

## **Team from Rhodes Elementary earns spot in Odyssey of the Mind World Finals**

An Odyssey of the Mind team from Rhodes Elementary School in Chino has won the opportunity to advance to the creative challenge competition's 2016 World Finals, to be held May 25 to 28 at Iowa State University.

Team members, all fifth graders at Rhodes, are Vikram Senthilkumar, Vishnu Sriram, William Sahagun, Sohan Bondada, Jerry Brown, Jayden Churchill, and Analiese Miller. Team coaches are parents David Miller and Gem Sahagun, who help the students with a long term challenge that is part of the competition, and parent Stayci Churchill, who assists the students on a spontaneous challenge. Churchill, the mother of team member Jayden, is a teacher at E.J. Marshall Elementary School in Chino.

The team earned a spot at the World Finals by placing first in their division at the California State Odyssey of the Mind Tournament, held April 2 at the University of California, Riverside.

The team's creative challenge for the World Finals is to build, ride on, and drive a no-cycle, recycling vehicle. It has to pick up discarded items, adapt them in some way, and then deliver them to places to be re-used. The vehicle has to travel without pedaling for propulsion. In addition, the driver will have an assistant worker riding on the vehicle that will help process the trash items being repurposed. They will make an unplanned stop along the way to perform a random act of kindness. Cost limit to complete the project is \$145.

It is the same challenge the Rhodes team had at the state level.

More than 800 teams from around the world will compete in the 37<sup>th</sup> Odyssey of the Mind World Finals. The competition emphasizes creativity and teamwork and has grown into the largest international creative problem-solving competition worldwide, according to the Odyssey of the Mind website.

Churchill said this is the second year in a row that the Rhodes team has placed first in its creative challenge and division at the state level.

"They advanced last year as well, and competed in the World Finals in Michigan," Churchill said. "It was an incredible experience, so much that they were determined to make it happen again this year. This type of success and achievement in this competition two years in a row is very unlikely. We never dreamed they would do it again, so you can imagine how proud we are of the team."



The Odyssey of the Mind team from Rhodes Elementary School in Chino are named California Odyssey of the Mind State Champions in their division on April 2 at the University of California, Riverside. They have earned the chance to participate in the 2016 Odyssey of the Mind World Finals in May in Iowa.