

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Schools that Keep on Winning: Odyssey Charter School, Inc. (OCS), Celebrates National Healthy Schools Awards for all Four of its Schools

Odyssey Charter Schools, Inc., in Palm Bay, Florida, a system of rigorous, healthy, and holistic schools, has earned two prestigious Gold with Distinction Awards from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Healthier US School Challenge (HUSSC) program. The Gold Award with Distinction is the highest national recognition a school can receive from the USDA and is a first for any school in Brevard County; only a handful of schools in Florida and nationwide have earned this distinctive award since its inception. Odyssey Charter School Elementary and Odyssey Preparatory Academy, both located in Palm Bay, have earned their place among less than 170 schools across the nation to have ever achieved such recognition. These awards recognize excellence in nutrition and physical activity, two factors proven by research to promote better performance in school, better grades, and better behavior in and out of class. Two additional schools received the prestigious HUSSC Silver Awards: Odyssey Jr./Sr. High in Palm Bay and Oasis Preparatory Academy in Orange County. Ms. Constance Ortiz, visionary Founder of the schools and 2016 Florida Charter School Pioneer awardee from the Florida Consortium of Charter Schools said, "Odyssey Charter School was the only state of Florida "A" graded school in 2016 out of a pool of 22 public, and public charter elementary, middle, and high schools in Palm Bay. Along with our rigorous academics, we know and understand that caring about the optimal health of our students, the nutrition they receive as well as physical exercise, will help them in their behavior and academics. Taking time for physical activity is not a break from academics, it is an investment in higher academic performance and a tool to assist each child in achieving their own unique and full potential."

Started in 2010 as a reward component of the nationally recognized "Let's Move" healthy kids program, the Healthier US School Challenge rewards schools that are creating healthy environments by promoting smart nutrition choices and physical activity, dedicated to the mission of putting student health first. The Odyssey charter cafe lunch model is a health-focused program emphasizing student health, fresh and local offerings, and educational nutrition programs. Ms. Cindy Chapman, OCS Food Services Director, and certified chef states "We are proud of our school lunch program and look forward to achieving even greater heights to improve the health and wellness of our kids."

The OCS café lunch program has been recognized with other accolades including the "Golden Carrot" from The Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine. On-site school gardens and vegetables from the full sized working educational farm located on the Jr/Sr High School campus augment OCS lunch menus, which the students are responsible for managing.

A newer school in the OCS fleet, Oasis Preparatory Charter School is a replication of the Odyssey model, and brings healthy food options to children located in an impoverished urban area in Orlando, Fl. Recently installed gardens from the Lowes 'Toolbox for Education' Grant, and kitchen equipment enhancements from the 2016 USDA National School Lunch Program equipment allow children to learn where their food comes from. It also enables the school's healthy café to provide much needed fresh fruits and vegetables for added nutrition. Oasis is striving to bring quality education to the children that need it the most.

For more information about the schools or to take a tour, please contact Odyssey Charter School at (321) 733-0442.

☺ May 11, 2016 ☺

Grass Fed Beef  
Burgers

on Whole Grain Bun

OR Black Bean Burger

and Lettuce + Tomato

9  
Days Til Summer! ☺

- Super Salad Bar -

- Assorted Fresh Fruit -  
White Milk

~ Soy & Almond Milk ~





