



## CONNECTICUT ODYSSEY OF THE MIND KICKS-OFF 43<sup>RD</sup> SEASON WITH NEW PRESIDENT AND STATEWIDE INFORMATION WEBINAR

Interested educators, students and caregivers are invited to join webinar on September 27<sup>th</sup>

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**WESTON, CT, September 15, 2023** – Connecticut Odyssey of the Mind (CTOM) is thrilled to announce the start of its 43<sup>rd</sup> season, inspiring students and their communities through creative problem solving and STEAM-focused enrichment opportunities. As teams begin to form across the state, CTOM has announced its new board president, Jake Williams. After over a decade of board service, including the last four in the role of Board President, Mimi Owen, a Director of IT Program Management at Nestle', has handed over the role and been appointed to the new position of Past President.

"The CTOM program inspires students to create using science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM), while teaching public speaking, collaboration and leadership," explained CTOM President Jake Williams. "I am thrilled to take over the leadership of the organization at such an exciting moment in our organizational history. For me, OM has many layers. There are the high school memories of working with my team in the science lab, the bonding, and the learning. Secondly, there's my time as Captain, watching children discover and learn."

Williams first joined Odyssey of the Mind in 1994, as a high school participant. "OM was introduced by our new science teacher, Mr. McNutt," explains Williams. "We won the California Regionals, followed by the State competition, and then took a road trip to Colorado for the World Finals. Coming from a small farm town, this event marked the first time I had left California and the first time I met someone from another country." Upon moving to Connecticut, Williams facilitated the program in the Bethel school district for five years, after which he joined the CTOM Board and became a Problem Captain.

Williams is a seasoned professional with 20+ years of experience in Software Design and Programming and extensive non-profit volunteer experience. Throughout the years he has served the organization in various positions, most recently participating in the national Odyssey organization's Shadow Program at World Finals.

Odyssey of the Mind is a creative problem-solving program for students K-College that teaches students to think not just outside the box but BEYOND the box! Teams of up to seven students are given a problem to solve at the beginning of the school year and work together to come up with a solution which they present as a theatrical performance at the Connecticut Odyssey of the Mind State Competition on March 16, 2024, at Southern Connecticut State University. Each year, hundreds of K-12 students from across Connecticut come together to participate in the rigorous, project-based academic competition. Winning CT teams continue their Odyssey by competing against students from across the United States and over 20 countries at the Odyssey of the Mind World Finals at Iowa State University.

CTOM will host a statewide informational webinar on Wednesday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 7:00pm. Interested students, caregivers, educators and after-school providers can find details at <http://ctom.org/info-session/>.

Additional background may be found at [www.ctom.org](http://www.ctom.org) and [www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com).

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