Maryland and DC Odyssey of the Mind
2025-26 Alumni Scholarship

Maryland and DC Odyssey of the Mind is proud to announce the second annual Alumni Scholarship. This scholarship is not based on financial need or academic performance. It is instead awarded to a Maryland or DC Omer who embodies the spirit of Odyssey by providing a unique and creative solution to a Problem put forth by the Board of Directors. All entries will be reviewed by the Board, and the team will determine the winner.

<u>Application requirements</u>
- ☐ Applicants must be a current high school senior or student enrolled in higher education or a vocational program. Students should provide documentation of acceptance or enrollment.
- ☐ Applicants should provide a letter from a coach stating that you were a member of a team that participated in Odyssey of the Mind for at least one year.
- ☐ Applicants must be involved in OotM as a competitor, coach, or judge/volunteer during the application year.

Please email solutions to alumni@mdodyssey.org by 11:59 pm on Sunday, March 15, 2026. The winner will be announced at the state tournament on March 22.

<u>The Problem: Investigating 2026</u>

The year is 5026. Halley's Comet no longer visits the earth every 86 years; it crashed into Jupiter long ago. Humans are still the same as they were in 2026, but they are no longer confined to Earth. They now enjoy emigrating to all sorts of fascinating planets throughout the Milky Way Galaxy and beyond thanks to the creative discoveries of wormhole technology. Colonies established within the Firefly Solar System are a favorite place for people to settle, since the climate is perfect for human habitation.

At the main University on Mal, the second planet from the center star, the chairman of the history department has organized a trip to study the ancient civilizations on the home planet, Earth. The teams of students are armed with the latest instruments so that they can see for themselves what life on earth was like 3000 years ago. They step into the wormhole and in a matter of a few hours, they find themselves actually standing on planet Earth. After setting up camp and establishing all the necessary tents, the teams begin to dig.

The first discovery is a curious item; it is a round device with numbers at its edge. "Ah ha!" shouts the esteemed Department chairman, "you've found a …………" What have they found?

Your problem is to have the teams dig up 10 items that are common today, but in 5026, scholars have NO IDEA what we use them for. Your job is to create outrageous, but plausible explanations of what the items you select were used for. You may include photos, diagrams, and illustrations with your explanation. The spirit of this problem is to create plausible yet outrageously wrong explanations of how people in 2026 use the objects you select.

There will be no clarifications for this problem.