



Congratulations Class of 2025



The Class of 2025 graduation ceremony was held on May 16, 2025, at 6:00 pm in the Melvin Davidson chapel. The class included 11 local day students and 14 dormitory residents from California, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Taiwan, Thailand, South Korea and Cambodia.

End-of-Year Celebrations



Students and staff lined Mulberry Street for the annual Senior Walk to greet the Class of 2025.

Our final chapel time of the school year concluded with prayer for the senior class led by President Gritton and a concert by the OBI Choir.



The week before, we met for chapel time at the Walker Athletic Complex to celebrate the baptisms of six students!

Senior Spotlights

Grace named recipient of top graduation honor



An international student from Thailand since 2021, Ester, known at OBI as Grace, received the 2025 William A. Evans' award, OBI's highest graduation honor.

(Grace continued p. 2)

Father's Day Offering for Oneida

The Father's Day Offering is one of four annual missions offerings sanctioned by the Kentucky Baptist Convention. We are grateful to our many friends and partners.

Christian education is more important than ever. Our mission of *Education for Time and Eternity* continues with your support.

Pray for OBI.
Give as you are led.



(Grace continued)

When schools shut down during Covid, Grace began looking for an alternative. She said, "My parents are pastors in our church, and they wanted a Christian school so that I could grow up in both physical and spiritual terms. I wanted to gain new experiences, and the education system in the U.S. is excellent." They learned about OBI from an acquaintance, and Grace said, "My family and I prayed for God's guidance. In His time, God opened the door for me to attend OBI."

Grace was eager to try the many co-curriculars offered here as she maintained top grades and formed friendships. She appreciated OBI's no-cut policy for athletics saying, "In Thailand, I didn't have time to exercise because I would spend hours doing homework." She participated in cross country, basketball and tennis. Grace stated, "Sports have taught me not only how to be physically stronger but also how to grow mentally and spiritually. I learned how to not to give up, to push through my limits, and to find hope in every situation."

Grace shared her talent in music at OBI as a leader of the student worship group and a member of the OBI Choir and the pep band.

This year's Salutatorian, Grace completed dual credit classes and earned the Highest GPA awards for grades 10-11. The OBI faculty named her "Miss Oneida," the award for the most outstanding senior girl. She was a three-time winner of the student-voted Brad Dorough Friendship award. Grace commented, "I am not perfect, but I do my best to live a life where others can see God's grace through me."

Grace plans to attend the University of the Cumberland to major in nursing. She said, "I hope that through my work, someone will come to know Jesus Christ." □

OBI's structured schedule helped Aki find success



Akawaq, nicknamed Aki, is from Ethiopia and received the "Mr. Oneida" faculty-voted award given to the most outstanding senior boy. Aki heard about OBI from a "friend of a friend" who was a former student. He said, "I chose to attend OBI because of its excellent academic program, the extracurricular activities, and especially because it was Christian."

When he enrolled for his sophomore year in August, 2022, he recalled, "The first thing I noticed when I got here was that OBI was in the middle of nowhere! The next thing I noticed was that there were a lot of Ethiopian students, and I was happy about it! They helped me get used to being in Amer-

ica and introduced me to many new people."

Aki played soccer all three years that he attended OBI and was proud to be a part of the 2024-25 team that broke school records with a 19-5 season and became the KHSAA 13th Region Champions. He reflected, "It was great! Last year, we had less experience as a team, but we learned a lot. This year, we had a really great team and a really great coach and that's how we were able to make OBI history. I am really grateful this happened in my last year." Aki received the Coach's Award in soccer and was named to the All Tournament Team for the Class A Regional tournament. He participated in basketball and track and field.

As a dorm student, Aki benefited from OBI's structured schedule, especially after school. He explained, "Time management is one of the hardest things to do to be successful in life. At OBI, there is a time for everything—study, practice, supper and work, which makes it easier for you to do everything." Graduating in the top ten of his class, Aki completed several dual credit and advanced placement classes. He plans to study business at the University of Kentucky.

Aki is appreciative for all of his experiences at OBI and concluded, "The friendships I have made here will last a lifetime." □

OBI was a stepping stone to college for Branson

Branson enrolled at OBI as a commuting student from neighboring Jackson County at the start of his senior year. He had attended a much smaller Christian school and said, "I needed something different to further my education."

To prepare for college, Branson wanted to experience a larger school with more co-curricular and academic options. He noted, "I liked the campus and how the buildings are spread out like a small college." He found his OBI classes to be more challenging "with a lot more homework." He had the opportunity to complete three dual credit classes. "I learned a lot this year," he said.

What was most noteworthy for Branson was the chance to meet new people. He said, "I have benefited the most from being in a bigger school with a lot more people." Branson received a President's Award at graduation and is looking forward to attending the University of the Cumberland. "I wasn't here for very long, but I made many great friends and many good memories as well. The staff and students are truly wonderful people. I wish I could have come here sooner, but I'm very thankful for the experience," he said. □



Would you like to contact us?

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Layla flourished in a caring school community



Layla enrolled as a sophomore in January, 2023. Her dad served on the OBI Board of Trustees, and her home church supports OBI. A local student from Clay County, she attended the public school but wanted a change following some negative circumstances at school. She recalled, "I chose to move somewhere where I felt I would be included and cared for." Though she knew a lot about OBI, she was a little nervous to change schools. "My parents and I prayed a lot about it and asked many different people what it was like," she said.

In her first week, Layla knew she had made a good decision. "Two girls who later became my good friends made me feel like I belonged as soon as I got here. The teachers showed that we are all cared about and that they want us to be here," she said.

As a Christian, Layla felt more freedom at OBI to be herself and to talk to adults when she was having a problem. "The teachers want to help us; they check in on us and try to help any way they can. They also push us to be the best we can be," she said. The faculty voted Layla the Most Outstanding Junior Girl.

Layla has had an after school off campus job since she turned 16. Like our dormitory students, Layla acknowledges the benefit of a daily job. "It gives you experience and teaches you how to work with people," she said. Because of her job, she was limited in the cocurriculars she could choose. She enjoyed participating in her school community through the Student Council, Smile Club, Choir and Yearbook Staff. Her senior year, she was a teacher's assistant in the Lower School. At graduation, she received the faculty-voted John Michael Davis Citizenship Award for being outstanding in the area of serving others.

After deciding that she had a passion for styling hair, the opportunity to work in a local hair salon opened up last spring and has helped to prepare her for the cosmetology program that she will start next fall. □

Nathanael led to OBI thanks to local doc



Nathanael is from Cambodia and learned about OBI from a doctor in Manchester, Kentucky who did missionary work with Nathanael's dad and who offered to be Nathanael's host in America. Nathanael was interested in a Christian education and the chance to attend college in the U.S. He enrolled at OBI in 2023.

Nathanael made friends quickly in the dorm and joined them on the OBI soccer team. He said, "I had never played soccer on a field, only on the streets with my friends." He played on the varsity team as a senior and said, "My favorite OBI memory was when our soccer team advanced to the All A State Finals after a penalty shootout in the state semi-final!"

When he was not at practice, he was spending time with his friends. He commented, "Dorm life was a big part of my experience. Living with friends felt like home. We'd hang out, study together, or talk late into the night."

Going from a school with 80 students in a class to OBI with 10-15 students in a classroom, Nathanael said, "I could concentrate more. The school had a tight-knit community, and the teachers were always there to support me, both in faith and schoolwork."

He was named the Most Outstanding Junior Boy and the Most Studious Senior Boy. Nathanael will attend the University of the Cumberlands this fall. He said, "During my time here, I was able to strengthen my relationship with the Lord. I will never forget it!" □



Above—Congratulations to our Pre-K and Kindergarten graduates!

Right—President Gritton had a special visit in the spring from the second grade class!



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State-bound spring sports



The middle school 4x200 meter relay team, all eighth graders, qualified for the state middle school track and field meet. Left to right: **Aramide Olayinka**, **Estrella Perez**, **Sophia Silva**, **Teniade Olayinka**. Estrella also qualified in the long jump and placed 15th overall at the state meet.



Tommie Branstutter (left) placed fourth in the high jump event at the state high school track and field meet. **Mo Olayinka** earned a personal best and 12th place in the state in the shot put event.



Sam Cho, Class of 2025, and his brother **Joshua Cho**, a seventh grader, became the 13th Region Tennis Singles' Semi Finalists and advanced to the state tournament. They are pictured with OBI Athletic Director **Tony Hall** (left in photo) and their tennis coach, **Tim Cochran**.

Time to enroll for 2025-26!

Families can reach out to us for more information or a tour.

Email: admissions@oneidaschool.org
Telephone: 606-847-4111 ext. 233

OBI Homecoming October 18, 2025

Make plans to attend!
Share the date with your OBI friends!

Want the OBI Choir to visit your church in 2025-26?

Talk to your pastor and then email:
john.monday@oneidaschool.org



In Memoriam

Roy Baker
Class of 1950

Ray Mills
Student 1950s

Bobby "Joe" Martin
Class of 1952
U.S. Army Veteran

Kenneth Smith
Student 1940s

Ruth Osborne Baker
Class of 1957

Marvin Cress
Former OBI Board
Chairman