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“NO IFS, ANDS OR BUTS, YSU MUST STOP THE CUTS”



Photo by Abigail Cloutier / The Jambar

YSU students and faculty protesting the board of trustees actions to cut programs.

Administration meets while YSU community protests further cuts

By Abigail Cloutier
The Jambar

As Youngstown State University's board of trustees met Thursday, Dec. 2, the YSU community protested program cuts near the fountain on campus. Students, faculty and community members chanted "No ifs, ands or buts, YSU must stop the cuts!" between

speeches.

Mark Vopat, a philosophy professor at YSU and the spokesperson for YSU's faculty union, discussed their goals for the protest. Around him, faculty trickled in wearing their full regalia and students held up

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Students in sunset programs speak out

By Abigail Cloutier
The Jambar

Students who are in some of the 26 programs Youngstown State University is choosing to cut spoke out about what they feel the university and future students are missing out on.

Kelly Baer, a senior religious studies major, said she was shocked and angry when she first heard the news.

"I know so many people that are minors in the department or majors and we're all a really close-knit group, and to think that within the next couple of years all of that would be lost was definitely difficult for me," Baer said.

She said she's never met kinder professors than in her religious studies program, and they teach skills that can be used throughout anyone's life.

"Especially Dr. [Michael] Jerryson. His main thing that he taught in his class was civility and always being kind to one another, and always trying to see where the other person was coming from rather than just trying to talk over them," Baer said. "I haven't really gotten that anywhere else."

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signs in support.
“So the point here was to tell the board that we want them to reconsider the cuts that they’re making, the approach that they’re taking to balancing the budget here. We’re out here to say that there’s misplaced priorities, that they really need to reconsider their actions,” Vopat said.

He said that in January, faculty will hear about what else the administration plans to cut in order to balance or sustain the university’s budget.

“I just hope that the students realize that this is going to affect them in a number of ways as well. So even setting aside these particular centers, the more cuts we make in faculty means larger class sizes means less individual attention, less access to professors, more part-time

instruction, — which, you know, those part-time structures are good, but it’s not the same as having someone who you can go to,” Vopat said.

Albert Sumell, an economics professor at YSU and the chief negotiator for YSU’s faculty union, recognized the need to balance the budget, but said he disagreed with how they went about it.

“Specifically, the choice to cut the number of academic programs that they’re cutting, and to cut the number of faculty that they’re cutting, while at the same time increasing spending on athletics and increasing spending in non academic sectors like institutional support,” Sumell said.

He said they aren’t advocating for athletics to be cut, but said the budget didn’t need to be increased. Sumell said it’s not too late to reconsider the cuts.

“These are programs that students

value, and if you do choose to save those programs, it will be better for our students and for the future of this institution,” Sumell said.

Mary Dippolito, a sophomore computer science major, planned on applying to the Northeast Ohio Master of Fine Arts upon graduation — a program YSU is cutting.

“If that program is going to be sunset, I won’t have that opportunity,” Dippolito said. “Unfortunately, I’ll have to look at a different university for grad [school].”

She said she wants to use her computer science career to support herself while pursuing her writing passion.

“If these cuts continue, unfortunately me and a lot of other students are going to have to take our money to different universities that offer the higher education a university is supposed to offer,” Dippolito said.

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Though department heads cited one of the reasons the program is being cut is a lack of interest, Baer argued almost every aspect of society and culture throughout history is affected by religion.

“Religion is a very fundamental part of someone’s personality whether they follow a religion, several religions or they don’t follow a religion at all,” Baer said. “But it’s such a fundamental part of someone’s personality that it tends to work its way into different

systems and governments.”

She added that a lot of other people in the program are worried about how it will look to employers and potential doctorate programs if they graduate from a program that will be discontinued.

Alexis Heldreth, who graduates with a double major in history and religious studies with a minor in Jewish studies in spring 2022, said the Center for Judaic and Holocaust studies helped give her a direction as an undergraduate student.

“Dr. Labenz has prepared me to apply for grad school

and profoundly shaped my worldview,” Heldreth said. “It’s irreplaceable what we’ll lose without Dr. Labenz and the center.”

Jenna DeLuca, a senior studying Italian and information technology, said Italian is integral to the history of the Mahoning Valley.

“A hundred years ago, several different lineages of my family immigrated here from southern Italy, settling in Youngstown, Ohio,” DeLuca said. “Our culture became a part of Youngstown’s identity.”

She added that a few other

examples of Italian American success stories in Youngstown include the DeBartolo and Cafaro families, which she said, “YSU knows very well, as they accepted numerous donations from them.”

Editor’s note: Jenna DeLuca is employed by The Jambar as our web manager. She is not a participant in the editorial process and does not contribute to the contents of student media.



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A case for academic advising

By Henry Shorr
The Jambar

Registration for the spring semester is now open for all Youngstown State University students. Students can schedule their classes through the Penguin Portal and it is recommended they meet with an adviser before scheduling.

There are many benefits to meeting with an adviser before scheduling classes.

Sandi Pendleton, an academic adviser at Williamson College of Business Administration, laid out some of these benefits.

“There are a lot of caveats that students may not be aware of. It’s always good to run your class ideas by your adviser to make sure you are setting yourself up for the next sequencing of classes. A lot of times students will not understand that there are prerequisites and if they don’t meet with an adviser it could cause a delay in graduation,” Pendleton said.

Many students at YSU opt to meet with an academic adviser before scheduling their classes, and Pendleton agrees that it is those students who are more likely to succeed.

“The ones that schedule with an adviser, they tend to graduate on time. That’s a phrase our students love to use. And ‘on time’ could be different for different peo-

ple — sometimes that’s a four-year timeline and sometimes that’s a five-year timeline. We find that students get out the door [spending] less money and less time if they meet with an academic adviser,” Pendleton said.

That is exactly why junior journalism major Matthew Maher meets with his adviser to schedule classes.

“It was extremely helpful. ... She just pulled up my record of everything that I’d done and needed to be done and said, ‘All right, here’s what you can’t do because you don’t have the prerequisites,’” Maher said.

Students also have the option to meet with an adviser virtually.

Senior communications major Hannah Higgins said she has been taking advantage of this option. Higgins has met with her adviser every semester to schedule her classes. As she enters her final semester at YSU, she wanted to make sure that everything was set for her to graduate.

“Since COVID, I’ve been doing it on Zoom. ... but before that, I met with my advisers in person ... I just like to do that every [semester]. I know it’s not really necessary, but I just do it to check in with my adviser,” Higgins said.

For those who cannot meet with an adviser in person, the school has other resources available.

“Students can obtain their curriculum worksheet — that’s probably the biggest one because it outlines

courses and then they can look up that information in our catalog. We have them itemized by subject and then they’re numerically numbered so students can get an idea about what that class is about. And it would also identify if there are prerequisites,” Pendleton said when asked what the most important resource other than an adviser was.

Pendleton also wanted to draw the students’ attention to a new resource that the school has opted to use.

“There is a new app that is available to students. It’s not sponsored by Youngstown State but the classes are loaded in there. It’s called Coursicle and allows students to map out what their schedule would look like. Many of our students, the vast majority, work and they need to get schedules on a timeframe that’s going to allow them to continue that employment. Coursicle is a great way, even when they’re in the office we can lay those out and make sure [the schedule is] going to work. If not, we discuss alternative classes,” Pendleton said.

The advisers at YSU want to ensure the highest level of success, and it is worth reiterating Pendleton’s point that students are more successful when they schedule classes with an adviser.

“I’m excited. I’m ready to see what I’m going to do next. I like the major I chose and we’ll see what happens,” Maher said.

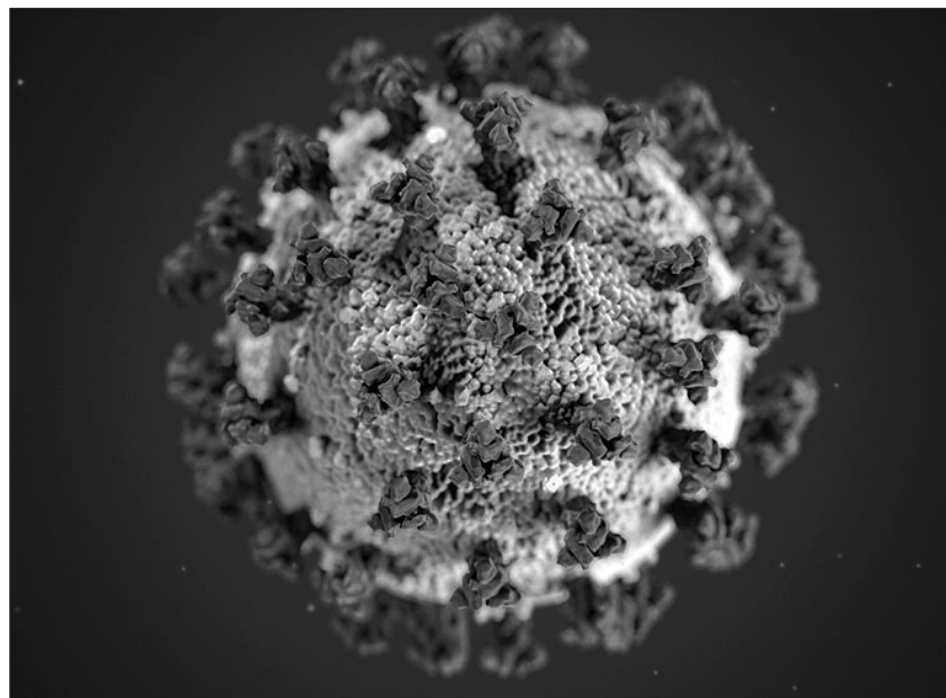


Photo courtesy of pexels.com

YSU’s COVID-19 cases spike

By Abigail Cloutier
The Jambar

Youngstown State University’s COVID-19 cases spiked this week. The university reported 42 cases for the week of Nov. 28 compared to 22 cases the week before. The university hasn’t reported as many cases since Sept. 12.

Of these cases, 41 are students, with three living on campus and the rest living off campus. The remaining case is a cam-

pus employee. Last week, YSU announced that elevated levels of COVID-19 were detected in Kilcawley Hall, an on-campus dorm, but no cases were reported.

The week of Nov. 28, YSU tested 80 people through its voluntary tests and two came back positive.

YSU has reported 419 cases of COVID-19 on campus since Aug. 22. Of those, 368 were students and 51 were employees of the university.

REDUCING STIGMA AND FINDING HELP



Photo by Jessica Stamp / The Jambar

YSU for Recovery is a program offered to students who are struggling with mental or substance abuse.

Opioid crisis impacts students during COVID-19 pandemic

By Jessica Stamp
The Jambar

Youngstown State University students may encounter many challenges during their college career, and the COVID-19 pandemic has added more mental and physical stress because of social isolation. Turning to drugs and alcohol is one coping mechanism some students might get involved in.

According to the Trumbull County Mental Health and Recovery Board statistics, about 500 approximately in Trumbull County from January-October 2021 have died from drug overdoses.

The YSU police department has not experienced any events related to opioids on campus during the pandemic.

Shawn Varso, YSU chief of police, said the last opioid incident the department encountered was about four years ago with a non-student who was found overdosed on campus.

"All of our officers are equipped with Narcan in the event we do encounter someone [overdosed from opioids], and the only time we've ever used the Narcan is about four years on a non-student who just happened to pull up into one of our parking lots," Varso said.

Narcan is a medicine that counteracts the effects of opioids and helps restore breathing. YSU officers carry Narcan in a nasal spray form if needed.

Students use drugs as an outlet from the workload stresses they are under which can lead to opioid addiction. They are afraid to say anything and get help due to worries about being kicked out of school.

April Caraway, Trumbull County Mental Health and Recovery board executive director, wants to help individuals overcome the stigma that surrounds substance abuse.

"When they're college kids, they're trying to excel, they don't want their parents to be disappointed in them," Caraway said.

Caraway expresses the board's worry of a possible increase in suicide rates and contemplation because of the pressures.

"We try to work with the colleges about stigma and make sure kids know where to get help," Caraway said.

For students who are struggling with substance abuse, YSU for Recovery can help.

Mason Edmunds, YSU Meridian Healthcare liaison, said YSU for Recovery offers virtual meetings to help students with feelings of loneliness.

"We've tried to really focus a lot of our events around

mental health and mental wellness ... and giving students ways to really equip [themselves] with the tools and coping strategies to deal with stress and to deal with the coursework as well as to deal with kind of the isolation that's coming from the pandemic," Edmunds said.

The meetings are a resource for students who need a place to be heard while being anonymous and can obtain a referral if they want one. Students who decide to attend the meeting will have the chance to meet in-person. Edmunds is working to set a specific day for the meeting around mid-January.

When dealing with substance abuse or mental health, Edmunds said, the YSU for Recovery meetings are a safe space for students to go to talk to somebody who understands their struggles and to connect with people who can help.

YSU for Recovery's goal is to help students who are struggling with any form of substance abuse. The group can also be a consistent resource for them and let them know there is a place to go to receive help.

If interested in reaching YSU for Recovery, contact Mason Edmunds by email at mgedmunds-guest@ysu.edu or call 330-509-5993.

Ethics Bowl team wins regionals

By Emily McCarthy
The Jambar

The Ethics Bowl team at Youngstown State University has won the Central State Regional Ethics Bowl for the sixth year in a row. The team started seven years ago and has welcomed students of various majors.

Mark Vopat, professor of philosophy in the former department of philosophy and religious studies, now within humanities and social sciences, said his colleague, Alan Tomhave, started the team. Three years after it initially formed, Vopat officially joined as co-coach. Vopat said they have had students from different majors, but many students came from other ethics courses.

“We’ve been extremely lucky. When we first started — this was just before I got involved — it was basically three students who were in Dr. Tomhave’s class and he said, ‘These are good students. They’re doing well in ethics and I think they might be interested in this,’” Vopat said. “He sort of recruited three students, and they ended up doing extremely well. Two second-place

national finishes and then a first-place finish two years ago. I think it says a lot about the work ethic of our students.”

Vopat said some students came in with minimal background in philosophy and ethics and have done surprisingly well and have put in a lot of effort. Students have come from backgrounds in business, engineering, philosophy, political science, English and psychology. The team has gone up against the United States Naval Academy, United States Military Academy West Point and DePaul University, Clemson and Stanford universities. It has won first place in the regional competition for the six years it attended.

“I think it is in credit to the students and their work ethic,” Vopat said. “They prepare, they do their homework and they show they can compete with anyone across the country.”

Vopat said he believes the Ethics Bowl is important because it is a discussion and fosters debate, civility, critical thinking, moral and reasoning skills. He said it also teaches students to think on their feet which has applicable scenarios to all students across campus.

“The Ethics Bowl was a part of the Association of Practical and Professional Ethics. Many of the people in our department have done work in ethics or applied ethics, and because of that we were also part of ... forming that organization” Vopat said. “It was our exposure at the conference and with other schools and helping them as judges, and then we said, ‘Let’s do one here.’”

Shianna Gibbons, sophomore journalism major with a philosophy minor, said this was her first year in the Ethics Bowl on the “A Team.” She said her professors and teammates have been incredible, and she credits them with the team’s success.

“I have known the professors and returning members for a few years, which encouraged me to join the team,” Gibbons said. “The Ethics Bowl team’s success is completely dependent on the faculty of YSU ... compared with other Ethics Bowl teams, they do not have this unconditional support system that YSU has. That is where our continuous success came from.”

Vopat said the team is always looking for new members. To get involved next fall, students can contact Vopat or Tomhave in the philosophy department.



Ethics Bowl coach Mark Vopat gives credit to the students on the team for success they've had so far.

Photo by Emily McCarthy / The Jambar

New name, new services

By Elizabeth Coss
Jambar contributor

Disability Services and the Center for Student Progress have new names this semester. Now named Accessibility Services and the Resch Academic Success Center, respectively, the two are unified through Title II Services at Youngstown State University.

The change for the Resch Center came easily, according to Becky Varian, director of the Resch Center for Student Progress.

"We've been the Center for Student Progress for 25 years, and when you read the literature for student success, even student success is part of the language that's used now," Varian said.

The name change isn't the only new thing it is offering — the Resch Center is also offering new services. The PASS Program, or Peer Assisted Study Sessions, are scheduled appointments students can make that will set them up with a one-on-one tutor. These have taken the

place of Supplemental Instruction sessions that were previously offered at the center.

During spring 2020, the center also partnered with tutor.com, offering students around-the-clock tutoring, even when the Resch Center is closed. The center pays for the service and offers it for free to any student who visits.

Varian said alongside the new services, academic coaching has seen an increase since last year. Academic coaching involves students initiating a meeting to find new ways to succeed and identify strategies for learning success.

"For academic coaching, we've seen like a 10% increase. Students want that one-on-one [time]," Varian said.

Just like the Resch Academic Success Center, Accessibility Services is also looking into online styles. Director Gina McGranahan said some changes are coming.

"We are putting all of our paper files into a cloud-

based program. We received a HEERF [Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund] grant through COVID that we are working to put all of our paper files that way," McGranahan said.

With Accessibility Services transferring files online, students and faculty can access their information to review, and look at their personal data at any time and anywhere. Part of the desire to move files online was due to the need to access information during the pandemic.

"It makes things easier for the students and for us to access their information, and for us if we ever have to work remotely again," McGranahan said.

Sally Frederick, a senior majoring in advocacy, was unaware of the name change and grant, but said she's pleased with the changes happening within Accessibility Services.

"If I need to change anything, they are super quick to help," Frederick said.

According to Gina McGranahan, all files will be online by spring semester.

Students discover history of popular products

By Mia Albaugh
The Jambar

Students in the readings in professional and technical writing class look to the past, present and future as they give their end-of-semester projects a topic of their choosing.

YSU professor Ron Fields has been teaching at YSU since 2018. He is a co-coordinator of the writing studies program at YSU and the professor of the class.

For the first few weeks of the semester, the class studied the theory of technical writing. After this, they examined

artifacts comprising a variety of technical writing.

Fields said the purpose of the final assignment is to apply theories of writing to instructions: how they are laid out for consumers and how the audience shapes both the content and form of these contents.

"If we can understand that about these objects, then we're going to be able to market these objects in a more effective way," Fields said.

The class analyzed and discussed instruction manuals such as Lego building guides, the instruction manual for the Pet Rock and more, Fields said. Afterwards,

the class examined field guides such as "Stray Shopping Carts," "Tiger Beetles of Florida" and marketing campaigns.

"My students have chosen an object to research during the course of the semester. Along the way, they collect pieces of ephemera relating to that object and compile that in a dossier," Fields said.

Students in the class gave passionate presentations and demonstrations, including items such as a record player and a stand mixer.

"They look at patent applications, instruction manuals, packaging, advertisements and more, and then present their dossier to the class in the form of an ex-

hibit with a complementary PowerPoint presentation," Fields said.

The informative presentations broke down the thinking of manufacturers and advertisers of various products.

"As an instructor, I've enjoyed the project. I get to learn about new things," he said. "We know what a KitchenAid mixer is, but I don't know what it is beyond just its utilitarian purpose of something to just mix food. Having a KitchenAid mixer is different from having one by Sunbeam and there's an entirely different ethos around the product identification," Fields said.

'Let It Snow' in Ward Beecher Planetarium

By Austin Caroline
Jambar contributor

Youngstown State University's Ward Beecher Planetarium is starting its annual Christmas shows on weekends in December leading up to Christmas.

The first program is titled "Let It Snow." This program is an artistic representation of the holidays and winter combined with thematic music projected onto the planetarium's dome roof, creating a color and music-filled experience suitable for all ages.

Tiffany Wolbrecht, a planetarium lecturer, said each showing of "Let It Snow" is unique because of the little differences the control staff make.

"The people in control of the lights differ every time we do this show, and each one of them likes to add their own little flair," Wolbrecht said.

The second program is titled "The Alien Who Stole Christmas." It follows Santa and an alien, Mr. Freep, as they visit planets of the solar system to see how the

inhabitants celebrate Christmas Eve.

Wolbrecht said this program is designed to give kids something fun to watch, while also entertaining the whole family.

Curt Spivey, the planetarium's engineer and show producer, said the planetarium has shown a musical holiday presentation for over 20 years. He also said YSU continually upgrades the planetarium's technology to give visitors a great experience.

"We had a 4K full dome video system installed in 2017 and we also have 5.1 digital surround sound in the planetarium," Spivey said.

He said this technology is what allows him and the staff to make the shows the highest quality.

Patrick Durrell, the planetarium's director, said he hopes people will come and enjoy the shows since they were unable to hold in-person events last year.

"We are thrilled to see people come out and enjoy the shows," Durrell said. "For over a year we could only present shows online, which is a rather big

change from the live presentations that we much prefer to do."

Durrell said the planetarium takes the safety of its visitors seriously, especially when it comes to stopping the spread of the coronavirus. The planetarium requires all visitors to wear masks when attending planetarium shows, regardless of vaccination status.

Spivey said attendance for the planetarium's shows has increased, but attendance for the shows geared toward children has been light due to the pandemic. However, the staff anticipate an uptick in turnout because children ages 5-11 can now be vaccinated.

"Let It Snow" shows take place at 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 10 and 17; 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 11; and 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 18.

"The Alien Who Stole Christmas" show takes place at 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 11.

For more information, visit <https://www.wbplanetarium.org> or call 330-941-1370

Kilcawley Center to be updated

By Kayla Duley
Jambar contributor

Youngstown State University is looking into ways of either revamping Kilcawley Center or tearing it down and rebuilding.

YSU President Jim Tressel announced in November during the State of University address that Kilcawley Center is 47 years old.

"You have to make the decision. Do you invest? Do you renovate? Do you tear down? What do you do?" Tressel said.

Joy Polkabla Byers, associate vice president for the division of student experience, helps run the committee for the revised Kilcawley Center plans. She said committee members are working with an architectural company called WTW Architects out of Pittsburgh.

"We are also looking at other campuses, like Bowling Green, to see what they have," Polkabla Byers said.

Polkabla Byers said as of now, the committee is in the process of assessing the five-year timeframe, and it won't have anything to formally share until April.

"The university has to determine how it's going to pay for the revitalization,

whether it'd be donations, or a bond the university will have to pay off, the committee [is] still trying to figure out what is best for the university," Polkabla Byers said.

Provost Brien Smith said the remodeling of Kilcawley Center is in a planning phase and reports are being made. He said it's not correct to say the construction of Kilcawley Center will start anytime soon. He also said this is one study the university is engaged in to see if the project is worth the university's investment.

"We would hope that a remodeled Kilcawley Center would serve students' needs better, make it a more attractive place to convene with friends, to study, to grow, to worship — whatever it is that students do," Smith said.

Student Government Association President Nicholas Koupiaris said students can participate in focus groups and go on trips to the other universities to see what they have on their campus. SGA Vice President Gianna Battaglia said if any student wants to join a focus group or visit a different university, they are more than welcome to.

"We have brought in a lot of focus groups, and most of those groups have included students. We want to know what students want," Koupiaris said.

The committee has trips planned for the rest of December to visit Toledo University, Bowling Green State University, University of Akron and Kent State University to check out what their student unions offer and to see how their campus buildings could influence those at YSU.

Kevin Francis, a senior majoring in information technology, said he likes Kilcawley the way it is now.

"I don't think it needs to change. I would like to see more food options though. There are quite a few that other universities have that we don't," Francis said.

Austin Angus, a junior majoring in vocal music education, said he'd love to see the new ideas. He said he wouldn't want the entire building to be changed and it would be nice for some of the building to be set aside for honoring and preserving its history.

"As much as I love Kilcawley and the history inside, I would love to see Kilcawley turned into a more modern building

with more natural light," Angus said.

Ravyn Mehle, a junior majoring in social work, said she didn't know the university had these plans. She doesn't believe it should change much, but she is excited what comes next.

"Another student lounge in there might be nice, with more accessible seating instead of just 'The Cove.' I like the food options so I don't care if they change that," Mehle said.

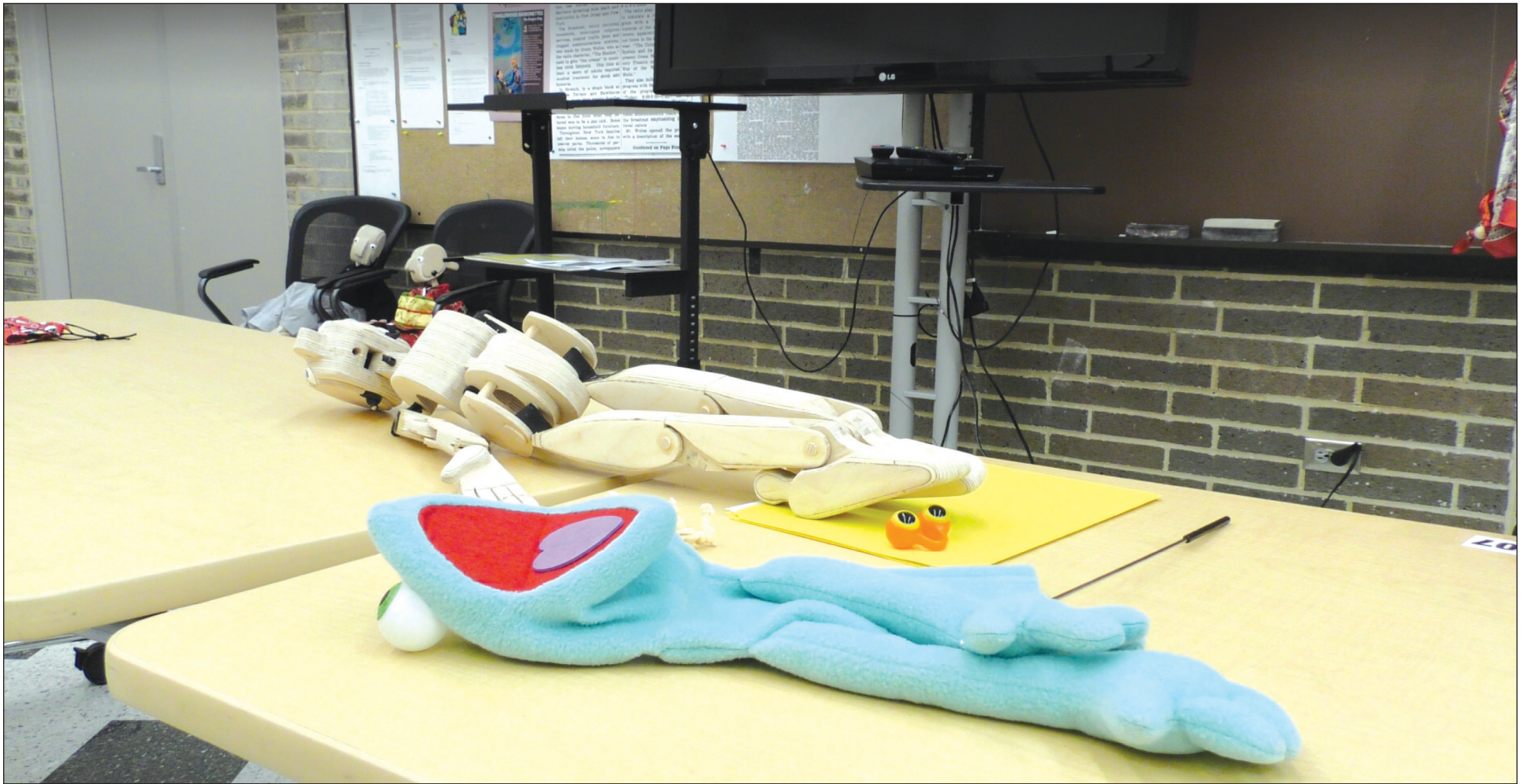
Maxine Fife, a senior majoring in primary intervention specialist, said she doesn't wish it would change.

"Kilcawley is very dated, but I like that about it. All of the restaurants in there I like as well," Fife said.

Mike Morris, a junior majoring in telecommunications, said the center is great but wished it had more food options.

"I would like to see a chicken wing place, something like Quaker Steak & Lube, on campus. I feel if you have a chicken wing place, college students will really love that, especially after game days," Morris said.

STORYTELLING PERFORMANCE



The puppetry minor offers a variety of puppets for students to learn about.

Photos by C. Aileen Blaine / The Jambar

YSU professor sets stage for minor in puppetry availability to students

By C. Aileen Blaine
The Jambar

The checkerboard floor of one of Bliss Hall's workshops adds to the wonderland-like ambience of the puppet construction zone, where students of all majors can experiment with an age-old form of art.

Theater and dance department professor Todd Dicken is one of the faces behind Youngstown State University's recently added minor in puppetry. He created the program in fall 2020 to provide students with the opportunity to express and diversify their educational

experiences through a creative avenue.

The minor's two tracks were the brainchildren of Dicken and Cliffe College of Creative Arts Dean Phyllis Paul.

"When we originally started [the program], we realized that it was more set up for theater majors, so I went back through and I set up a list of courses and divided it up so that we actually have a minor for non-theater majors," Dicken said.

The introduction to puppetry course offers non-theater majors an overview of the history of puppetry and its various styles and ranges. It also provides students a

chance to experiment with the different aspects of what goes into a show, such as script-writing and performance techniques. Later courses focus on collaborative efforts between group members, as well as the construction of puppets themselves.

Dicken said one of the accomplishments he's most proud of is helping non-performance arts students come out of their shells and expand their horizons.

"[I see] the students that prefer to work behind-the-scenes in theater, or the ones that have not done performance, coming from the outside and really opening up — just allowing themselves this opportunity to explore,"

Dicken said.

The recent Donald P. Pipino Performing Arts Series show featuring the Tanglewood Marionettes' production of "Perseus and Medusa" is just one steppingstone toward Dicken's goal of exposure in the community.

"Prior to this, we really didn't have any kind of puppetry going on in the community," Dicken said. "[I'm] trying to get everyone in Youngstown, Ohio, to understand that there's a variety of formats to this, and the value to it."

Dicken and his lineup of friends have even had a small claim to fame in the shape of Captain COVID, who made an appearance in one of Gov. Mike DeWine's coronavi-

rus updates earlier in the pandemic. Made from a dried gourd, golf tees and felt, he was eventually "vanquished by a can of Lysol."

One message Dicken stresses for prospective students is that the program can help them expand their horizons and try new ways of expressing themselves, whether through hands-on construction, scriptwriting or collaboration with other students.

"There's an incredible set of skills that students can develop as they work into puppetry," Dicken said. "For students who may be uncomfortable performing, it gives them a way of opening themselves up to that."

Dicken refers to a particular student — an engineering

major — whose puppet was abducted by his friends as an example of how the courses' impacts can be positively felt across campus.

"[The student] came in, and he didn't have his puppet. And I said, 'I know you have it done — so where's your puppet?'" Dicken said. "He said ... 'Some of my buddies found my puppet, and they were having so much fun with it that they ran off with it and [were] running through the building with it, and I lost track of it.' ... In the next class, he came back with it."

For those interested in learning more about classes available through the puppetry minor, visit YSU's course catalog under the department of theater and dance.



Todd Dicken demonstrates a simple hand puppet to show the different styles of puppetry.

EXHIBITING CREATIVE DESIGNS



Photo by Samantha Smith / The Jambar

Seniors in the Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Fine Arts programs showcase their art for public viewing until Dec. 18.

Graduating students display artwork at McDonough Museum

By Samantha Smith
The Jambar

Youngstown State University's McDonough Museum of Art held an art exhibition for art pieces created by students in both the Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Fine Arts programs. The reception took place from 5-7 p.m. Dec. 3 at the museum.

The exhibition displayed the work of eight seniors in the BFA and MFA programs. Students including Micheline Cleaves, Emily Fetsko, Anna Pugh, Bailee Rinestine and Holly Yarab participated in the BFA exhibition. MFA student Katherine Williamson and BFA students Emily Eastlick and Lindsay DeLullo collaborated for the MFA exhibition.

Artwork created ranged from areas of photography and interdisciplinary visual arts to graphic and interactive design and interdisciplinary studio art.

Claudia Berlinski, director of the McDonough Museum, explained more about the event and what it represented.

"At the end of each semester, the graduating seniors from the department of visual and dramatic arts, in the visual portion of the visual arts, have to mount an exhibition as part of their senior project. That is a combination of their four year program here," Berlinski said. "Each student who is graduating and who is registered for the senior project would put their work up in the museum."

Berlinski said when the student only has a few

courses left to complete, along with the senior project and senior seminar, the rest of their classes would be designed for the senior project.

The reception was open to the public for the first time since spring 2020.

"This is a huge moment for our students," Berlinski said. "It is really kind of everything they have worked for over the years. They really made the push this semester to bring everything together sort of a combination."

The exhibitions will be on display until Dec. 18 for public viewing. For more information on the exhibitions and students participating, go to the McDonough Museum's website.

Seniors at YSU talk about their college experiences and futures

By Kaitlyn McCarthy
The Jambar

Senior year in college often helps students get ready for their future career. Many students are getting internships or trying to gain experience at Youngstown State University for their future careers.

“My favorite part of YSU was getting real-world experience on ESPN broadcasts,” senior telecommunications major Richie Juliano said.

Criminal justice major Dante Smith enjoyed being a member of Student Government Association during his experience at YSU.

“It was amazing getting to serve the student body over the last four years, and I’m really going to miss it,” Smith said.

Senior telecommunications and music performance major Brandon Maffitt said professors have been very

helpful toward him at YSU.

“Paul Ditchey and Lisa Johnson have been a huge help to me since I switched majors. Those two [professors] work in the industry I want to be in and they’ve been nothing but helpful with me in the transition I made,” Maffitt said.

Accounting major Matt Stephens said instructor Jessie Wright helped him change his major from business to accounting.

“Jessie made the class very interesting and was an outstanding professor. Initially, I came into YSU as an undeclared business major. I enjoyed this class so much that after taking it, I knew that accounting was the path I wanted to go [on],” Stephens said. “In a way, I credit Jessie for my decision to choose accounting.”

Stephens said that his favorite part of YSU was the social aspect. He has met many new people and made friends while receiving his education.

Some seniors are just beginning their academic career. Smith’s future plans involve going to law school, furthering his education.

“My plans after college are taking a short break to save up some money, then I would like to attend law school in Akron,” said Smith.

Maffitt stated YSU has given him many new experiences and memories.

“I’m just thankful for all the experiences and opportunities I’ve been able to have while at YSU. Those experiences have helped shape me into the person I am today,” Maffitt said.

For many students, college has made a large impact on their lives. As students come closer to graduation, many are using their experience at the University to help shape their futures.

Students mingle on YSU App

By Elizabeth Coss
Jambar contributor

The Youngstown State University App has been drawing attention from students for more than the purpose of housing availability and popular events. The app has become a resource for finding new friends and fostering new relationships.

Caleb Ellison, a sophomore telecommunications major, has used the app to reach out to people and create friendships since he started school.

“I saw other incoming freshmen in my grade asking for friends and making group chats and stuff like that, so that’s where I started to make my first friends,” Ellison said.

The app also has grown into a place for students to reach out about classes and assignments since its debut.

“Now people post their classes when the semester starts, and asking who has the same classes, and that’s where I made

one of my friends this semester,” Ellison said.

Sophomore human resource management major Amanda Furlong has also used the YSU App as an easy way to make friends and said she will continue to do so.

For students who don’t know where to start, sharing social media platforms such as Snapchat is a great place, according to Furlong. She added that students may also want to consider making friends in order to have support in courses.

Making friends isn’t always easy, but according to Joy Tang, a psychological sciences and counseling professor, the benefits that come with friendships are abundant.

“Meaningful relationships and intimacy are linked to a host of psychological and physiological benefits for human beings. For college students, they are at a particularly unique developmental juncture in life, when [most of] them are leaving home and entering young

adulthood,” Tang said.

Another way to make friends on campus is through joining organizations. Caleb Queen, the coordinator for student involvement, said student organizations are a great way for students to find common ground.

“Student organizations allow students to gather around a common goal — be it

something related to their academics or special interests like a hobby or a social issue,” Queen said.

For students who are interested in joining an organization, visit the Penguin Portal and click student organizations under e-services.

According to Tang, in addition to relationships being crucial in development, there are three things that come into play under the rules of attraction while forming these friendships:

- 1) Proximity: meaning you need to be close to/cross paths with people in order to form a bonding relationship with them. Think about who you’d like to be friends with, and where you can find such people, and then involve yourself in activities/classes/physical locations where you will come into contact with such people.
- 2) Similarity: people are drawn to people who are similar to them. So think about who your kindred spirits are and go find them. Find people who share your interests, inspirations, backgrounds.
- 3) Reciprocity: People like those who like them back. Show kindness to others, be nice to them, and show interest in others. This can help facilitate your positive bonding.

THE JAMBAR POLICY

Since being founded by Burke Lyden in 1931, The Jambar has won nine Associated Press Collegiate Press honors. The Jambar is published weekly in the spring and fall semesters. The Jambar is free for YSU students and faculty.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The editorial board consists of the editor-in-chief, managing editor, news editor, arts and entertainment editor and head copy editor. These opinion pieces are written separately from news articles and do not reflect the opinions of any individual staff member. The Jambar's business manager, multimedia journalists and non-writing staff do not contribute to editorials, and the adviser does not have final approval.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Jambar encourages letters to the editor. Submissions are welcome at thejambar@gmail.com. Letters should concern a campus issue, must be typed and must not exceed 400 words. Submissions must include the writer's name and telephone number for verification, along with the writer's city of residence for publication. The Jambar does not withhold the names of guest commentators. Letters are subject to editing for spelling, grammar and clarity. Letters will not be rejected based on the views expressed in them. The editorial board reserves the right to reject commentaries and letters if they are not relevant to our readers, seek free publicity, fail to defend opinion with facts from reliable sources or if the editorial staff has decided that the subject has been sufficiently aired. The editorial board will request a rewrite from the submitted writer based on these requirements. The Jambar will not print letters that are libelous, threatening, obscene or indecent. The views and opinions expressed in letters and commentaries on the opinion page do not necessarily reflect those of The Jambar staff. Editorials do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the faculty, staff or administration of YSU.

The Jambar Editorial Goodnight and good luck

Dear Penguin community,

In this short and strange fall semester, it has been my honor to serve as the editor-in-chief for the student voice of Youngstown State University. In that short time, I've covered numerous protests spanning from mask mandates to abortion rights to the university's decision to cut 26 programs. Though there's been a lot of heartbreak, I've also had the pleasure of over-

seeing some wonderful stories covering passionate students and faculty and the work they do that makes YSU an amazing institution.

I'm deeply proud to be graduating from this institution, not because of the administration, but because of my amazing fellow students, professors and colleagues at The Jambar. To Mary Beth Earnheardt, Michele Gatts and Shelley Blundell: you have all been amazing teach-

ers and mentors. I would not be the journalist I am today without your guidance.

To my editorial team at The Jambar: even through all of the long nights and frustrating mishaps and breaking coverage, you have been my supporters and the backbone of this paper. You make the stories we tell even better and the long nights go a little faster with all of you by my side. My Wednesday nights won't be the same without you.

It's my pleasure to hand off the editor-in-chief position to Sydney Stalneck, who has done an amazing job with our broadcast publication JambarTV. I know she will do great things at the helm and I look forward to seeing the great things she accomplishes.

Good night and good luck,

Abigail Cloutier

Letter to the Editor

Editor:

On behalf of the Islamic Society of Greater Youngstown and the Youngstown Area Jewish Federation, we are jointly expressing our deep concern about YSU's decision to non-renew the contracts of Dr. Mustansir Mir, Professor of Islamic Studies (Department of Humanities and Social Sciences) and Dr. Jacob Labendz, Assistant Professor of History (Department of History). The separation from the University of these two scholars will result in the de facto elimination by the YSU administration of two critical academic programs, Religious Studies, and Judaic and Holocaust Studies.

The importance of religion and its influence on world affairs is undeniable. Religion has literally shaped the world in which we live and will continue to do so. It is extremely important for students today to understand world religions, especially Islam and Judaism, and how they impact current life. This understanding will help prepare them for whatever they face personally and professionally, given the diverse and closely interconnected global environment in which we live.

Because YSU has not replaced several Religious Studies faculty members who have either retired or sadly passed away, Dr. Mir, who teaches classes on a variety of world religions, is currently the only full-time faculty member in the Department of

Humanities and Social Sciences with expertise in religion (the remaining full-time faculty in the department are Professors of Philosophy). His loss will mean the end of the study of religious traditions around the world at YSU, something that clearly will be a detriment to the students and the community at large.

The study of the historical lessons of the Holocaust is equally as crucial. During these perilous, polarized times, where we are seeing a substantial uptick in antisemitism, Islamophobia, and political misappropriation of Holocaust history, it is more vital now than ever that a pedagogically qualified historian be present on campus to teach about and direct programming on this material. Because Dr. Labendz is the only current YSU professor who is qualified to teach Judaic and Holocaust studies, and because of the administration's apparent decision to shrink the footprint of history education at the University, any future efforts to present Judaic/Holocaust opportunities, without an appropriate scholar as a full-time member of the faculty, will dilute the impact of this education to the point that it is rendered meaningless. The history of the Holocaust matters and cannot be forgotten.

YSU has presented itself as a strong promoter of diversity, equity, and inclusion principles. However, the elimination of

these two academic programs belies the administration's characterization of a campus environment that is truly committed to these concepts. The retention of strong, detailed, and diverse education in both Religious and Judaic/Holocaust studies will send the message that YSU is committed to its students and their futures. Now is not the time to cut back. The students of today are our leaders of tomorrow, and it is vital that YSU prepare them fully for the challenges that lie ahead.

Accordingly, for the reasons we have stated here, and for the reasons we have articulated separately on behalf of our communities, we strongly urge YSU to reverse its recent employment decisions, retain Dr. Mir and Dr. Labendz, and continue to enhance the study of religion and history in light of the long-term benefits to their students.

Islamic Society of Greater Youngstown
Youngstown Area Jewish Federation
Randa Shabayak, President
Suzyn Schwebel Epstein, Board President
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Track and field expectations running high

By Yousof Hamza
The Jambar

The Youngstown State University track and field team broke the ice for the indoor track season with 52 other schools at the YSU Icebreaker meet in Watson and Tressel Training Site.

Senior Wyatt Lefker and junior Erin Bogard both set men’s and women’s pole vault school records to open up the season. Lefker cleared a 5.15-meter bar while Bogard cleared a 4.05-meter bar.

Other highlights from the meet include junior Jahniya Bowers gold finish in the women’s 60-meter dash with a time of 7.38, tying her personal record and placing her second in school history.

Bowers also won the 200-meter race with a personal best of 24.40 seconds. Junior Kyndia Matlock finished second for Youngstown State with a time of 25.05 seconds.

Head coach Brian Gorby believes the team will con-

tinue to improve as it chases another Horizon League Championship.

“A lot of the folks have trained hard over the last three months and this was their shot,” he said. “The track team ... this was like their championship for the fall ... the focus is to always build through the season, but peak comes [around] championship time.”

Going into this track and field season, Gorby has 47 Horizon League championships. He has the ability to make it to 50 championships after the indoor, outdoor and cross country seasons this year.

He believes the students and assistant coaches are the key to his success. Recruiting those students is important, and Youngstown State has received one of the best recruiting classes in Ohio.

“Great staff, great kids, lots of energy — pretty much the energy we bring everyday — and these kids keep taking it up to another level,” Gorby said. “It’s the atmosphere — there’s nothing like it. We’ve got the best

coaches in the nation.”

He believes the coaches and athletes are helping build Youngstown State into a Power Five-type program.

Recruits are attracted to what Youngstown State offers its athletes, and Gorby is continually trying to bring in top athletes.

“The facility — it’s one of the best in the nation. Our travel schedule, we’ll put it up against anyone in the nation,” Gorby said about attracting student-athletes. “We do go above and beyond for these kids, the bells and whistles, to kind of get them whatever they need to be successful. We’ll take athletes four, five different places a weekend to get them, of course, the opportunities.”

This meet was the first time spectators could view an indoor meet at Youngstown State in 22 months. Gorby appreciated the support from the fans and their impact on the team.

Swimming and diving sets records

By Yousof Hamza
The Jamabr

The Youngstown State University men’s swimming and diving team set new school records at the Miami Invitational in Oxford, Ohio. There were also 10 individual records set.

The team set school records including:

- 200-meter medley relay - 1:30.88
- 400-meter medley relay - 3:20.58
- 800-meter free relay - 6:46.83

Freshman Simon Iwanonkiw

- Platform Diving - 209.25
- Freshman Aleksa Radenovic
- 100-meter backstroke -48.88
 - 100-meter fly - 1:45.73
 - 200-meter fly - 1:45.73

Junior Karan Raju

- 200-meter freestyle - 1:40.37
- Sophomore Brenden Reeves
- 200-meter individual medley - 1:49.83

Sophomore Gavin Webb

- 500-meter freestyle - 4:29.98
- 1000-meter freestyle - 9:17.18
- 1650-meter freestyle -15:22.11
- 400-meter individual medley - 3:56.59

Athletic department increases number of student-athletes

By Kyle Willis
Jambar contributor

Youngstown State University, just like any other college or university across the country, uses athletics to try to attract potential students to its campus. At Baldwin Wallace University and the University of Mount Union, more than half of the students on campus are student-athletes.

Ron Strollo, executive director of intercollegiate athletics for the university, said it's an important piece of the enrollment initiative at YSU.

The university is planning to cut 26 programs from academics because of budget constraints and declining enrollment. Some have suggested that using money from athletics is the answer.

Strollo said there's a perception of academics vs. athletics. However, the Athletic Department has been asked to help support the enrollment initiatives.

"That's why you've seen the expansion of some athletics programs and women's lacrosse, then swimming

and with double the roster and cross country. And four or five years ago I added bowling," Strollo said.

While YSU offers scholarships to its athletes, Strollo said it can only distribute a certain number of full scholarships. The department breaks down those scholarships and offers partial ones, still requiring student-athletes to pay parts of tuition, food and dorm costs.

There are approximately 530 student-athletes at YSU. Three years ago, there were approximately 400. He also said these student-athletes wouldn't be at the university if it wasn't offering their specific sport.

"We're managing more student-athletes, but these are all students that probably wouldn't be at YSU if it wasn't for us offering the sport," he said.

While additions of women's bowling and lacrosse have helped raise athletic enrollment, he said the Athletic Department is exploring which sports to add next.

"You're always thinking about adding, not only for enrollment for Title IX purposes, but to try to add to our women's programs," Strollo said. "We're still just settling in when your enrollment goes up by 130 students,

we're still trying to settle in and trying to manage those 130 right now," Strollo said.

Athletics is still recovering from the effects of COVID-19. It issued layoffs for 22 positions during the pandemic.

"We're settling back into a normalized budget with that extra group of student-athletes and then we look forward to other possibilities, helping with the enrollment initiative," Strollo said.

Going into the 2021-2022 athletic season, the Athletic Department partnered with Nike as all athletic teams donned the swoosh on their uniforms. Having a brand like Nike will help attract incoming recruits, Strollo said, thus increasing the number of student-athletes.

"We've got a good brand, so a lot of times from a student perspective, student-athletes are reaching out to us," Strollo said. "There's recruiting services out there that help you identify prospective students-athletes. There's relationships between our coaches, administrators [and] high school coaches. High schools try to unearth some of those that have really good talent."



WATTS prepares to house new additions to athletics.

Photo by Kyle Willis / The Jambar

Men's basketball turns around misfortunes in Wisconsin

By Kyle Wills
The Jambar

The Youngstown State University men's basketball team swept the road trip to Wisconsin, defeating the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and the University of Wisconsin Green-Bay to start 2-0 in Horizon League play.

The men started conference play against Milwaukee Dec. 2, claiming victory over the Panthers with a score of 70-68. The team struggled offensively, shooting 31.3% from the field; however, it was also tremendous at the line, putting 23-of-27 free throws through the nylon.

Senior guard Tevin Olson was stellar on both sides of the ball, scoring 18 points and recording seven rebounds, three steals and a block. Senior forward Michael Akuchie and sophomore guard Shemar Rathan-Mayes were also in double-digits, both scoring 10.

Off the bench, junior guard Owen Long was phenomenal as he lit up the statistical column, recording 17 points, two assists, four rebounds and four steals in 23

minutes.

Two days later, the men would face off against Green Bay as they shot over 20% greater than their previous game at 53.6%. They defeated the Phoenixes 82-58.

Out of the five starters, four were able to score in double figures. Olson finished with 20 points, Akuchie had 17, and Rathan-Mayes and junior Dwayne Cohill both had 15.

Offensively, the team struggled prior to the road trip with the loss of senior guard Garrett Covington. However, they were able to find success following a 10-day break with Olson leading the way

"After Garrett [Covington] got hurt I feel like I have been more aggressive on offense and not trying to force the issue, but just play off my teammates. They know I can score. They know when to give me the ball, so I just play out there," Olson said.

Defensively, Youngstown State played tighter, holding Green Bay to 41.3% shooting. The Phoenixes made just 19 shots in the contest.

Head coach Jerrod Calhoun said the loss of Covington

required a big adjustment for the team, but numerous players have been stepping up to fill the void.

"Garrett guards the other team's best player. We ran a lot of our offense for him, so we're really trying to spread it out a little bit. Tevin Olson and Owen Long were tremendous. Dwayne Cohill was tremendous. Akuchie is going to be tremendous all year. We're just trying to find our niche with some of these other guys," Calhoun said.

Despite having an impressive showing to sweep the road trip, Calhoun believes there's still more to be solved as the season progresses.

"We're still a work-in-progress, and that's why you have to keep guys in the moment. You have to keep getting better," he said. "You went from losing two heartbreakers to now jump-starting your season with two road victories inside the conference. Those are hard to come by, so we feel good where we're at but we're not overconfident."

The Penguins will look to continue their winning streak when they take on Canisius College. Tipoff at Beeghly Center is set for 2 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 11.

Women's basketball continues to win without star player

By Kyle Wills
The Jambar

The Youngstown State University women's basketball team continued its dominant start to the season, defeating the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay to extend its undefeated streak to 7-0.

On Wednesday, Dec. 2, the women played host to Milwaukee as they topped the Panthers 58-50. The team was missing its star post player in senior forward Lilly Ritz, which led to struggles offensively in the first half, shooting 1-for-12

in the first quarter and 3-for-13 in the second.

However, in the second half, the women were able to get their shots to fall as junior forward Paige Shy led the team with 16 points and senior guard Megan Callahan was able to score 13.

Defensively, Youngstown State was tremendous as it held Milwaukee to 26.7% from the floor and 26.1% from beyond the arc.

Offensively, the women were able to turn it around Dec. 4 against Green Bay, defeating the Phoenixes 67-58.

The Penguins finished the game shooting 44.2% overall and finished one

3-pointer shy of the school record with 15.

Callahan had another great performance, shooting 7-for-12 to help her score 20 points. Sophomore guard Malia Magestro shot 5-10 behind the 3-point line, accounting for all 15 of her points in 30 minutes off the bench.

Youngstown State was again aggressive on defense, holding Green Bay to 32.2% from the field. Junior guard Mady Aulbach dominated in the rebound statistics, finishing the game with 12 rebounds.

Ahead of the team's matchup against Canisius College on Dec. 8, head coach John Barnes said the 7-0 start has been

difficult, especially playing without Ritz, but the team continues to look ahead.

"I don't think we've had an easy game yet this year, no matter who we're playing. We've been really focused on Canisius. They have a heck of a guard, some good shooters around her and some good post players," he said.

For stats, highlights and more from this game vs. Canisius, visit www.ysusports.com

The women's basketball team will look to extend its undefeated streak further as it takes on a Big Ten opponent at Penn State University at 2 p.m. Dec. 12.