

Trumbull Teams Do Well at State Odyssey of the Mind Competition

Four Trumbull Odyssey of the Mind teams participated in the Connecticut State Odyssey of the Mind competition in Bethel, Connecticut on Saturday, March 27. Close to 150 teams from various towns and cities competed. For the past seven years, Trumbull Odyssey of the Mind Teams have participated at the state competition and, for the past five years, at least one Trumbull team has advanced to the World Finals. This year's teams were from Tashua, Hillcrest (two teams), and Trumbull High.

This was the first time a team from Tashua Elementary School participated. They placed 13th at the state competition in their problem, Food Court. The team of 5th grade students includes James Casola, Jorge Eckardt, Emily Mahoney, Molly Malloy, Elise Rimkunas, Steven VanZyl, and Keerthi Yalamanchili.

One Hillcrest Middle School team competed in the Discovered Treasures problem. They came in first in their long term performance and sixth overall. Members of this team of sixth and seventh graders are Amanda Daigle, Rishav Jauhri, Henry Schott, Felix Seip, and Sarah Thirkield.

The second Hillcrest team placed fourth in their Food Court problem. Megan Kelly, Madison Kustom, Rory Morrison, Josh Pavel, and Mike Zabin make up this team of seventh graders.

Trumbull High's team placed first overall in their problem, Discovered Treasures. They will move on to compete at the World Finals next week from May 26th – May 30th at Michigan State University. Members of the team are Ellen Carpenter, Bonnie Deal, Jeremy Eckl, Brooke Hayden, Steven Schillaci, and Alyssa Zabin.

Odyssey of the Mind is an international problem solving competition for students of all ages. It consists of two parts: long term and spontaneous problem solving. Each year the Odyssey of the Mind organization publishes five long term problems and teams choose the problem in which they would like to compete. Teams must have at least five, but no more than seven, members. The teams work from October to March on their long term solutions.

Team members must solve all parts of the problem on their own without any assistance from their parent coaches who are responsible for helping them develop alternative ways to solve problems and to expose the team to various methods and materials they may wish to use as part of their solution.

The second part of the program is the spontaneous problem solving. Teams practice the three types of spontaneous problems – verbal, verbal hands-on, and hands-on – throughout the year. These problems are designed to be short term problems that may require teams to give a verbal response to a problem, make a structure and explain the way it was constructed, or complete a task with different given materials.

At the competition, teams present their long term solution within an eight minute time limit. There are specific criteria and rules that judges use to score the long term presentations. At the end of the presentation, judges come up to the team members and ask them about their presentation. The teams must also compete in the spontaneous portion of the competition. To do this, the team enters a room alone and is asked by the judges to solve a certain problem within a specific time frame.

The final score that determines placement in the state competition is a combination of the long term performance score and the spontaneous score.

For more information about Odyssey of the Mind, visit the Connecticut website (ctom.org) or the national Odyssey of the Mind website at www.odysseyofthemind.org.



Trumbull High School Odyssey of the Mind Team Division 3 Problem 3 "Discovered Treasures" (From Left team members are: Jeremy Eckl, Steven Schillaci, Alyssa Zabin, Ellen Carpenter, Bonnie Deal, and Brooke Hayden)