

Congratulations to Amelia Gephart of Canyon del Oro HS!

Arizona Odyssey of the Mind Lorna Callaway Memorial Scholarship Winner

What her coach tells us about Amelia: Amelia Gephart is a remarkable individual who exemplifies the highest expectations of Odyssey of the Mind Program. Amelia's quiet demeanor belies her tremendous depth and strength. I have been Amelia's Odyssey of the Mind coach for the past four years. In that time, I have discovered the funny and clever Amelia, the studious and hardworking Amelia, and the courageous and determined Amelia. An impressive aspect of Amelia's character is her willingness to travel her own pathway. Amelia is self-directed in her learning and selects content and courses that contribute to her goals. She also identifies extra-curricular activities that allow her to be intellectual, creative, and artistic. Amelia was invited to join an Odyssey of the Mind team during her freshman year in high school. She found an intellectual and creative home in the Odyssey environment. It was apparent from the beginning of her Odyssey experience that Amelia has an insightful intellect, which allows her to seek unusual approaches to solve complex problems. Amelia overcame her natural reserved manner, to leave her comfort zone and fully participate in the intellectual opportunity of team problem solving. At the end of her second year in the program, Amelia's family questioned the time commitment necessary for Odyssey. Amelia was so determined to continue that she composed a letter to her family explaining her need to continue and the benefits that the program provided for her both intellectually and creatively. Amelia's teammates value and appreciate her for her clever wit, outside-the-box thinking, artistic abilities, diligence, and willingness to work hard to achieve a collaborative goal.

What Amelia says about her experiences in Odyssey: Before I joined Odyssey, I had a narrow-minded view on what leadership was. Like spontaneous encourages teammates to stretch their suspensions of what an idea could be, working with teammates through high school stretched my understanding of what leadership could be. Instead of recognizing leadership as managing duties and overseeing every single detail of a project, I learned to enhance the team's abilities, inspire the team, and prioritize the needs of others. Odyssey has guided me to recognize my abilities as a hybrid between a transformational leader and a servant leader while making valuable friendships along the way. I love creating new things, and there's a bit of magic in weaving together the team's various talents for a final product. Thanks to all of the resources available to Canyon del Oro's high school teams because of supportive and involved coaches and parents, I have had the ability to not only hone my creative abilities, but also develop my confidence and become an effective leader