



Class of 2020
Open World Learning Community
Graduation Program



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Order of Events

Processional

“Pomp and Circumstance” by the Minnesota Orchestra

Greetings from Administration

David Gundale, Principal

Dr. Joshua Delich

Greetings from the Board of Education

Jessica Kopp, Director

Faculty Remarks

Clara Raineri

Luke Turvold

Parent Remarks

Tammy Plaman

Student Remarks and Performances

Conferring of Diplomas

Steve Marchese, Director

Call of Roll of the Class of 2020

Tom Totushek

Presentation of the Class

David Gundale, Principal

Closing Slideshow

A Note From the Principal

Class of 2020,

Congratulations on your graduation. Earning a diploma from Open World Learning Community and the St. Paul Public Schools means a lot. It not only confirms that you have completed the required number of credits determined by the State of Minnesota and the St. Paul School Board of Education. It also means that you have completed a significant number of service hours to your school and community and completed a senior project. I am very proud of you for all of your accomplishments and that you have persevered through some very challenging times. It has been a great honor to be witness to and a participant in your development over the last several years. I truly believe that you will be agents of change and leaders in this world.

Thank you very much.

Your Proud Principal,

David Gundale



**OPEN
WORLD
LEARNING**

Class of 2020



**Emi Stiefel
Alperin**

*Binghamton
University*

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

*What extracurriculars were you involved
in?*

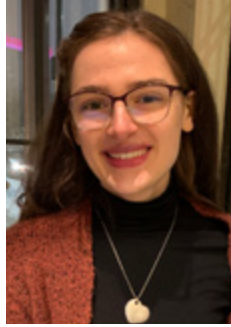
United Synagogue Youth and yearbook

*What advice would you give to the younger
students in your crew?*

Hard work pays off.

*What do you miss most from “normal life”
during the pandemic?*

Seeing my friends and getting to have a
normal end to senior year.



Grace Bellamy

*University of
Chicago*

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord in 11th grade

*What extracurriculars were you involved
in?*

Swim team, the Purple Press, and Outward
Bound.

*What advice would you give to the younger
students in your crew?*

If you do it now, you don't have to do it
later.

*What do you miss most from “normal life”
during the pandemic?*

I miss having social interaction outside my
immediate family. And going out to eat.



Erin Belmares

*Metropolitan
State University*

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

*What advice would you give to the younger
students in your crew?*

Procrastination is like you clingy toxic
ex so just do your work and turn it in on
time.

*What do you miss most from “normal life”
during the pandemic?*

Being able to hug my friends.



**Henry
Bowring-
McDonough**

*Minnesota
State University
Mankato*

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
11th grade - Du Nord.

*What extracurriculars were you involved
in?*

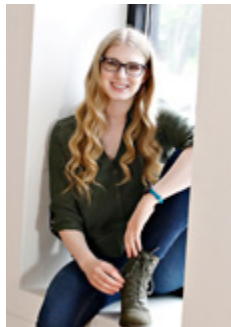
Theater, archery and choir, if choir counts.

*What advice would you give to the younger
students in your crew?*

DO NOT PROCRASTINATE! MOTI-
VATE!

*What do you miss most from “normal life”
during the pandemic?*

Seeing people.



Shayla Brooks

*University of
Arizona*

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Junior year fall fieldwork

*What extracurriculars were you involved
in?*

Synchronized swimming

*What advice would you give to the younger
students in your crew?*

I promise, whatever it is, it does not matter
as much as you think it does.

*What do you miss most from “normal life”
during the pandemic?*

Being able to hang out with people without
thinking about staying far away.



Jedi Casas

*Washington State
University*

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Du Nord

*What extracurriculars were you involved
in?*

Ultimate frisbee, volleyball, and basketball.

*What advice would you give to the younger
students in your crew?*

Having good friends is key.

*What do you miss most from “normal life”
during the pandemic?*

Sports.



Esai Cueto Remedios

Century College

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
Push yourself to the limit.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?
Hanging out with the boys.



Annet Chautla Suastegui

Augsburg University

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

What extracurriculars were you involved in?
Dare to be Real (D2BR), Girl Scouts, and yearbook.

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
Talk to people, don't close yourself off

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?
I miss being able to see friends.



Abby Davis
St. Olaf College

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Outward Bound - Camp Du Nord

What extracurriculars were you involved in?
Outward Bound, ultimate frisbee, volleyball, yearbook, and choir.

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
Do the formative assignments, they help you in the long run.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?
My friends, athletics, choir, and crew.



Eponine Diatta

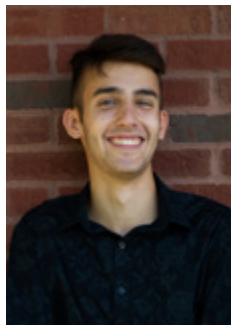
Pace University

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

What extracurriculars were you involved in?
Theatre

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
Be nice to Nora, she'll miss me really bad.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?
Going to restaurants.



Jack Goodrich

University of Minnesota - Morris

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

What extracurriculars were you involved in?
Ultimate frisbee, concert choir, archery, and Outward Bound.

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
Don't procrastinate.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?
Seeing friends.



Madeline Gray

St. Thomas University

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
12th grade trip to Ely

What extracurriculars were you involved in?
Choir

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
It's not all about school work -- life outside of school is just as important.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?
Seeing my friends in person. And hugs.



Micah Gundale

Gustavus Adolphus College

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

What extracurriculars were you involved in?

Club soccer, high school soccer, track and field, and Emerging Environmental Leaders (EEL).

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?

If you have found your passion or discipline then don't stop doing it, always do what you love.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?

Playing soccer with my team



Tom Hobday

St. John's University

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Outward Bound - Camp Du Nord

What extracurriculars were you involved in?

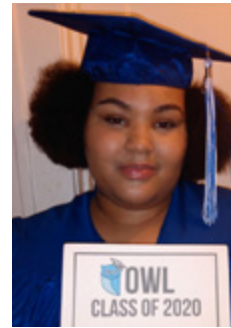
Frisbee, basketball, volleyball, Outward Bound, Dare To Be Real, and Peer Ministry.

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?

If you can get through a pandemic, you can get through high school.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?

I miss the ultimate season, and hugs.



Jayonna Keenan

Post-Secondary Program

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Walker Art

What extracurriculars were you involved in?

Career Study

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?

Ask for help.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?

Trying to go to school.



Htoo Kmeisay

Century College

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
College visit

What extracurriculars were you involved in?

Volunteer work and community service.

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?

Keep your goal in mind. Work hard, be organized and use your resources. Study really, really hard and keep up with all of the material they're going to give you.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?

Going to school I guess.



Amarius "AJ" LeSure

Carleton College

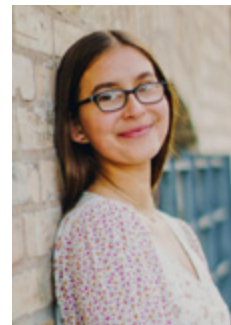
What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Outward Bound Maine

What extracurriculars were you involved in?

Outward Bound, Upward Bound

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?

I miss being with my friends.



Lauren Mitchell

St. Olaf College

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

What extracurriculars were you involved in?

Outward Bound and ultimate frisbee.

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?

Make the most of the time you have and always finish your work on time. Also, make sure you thank you teachers and parents for all that they do, don't take it for granted.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?

Being able to see my friends everyday!



**Noah Hansen
Morris**

*Macalester
College*

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Water testing in Duluth with APES.

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?

Sleep on the bus. Get a buddy to wake you up. 45+ minutes made up every day.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?

Taking walks of extreme length.



Promise Moua

Century College

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
11th grade fall retreat

What extracurriculars were you involved in?

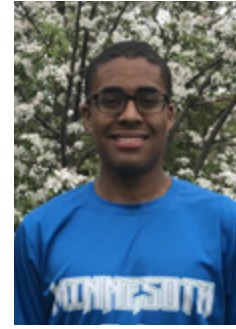
Concert choir, a leader outside of school.

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?

Don't worry about the past or the future, focus on the present and also smile more!

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?

Being able to see and talk with everyone.



**TeDabi
O'Gorman**

*St. John's
University*

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

What extracurriculars were you involved in?

Manatees, Outward Bound

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?

Eat lettuce.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?

Senior Seminar



**Stephanie
Orellana**

Century College

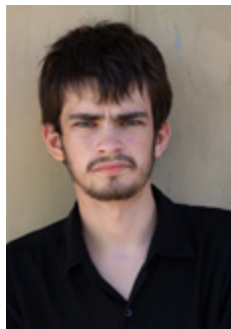
What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?

High school is hard thing to get through but you just gotta put on your big kid shoes and keep moving forward.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?

Going out to eat at restaurants.



**Nickalas
Osweiler**

*Post-Secondary
Program*

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

What extracurriculars were you involved in?

Boy Scouts

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?

Don't give up.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?

Going to Target everyday.



**Eric Perez
Fuentes**

Century College

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Wolf Ridge

What extracurriculars were you involved in?

Outward Bound

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?

Do your work?!

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?

Going out with friends.



Lucas Plaman

University of Minnesota - Twin Cities

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord!

What extracurriculars were you involved in?

GSA, choir, Outward Bound, volleyball, and baseball.

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?

Advocate for yourself! Make sure to ask questions if you're confused and don't be afraid to speak your mind.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?

Hugs! I wish I could go and hug all my friends.



Alex Ramirez-Cannon

Iron Workers Apprentice Program

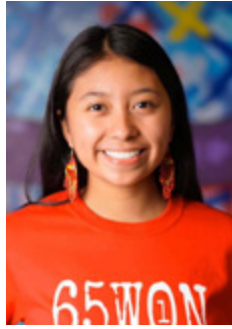
What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?

Sleep and breakfast are most important, miss that first hour.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?

Going to school and having my 1st hour teachers see me walk in late with breakfast.



Atquetzali Quiroz

Colorado College

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

What extracurriculars were you involved in?

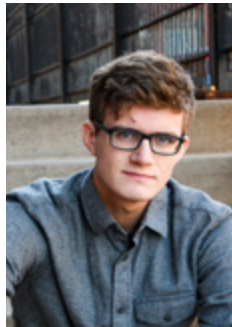
Theater, Danza, and community organizations

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?

Believe in yourself and you are more than enough!

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?

Being able to be in community with others.



Jacob Rohde

University of Minnesota - Duluth

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Any Colorado trip, they've all been great experiences.

What extracurriculars were you involved in?

Archery, Outward Bound, Robotics (freshman year only).

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?

Don't try so hard that you suck all the fun out of school.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?

Going to school and getting to experience the end of my senior year.



Malachi Raymond

Middlebury College

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Lake Itasca

What extracurriculars were you involved in?

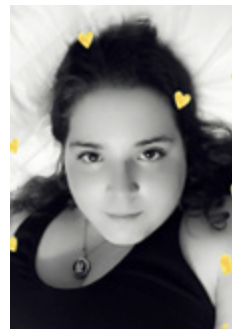
Dare 2 Be Real, Outward Bound, Student Government, Running Club, yearbook, fraquetball, and frisbee!!!

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?

Find what works best for you. Develop strategies to help with school work and build communities as support for other barriers you will face throughout school and personal life.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?

Being able to have physical contact with people, from fist bumps from Tim and Dave to chest bumps on the frisbee field.



Victoria Raysor-Kessel

Luther College

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?

Be yourself.



Connor Scott
Whitman College

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

What extracurriculars were you involved in?
Outward Bound, skiing, and Frisbee.

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
Find a balance of doing work and having fun.

What do you miss most from “normal life” during the pandemic?
Hanging out with friends.



Kamora Shambley
Saint Paul College

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
To never give up.

What do you miss most from “normal life” during the pandemic?
I miss interacting with my peers.



Katherine Syers
Luther College

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Colorado Outward Bound

What extracurriculars were you involved in?
Volleyball, ultimate frisbee, and Outward Bound.

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
Always ask for help when you need it.

What do you miss most from “normal life” during the pandemic?
Seeing my friends and teachers.



Mercutio Takle
Iowa State University

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Gooseberry Falls trip for APES.

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
Stay hydrated.

What do you miss most from “normal life” during the pandemic?
The freedom of going wherever I want.



Caden Tarnow
Columbia College of Chicago

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Senior fall retreat

What extracurriculars were you involved in?
Archery and fraquetball.

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
Be adventurous and do that extracurricular activity.

What do you miss most from “normal life” during the pandemic?
Playing board games with my crew.



Kou Vang
University of Minnesota - Twin Cities

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

What extracurriculars were you involved in?
Volleyball, PSEO

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
Don't be afraid to make mistakes.

What do you miss most from “normal life” during the pandemic?
Laughing with friends over silly things in real life.



Lu Vang

Saint Paul College

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
I don't have one because all of them were fun and filled with new experience.

What extracurriculars were you involved in?
Volleyball

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
Education comes first -- focus on your education. Have friends and teachers to help and support you through your high school years.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?
Having people to talk with because the pandemic helps but it also affected a lot of people in different ways.



Jay Xiong

Century College

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

What extracurriculars were you involved in?
Volleyball

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
Make sure you don't slack off because it will catch up to you in the end.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?
Going out to play sports.



Margaret Windingstad

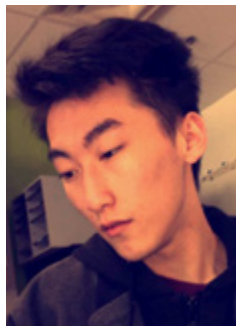
Colorado State University

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Ely, 12th grade

What extracurriculars were you involved in?
Outward Bound and Kurt Hahn

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
Don't be afraid to disappoint your parents.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?
My friends, going on Kurt Hahn and Outward Bound trips.



Kongpeng Yang

Century College

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Du Nord

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?
Friends



Chutima Xiong

University of Minnesota - Twin Cities

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Du Nord

What extracurriculars were you involved in?
Upward Bound, choir, and Art of Dance.

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
You never know until you try!

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?
Seeing my friends and teachers.



Pao Yang

Saint Paul College

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

What extracurriculars were you involved in?
Upward Bound

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
The real friends will stay with you and push you to be a better version of yourself. Make the right decision in who you call friends so that you can leave high school with fun memories.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?
Having a normal school schedule.



**Milo
Zimmerman-
Bence**

Bard College

What was your favorite fieldwork trip?
Camp Du Nord

What extracurriculars were you involved in?
Theater

What advice would you give to the younger students in your crew?
You are not dumb if you need help. Just ask.

What do you miss most from "normal life" during the pandemic?
Being able to see people in person.



**Juan
Almaguer
Cabellero**

*University of
Monterrey*

International Student

Top to bottom: Lauren Mitchell, Jedi Casas, and Katie Syers (left to right) paint a mariposa for Tim's Spanish class; Students with lawmakers during the Senate Expedition in 8th grade; Students pass sticks in a fireline to clear a pile during 11th grade Fall Fieldwork.



A Senior Portfolio

A senior portfolio is an Expeditionary Learning Education tradition, celebrating the work students have put in during their time in high school. It is a cumulative demonstration of growth by students through middle and high school. Students write reflections and select artifacts of high-quality work for each of their core classes and an elective class. They also reflect on the 300 hours of service

they have completed to graduate, as well as their personal growth. Finally, students reflect on their personal growth throughout high school.

The portfolio is shared at a senior meeting, all of which were virtual for the first time this year. Students prove they are ready to graduate by going through their portfolio in front of their senior meeting guests, including parents, friends, teachers, community

members -- anyone the student chooses to invite. Everyone speaks about the senior being celebrated, with the student's crew leader speaking second-to-last and the parents speaking last.

In this program is a collection of reflections from different portfolios across the class of 2020. Additionally, there are select quotes from portfolios by other seniors.



English

Annet Chautla Suastegui

English has been one of my favorite subjects in school. I think it has been very important to me to work hard on and try my best because I have always struggled in English.

Starting off in ninth grade we started a group infographic. I wasn't very used to working in a group, I liked to do independent work. This infographic was supposed to help teach us how to pull out relevant information from a text to make a well-organized infographic but I for me it taught me the *"With every challenge I faced. . . I gained a little bit of courage and confidence every time. Through those challenges, I discovered myself."*

-Chutima Xiong

basics of working in a group

Tenth-grade we did the values essay, I think this when I began to like writing, realizing that English is an expressive subject. This essay was supposed to assess our ability to define the meaning of words. I was very excited to do this project and wanted it to be as perfect as I could get it to be. I ended up getting all fours on each criteria. That year was also filled with a lot of reading which I hadn't done a lot before sophomore year. A few books that I enjoyed were Night, Unbecom-

"These past years in high school have helped me become the person I am now and the way things motivate helped me improve on myself with my education, goals, and accomplishments."

-Lu Vang

ing, Aristotle and Dante Discover The Secrets of The Universe, and Never



Clockwise from top left: Chutima Xiong looks down from the rope course at Ely Outward Bound Fall Fieldwork in 12th grade; A work group plays a blindfolded teambuilding game also on the Ely trip; Atquetzali Quiroz and Kou Vang work together on schoolwork in the cafeteria. Collaboration is one of the school's values and is exemplified by the class of 2020.

fall down. This was one of my favorite years of English because we did a lot of work that involved a lot of creativity

really got to explore English creatively and meanwhile also learning to format an essay and scripts. In general, I developed a love for English through learning and improving my own skills

Junior year was also a year for creativity. The first summative essay we had was on Macbeth; we compared two films to a written play. I liked looking at the different takes on the films and how a play can have a different feel to different people.

After that we started analyzing a story

Continued on page 13

Continued from page 12

called Framed, framed was a story of a woman who got “framed” for a drug crime by two-parent of a student who she had taught in an afterschool program. I think this story interested me because it was real and I liked to learn of crime and motives. Our summative for Framed assessed our ability to write an argument essay. Since I was so interested in the story I finished the assignment on time and got a perfect score on it. The last two quarters of the year we were assigned “An essay that answers a question” We could choose to answer any question we wanted to. I chose “Why has mental illness increased in America” when I was doing this I began to think back to my first year and realize how I did a research project with ease now compared to my infographic. The last assignment

we did was a creative writing piece. We got to choose a story style and then write a story in a similar fashion. I combined multiple styles. I wasn’t satisfied with the result but I did most of the assignment with esses and got a good grade.

This year we have been working on survivor stories. The first quarter was looking at and reading survival stories. Second-quarter we spent some time reading and annotating the stories. The last assignment we had for second quarter was annotating a survival story. I chose to annotate the hardest story because it could get me to an E. I think I seriously challenged myself because the story had a lot of shifts and changes into narrative and exposition. Through all my years at OWL, I’ve had to set a reading goal for myself, and although I’ve met all of my goals I never felt that I accomplished any

progress because I always set my goal at a minimum. This year I’ve really challenged myself. Although I didn’t meet my goal completely. I was reading more than the previous years and the book I’ve been reading are challenging and diverse. Right now I’m reading two books one is called the Demonologist and the other is Me being Me Is Exactly As Insane As You Being You. Both of the books are drastically different; the demonologist follows the files that Ed and Lorraine Warren, two famous demonologists. While Me being me is a story about a boy who is dealing with his parents divorced and his older brother moving away.

Although I’ve always struggled in English it has become my favorite subject in school and I think that is because I have to put a lot of work and self-expression into it. I hope to continue developing my skills in college.

“My passion for learning has only been strengthened since I began using language as a tool to better understand my world.”

-Henry Bowring-McDonough



Left to right: A fieldwork group plays a game of buttball during a break from service on the 12th grade fieldwork trip to Ely Outward Bound. Every fall fieldwork in 9th through 12th grade had a service component to it; Henry Bowring-McDonough, Mercutio Takle, and Abby Davis give some love to one of the sled dogs at the Ely Outward Bound base camp.



Math

Milo Zimmerman-Bence

Math was perhaps the area I struggled in the most, yet simultaneously had some of the most growth in. This wasn't anything new for me; it hadn't exactly been my forte at any point in my life, but I didn't expect to have to fight to keep my head above the water as much as I did. For me, Geometry in 8th grade had been a relatively simple class, but from Algebra II in 9th grade onward, I repeatedly ran into obstacle after obstacle. From that, I believe I learned a lot about problem solving and persevering through adversity.

9th grade was the first time in my life when a class alone made me feel sick because of stress. It wasn't because the instruction was poor or anything like that, but rather because I wasn't

“Taking care of your mental health should always be your first priority in order to succeed.”

-Erin Belmares

used to there being stakes, so I didn't pay as much attention as I probably should have. That led to a lot of undue stress during tests, more than one of which I broke down while taking. I ended up not passing some quarters, so I had to find a way to make it up. Thankfully, I had been taking Japanese through NSO, which also had an Algebra II course, and so I spent the summer working to compensate for the lost credits.

Not eager to repeat that experi-

ence, I entered Pre-Calc in 10th grade with a less confident mindset, scared to do poorly. Funnily enough, that actually led me to do poorly, as my methods of avoiding stress focused on avoiding what was causing it, which was the stuff I needed to do. That led me to do

“My math education throughout high school definitely laid the foundation for my healthier study habits that I have now.”

the bare minimum on many occasions, and since that was still doing work, if not enough, I had the impression that I knew how to do many things that I in fact was completely clueless about. So, I put off studying because of a false sense of confidence and ended

up causing myself a lot of stress and anxiety while taking tests. Somehow, I managed to scrape by in the first three quarters, but ended up with an N in the fourth. So, last year, I had to put in extra work to get the credit back that I lost, making it a repeat of sorts of 9th grade.

Luckily, 11th grade was a different story. Whether it was because I had more friends as classmates, a new determination to do better, or just because the concepts we explored

were easier for me to understand, I did much better in CIS Algebra through Modeling. Aside from one instance where I accidentally submitted a test early leading to an emotional breakdown, I went through the year pretty-much stress-free, as I had people

-Eponine Diatta

working with me on the models and had gone a long way in overcoming my tendency to not ask for help even when I badly need it. Because of that, I was able to enter senior year with a newfound confidence in my mathematical abilities, and with many projects under my belt that I can look back on and feel proud of myself. For those reasons, I have selected the Historic Hotel Model and the Fairness & Friendship Model as my math artifacts.

For whatever reason, math has always been one of my weakest subjects, and I felt the effects of that badly throughout my time in high school. It has also been one of the areas in which I have grown the most, going from an unconfident 9th grader who felt like he couldn't do anything right nor could he ask for help, to a much more capable senior who is not without shortcomings, but is no longer as afraid to seek out help where needed.

Social Studies



Henry Bowring-McDonough and Jacob Rohde present their History Day project in 6th grade. History Day is a big component of many Social Studies classes at OWL and allows students to choose a historical topic they are interested in to research.

AJ LeSure

Social studies is my second easiest subject. I enjoy learning about the world and gaining new perspectives from different places and different time periods. The past three years of social studies have been enjoyable and interesting. It's always interesting to see how contemporary events compare to events in the past. Social studies is like the man in the middle: it's similar to English in that it often prompts discussion and allows room for subjectivity, but it's also similar to math in that there are objective components that students must familiarize themselves with.

Human Geography was my social studies class for my freshman year, taught by Luke. A lot of the content that we learned was connected to our English class, and it was fun and engaging to combine things that we were learning about our personal values with values in the world and throughout history. My 8 Elements of Culture slideshow was a project for both Human Geo and English. In this slide-

show, I analyzed 8 different elements of culture observed in a folktale. This project reflected the purpose of the curriculum in both classes that year: the importance of culture and place, and how that affects not only ourselves but those around the world.

I continued to work for Luke in my sophomore year social studies class, World History. Students were introduced to many important—famous and infamous—historical events; The Great Depression, WWI and WWII, Pearl Harbor, the Holocaust, the Cold War, etc. The topics we were covering were often serious and they were sometimes challenging to talk about. But amidst those times were moments of humor and gratitude for the world we currently live in. One example of the fun I had in this class was my Historical Event Movie Trailer project. I worked with Jacob Rohde to create a comedic rendition of the Boston Tea Party, which we both agreed to be one of the funnier and lighthearted events in history. That project highlighted that year as I continued to take steps to

thrive in social studies.

Like a lot of my core subjects, junior year was a step above in the rigor of the content area. I took AP US History with Katie, and in this class a lot of the work was preparatory for the AP exam. The volume of work was bigger than all of my social studies courses before, and there were periods where I struggled and fell behind in my work. One of the most challenging aspects of the class was the amount of content that I had to consume and process. By collaborating with my classmates and a ton of note-taking, I was able to work through a majority of the content and maintain good grades. It also helped that Katie was willing to negotiate with students about deadlines and other various course requirements. Although we had a tight schedule for a majority of the year, there was ample room for class-wide discussions to take place.

For my first semester of senior year, I'm taking Government with Dan. First quarter was a good start to the year. I've been able to use some prior knowledge on a majority of the content that's been taught so far. Looking forward I'm sure I'll continue to thrive in Government, and I'm excited to have Economics for the second semester.



Connor Scott pours a bowl of granola for Alex Ramirez-Cannon during breakfast at 12th grade Fall Fieldwork.

Science

Shayla Brooks

Science has never really clicked easily for me in class, which is strange considering my dad is a research scientist by profession. I've learned about science since I was young, but in a different way than we do in class. My freshman year of high school I took biology, which was a difficult class for me. Sophomore year I took chemistry, which I liked, even though I found it challenging. Junior year I took environmental science, which was really difficult but very applicable. Senior year I took anatomy & physiology, which has been a good learning experience, although different than I was expecting, so far.

My freshman year science class was biology. My class had about 12 people in it- it was very small. Biology has historically been a topic I struggle in. It's all so small and complexly related that I have trouble understanding and



Left to right: Esai Cueto Remedios, Stephanie Orellana, and Chutima Xiong paddle the Mississippi during 8th grade Fall Fieldwork. The 8th grade expedition centered on the Mississippi and was tied to multiple classes.

“By the end of junior year I had academically been successful and my mindset of school had shifted to a better place than it was before.”

-Stephanie Orellana



Jedi Casas and Kong Peng Yang measure the circumference of a tree for the AP Environmental Science Forest Census lab. Involving two field trips, it's one of the most extensive, but also most satisfying, labs in OWL's science curriculum.

remembering it all. When we did some biology in APES this experience still stood, which is why I opted not to take AP Biology my senior year. One thing I remember the most from this class is doing the discussions each unit. Our small class that didn't talk a lot, but generally the things we were discussing were quite interesting, so people had some things to say. Also, I tend to be a verbal processor. I understand things better if I can explain them to other people or discuss them out loud. Because of this, I think I learned a lot not just preparing for the discussions, but actually taking part in them. Another project I remember more vividly from biology is the cell project. It's a classic. For my cell project I deconstructed the cell parts, making each part a candy, and having the class guess which part each candy was. As I went around to stores trying to find just the right model for each part I started internalizing the parts, remembering them better and better. I remember being quite

excited about this.

Chemistry was a tough class for me. It's small and intangible, like biology. I had heard that it was a hard class from peers above me, so I was bracing the whole year for the part where it got hard. Because I was so nervous about when I would start struggling, I think I was extra careful to keep up and ask questions. It didn't end up really getting to the point where I was having a lot of trouble following until the torpedo lab. I also had a group of friends in this class who all sat together and helped each other out. Usually at least one person understood, so we were all able to figure it out eventually. The torpedo lab was definitely one of the things that stood out to me the most. I remember working on it with my group on the big whiteboards in Rebecca's crew room for entire class periods, and really struggling with it. We eventually figured it out but could have been much more successful with the speed and distance of the pipette. You'll notice when looking at my lab report that there were a lot of human error issues, as well as other design elements that we could have fixed. Unfortunately, we ran out of time and had to be okay with the grade we got.

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It was a stressful but fun year.

Junior year I took AP Environmental Science. This is a super relevant class right now, for obvious reasons, and I learned a lot taking it. During the year it became an inside joke in my family that I took APES, because I brought it up so often. I was excited that something I learned had become relevant, and wanted to tell my family all about drip irrigation and poly-culture farming (we had a good time watching *The Biggest Little Farm*). That's not to say it wasn't a tough year, though. APES was a class I hate a love-hate relationship with. I loved learning the interesting stuff, but struggled

you're looking at the rubric. It was supposed to have creativity, originality, and realism. I was supposed to create something entirely from scratch! It seemed impossible. And worse, nobody I asked could agree on if it was required or not. Well, as it turns out, it was. My memory might be faulty, but I remember doing the project in a night or two of work. I could have started it earlier but the prospect of creating something out of nothing was quite scary to me, especially because it was supposed to be original- I felt like I had no novel ideas. I looked up a lot of inspiration and eventually came up with something to turn in, but I wasn't happy with it. I ended up getting a



"I've grown accept myself and not fear of what others would think of me. I've grown to learn a lot about myself I never knew before."

-Pao Yang

with the labs and hated how hard it sometimes was for me to grasp the information. It seemed to come pretty easily to a lot of my classmates. One of the biggest projects I remember is the city design project. It was one of those projects that seems really big when

solid grade on it, and felt pretty embarrassed that I put it off for so long. The next time I got an overwhelming project in APES, I did my best to remember that just starting is the hardest part, and that the earlier I start it the better I can ask for help.



Top to bottom: students wade into Burntside Lake by the sauna at Camp Du Nord during 11th grade Fall Fieldwork; Atquetzali Quiroz holds a butterfly at an exhibit at the Science Museum of Minnesota for a Life Science fieldwork trip in 7th grade; Kou Vang, Shayla Brooks, and Malachi Raymond (left to right) figure out an interactive exhibit on the same trip to the Science Museum.

Electives

Lucas Plaman

Throughout my high school experience, I've taken quite a few elective classes. I think that these classes have been almost as instrumental in my personal growth as my core classes have been. Even though I've taken a whole lot of electives I'm most grateful for my Psychology class in freshman year, and my choir classes.

In Freshman year, I took Psychology, African American Studies, and Intro to Theatre. I really liked taking Psychology with Dan. I liked it so much because it helped spark my passion for learning how the human brain works, and made me realize that I want to be a therapist. My favorite project from Psychology was definitely the music and emotions project, which is one of my artifacts. I liked it so much because music has always been a really big part of my life, and it gave me the opportunity to study how it makes me feel, and why it might make me feel that way.

In Sophomore year I actually didn't take any elective classes. I took Health and Nutrition & Fitness. I really, really liked Nutrition & Fitness with Kathy, because I enjoy cooking and learning about my body. My favorite activity we did in Nutrition & Fitness was definitely making bread pudding. The bread pudding wasn't great, but it was fun to make it with my friends and mess it up a lot.

In Junior year I took Astronomy, Concert Choir, Current Events, and Women's Studies. My favorite class was probably Current Events with Katie. I liked it so much because it forced me to keep up to date on the news and make sure we're knowledgeable about the world around us. My favorite project we did in Current Events was probably the daily current event marker. We had to pick a news story from each day of class and summarize it. Then, we got to present it to the rest of the class. I liked it so much because

I got to learn about lots of stories in a short amount of time.

Even though I'm only halfway through my Senior year at the time of writing this, I'm going to write about my electives anyways. This year I'm taking Concert Choir, Jazz Choir, and Senior Seminar. My favorite class of these is definitely Jazz Choir, because I

feel like I'm elevating myself musically. At the time that I'm writing this, we're preparing for our winter concert, and everything is all happening at once. I'm really proud of my choir and the sounds that we can create. I also really enjoy Concert Choir, especially because I'm the President so I feel a lot of responsibility is on my shoulders.

"I can work my butt off to help someone else, and while I might get tired I know I'll always have someone there to help me."

-Katherine Syers



The OWL choir perform on their East Coast tour they took over Interim in 2019.

"I learned that I was able to maintain a social life and academic life simultaneously."

-Annet Chautla Suastegui



Students outside the sauna at Ely Outward Bound during 12th grade Fall Fieldwork. The pattern was suana-river-sauna-river, as many times as you could, before ending with a final dip in the river.

Service

Grace Bellamy

When looking at middle schools, one of the major factors of why OWL topped my list was its service learning requirement. I loved volunteering at the Animal Adoption Center (AAC), and generally being of use to my community. As time went on, I continued to do service and understand why it was important to me.

My main source of community service hours was working at the AAC. I've been involved there since the summer before 1st grade, when I

“I think OWL gave me the service bug, and I want to continue that post college before I truly launch my career.”

-Tom Hobday

accidentally let a dog escape on a walk (Jenny the basset hound was found at a nearby steakhouse, safe and sound). As time went on, I threw myself into the work there; I spent hours cleaning litterboxes, vacuuming, spending time with animals, and doing whatever miscellaneous tasks needed doing. Four years ago, I began working at the AAC as a youth intern, rather than just a volunteer. My tasks expanded slightly, now including both my favorite (inventorying the medicine cabinet) and my least favorite (selling raffle tickets at the New Leash on Life event). I'm

still there for the animals: the bonds I form with them and how amazing it is

to see an animal go to their forever home.

While the AAC consisted of most of my service, Outward Bound trips were just as important to me. I went to Wolf Ridge in 10th grade and to Hurricane Island in 11th grade. Both times

I absolutely loved it. Outward Bound trips are different from the other types of service that I've done, because it falls more under “hard labor.” You end up sore and very tired (and maybe a little bloody!) on these trips, but I loved that feeling because it proved I had done something. In Maine, we collectively cleaned up an estimated 3,000 gallons of trash. It was a simultaneous feeling of accomplishment and despair -- we picked up so much, but realistically, it was less than 0.001% of what's in our oceans. But regardless, seeing that pile

made me feel so good. Another aspect of these trips that's so appealing is how you're able to

form friendships that you might not otherwise. This camaraderie provides this sense of community both inside and outside of OWL. I think that while you form bonds with the group, you also gain a stronger sense of how what you're doing is outside of OWL and outside of your daily experiences. I completed my required 150 school service hours in 10th grade, with two semesters of being a TA for Nora. My TA hour was always one that I liked, because I was able to work on things of which I could see the results; almost everything dealt with organizing or

“Today in senior year I am more confident than ever and feel like I am truly a part of something.”

-Emi Stiefel Alperin

preparing something for her classes. When I did something like figure out how to copy the book club packets or print an infographic, it resulted in something tangible, often that I could see outside of my TA hour, like

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Top to bottom: Working at Camp Du Nord during 11th grade Fall Fieldwork; eating breakfast in our work groups during 12th grade Fall Fieldwork; removing invasive species at Indian Mounds Park during 9th grade Fall Fieldwork.

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a poster in Nora's classroom. There is something fulfilling about contributing something tangible.

Another way that I did service for OWL was through layout. Timewise, it was a much smaller part of my school service, but it seemed more valuable, in that it was a specialized skill. Learning InDesign is a skill that I can use in other parts of my life, beyond high school. Such a sense of accomplishment accompanied seeing the final product. One of the coolest things was seeing the EL educators writing in the guidebooks I had laid out. It was a feeling of having contributed, of having been an integral part of the system that let OWL host this major event.

As I've completed more service (and been required to reflect on it!), I am able to truly say why I enjoy it: it makes me feel like a part of a community. Creating something or making a tangible difference makes me feel like a true member of the community -- a "contributing member of society" so to speak. But it also comes from bonds formed while doing service, like friends you make on an Outward Bound trip or when you foster a dog like Minnie. I believe this will continue to be beneficial throughout my life, whether in college or beyond.



Left: A work group in their matching rain gear on a break from helping Will Steger clear wood from his land during 12th grade Fall Fieldwork. Right: students work through a ropes course on the same trip.



Right to left: Pao Yang and Annet Chautla Suastegui work to pack food at Feed My Starving Children during 10th grade fall fieldwork. Packing meals always creates a sense of friendly competition, trying to pack more than the other groups around you.

"On the hardest most physically demanding days, when there is complete mental and physical exhaustion, it is in those moments where we learn more about each other and ourselves, and become better people."

-AJ LeSure



Personal

Chutima Xiong

Coming into OWL as a 6th grader, I was a shy girl and didn't have the courage to speak out on my opinions because I was scared and anxious on how people would think and reply. However, I was surrounded by many friends, many people. It was a very supportive time in my life, and I was never alone in what I did. That period of time shaped me to be very dependent on my friends because everything I did was with my friends.

Through middle school, it remained the same. I was confident on the outside but on the inside I really questioned who I was, why I was the way I am, why I believed in different beliefs from other people and I was really timid. Middle school is not the proudest journey in my life but it really shaped me to be who I am today. I feel like compared to middle school I was so open yet insecure about myself,

“I eventually realized that really the only thing that ever kept me from doing something was the unfounded belief that I couldn't.”

-Milo Zimmerman-Bence

but now I'm more conservative and reserved but more confident in who I am and what I do.

High school is when your interests really start to develop and you're more aware of intangible ideas around you. In freshman year, it challenged me in a way where I had to learn how to be independent because everything I've done before was with my friends. It also challenged me because I was different from others and I was still insecure about everything and had little to no courage within me.

Everything within me started to sparkle because of dance. I really like the quote “dance is a hidden language of the soul” because I expressed my ideas and feelings through dance. Therefore, I was really interested and



Above: Chutima Xiong, Kou Vang, and Jay Xiong (left to right) perform at Asian Culture Night, which is an annual tradition, and was Jedi Casas' and Kou Vang's Senior Project this year. Below: Teachers pass by in cars to celebrate Donut Declaration Day. Students are awarded a donut when they announce their plans for next year, a tradition that staff adapted to the constraints of the pandemic.



“If it weren't for the friendships made, communities built, and new families created I wouldn't have accomplished half of what I can with these people by my side.”

-Malachi Raymond

