

STEM team is off on another Odyssey

Fond du Lac team is off to World Finals

For Action Reporter Media

Fond du Lac's STEM Academy is advancing to the World Finals for Odyssey of the Mind competition.

The team earned the right to advance to world competition by finishing first in state competition March 22 in Madison.

World Finals will be held at Iowa State University in . Team members are Mason McGrath, Miles Dennis, Sophie Schmidt, Jared Ott, Eleanor Sitter, Allison Riley and Alexis Lord. The placed first in Division I with their solution to the problem "The Not-So-Haunted House."

The team's problem was to create and present an original performance that included a "pop-upstyle" not-so-haunted "house" where four special effects take place.

Although the intent of the special effects were to scare, they produced different results instead, according to a press release from the Fond du Lac School District. The performance required at least one character to experience the special effects and a narrator who relays the experiences to the audience. It also included a surprise ending. The special effects were scored for originality and engineering.

The team's performance included talking furniture, magic acts and various illusions.

The team also had to develop four specialty

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Members of the STEM Academy Odyssey of the Mind team that won at state competition are, from left, Alexis

Lord, Allison Riley, Sophie Schmidt, Mason McGrath (back), Eleanor Sitter, Miles Dennis and Jared Ott. The team advances to World Finals in May in Iowa. SUBMITTED PHOTO

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items to be scored in the style category. The team chose the overall construction, design and engineering of their teamcreated furniture, as well as team-developed songs for this category.

The final element of Odyssey of the Mind is called spontaneous. In the spontaneous portion of the competition, students must generate a solution to a never seen problem through quick thinking and working as a team.

The team's total combined scored in all three categories earned them the Division I State Championship.

Students prepared for the competition by studying science, math, art and language arts to develop an eight-minute solution to the problem. The five-month process included the OM team researching special effects, learning about communication, researching music, studying language, practicing creative problem solving, writing a play and creating building plans. In addition, students learned how to operate power tools safely. Students then combined their acquired knowledge and skills to create a production.

The students will represent Fond du Lac and the state of Wisconsin at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa, May 26 through 31. They will compete against future world leaders from more than 33 countries.

The team's journey to Ames will start with further work on their teamcreated solution and fundraising to make the trip possible. Anyone wishing to learn more about the team's odyssey or aid in financing the trip may contact Archie Baribeau at STEM Academy.