Jr.)**



Music is life, joy, pain. Music is so real. I don't know what I would do without music. It's like a drug, so addictive. I wake up off music, I clean with music, I dance with music, I talk with music, I can't sing without music. I bathe with music, I drive listening to music. Music is my everything. I get emotional with music. I reminisce, remember music; music is my healer, my therapy. I love soul music, massage music, and old school music. I love my ma and dad music. Music eases my soul. I love the blues, classical, and jazz music. I really love gospel music. Music is magic. Music can make me cry. Happy music is so motivating to me. Music, music, music. I watch my kids love music. The whole world is music. Music is peaceful. I like Bob Auerbach's music. **(Kimberly Rodgers)**



Music is my life. I wake up to Pandora Radio and go to bed to it. Music helps my nerves but also gives me different feelings, or should I say emotions? Alexa determines my day by the first song I hear at 7 AM every morning, and usually it's an upbeat mood, but I'm able to change it during stressful times, happy times, sad times, and crazy times throughout my day. I'm a big fan of Dustie music, people such as Etta James, Earth Wind and Fire, Ron Isley, Louis Armstrong, and so many more, but on a regular day I listen to Rhythm & Blues (R&B) music, which includes Mary J. Blige, Ashant, Aaliyah, Brandy, Monica, Chris

Brown, etc. But I love all music and can adapt to any type of music, especially fun and energetic music. **(Marcy Tibbs)**



Music makes my soul happy. I can be stressed, sad, or mad, and music will put me into a whole new mind state. I love all types of music. My favorite is R&B. I love listening to love songs. Old school R&B is my favorite. I like rap and hip hop also.

I grew up on a lot of singers like Sade, Maxwell, Earth Wind and Fire, the Temptations, and I also grew up on the Beatles and Simon & Garfunkel. So I listen to all types of music.

Music can change my mood quickly; if I'm sad, I'm throwing on something I can feel and usually cry to. If I'm mad, I'm listening to my rap. And most definitely if I'm having a bad day at work, I'm getting off listening to something to get me hyped up. **(Amanda Von Behren)**



I like R&B. I enjoy the deep voice of Barry White as I entertain a lady friend. R&B for me sometimes told a story. Marvin Gaye's "Ain't no mountain high enough": he's speaking of loving a woman. Curtis Mayfield's "Pusherman" tells of people selling drugs. Jazz is also one of my favorite kinds of music. Anita Baker's very soulful voice singing rapture music has so much power, soothing and relaxing. **(Ron Watson)**



WANDERING WITH WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Wordsworth starts the poem with a simile, “I wandered lonely as a cloud.” Wordsworth’s affinity for nature allows him to embody a cloud that is granted a bird’s-eye view of nature. Through this poetic lens he is able to capture a wide-angle shot of thousands of daffodils—a beautiful swatch of bright yellow. No drone technology allows Wordsworth to see such a view; he relies on his potent imagination to tap into such a vision or has seen an army of daffodils from some lofty vantage.

“I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud”

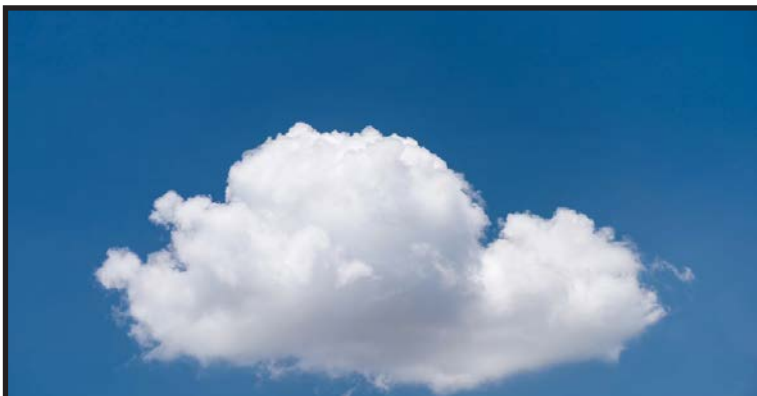
*I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o’er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils.
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze . . .
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance . . .
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:*

*For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.*

I feel in “I wandered lonely as a cloud” he is admiring how free and happy the daffodils are and what joy or peace they bring to him. When he feels his life is boring, he appreciates the wholesome feeling he gets when just thinking of the daffodils.

I think what I can take from this is just the appreciation for the little things in life. I think everything, no matter how big or small, serves a purpose. At times when I’m in a mood, it can be the little things that set me back on track and keep me afloat. **(Mekicia Davis)**

This is a treasured vision that can uplift the poet and reader. Wordsworth is a little grey cloud floating aimlessly, and then suddenly, an emergence of bright yellow as the clouds part and the sunny daffodils burst through. I would hazard that most of us have happened upon this technique: the bottling of a memory to be sipped on until the vintage turns or dries. A simple lesson that can be derived through this poem is the power of memory to soothe. I often turn to external things to lift my mood, but I shouldn’t forget that there is a wealth of medicine stored within. **(Lucas Benford)**



I read the William Wordsworth poems a couple times and I couldn’t understand the older English. But I did understand the end of “I wandered lonely as a cloud.” Something that fills my heart with pleasure is when I think about my babies. Being a single mom of five kids isn’t easy, but I wouldn’t change it for the world. They bring me happiness. When I’m at work I can’t wait to get home and unlock the door. They run to give me a hug and say, “Mommy, we love you!” They ask how was my work day, and that makes my heart smile. Another thing is my oldest daughter, Na’Kyiah, wrote me a note and it said, “Mom, I love you. You are a good mom. Keep doing what you are doing and always follow your dreams.” That meant so much to me. I don’t let my children see when I’m hurting or feeling down, so for her to write that she made me cry. I always find myself questioning myself about going to nursing school. That’s another reason why her letter touched me. So, when I think about what brings me pleasure or when I’m alone having a bad day, I think about my five beautiful babies, and that’s what gets me by. **(Andrea Evans)**

I liked “I wandered lonely as a cloud” when he said “when on my couch I lie in vacant or in pensive mood.” I understood what he meant. Like when he’s at home, his thoughts over cloud him so he is in his best mood compared to when he’s outside around the world. **(Shanigel Goodwan)**

I can describe a magic scenery of beauty and joy. I take this poem into my life as a reflection. I belong to an indigenous community. I grew up surrounded by mountains, lakes, rivers, etc. My connection to nature is very strong. I respect and protect my mother land. **(Blanca Laine)**

The poem I resonated with was “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud.” I see myself as the cloud. I see my struggles with Depression as the cloud. The “wandering lonely” reminds me of my tendency to retreat and isolate in life. Even the “floats on high” aspect mirrors the dissociation I have felt at times.

He goes on to admire the color of the daffodils as golden, and that struck me as such an opposite to the dreary colors a cloud has. The host of daffodils represented for me social scenery and all these moments in life where I have watched from a distance as the cloud, all those daffodils of people socializing.

The second stanza sounds like mindfulness. He speaks about being vacant and his pensive state and mentions a couch. At first, I thought of my moments deep in depression because solitude can be very painful; however, Wordsworth describes “the bliss of solitude” and “dances with the daffodils.” This is the power of the mind and, seemingly to Wordsworth, the power of nature. **(Giana Mason)**

In “I wandered Lonely as a Cloud” it seemed clear to me he was a loner and observing his surroundings, taking in everything and feeling free. I can relate it to my own life because I used to have a bunch of friends. As I have gotten older and more mature, I’ve realized that it’s okay to be alone. It



gets very lonely from time to time, but the peace is worth it. **(Rodney Poe Jr)**

After the reading of William Wordsworth’s poetry, I feel the void of my deceased brother. While growing up as children, my brother and I were close. He passed away. At times I look up in the clouds. I talk to him, lonely, as I miss him. I look around and up in the sky and imagine all of my loved ones. I feel that in the sky, over the hills, especially when I fly, looking down at all the beautiful nature from the golden daffodils, lakes, trees dancing in the breeze, as the plane flies over the clouds that are in the sky, entering the beautiful rainbow that has no ending, just as one day my life will begin and end in heaven. **(Kimberly Rodgers)**

In “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud” I felt he was in a field of daffodils and it was a nice breezy cloudy day. The view was beautiful and calm, and he was at peace there. And when he laid on his couch in a lost mood, he had a flashback of his view of the field of daffodils and clouds. It again brought a peace of mind and serenity. **(Endia Walls)**

It’s clear that he has time to sit and admire nature. I can tie this to my own life because I love to sit and look at the stars when I am by myself. A lot of the time I do feel alone, and nature can make you feel better. **(Amanda Von Behren)**

He is out in nature where the flowers have blossomed, the water is clear and ever flowing, and the birds sing and flowers dance. **(Ron Watson)**

The biggest thing for me was understanding Wordsworth and his wording. I guess I interpreted that nature is a symbol of life and meaning. I like how he described seeing the rainbow and stating “my heart leaped.” To me, that shows happiness. I also believe in nature. **(Dontaeva Acklin)**

“My Heart Leaps Up”

*My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky.
So was it when my life began,
So is it now I am a man,
So be it when I shall grow old
Or let me die!*

really helps me visualize how he gets a wonderful feeling from seeing rainbows.

He started to confuse me a bit when he started the “so was it, so be it” lines. I’m making sure to be in the tutoring session Tuesday night to get a clearer understanding of what he was trying to actually say.

What seemed clear to me in this poem is the joy that a child feels when they see a rainbow form. I get this from the part in the poem where he says “I am a man.” This makes me believe that the first couple sentences are him writing as if it is in a child’s view. The meaning of the poem is what’s unclear to me. In my opinion the poem is saying that we should view the world the same as a child views a rainbow when they see one. We should be excited and feel joy in the things we see and do in life. We should keep this view until the day that we die. **(Danika Bethel-Johnson)**

The image I received from the poem “My Heart Leaps Up” was a man experiencing a feeling of peace, such as being reborn again. And in that moment, he wanted it to last forever or he didn’t want it. I can relate now that I’m back writing. When I was younger, I loved it. It was my peace. I stopped and lost that feeling. But I’m hoping to regain it with the help of this class and Odyssey. I hope that I continue to do so because that’s what made me happy. **(Fataeshia Clark)**

It is clear to me that the boy likes nature and all that comes with it. When I’m alone I am content, calm, and able to think clearer. I enjoy and appreciate the little things like quiet time. **(Andreya Gavins)**

I honestly didn’t understand the poems, but I kind of understood the “My Heart Leaps Up” one. The image was like a rainbow or angel light shining down, and he was talking about his own life. **(Mikaylah Harris)**

It’s very clear to me that Mr. Wordsworth and I share a love for rainbows. When he said “my heart leaps up when I behold a rainbow in the sky,” it

Rainbows have a significant meaning in my life. It symbolizes beauty after the rain, which I compare to rainy days in my life. My grandma also had a favorite rainbow song. I’ll have a picture with a back-story to share with the class. **(Cierra Jackson)**

I am living far away from my home country and my family; however, if I walk by nature, it is just enough to connect with them, no matter where I am or how old I am. **(Blanca Laine)**

“My heart leaps up” is pretty easy to understand. It is saying the heart jumps up when he sees a rainbow in the sky. So it was when life began. He is a man now. With that, he realizes he is growing old and someday will die. **(Sally Phelps)**

“My Heart Leaps Up” was very confusing but understandable to me. I had to read this poem over and over again just to see if I could grasp what he was talking about, or even feeling.

I compared it to my life and where it is now, all except the ending of the poem where he said “so be it when I should grow old or let me die.”

In the first part he made very clear as he was feeling joy every time he saw a rainbow all through his life. So when comparing it to my life, I had to feel something, so maybe I felt like the weight of the world was lifted off my shoulder and that my life is beginning because I got into the Odyssey Project. This opportunity will take me places in life. Who is to say where I would be if I hadn’t taken a leap of faith?

Now I’m getting to the end of his poem. I think it means if you can’t have beauty in life then is it worth living? **(Marcy Tibbs)**

"To My Sister"

*It is the first mild day of March;
Each minute sweeter than before,
The redbreast sings from the tall larch
That stands beside our door. . . .*

My Sister!come forth and feel the sun . . .

*Love, now a universal birth,
From heart to heart is stealing,
From earth to man, from man to earth:
It is the hour of feeling. . . .*

"Love, now a universal birth, stealing from earth to men, from men to earth. It is the hour of feeling!" This is the excitement of spring or a new day and opportunity. I almost can smell the day from the way he describes it. It's the most beautiful way I ever heard about living in the moment.

(Jasmine Benson)

To be completely transparent, every poem was a bit confusing, I had to read them all more than once. But specifically analyzing the poem with his sister, I know it's a nice day in March, and it sounds like a happy and nice day out. I think he's also telling her to enjoy the nature and enjoy the sunshine outside.

(Mia Cannon)

The Poem 'To My Sister' is well written metaphorically. When first reading it, I thought it was truly about his sister but soon discovered it was about the spring season. **(Vernell Cauley)**

This poem can describe the unforgettable memories that I have with my siblings when we were children. We used to play together, swim together, cook together. I was rich but I did not know it. Now I am contemplating my memories.

(Blanca Laine)



It is clear that we have just entered March and the birds are singing in the trees. What was confusing was "love, now a universal birth, from heart to heart is stealing from earth to man, from man to earth: it is the hour of feeling." What I take from this poem is that sometimes I just need to stop and be in the moment. Stop moving so fast, and pay attention to everything that is happening around me. **(Tanisha Milligan)**

In the third stanza of the poem, I feel like he was talking about stepping away from reality even just for a moment to enjoy life. "Just for a moment" means being happy or present in that moment. There are years of uncertainty or worrying about things that are beyond your control. Yep, that pretty much sums up my life right now. **(Isiah Pickett)**

It was clear to me that when the snow is gone and seasons change, the birds singing is a reminder of joy in the air. What I can take from this and experience in my life is to enjoy and cherish nature and to take in how it makes us feel.

(Aleesha Flowers)

To me it seemed clear and very relaxing like I was there smelling the spring in the air, like after I cleaned my living room, so relaxing and clean.

(Rosanna Lopez)

"One moment now may give us... our mind should drink at any pore.....the spirit of the season."

My understanding of this excerpt is that sometimes life needs to be lived to the fullest. Every moment should be appreciated and lived as if it were the last. We should free our minds and learn from all the aspects of life.

I believe any critical approach or questioning should certainly be done with an open mind. It should also be done with honesty, decency and wisdom. **(Souleymane Nikiema)**

NOTICING NATURE

After reading William Wordsworth's poetry, students wrote their own responses—positive or negative, in prose or poetry—to being in nature.

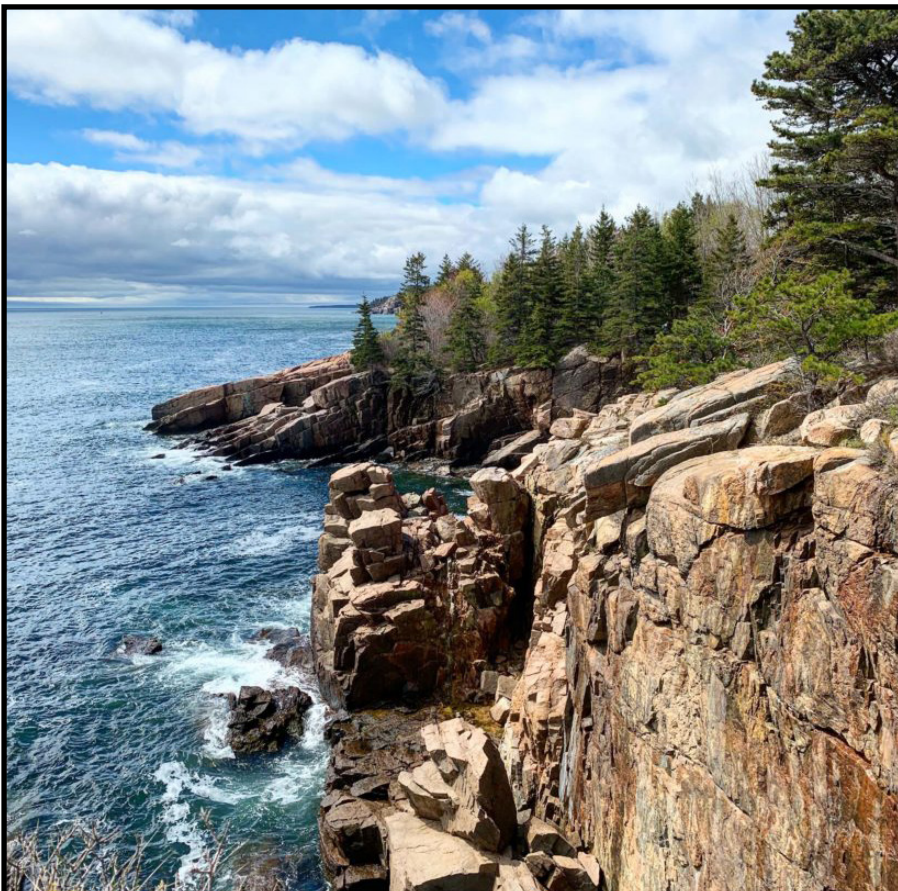
Personally, I love nature! I love being in the sun as the sun soaks into my melanated skin, barefoot, feeling of walking on clouds and connecting with the earth. I lie underneath the tree, feeling all its energy and power flow through me. I am nature <3
(Dontaeva Acklin)

Fragments of Mount Desert Island

The largest island of the eastern-seaboard. The place where one can catch the sunrise before everyone else in the Americas. Former playground of the Rockefellers before they found other diversions and gave the land back to the people. Home to Acadia National Park and Martha Stewart. A place where everyone can feel rich watching the sunset from Cadillac Mountain.

Here the night sky is heavy heavy. It feels like a glass of water filled to the very brim and just beyond, only a bit of surface tension holding back the black belly of the sky. There are few lights on the island and the stars...the universe...the universes are bright, potent, and mysterious.

In the city we are robbed of our stars and forget the heavens until we worship. On the island, the sky seems ready to burst and flood our world with twinkling stars, colorful orbs, silvery liquid, and waves and waves of inky black. Some people feel small or lost when presented with the immensity of the above, but I just feel grandmother night wrapping me in softest black velvet embroidered with silver and dappled with diamonds.



We love to dip into Frenchmen's Bay where on certain nights we are treated to magic. There are water fairies with us—what science calls "bioluminescent plankton." When we disturb the water with our swimming, we are dazzled by blue green light that emerges from these little beings. The light coats our skin and ripples in the water like an aquatic aurora borealis. **(Lucas Benford)**

Wisconsin in November has a smell, the cold doesn't howl it yells. I could never imagine myself snow shoeing through the woods. I'm from Milwaukee, not the suburbs but the hood, seeing owls and animal tracks. The fresh air so brisk, yet somehow, I feel able to relax. I find myself thanking God for nature's beautiful collage. **(Jasmine Benson)**

It was 90 degrees and humid in Los Angeles, California. The windshield is high enough to make my nose cold but hot enough for shorts and sandals, yet I have on sneakers. I'm hot and my skin is sticky from sweat. We can't visually see the destination because the hill is so steep. Every step I feel the muscles in my calf aching. After 10 long minutes that felt like an hour, I see the top of the mountain. Most importantly, I see the off-white dusty letters, all of them: the infamous "Hollywood" sign. At that moment I felt I finally experienced California. **(Mia Cannon)**



It was my birthday and I was in Long Beach, California. I decided I wanted to go horse back riding. I had never been, and I was going to get the chance to see the Hollywood sign up close and personal, so why not, right? I was in for a time that I could've never imagined. My horse's name was Top Notch. Okay, I liked that part, but why didn't anyone tell me it was that high up on top of a horse? And that was just the beginning.

We rode on the skinniest, thinnest ledge possible, hundreds of feet in the air. I knew I had to let go

and let God decide if I was going to be able to finish this ride out. Everything looked tiny from the famous Hollywood hills. I now see exactly why they're called the Hollywood hills because that's all there are: steep, slanted, and skinny hills. I don't see how people can do it every day, but they probably say the same about our winters here. Anyways, I got a little carried away, but the peace I felt when going through those hills was like no other. Everything was clear. The sky was the brightest baby blue, barely any clouds, and not a bug in sight, just me, my horse, and the Hollywood hills. I do not recommend it if you are afraid of heights, animals, nature, or stepping out of your comfort zone. **(Shanigel Goodwan)**



My response to nature is peace. The feeling is like the rainbow in the sky. I believe nature is something that can make you forget. It's an escape but a beautiful one. Something that calms you, relaxes you. Like the feeling I get being on a solo vacation at the beach. Sand sliding through my toes, big waves, palm trees, and good energy. Spraying sunscreen in a two piece, lying back on a blue mat enjoying the scenery and light breeze. **(Fataeshia Clark)**

Nature is really not my thing. The grass makes me itch, so you would never see me walking bare foot in the grass. I don't think that I would be able to have a picnic with blankets on top of the grass. Even though I would love to have a picnic with the kids or friends, just knowing the grass is underneath the blanket I'm still going to itch. Hiking is not for me with all the walking. With hiking, doing all that walking you're going to sweat and when I sweat it makes me itch. With hiking comes insects and other creepy crawlies, so I don't care too much for nature and most of the things that come with nature.



But at the same time I love butterflies. They represent so many different things: movement, variety, beauty, gentleness, new beginnings, hope, faith, rebirth, transformation, and freedom. They are delicate, colorful, and swift. Butterflies go through a metamorphosis from a caterpillar to a beautiful butterfly. I am one of those people that find the themes relatable to my own life experiences. I have been through a lot, and I never thought that I would be where I am in life today. Butterflies have no worries. They are my happy place. I would love to sit in a room full of butterflies and write in my journal while listening to the beats of their wings and getting peace of mind, not thinking about the things I have going on outside of the room but just enjoying the moment of being with the butterflies. **(Andrea Evans)**

The bright fluorescent blue cabin was deep in the Northwoods, miles away from anything. We drove down a long, curvy gravel road. The sound of tiny rocks clicking on the wheel walls was all we heard and felt through our bones. There was something about the quietness. No traffic, no TVs. A herd of whitetail deer tiptoeing in the grassy fields. The smell of Christmas with pine all in the air, so refreshing and pleasant without a care. The music of the woodpeckers pecking on the old wilted pine tree. So repetitive and timely. The sounds and smells of nature are like food to our mind, body, and soul. Some of the best experiences I cherish most of all. **(Aleesha Flowers)**

Growing up in a big city like Chicago, nature can be like a distant cousin. It wasn't until I moved



to Wisconsin that I discovered nature is something worth loving. On the road to Madison there was so much land afar. Fields of green grass and trees surrounded the windows of my car. The sun kissed the clouds so bright in the day. A wonderful artist God must be to paint a picture full of vivid color and also give me blessings to live and see. **(Vernell Cauley)**

I love fire.

Bonfires.

I wanted to write a poem but my poem was becoming more romantic and less about the nature component, but I really believe fire is the most romantic element. Some of the words I came up with for bonfire were embers, flame, roar, crackle, billow, pull, push, magic, enchanting. **(Giana Mason)**



Any state I've traveled to, I have made it my mission to explore some part of nature. My favorite place thus far would be Royston, Georgia. Our tour guide was an older Thai man who owned a farm nearby, so I was excited that he brought along healthy snacks such as hummus, veggies, and my favorite fruit, pomegranates. From there, we went wine tasting at a winery owned by a man born in France. The experience was absolutely breathtaking. Talking to someone who lived a completely different life from you, hearing his struggles, and seeing where he ended up was motivating. **(Synquar Harston)**

I remember when I used to visit the lake just to get away. Sometimes I would first go grab lunch, then I would drive to Lake Mendota, and find a close parking spot next to the water. Once parked I always like to roll all my windows down to feel the breeze flow in and out of the car. I can hear the current hitting against the rocks. And birds with pitch sounds gliding in the blue sky. As I sit, I close my eyes and meditate. **(Andreya Gavins)**

My college friend Gordon and I took a trip up to Black River Falls, Michigan. The camping site was in a national park. The reason why it's called Black River Falls is because the rocks in the waterfall are black. There are several beautiful waterfalls rushing into a huge river and even water coming out of caves. There were rainbows over the water all the time. It was amazing to see something so clear and beautiful. Coming from the city of Chicago, I had never seen something like that. **(Isiah Pickett)**



There aren't too many moments that I have been in nature. If you know me then you know I hate it. I hate the smell of dead fish in the ocean. I hate the feeling of something touching my skin. The feeling in my body when I am in nature is all the hairs on my body standing up, and it makes it feel like I'm literally dying. I get to scratching and needing to go home to take a shower. I hate the feeling of hearing something rattling in the woods, like something is about to jump out and get me. I hate the feeling that a bird is going to be flying above me and poop on me. To me being outside in nature tastes like the food my momma used to force me to eat, like having to sit at the table until I finished it and that was never. So now that you know me, know I hate the outdoors. Catch me inside. **(Tanisha Milligan)**

In Burkina Faso when I was younger, I was part of the Scout movement. Also known as Scouting, it is a worldwide youth movement employing the Scout method. It is a program of informal education with an emphasis on practical outdoor activities including camping, woodcraft, aquatics, hiking, backpacking, and sports.

At the time, we were going camping most of the time. We stayed days or weeks depending on the objectives of the trip. And we implemented what we learned about nature and survival skills including finding our way in nature day and night.

One day, I was by myself at night trying to find my way back to the camp. I experienced an intense fear I had not experienced before. I saw shapes everywhere and heard strange noises. I got so scared that I got so cold and started shaking. And a minute later, I was so hot that I started sweating as if someone had poured a bucket of water on me. After a few deep breaths, I decided to keep moving no matter what. I finally arrived safely at camp.

This experience made me realize that most of my fears only come from my mind. One of the fights worth fighting is to fight to be a better version of myself every day. **(Souleymane Nikiema)**



The cool crisp air like the wind is whispering “winter is coming,” the bright light of sun not letting go. The leaves change colors from green to wild red. It makes me wish winter is here but not yet. **(Rosanna Lopez)**

Whenever I need to think or clean my mind, I would go on a nature walk or go sit at a park. It helps me to see and hear the animals, birds chirping, smelling the different scents of the different flowers. It makes me think how much freedom they have, so worry free, it helps me to clear my mind. **(Sally Phelps)**



Standing out in the rain, I can feel the water drops hitting me like beads bouncing off the kitchen floor. The rain really helps my mood. When I take a deep breath, I can smell freshness, kind of like walking through the veggie aisle in a grocery store. When the rain wets my hair, it fills my mind like the water on the Titanic. **(Cierra Jackson)**

As the green leaves start to change to orange, yellow, and a crispy brown, I can feel the breeze of summer drifting away into fall, with a fresh crisp scent of howling winds that almost touch the nape of your neck but kiss your cheeks. I can hear nature breathe as I sigh a sigh of relief. The warmth of my sweater brings me back while the whispers keep me calm upon the divine fall trees. I can touch all the eventful colors of life from the tarnished rose petals as the fall wind blows them away. I fall back onto a pile of leaves wishing upon every lit star in the quiet daylight that I can see. Fall was here and oh how I needed the nature of pure wings to surround me with beautiful things. As I surrender to the wind that snuggles my body with a cool gentle air, I can hear my mother yelling from the top of the hill: "It's time to come in." As I run to the sound of her voice, I can see the mist of my shallow breathing take part of nature as I can smell but also taste velvet hot sweet potato pie between the creases of my lips.

I am not really a nature type of guy, but the last thing I can think of was this past summer. I was hanging out with my friends, and I had my son with me. We decided to go to a beach in the Dells because it was really hot that day and my son wanted to be in some water. The whole time these fools took us through the woods in a place I was very unfamiliar with. We were going through some steep woods in the hills. Mind you, I am already afraid of heights plus I have my four-year-old son with me. I wasn't paying attention to the nature. All I felt was fear and thinking about the show Criminal Minds. I was doing my best to not look over the edge and show that I am scared because I had my son next to me walking in these random woods. I was trying to show him that we were going to be okay because I trusted my friends.

We eventually made it to the beach, which was a beautiful scene once we got there and my nerves settled. The sun was shining off the lake, people were jumping off of the cliff, and there

was overall pure joy in the air. All in all, we had fun, but I will not be doing that again. **(Rodney Poe Jr)**

Camping as a child was full of excitement and fun: smores, campfire, laughing children all on the run, tents and hiking, exploring nature at its best, poison ivy, quicksand, big bugs. What a test of survival! Fear but also enjoying the beauty of it. Nature at its best, a lifetime experience and a great gift. **(Endia Walls)**

Nature is one of the most beautiful things in life. I remember while growing up as a little girl, my family and I would have birthday parties on the lakefront, where there would be all different insects, nice beautiful ocean, boats, and the land full of beautiful trees. There was a nice long bridge from the beach that ran across the miniature highway into our community, railroad tracks and trains, and cars. Looking across the bridge you could see all of the houses, grocery stores, the dime store, beautiful green grass and daffodils, birds, snakes, dogs, cats, and people from all over swimming on the lake. Beautiful sun in the summer and in the winter lots of beautiful white snow. At night, the shining moon and in the day the smiling sun. Lifeguards, caterpillars, worms that would surface to the ground when it would rain, lightning bugs, mosquitos, flies, grasshoppers, swimming in the ocean, sand everywhere, and crabapples falling from the trees. **(Kimberly Rodgers)**



When I approach the door to my grandparents' wooden cedar cabin, I can see the fog of density on the window pane and door handles. "It's almost time to eat!" my mother shouts. "Please wash up for dinner" She glances across the table from the corner of her eyes only to catch me taking an apple crisp pumpkin cookie from her beautiful giving basket. She smiles and all I can do is smile back as I bite into my warm cookie just pulled from her oven where cooking is loved. I think to myself of all of the seasons, love has to be the reason why I love the fall of falls and the forgiving skies. **(Marcy Tibbs)**

I remember as a young boy visiting my father down south. My brother and kids that live across the street in a rundown trailer tricked me. We were out in the forest, where the trees were as tall as the Twin Towers. I could hear the different sounds of birds singing as if I was at a concert. Before long



we stumbled over upon a can in the midst of the tall grass that surrounded me. The little guy started banging on the can. Before long I lifted the can from beneath the mud from dirt. I was attacked by a nest of bees. I had numerous bee bites so my body felt like it was a pin cushion. My father had to bathe me in hot water and alcohol because there was a possibility I could have died! **(Ron Watson)**



Winding roads and lots of trees.
Last summer fling of the year.
Sailboats and paddle boats and lots of families.
Kids running and laughing, that's all you hear.
Got my cooler packed with snacks and beer,
Grills going and I can smell burnt hot dogs sneak past my nose.
Was nervous at first but glad I chose.
Water cold like winter nights
Kids jump in and start to fight.
Little fish swim around my toes.
Water is murky so their reflection shows.
Sand so squishy, it feels so mushy
Like Play-Doh in my toes.
Then the next step- f**k it's a rock
I should have kept on my Crocs.
The sun starts to set, we walk on the dock.
Kids looking tired, I guess no fire.
This was a trip so perfect to take
So many new memories at Devil's Lake. **(Amanda Von Behren)**

In the middle of a warm summer,
As I lay in the moist grass waiting for time to pass,
I think, what a bummer.
I waited my whole life to feel this way, but still I couldn't make you stay.
The look of love in your eyes, never did I think
We would speak of your demise.
Blades of grass grow and fall, symbolic of life.
All things living are preparing to die. Does anyone wonder why? **(Carissa Andrews)**

Grey and windy, chilly, and spooky leaves falling, trees empty
 Red, orange, yellow, brown trees, empty leaves falling, chilly and windy,
 one fall night walking down a park path walking with my lover
 feeling so happy and calm when if I was alone I would be terrified.
 Listening to the branches falling and animals crawling
 the trees looking behind me to make sure nothing was following me
 but in this moment in this late night nature walk
 I was enjoying the breeze looking at the full moon. **(Mikaylah Harris)**



First Instance

6:35 pm and the sun was starting to set.
 The roars are loud as my ears pop in landing.
 A newborn baby, crying loudly two rows behind me.
 My heart filled with anticipation and beating
 like I was in the front seat of the highest roller coaster.
 We are here, in a new environment, and I couldn't believe my eyes
 Blistering sun, palm trees, and bright green pastures.
 It was a short ride over the bridge.
 Upon arrival, we spread our oversized burgundy towel.
 Men and women are more than half naked in the scenery.
 They all have beers and other beverages in hand.
 In motion, my feet have never felt this before. Hot, but tolerable.
 It was a strange, grainy, unbalanced feeling.
 There was a green and brown slippery, slimy substance floating above



like I've never seen before.
 It was bunched at the shore, entangled.
 But I loved it.
 The smell of salt water in the air
 and calm whispering waves crashing was so pleasant.
 The feeling was unmatched.
 In this moment, time felt so still.
 In thought, I knew this is what real relaxation is.
(Danika Bethel-Johnson)

"Nature is a maximum expression of beauty and freedom."
 I am a guardian of its mountains, lakes, rivers, etc.

It is another typical morning of the year.
 A white rooster singing from the backyard.
 Announcing a time my journey starts

Mama Cotacachi is calling me, a mountain is calling me.
 I pack my food and water; a long day adventure begins.
 A cold breeze of fresh air is touching my face.
 I am walking a rocky and muddy narrow path.
 A mysterious wild green bush is my companion.
 Every step that I take, every step that I am away from home,
 I look at by the horizon and the sky is a contrast of red and orange colors,
 The sun starts shining.
 I am amused looking up at the green rocky mountain touching the sky. **(Blanca Laine)**

LOVING THE AUERBACH LOVE STORY

Students read two stories Emily Auerbach published in the Wisconsin State Journal about her parents' journey out of poverty, long-lived marriage, survival of adversity, and generosity towards the Odyssey Project.

Three words, Real Life Tears! I adored both stories about Bob and Wanda—specifically, the love Bob has for Wanda! I loved how they both had completely different backgrounds and the odds weren't in their favor. No one said it was a good idea for them to be together, but their love was much stronger than any hate could ever compare. . . .

Thank you, Emily, for writing this beautiful piece. This piece gave me so much emotion. The way Emily is able to describe Bob and Wanda's love was perfect! As I was reading, it almost felt like I was there. Seeing the way Bob and Wanda look at one another, this is a love that people pray for. I found these stories to be inspirational and well written. Thank you, Bob, for all you do with the Odyssey program, and thank you for sharing Emily. Bob is an incredible man, and I am stoked to meet him + learn! **(Dontaeva Acklin)**

The first opinion that crossed my mind after reading was on the character of Bob Auerbach. Wow! What a stand up, strong and resilient man. Being resilient is definitely a trait that I can relate to and possess. Immediately after reading about his love for Wanda, a Bible verse came to mind: "Love is patient and kind; love doesn't envy or boast; it isn't arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth."



Personally, I feel that in the reading, Bob graciously displayed this type of love to his wife, and life in general. **(Carissa Andrews)**

In the articles, you mentioned that you might have become a misanthrope if you would have experienced your father's negative formative experiences in Germany/England. I'm curious to know where your father thinks the USA is heading in terms of equity, values, etc. Personally, I see the rise of fascism and a rejection of truth to be terrifying, and it feels like we're in

1923 versus 2023, in terms of rising inequality and corruption. Fascism is on the rise, and lessons of history often seem to have been relegated to the landfill. What gives your father hope that we can be better as a nation? What books, ideas, pieces of music help bolster his spirits in these complex and frightening times? **(Lucas Benford)**

Your parents' love is an inspiration of what true love should be. It knows no bounds and doesn't hurt, but it encourages, heals, and uplifts. I think we all pray for a love like that. We live in a world where the word "love" is used like saying thank you or hello. My grandmother said, "don't let the world lie to you, true love doesn't lie, cheat or steal, it doesn't hurt." It sounds like that's what Bob and Wanda shared. I hate to use the word shared because it means past tense form. Reading the article, I find their love feels very much alive for me.

As a gay woman I wonder if I might find my forever love. I would want us to be as happy as Bob and Wanda, though people have and still do frown at the thought of someone like me finding love. People have yelled at me, given me and my partner at the time mean stares, but I still yearn for true love. I pray that my partner is as strong as Wanda and Bob and that we'll make it. **(Jasmine Benson)**

Both stories are very inspiring. Not only do they inspire me to learn to work together with my partner as Bob and Wanda did but also to not let anyone get me down or judge my relationship. Others can only judge your relationship based on what they hear or see. They are not the ones in that relationship.

My idea of love is very simple. I want a man who will love me, for me, unconditionally. I want him to be respectful, kind, honest, and forgiving. My views on aging are that I do not have any. There is a reason for this. One of my dearest fears is passing away, with the understanding that we all do pass away. But to think that I age with this person, through the entirety of my life and then for them to pass away or I pass away and have to live on this earth without each other is devastating.

When it comes to discrimination, my values are not what I have been taught. I was raised that a man should not love a man romantically, and the same when it comes to women. I believe people are going to love who they want to love. Whether they are man to man, woman to woman, or woman to man, love is love in my eyes. These are views that I will instill in my children as well. **(Danika Bethel-Johnson)**

The story is an absolutely beautiful story and gives me hope when it comes to love. I didn't come from a family of marriages and love. I grew up raised by a single mother, and I am a single mom myself. I have never witnessed true love. Reading about all the obstacles they experienced makes me want to become successful so I can give back in a similar way. **(Mia Cannon)**

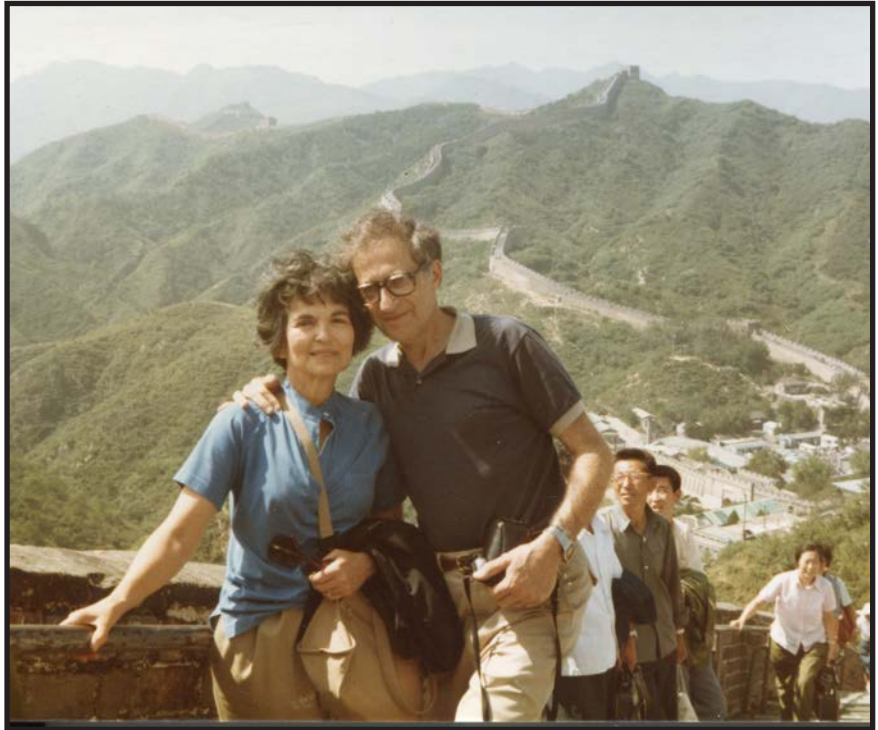
I first want to say thank you for sharing such an inspiring story. This story is full of love, passion, courage, and strength, to say the least. If anyone ever struggled with lack of hope on what I would call "True Love and Success," I would encourage them to read this article. Sometimes life can throw us plenty of obstacles that will often leave us discouraged. I've come to learn it's not what happens to you that matters, but what you do about what happens to you that's most important.

Bob fighting for his life of deportation at the age of ten set the bar for his attitude of success, I believe. He was determined to create the life he wanted and not what was handed to him. That reminds me of myself. Growing up in Chicago, I feel I was written off to be a statistic. At the age of 12 I was arrested in grade school for bringing alcohol to class. Refusing to go into details at this time, I can still hear the voices of my teachers who believed I would amount to nothing in life. I still fight with those voices today. Bob's story teaches us when you want something, go after it and never give up. Also, when you get what you want, make sure you help someone else get what they want. **(Vernell Cauley)**



I think their love is a beautiful thing. The fact that a love lasts so long is crazy in this day and age! Nobody loves for love anymore. It's all about what that person can give. To come to America escaping something tragic and making the story so beautiful is awesome, and I wish for something like that! A love like that! His story is inspiring, and it shows how dedicated he was to getting his education. **(Mekicia Davis)**

I love that they stayed strong together even though people didn't approve of them being together. They didn't let anything get in the way of them being together. As long as they had each other and were happy, that was all that mattered.



For me, love is the most secure feeling. Love is having a companion, best friend, lover, partner, cheerleader, advisor, and cuddle buddy through every avenue in the journey of life. I felt Bob and Wanda had all those things within their relationship. **(Andrea Evans)**

Wanda and Bob both navigated through poverty. Bob escaped deportation to concentration camps and Hitler's Germany. Wanda escaped from the hills of Tennessee without money and running water. She had a dream to finish college. Wanda and Bob met at Berea College, which enabled poor students to work their way through school, and they married at the same college. Both worked hard for their family with fulfilling careers at UW Madison. They were married 62 years until Wanda's passing in 2012. Bob copes with the death by inspiring others with his music. His contribution of \$100,000 on his 90th birthday was a gift for so many. Bob's devotion to help break the cycle of generational poverty and offering a program to help empower students to achieve their dreams gives others a head start to a bright future.

I can relate to how they were raised far from one another and met in the US. My parents are of

different cultures and lived in poor communities. My father also fled the south in the late 50s from racism and poverty. He made his way to Wisconsin, where he met my mother. My parents were forbidden to marry. My mother was an Irish/German raised in Las Vegas, Nevada, by very strict racist parents. I sadly say they are my grandparents, but I have only met them one time, which was not fun or too memorable. I can also relate with Wanda, being a person raised with little or no money, to make sure to graduate college and have a fulfilling career. I am on my way, and I will get everything I achieve. Discipline and hard work will get me there. **(Aleesha Flowers)**

The story of Bob and Wanda is a Love Story at its best. I always believed True Love is Real. This story is proof! I want to say, Thank you for your generous contribution to Odyssey. Because of you, I have a HUGE chance at a brighter future! **(Andreya Gavins)**

This is a great story! I wish/hope that I will find a love like this. Nowadays people don't want to get married or have that equality in a relationship. No matter how much they were different, the love overcame it all, which is truly a goal of mine. **(Mikaylah Harris)**

Growing up I was always surrounded by family. Even when we were at odds, I always held a level of love and respect because they're family, right? So, growing up and going out into my own life, I started to form relationships (like partner, friends) like family. I think it's beautiful to see Bob and Wanda's love for one another and the lengths they went to in order to provide for their family. **(Synquar Harston)**

I think Bob is a really good man, and if I ever had a chance, I would tell him how awesome he is. I'd thank him over and over and over again. He is the type of person the world needs. I want him to know he is very inspiring because no matter what obstacles he faced in life, he kept on going, kept on fighting, and kept a good heart towards other people.

This is awesome because even though in his life he endured much discrimination and got to see firsthand how society can just be unfair for some people, I love the way that he is deciding to give back by donating to Odyssey and using his time as a piano man for older people. (His wife would be so proud.) I think that's awesome, and he will be blessed for sure.

I'd also liked to agree with him on his thoughts about marriage and love. I couldn't agree more with his idea of there is no head of the household, and I love the way that he viewed his wife as an equal. **(Cierra Jackson)**

I am privileged to read the beautiful love history of Wanda and Bob Auerbach. The beginning of their lives was full of barriers and obstacles; however, the love of each other could overcome any difficulties on their journey. Even when Wanda is not physically here anymore, Bob is still loving her as the same

first day when they met together.

Why is so difficult to see that kind of relationship in the present? Perhaps we have forgotten the essence of real love, the essence of respect of each other. Probably our busy lives are replacing the significance and value of "Love." **(Blanca Laine)**

That era when they were in college and getting married seems so timeless, like a movie. They had undying love and respect for one another. Mr. Auerbach at his early life escaped from the Nazis to become a refugee in America, and he was able to go to college and to give back to the community. **(Rosanna Lopez)**

There were a few lines that stood out to me most in "Auerbach Wedding Anniversary." The first was, "Although my mother owned only one skirt and two blouses, her beauty, kindness, and intelligence led fellow students to select her as their May Queen." This line jumped out at me for a couple of different reasons. Wanda sounded like she carried herself with grace. Others must have noticed for her to have been voted May Queen.



But, more importantly, this excerpt reminded me of the kind of woman I aspire to be. I have never had much in terms of material things and that has kept me humble. What I would like, though, is to no longer struggle. I enjoyed the part where it was asked, "What is it that makes their love so golden? Perhaps most importantly, their marriage thrives on absolute equality and respect." This story gave me insight into what might have been the trouble in a number of my relationships with men; there wasn't any respect like the kind between Bob and Wanda. **(Giana Mason)**

My first thought was this is the type of love that I want. I want to be married for as long as I can be to a man who loves the things I love, like family. I want someone who will stand beside me through it all. I believe the best partnerships are between people who come from two completely different worlds. Get to know what makes them the person they are today and the different traditions and values they grew up on.

(Tanisha Milligan)

The Auerbach story is fascinating and inspiring. It is fascinating because they did not only overcome the odds and their differences, but they also proved their detractors wrong by loving each other from the first day of their love to the last.

It is inspiring because we can and should learn from their simplicity, their complicity, their humanism, and the way they loved and respected each other. I'd like to note that this story also points out the fact that "Love" needs to be maintained perpetually with some attention and meaningful acts in everyday life.

From this story, I recall what my wife and I faced when we decided to get married. I am a Muslim from a Muslim family, and my wife a Catholic from a Catholic family. Each family wanted us to convert, each to the other's religion. It was so complicated because back home the family is so important; it is the basis of everything. It is almost impossible to get engaged without the two families if you want to follow the tradition and to get their blessings.

After a long period of negotiation, they finally realized that we really loved each other and that we were not going to give up. They found a way to adapt so we could get married in 2010.

Since then, we have lived together in perfect harmony. She goes to church and lives based on Christianity, and I do the same with my religion. We never had a problem due to our different religions because we truly respect each other's religion.



Our three children have both Muslim and Catholic names in respect to our religions. Later, they can pick the religion they want (hopefully, one of the two religions) without us imposing them.

(Souleymane Nikiema)

I desire to have the family values of having a loving marriage, a loving home, and a loving family. A house is not a home if it's not a loving, caring, and safe haven for family to build memories. I desire to find a love and to be loved and build a strong foundation. **(Sally Phelps)**

I believe what Bob and Wanda had was beautiful and rare. No matter what, they were truly partners and equal. Despite any adversity or obstacles they may have faced in life or marriage, they worked through it together as a team, which is another rare thing nowadays. Bob is a humble and noble guy with a huge heart. Any loss, you suffer grief, and I couldn't imagine his pain. No void can fill that loss.

You find life's pleasures to live to make them proud. I never get over the loss of my mother. I miss her every day and keep living. Comment: I am truly thankful for Odyssey and Bob's support and love to the program. What Odyssey staff and family give is a very powerful but RARE THING. **(Isiah Pickett)**

Basically, what I get from these two stories is overcoming adversity, loving one another, and anything is possible. Their story is so strong and moving it helps add fuel to my fire and motivation to keep loving and moving forward. Love is so strong you can do amazing things with it. Without Bob I probably wouldn't be in this position with the Odyssey Project. **(Rodney Poe Jr)**

The two stories of the Auerbach family are two of the most loving, passionate, caring, bravest and modest love stories that touched my heart and soul. Wow! At the beginning, his family went through the most terrifying experience. They bravely overcame their challenges from great careers as lawyers escaping from Hitler. I have heard and watched movies of others' terrible experiences including death for those who didn't make it through this horrible time of their life. May they all rest in Heaven.

Then there is the most loving love story (the American Dream) of being with the love of your life for 62 years. Mr. Robert Auerbach is amazing. He lives his life through his wife, Ms. Wanda Auerbach, carrying on their love, their dream, and happiness that they built together. He turned to

music and sharing their life and spreading their love. It is wonderful, beautiful, brave, and amazing to continue to live through his better half.

He has a daughter, Emily Auerbach, to share and continue the dreams and goals her parents' grandparents started, to help others. How thoughtful and amazing to have grown an empire so high that it is continuing on an on.

(Kimberly Rodgers)

Someday I wish to have a \$500 wedding as you and Mrs. Auerbach had so it can last as long as yours did, versus paying \$100,000 and it lasts all of one season. Here are two people from a totally different background who found each other and loved each other. It was a marriage that lasted 62 years with love, laughter, song, and children. I absolutely love that for the both of you and your family. **(Marcy Tibbs)**

This is why my love life sucks (LOL). I literally feel this is how relationships should be. I believe every man should treat his woman like this. To go from having nothing to having so much shows a lot. I want to have someone be there for me like this. To have a loving spouse, I'm sure makes life so

much better. He touched so many lives. Reading the article makes me hopeful that one day, I will find the love of my life and we will upgrade each other's life in so many ways. I would tell him to write a book! A book on how to love! A book on how everyone is equal no matter what! Sadly, a lot of men think women are not equal.

(Amanda Von Behren)

I totally disagree with someone hating another person because of race. We as humans should understand that God didn't make one to be better than the other, for those who believe in God. We do hold our own talent or skills over someone; however, in my heart and soul, I believe in you! **(Ron Watson)**



ALUMNI CORNER

Alum Dominique Smith '23 chose Jasmine Banks '24 as her Woman of Courage to profile in December 2022.

JASMINE ALEXANDREA BENSON: A JAB AT LIFE

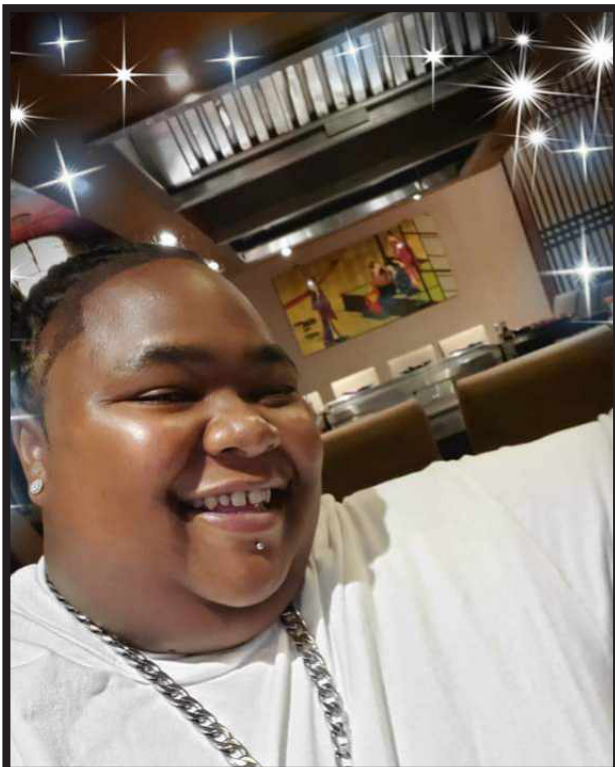
BY DOMINIQUE SMITH

When I think of home, I think of a familiar face emanating courage, a friend who became family while fighting her own silent battles. As a young adolescent she stood firm in her stance as the protector of our pack, the educator wise beyond her years, and the equalizer to conflicts that could potentially affect us all. I knew that with her as my friend, I was always safe and secure. Naive to anything outside my immediate world, I never considered the trials my friend was navigating through in life. It wasn't until my own lived experiences as an adult that I was able to understand the fuel behind her motivation to make a difference. As she would say, "When climbing the ladder, don't forget to reach back down." Through courage, Jasmine found ways to give back, get involved, and build others up, all while finding her voice that could have been silent forever.

As a child Jasmine was not afforded the privilege of a nurturing, safe, and stable environment. At an early age Jasmine was failed by the foster care system set up to protect her. She was exposed to harsh punishments, food deprivation, and the advances of monstrous acts of pedophilia. Each day was a battle of survival. Her only relief came when she was able to participate in extracurricular activities through local youth programs. Here she was able to live out her youth and escape the uncertainties of tomorrow. At the age of 10, I remember meeting this confident girl who was equally equipped with humorous wit as myself. I did not know the magnitude of pain and precariousness of the day. She fought through, to

live in the moment and engage with other youth whose biggest concern was their choice of snack, or getting the latest pair of popular shoes. She did not get bitter and she did not envy. Instead, she protected this peaceful safe zone she had established among her friends and basked in those moments of innocence and happiness.

Jasmine found her calling when she became a program director with the Salvation Army's youth center. Here she was able to tap into her own experiences as a child and provide resources and guidance to many youth who, like her, would have been lost to the systems designed to categorize them solely on their financial status. With a passion to inspire and educate the youth to live out their full potential, she created programs that allowed them to indulge their aspirations. With her support their dreams are always possible. She went above and beyond to create a safe haven for not only the youth but for their families, too. Recently she transitioned to working with youth who are experiencing behavioral issues. She understands that they may require that extra



dose of patience, persistence, and positive influence in their life. She strives to implement those aspects by redirecting their behaviors and offering outlets for redemptions. Through community service she helps youth rectify their actions, reinforce morals, and accept responsibility for their future. Jasmine saw an outcry and planted a pillar of support in a community for our youth.

As a woman of color and someone who decided to love outside of the religious requirements, Jasmine faced many days where she was met with discriminatory practices. In employment settings she was perceived as uneducated or completely dismissed because she was a woman of African descent. She eventually found her voice and the courage to remain confident in her stance to be heard and accepted as an equal contributor of intelligence. She found her voice and created herself a path of opportunity for continuous growth in her career field. That was only the beginning. Jasmine found the courage to live out loud in her truth, something she had battled with for years because of the fears of being shunned by society or even close friends or family. Courageously, she was willing to leave herself vulnerable and open to humility and accept the uncertainties of whether she'd still be accepted. Fortunately, she was met with overwhelming support and understanding, but she knew that there were many others who did not have that same support system. She made it her mission and found ways to educate others on the LGBTQIA community, putting herself on the front line to proudly advocate for tolerance, acceptance, and equality.

Home is not always what it seems from the outside looking in. Often, we must take pieces of experience to decorate our character. Jasmine Benson took a jab at life and fought through many obstacles that could have broken the average person. From surviving a flawed foster care system setup to protect her, she took that experience and became a pillar of the same community that failed her as a child. In her fight for acceptance and stability, she found the courage to advocate for others educating on tolerance and inclusion so that no one feels discriminated against or at a disadvantage in their life. It is this courageous nature that allows Jasmine to take her own trials and create trails for others to navigate with support and guidance. Courageously, she faces every day ready with an armored heart fit for a warrior. She is ready to battle life's many obstacles and open doors for others to feel accepted, supported, and protected. Jasmine is a woman of courage who selflessly thinks of others.



8th grade youth basketball picture (Jasmine top left, Dominique bottom left)