



Odyssey of the Mind®

Dear Odyssey of the Mind supporter,

Welcome to the 2020-21 Odyssey of the Mind (OotM) program year. I hope you and your family are doing well in this uncertain time. Thank you for your continued support for creative problem solving and for the OMers who depend on you.

While some of you have a lot of experience and some of you are new to OotM, remember, each year brings new Odyssey problems to solve and seemingly endless creative solutions that exceed all expectations. We hope you enjoy watching the teams work to solve them.

OotM benefits students at all learning levels, so it is important that you provide all students the opportunity to participate. Team members develop skills including critical thinking, creative problem-solving, time and resource management, and risk assessment. They also perform in public, build self-confidence, and learn to work on a team.

Team members will combine their knowledge and creativity when solving this year's problems. They will also have fun while learning how to use new resources and to adapt to unpredictable circumstances.

To be successful, teams must read, understand, and refer to the problem it selected, especially the limitations and scoring. As they work on their solutions team members will have questions. The answers to most of their questions can be found in the [Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide](#) or the problem. The *Program Guide* provides information that is necessary when solving this year's problems. It is updated and every coach and team member must read it to know all of the rules of participating.

Your membership provides you access to membership materials online and the clarification process. Please register individual teams as soon as possible in the [Members Area](#). By giving each team its own access, you're ensuring that replies to team-specific clarifications are kept confidential.

New this year, we are offering the option to participate virtually or in-person. If you sign up for an in-person tournament and it is cancelled, there will be an online option and you can remain on track to compete in-person at World Finals. You are also allowed to switch between the two by a deadline to be determined.

Encourage teams to have fun while creating and performing their solutions. If possible, try to arrange for teams to perform their solutions in an assembly, at senior citizen centers, and to community organizations. This type of practice is fun, benefits the teams, and the entertainment benefits the school and community.

Take time to read about Odyssey Angels (www.odysseyangels.org). It is an exciting charitable initiative inspired by Odyssey students that challenges people to improve their community through creative problem-solving in a competition that benefits society.

It is often said, and is very true, that by solving problems using creativity and teamwork all Odyssey teams are winners. Best of luck and enjoy the Odyssey of the Mind year!

Sincerely,

Samuel W. Micklus
Program Director