

The Odyssey – 2015
A Leesville/DC Adventure
Day 2

As our weary travelers emerged from their rooms (and the children they were charged with watching as well ☺), we all made our way to the cafeteria for a protein filled breakfast of Danish and muffins (there were eggs and cereal as well) to replenish their energy levels for the day ahead. Today promised to be great deal of walking, but the students and chaperones alike were ready and excited for the challenge.



The first stop was the Jefferson Memorial. This massive structure with a huge striking statue of Mr. Jefferson had the students captivated and once again led to the ooooos and aaaaahs that make this entire experience so worth it and memorable. The students were definitely prepared to be wowed by one attraction after the next.



From Jefferson, we walked around the Tidal Pool to the MLK Memorial... what a beautiful image display; the main part of the memorial was a huge stone sculpture in three parts... in the back were two mountains, missing their middle section. Pushed well in front of them was the missing middle section with a remarkable, carved image of Martin Luther King, Jr. accompanied by the carved quotation, **OUT OF THE MOUNTAIN OF DESPAIR, A STONE OF HOPE. The serenity of this exhibit possessed us all with its balance of tranquility and deep and powerful meaning.**



We tracked back a bit to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial... this testament to a great leader was beautifully laid out with symbolic stone structures, expressive statues, and thoughtful quotations to inspire compassion and activism among its visitors.

We re-boarded the buses and made our way to the White House. Despite the crowds and increased security and fencing to keep spectators at a bit of a distance, this was simply thrilling. A group of our students were fairly convinced that they saw first lady Michelle Obama, but were only briefly disappointed when it was shared with them that the first lady, if ever this close to the public, would have been completely surrounded by the Secret Service. The disappointment passed and very quickly returned to sheer excitement for this one of a kind photo opportunity.





The next stop was lunch in the cafeteria of the American History Museum at the Smithsonian and then back onto the buses to go on a tour of the Capital. Currently coated in scaffolding around the dome, the building was not less incredible or awe inspiring. Once we found our way to the starting place and got our tickets for the tour, we moved forward into the crypt before being led into the various rooms with the paintings and the statues that commemorate

and honor the history of this country. To actually stand in these rooms and hallways, with the history of Presidential Inaugurations and government processes, creates a remarkable perspective. The students were tired and hungry, but really rallied to represent Leesville well.



From the Capital, we went back to the Monuments and took a brief opportunity to see and learn a bit about the Lincoln Memorial, as well as the Korean War and Vietnam War Memorials. The students rallied and persevered as they made their way through these touching representations and symbolic gestures to the fallen soldiers from these wars.

The well-earned and deserved dinner gave everyone a burst of final energy to make it back to the hotel and in high spirits from a long and packed day of new experiences and unforgettable real world learning.