



## DEAR COACHES,

Here we are — spring. It’s about now that you find yourself sitting down in your kitchen, elbows on the table, hands clasped on your cheeks, you are staring at the calendar, and you finally come to this realization and say out loud (to no one in particular, except perhaps your dog), “Oh snap! We only have a few weeks until competition and there’s just no way they are going to be ready!” At this point, you take your hand, put it on top of your head, grab a handful of hair, and give it a good yank.

It’s at this time that in the back of your mind, questions start to emerge. Why did I agree to do this? Is this even close to worth all the time and work I’m putting into it? Are the kids even getting anything out of this?

Well, I’m writing this to remind you of some things you really already know, but are finding difficult to believe at the moment.

Yes, this is worth your time and effort, and yes, the kids are getting something very valuable out of this. . . and now I’m going to prove it to you. Below is an essay written by Colton Flick. He wrote this to include in his admission application to college.

“Odyssey of the Mind is a creative problem solving competition reminiscent of what might happen if you were to throw theater, visual art, creative writing, legal loophole-ing, and a healthy dose of winging it into a blender, and, on a whim, hit ‘puree’. It is an absolutely beautiful thing.

I began in fifth grade. I started a team at my elementary school. We failed miserably in competition — second to last, at the regional level — and we had a glorious time doing it.

An Odyssey solution might have a crazed Captain Ahab dragging a few unwilling tourists along for the ride as he hunts down Moby Dick. That’s pretty good, but for full Odyssey effect, we’re going to need at least one musical number, some conspiracy theory jokes, and a giant puppet or two. Now we’re getting somewhere.

After this, you have a spontaneous problem, or, as I like to call it, Winging It: The Game. Spontaneous problems give you a simple task, which you must complete as thoroughly and creatively as possible within the time allotted.

These are the concrete and factual details of how Odyssey works. It’s certainly a fun program. But this alone is not what

keeps me coming back over and over, working my way from second to last to seventh worldwide. There’s something to Odyssey that I’m not sure I can convey in text.

There’s a rush and a feeling that comes with being in a college stadium with 8,000 other kids screaming for your state and knowing that if you were to make an oh-so-witty Faulkner reference right now, they may groan, but they would certainly get it. My language can’t describe this. I’m not sure any can, really, but they can try.

There is a Danish word, “Hyggelig.” It is often translated woefully inadequately as ‘warmth’. That’s not really what it means, though. It’s a metaphorical sort of warmth. It’s the kind of warmth you feel

at two in the morning when you know you are the last people awake in the hotel and you’re 300 miles from home playing a game.

It’s the kind of warmth you feel when, all of a sudden, your teammate turns to you to say that no matter where we placed, this was all totally worth it. It’s the kind of warmth you feel when you’ve spent three hours angrily paper mache-ing a six-foot-tall whale tooth and you finally get to kick back and say to each other, ‘that is the single best oversized aquatic incisor you have ever seen.’ And it’s the

kind of warmth that keeps me coming back to Odyssey.”

Coaches, finally, trust me when I say this. When teams perform at their competition, they are going to do a better job than you ever thought they could. They might not — and probably won’t — win first place. But they are going to have learned something and gained some experience they could not have gotten anywhere else.

If you don’t believe me, just ask Colton.

~ Submitted by Randy Burton, NC.

~ Essay by Colton Flick, NC.

**“YES, this is worth your time and effort, and YES, the kids are getting something very valuable out of this...”**

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## MAX MANSFIELD AWARD WINNER ANNOUNCED

Poland is this year's winning Association for membership growth. It has added new teams in the hundreds this year and has steadily increased its memberships for over 12 years. The association is an inspiration to others as one of the largest OotM organizations in the world and is the first international association to win the Max Mansfield Award.

Co-Director Wojtek Radziwilowicz believes the hard work of growing an Odyssey of the Mind Association is important. "As Odyssey of the Mind people we can make a REAL difference. Any child participating in the program will learn life-lasting lessons. It depends on us, though, whether we stay content with seven kids only – or three or more thousand students from our state, province, or country. The effects are there for sure; the scale of it depends on the Associations," he said.

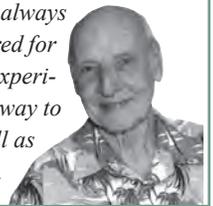
Wojtek's advice for growing an association is simple but effective, "Maintain quality in everything you do at all times – it WILL pay off; rely on word of mouth – in a world of constant informational noise, one-to-one recommendations of students, parents, and educators is *everything*; and Think Big! There is no reason why Odyssey could not be on nationwide television, receive support from federal authorities, get funding from the

top-of-the-line companies, or become a benchmark for any educational initiative."

He also said, "We are a program of indisputable ingenuity, proven effectiveness, and incomparable energy (ask any OMER) – make use of it!"

Wojtek, along with Association Director Darek Wyzykowski and the rest of Poland's volunteers have worked hard to make the association strong and serves a model to Associations around the world, "We feel honored, as we realize we're only one link in a chain of torch-bearers who pass the Nobel-sized idea of Odyssey of the Mind on to the next generation of creative problem-solvers. We also feel happy – for each and every Polish smile, question, and spark of creativity makes our country and our world closer to this dream of ours."

*Creative Competitions, Inc. created this award in honor of Max Mansfield and rewards membership growth. Max will always be remembered as someone who selflessly volunteered for Odyssey so that as many people as possible could experience creative problem solving. This award is CCI's way to honor his years of dedication and hard work as well as all Odyssey associations attempting to do the same.*



## Great Minds

### Pet Project: The Seeing Eye

Dorothy Harrison Eustis (1886 – 1946)

Dorothy Harrison Eustis was inspired by the capabilities of her pet German shepherd Hans. She was impressed at the dog's ability to not simply perform the tricks of a "show dog" but to perform jobs that could help humans. She turned this interest into a project that helped the lives of blind people by opening the first training school for guide dogs in the U.S.

Dorothy grew up in an affluent Philadelphia neighborhood where she was taught the importance of civic duty and was exposed to a great variety of animals at her family's summer home.

This love of animals led her to breed and train police dogs in Switzerland. While traveling, she was intrigued by a school in **Potsdam, Germany** that trained dogs to help blind World War I veterans. Dorothy knew they were on to something important.

She wrote an impassioned article about the importance of the school that was published in the *The Saturday Evening Post*. This article would go on to not only change Dorothy's life, but the lives of countless blind individuals.

Her article, *The Seeing Eye*, garnered much interest, and she received many letters in response. One letter was very special. It came from **Morris Frank**, a blind man from Tennessee who

longed to live a more independent life. He asked her to train a dog for him and in return he would train others to do the same.

Dorothy was so moved by Frank's letter that she flew him to Switzerland and followed through with his request. After a 5-week training session, she sent him back with a trained guide dog, knowledge, and 10,000 dollars to help others. His lessons were in such demand that she soon followed him to Tennessee and opened a school for guide dogs and the blind.

The school, finished in 1929, was also called **The Seeing Eye** – the term now widely used for guide dogs. The Seeing Eye Inc. soon expanded and moved to its current location in **Morristown, NJ** where it continues to help over 8,000 blind men and women regain their independence and where they've trained more than 15,000 dogs.

Throughout her life Dorothy devoted much of her wealth and time to the company. She served as the school's president until 1940 and then became Honorary President where she continued working to get publicity, funds, volunteers, and scientists to continue to work to better the breed and the school.

Her school became a model for the many others that have since opened around the world.

Dorothy was instrumental in helping others realize that the blind can have independent lives and she is often credited with helping change society's views of people with disabilities. She also saw potential to use animals in a beneficial way.

As she said in her article, "To think that one small dog could stand for so much in the life of a human being, not only in his usual role of companion, but as his eyes, sword, and shield! How many humans could fill those roles with the same uncomplaining devotion and untiring fidelity?"

# 2013-14 Long-Term Problem Synopses\*

*Tentative as of April 22, 2013. All problems have an 8-minute time limit.*

## Problem 1: Driver's Test

For this problem, teams will design, build, and drive a vehicle that will travel a course at least two times where a student driver attempts to complete tasks in order to pass a driver's test. The vehicle will travel using one propulsion system and then travel in reverse using a different propulsion system that uses stored human energy. The vehicle will encounter a directional signal and have a Global Positioning System (GPS) that talks to the driver. The team will create a theme for the presentation that incorporates the vehicle, a driver's test, a student, and the talking GPS.

*Divisions I, II, & III. Cost limit: \$145*

## Problem 2: The Not-So-Haunted House

The team's problem is to create and present an original performance that includes a "pop-up-style" not-so-haunted "house" where four special effects take place. The intent of the special effects will be to scare others but, they will produce a different result instead. The performance will include at least one character that experiences the special effects and a narrator who relays the experiences to the audience. It will also include a surprise ending. The special effects will be scored for originality and engineering.

*Divisions I, II, III, & IV. Cost limit: \$145*

## Problem 3: It's How We Rule

In this *Classics* problem, teams will re-create a King's Court from history and make their own Royal Court set in an original kingdom at a different time and place. The Historic Court will issue a decree that fits in with its history, while the team-created Royal Court will issue a decree that changes an everyday behavior for the people in the kingdom. The Historic court will be composed as the team wishes, but the original Royal Court will be made up of a leader, a minstrel that performs a song while playing a team-created instrument, and a jester that makes fun of the leader. The performance will include puppets and a Peoplet (a person portrayed as a puppet), and will be scored for humor.

*Divisions I, II, III & IV. Cost limit: \$125*

## Problem 4: The Stackable Structure

Teams will design and build a structure made up of separate components stacked on top of one another. The structure components will be made of only balsa wood and glue, and will be tested by balancing and supporting weights after they are stacked. Teams will be scored for the number of components they use in their final structure. Before they are stacked, the separate components will be integrated into an artistic representation of Earth. The team will include the stacking of the components, placement of the weights, and Earth into the theme of its performance. **Sponsored by NASA.**

*Divisions I, II, III & IV. Cost limit: \$145*

## Problem 5: Seeing is Believing

In this problem teams are to create and present an original performance about a community that feels threatened by something in a location it has never visited. The community townspeople will use a creative method to select one or more Travelers to visit and explore the location. While at the location, a Traveler will use a means of communication to send a message home to convince the community that there is nothing to fear. The performance will also include a narrator character, two rhymes about the travels, and a moving set piece.

*Divisions I, II, III & IV. Cost limit: \$125*

## Primary: The World's First Art Festival

The team's problem is to create and present an original humorous performance about a prehistoric art festival. The festival will include artwork, dance, music, song, and — of course — a team-created audience to experience it all. The team will also create a backdrop that is a replica of a cave painting.

*Grades K-2. Cost limit: \$125*

# Room to **GROW**

**COACHES AND OFFICIALS PROBLEM**



## A. The Problem

Your problem is to design, create, and wear a costume that changes size so that multiple people can wear it at the same time. The costume will be worn by one team member and then grow to fit as many people as possible.

## B. Limitations

1. The costume:
  - a. must be original, however, it may include commercially produced parts.
  - b. must not include components that are supported by the floor or something resting on the floor. The costume may touch the floor as long as the floor is not supporting it.
  - c. must be one costume worn by one competitor, then change to fit as many people as possible. The additional people can include team members, co-coaches, officials, parents, siblings, audience members, etc. When more than one person is wearing the costume, it must always be connected by costume materials.
  - d. can be anything you wish and can appear to be multiple items as long as the costume as a whole remains connected at all times.
  - e. must be worn by the original competitor at all times. You may add or remove components when you make your change. (Tiebreakers will be determined by how little is added or removed.)
  - f. must be safe in its design. For example, your costume isn't allowed to have AC power. If it is judged to pose potential harm to anyone or the competition site, it will be prohibited. See *2012-13 Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide*.
2. Everything counts toward the appearance of the costume including cosmetics, apparel, eye wear, etc., and the entire costume will be judged for creativity.
3. You will expand your costume in front of an audience so you must make sure your appearance is never inappropriate.

## C. The Competition

1. You will be assigned a number when you register at the competition site.
2. When your number is announced you move to the **Start Line** in costume. Anyone that will be added to the costume can wait at the opposite line.
3. A judge will blow a whistle to indicate that it's time to demonstrate the costume.
4. Demonstrating the Costume:
  - a. competitors will walk one at a time from behind the **Start Line** down the **Runway Line** and across the **Grow Line**. The Runway Line is a guide and not a boundary. The distance between lines will be approximately 35'.
  - b. once a competitor reaches the Grow Line, you will signal to the rest of your team that it's time to "grow." You will have 30 seconds to add as many people as possible to your costume. Then everyone in the costume will walk back to the Start Line together.
5. Qualifying rounds will run as needed, with finalists advancing at each stage.

## D. Awards

1. Your costume will be rated by how creative it looks in each version, the impact of the change, and the creativity of how it is designed to grow. Scoring will be determined as follows:
  - a. crowd response = 50%
  - b. trio of Judges = 50%
2. Trophies will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place.
3. A trophy will be awarded to the person with the most outstanding STYLE. In this problem, Style will be how well you make yourself stand out from the rest. Every contestant is eligible, even those who place 1st, 2nd, or 3rd.



# ODYSSEY OF THE MIND 2013-14 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Questions? Email [info@odysseyofthemind.com](mailto:info@odysseyofthemind.com) or call 856.256.2797

For new memberships or renewals, complete this form and return it with a check, purchase order, or credit card information below.

### Check one:

#### Divisions I, II, and III:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Individual school: Must register in the school name. May enter one team per problem per division in competition.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Two or more schools: Must share the same principal to be under the same membership. Use school district name on application. May enter one team per problem per division in competition.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Home-schooled students: Must include at least four home-schooled students. May also include up to three members from one school. May enter one team per problem in competition.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Community Group: May enter one team per problem per division in competition. May not be an organization established solely for the purpose of participating in Odyssey of the Mind. Please submit by-laws if this is a new membership.

#### Division IV:

- \_\_\_\_\_ All team members must be high school graduates and registered for at least one class at a college or university. They do not have to attend the same institution. May enter one team per problem. May proceed directly to World Finals.

Membership name \_\_\_\_\_ Membership number (for renewal, if known) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Grades covered by membership \_\_\_\_\_ School district \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_  
 Contact person (may be a coach) \_\_\_\_\_ Mailing address (for correspondence) \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_  
 Daytime phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Each individual membership costs \$135, but you will receive discounts if you purchase more than one membership. For each membership purchased, you get five **competitive long-term problems**, one **primary problem**, one copy of the **Program Guide**, and more!*

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Individual 2013-14 Odyssey of the Mind Membership @ \$135** .....
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Additional membership(s) for the same school or community group @ \$100** .....
- \_\_\_\_\_ **6-10 memberships for the same school district (must register at the same time) @ \$120** .....
- \_\_\_\_\_ **11 or more memberships from the same school district (registered at the same time) @ \$100** .....

### ODYSSEY OF THE MIND SUPPORT MATERIALS

- \_\_\_\_\_ A Creative Experience @ \$9.95 *Odyssey of the Mind promotional DVD* .....
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*\* Lots of Problems. . . And Tips to Make You More Creative @\$17 *Tips on problem-solving*.....
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*\* Creative Interaction @ \$17 *Discusses the importance of interaction between students*.....
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*\*Applying Your Creativity @ \$15 *Discusses different types of human creativity*.....
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Spirit of Creativity @ \$15 *Anecdotes about OotM written by Dr. Sam* .....
- \_\_\_\_\_ \*\*Spontaneous Combustion @ \$7.50 *Booklet of spontaneous problems and tips*.....
- \_\_\_\_\_ Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide @ \$7.50 (one is automatically included with membership) .....
- \_\_\_\_\_ Coaches Training Video @ \$20 *DVD with tips and techniques for coaches* .....
- \_\_\_\_\_ packs of Balsa Wood (premium grade AAA 36" x 1/8" x 1/8") @ \$20 per bundle (50 pieces).....

**Spend \$40 or more and get free Shipping & Handling!** Contact CCI for international S&H.

Orders under \$40 add \$7.50 for S&H. There is no S&H charge for membership packets.

\*\* These are books with a collection of long-term and/or spontaneous problems from past years.

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S&H \_\_\_\_\_

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### Payment Methods (Sorry we do not accept phone orders.)

- **U.S. Mail:** Send this completed form along with a check or Purchase Order, payable to CCI, or with your credit card info to: **CCI: 406 Ganttown Road Sewell, NJ 08080**
- **FAX:** Send this form along with a copy of your Purchase Order or credit card information and fax to (856) 256.2798.
- **Online:** Pay by credit card at [www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com).

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## Odyssey of the Mind

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Hey Teams,  
It's time to renew! Be among the first  
to receive next year's Long-Term  
problems.

Your friend,  
**OMER**

The *Odyssey of the Mind Newsletter* is published by Creative Competitions, Inc.

## Odyssey Angels

The Odyssey Angels program is in its final — and most difficult — stage: selecting the group that will attend World Finals and present its project at the Creativity Festival.

Much like judging in Odyssey of the Mind, those projects that utilize creative thinking will be given more weight than simply the best outcome. We hope that teams will continue their projects after the deadline to help those in need.

Anyone interested in forming a group can start now for next program year. Enrollment will begin July 1 and continue until the end of the year.

Visit [www.odysseyangels.org](http://www.odysseyangels.org) in May to see the results! Everyone that participated in the program is truly a champion, however, the communities that were helped because of your good deeds are the ultimate winners!

## Call for Submissions

If you enjoyed the article on page one from Randy Burton and have a story of your own to tell about Odyssey of the Mind feel free to email it to: [pressroom@odysseyofthemind.com](mailto:pressroom@odysseyofthemind.com) for consideration.

We love hearing everyone's odyssey story. It can be a testimonial, college application essay, team story, or anything you think would inspire others! We look forward to hearing from you.

## Odyssey Anniversaries

Correction: The following associations were omitted from the Winter 2013 edition's list of 30<sup>th</sup> anniversaries:

• **GEORGIA** • **COLORADO** • **WISCONSIN**

We are proud to have these veteran associations still going strong. Congratulations to all and thanks again for your hard work!

