



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Brookfield, Connecticut – April 17, 2021

Imagine you had to assemble and ride a vehicle that performs a special effect, create a character that enters virtual reality, recreate Jack’s storybook adventures with a magical growing beanstalk, build a balsa wood trap that will bear weight, or develop a superhero character who wears socks with “special powers.” Now, just to keep things interesting, imagine you had to do this using only recycled materials and with a dash of humor! Students from all around Connecticut have risen to the challenge to implement *their original ideas* to do exactly that and compete at the 40thth **Annual Connecticut Odyssey of the Mind (CTOM) State Tournament!**

The pandemic challenged CTOM to host its first virtual tournament. CTOM salutes all the hard work, creativity, teamwork, flexibility, and perseverance required of each team that competed. This year’s judges were extremely impressed with the creative problem solving and imagination on display!

Odyssey of the Mind (OM) is the largest international creative problem-solving competition in the world. Millions of students from kindergarten through college have participated in OM since its inception in 1979. The program is **STEAM** focused, employing concepts from science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics, in conjunction with critical thinking skills, creativity, and teamwork. Teams of up to seven students meet weekly for more than six months under the guidance of a volunteer adult coach to develop their solution to one of five long-term problems. Importantly, *the solutions are 100% created by the students*. And for some added challenge, this year students also solved a spontaneous verbal challenge online under strict time constraints!

Congratulations to our teams eligible to advance to either the Odyssey of the Mind Virtual World Finals or the in-person World Finals at the Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Florida on June 11th and 12th.

Gold Medalists:

Charter Oak Academy, West Hartford
Coginchaug Valley Education Foundation, Durham (two teams)
Spring Glen School, Hamden
West Rocks Middle School, Norwalk (two teams)
King School, Stamford
Ridgefield Library, Ridgefield
Kids Helping Kids, Stamford (three teams)

Silver Medalists:

Ridgefield Library, Ridgefield
Hillcrest Middle School, Trumbull



For a glimpse of the creativity of these teams, visit the [CTOM website](#) or [Facebook page](#) to view the 2021 Celebration Video. Congratulations to all teams!

Additional background on the program and contact information may be found at www.odysseyofthemind.com and www.ctom.org. Schools, libraries, homeschools, and community groups are encouraged to join the fun by forming teams of students in grades K-12 this fall and participating in CTOM's tournament in March 2022.
