



## FEES WITHHELD FROM UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENTS AND COLLEGES

The university was given discretion to allocate funds to different academic departments at their request through the Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget approved by the YSU Board of Trustees in its June meeting. Photo by J. Harvard Feldhouse/The Jambar

### RACHEL GOBEP

*The way college and technology and laboratory fees are currently disbursed is a change of common practice at YSU.*

About 63% of technology and laboratory fees paid by students, or \$1,472,855, have been disbursed to Youngstown State University academic departments, according to Neal McNally, vice president of finance and business operations.

Seventy-two percent of college fees, or \$698,703, are also being withheld.

According to YSU's Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget, \$3.98 million was budgeted for laboratory and materials fees, while about \$4.06 million was budgeted for college and program fees.

One-hundred percent of program fees, which are fees related to specific programs students are enrolled in, have been disbursed.

The YSU website states the laboratory fee is designed to "partially offset expenses associated with courses that make use of supplies, equipment or personnel support beyond that associated with typical lecture courses."

This includes chemical supplies, equipment, computers, software and lab monitors.

College fees recognize the "differential cost of instruction among colleges." This can include teaching equipment, software and lab space upgrades, among other things.

According to YSU Provost Brien Smith, the funds have not been appropriated for other use at the university.

"The benefit is if we have money available to meet the needs of students in their labs, their courses ... and have other dollars available. ... We can do more things at the institutional level to support student learning and increase that experience," Smith said.

Smith said deans of colleges and department chairs were not involved in the decision to withhold fees — it was an administrative decision.

The Youngstown State University Board of Trustees passed the Fiscal Year 2020 Operating Budget in its June meeting.

The operating budget went into effect on July 1, 2019, and made it possible for the university administration to develop a "process to allocate strategic investment funding," in hopes of ensuring the responsible use of financial resources, according to Page 4 of the budget.

"To further optimize the use of all available resources, principles and expectations associated with the proposal and use of certain types of student fees will be implemented," the budget

states. "The overarching principle will be that all such fees are centrally collected and institutional discretion will be exercised to allocate resources that are sourced from these fees. This will include the notion of holding back distributions pending demonstrated accomplishments aligned with University priorities."

Therefore, the university has the discretion to allocate funds to different academic departments at their request, but the process is much different than years prior.

McNally said although communication could have been better, the university was transparent with its intentions because the wording was placed in the introduction of the operating budget.

"I don't know that communicating it then versus now would have a different outcome because it's still the same message. ... It's just change either way," he said.

This comes as the university is currently in a projected \$8.9 million deficit, according to McNally.

"There is no actual deficit because we're managing right now through spending, mostly hiring decisions and deferring hiring positions," he said.

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# INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FACE SACRED STRUGGLES

The sanctuary in Congregation Rodef Sholom is within walking distance of YSU. Photo by **Heather Newsome/The Jambar**

**AMANDA JOERNDT**  
**BRIANNA GLEGHORN**

A Buddhist international student traveled from Sri Lanka to study mechanical engineering. She later realized the difficulties she would face in practicing her religion.

Hasaru Kodytuakku, a sophomore mechanical engineering major, is one of three Sri Lankan students enrolled at Youngstown State University.

Although the Andrews Student Recreation and Wellness Center and Jones Hall installed meditation and prayer spaces, students still resort to traveling off campus to practice their religion. Kodytuakku said practicing Buddhism can be an obstacle at times due to the lack of Buddhist temples in the area.

She resorts to worshipping in her dorm room.

"I wish there were at least one temple nearby, but there are two temples in Pittsburgh. But still, even those temples are not the actual temples we have [back home]," Kodytuakku said.

She said her daily practices consist of worshipping, offering flowers and lighting an oil lamp and incense.



Hasaru Kodytuakku worships in her dorm room with a self-made temple by using a wooden stool to hold her worship items. Photo Courtesy of **Hasaru Kodytuakku**.

"I have a private room, so I have a stool set up for worshipping with a Buddhist statue there," Kodytuakku said. "The thing is, I can't actually light a lamp because we have smoke alarms, so I can't actually use the incense, and it's hard to find flowers to offer to Lord Buddha."

She said although she attends the Nepalese Student Association festivals, she hopes YSU will add additional resources for students who have different worship practices.

"It's impossible to build a temple for Buddhists. But maybe just a room to practice having Lord Buddha and letting us have the chance to do whatever we usually do, like offer flowers, light oil lamps ... the things we can't do in our dorm room," she said.

According to Kodytuakku, she hopes to form a bigger circle

of students who practice Buddhism and that another Sri Lankan student will enroll at the university.

YSU's student body is made up of various religious identities, such as Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim groups.

While some students can travel within walking distance to a Jewish synagogue on Elm Street, Buddhist students can find their nearest place of worship at a temple near Pittsburgh.

## Practicing Islam in Youngstown

Many Muslim students resort to the two meditation facilities in the rec center and Jones Hall for religion practices.

Cameron Adams, assistant director of operations and guest services at the rec center, said although some students use the meditation room on a regular basis, he feels the room is underutilized.

"They find it really useful because it's quiet and tucked in and just a nice place to come in and meditate and do whatever stuff you need to do in here," he said.

According to Adams, the room holds different equipment for religious practices along with running water for tranquil meditation sessions.

"I think there's just a lot of students that practice some type of religious belief, and they need the space to do that and feel comfortable," he said. "We have the water running to make it a tranquil and calming setting."

Adams said because a public institution "can't mix church and state," the meditation room was the next best option.

"It was one of those things where the donors who put up the money wanted to have some type of church or chapel-funded thing. ... So, we compromised and came up with the meditation studio space," he said.

Carly Devenburgh, assistant director of international student and scholar services at the YSU International Programs Office, said Jones Hall built prayer rooms along with nearby hand and feet washing centers for student use.

"For the Muslim students, some of the students also do a foot wash and they wash their face, their hands and their feet before they pray," she said. "That is something that our office recognized. Students were using the bathrooms, and we just didn't think that was respectful or safe practice."

According to Devenburgh, she believes the university can be

more accommodating to different faith beliefs.

"I think there is more that we can do in that area. Maybe looking at our website, making sure different temples or, you know, different religious sites are available so that we can point especially new students that might be new to the area," she said.

Like Kodytuakku, Taufeeque Mohammad, a sophomore mechanical engineering major, resorts to off-campus resources as a more efficient alternative to practice his religion.



Taufeeque Mohammad poses in front of the Youngstown Islamic Center sign before his prayer service on Nov. 15. Photo by **Heather Newsome/The Jambar**

Mohammad travels to the Youngstown Islamic Center in between classes to continue practicing Islam while studying at YSU.

He said the practices are much different in the United States versus those in his home in Nepal.

"We are supposed to pray five times a day and men are

supposed to pray at the mosque. Women are supposed to pray at the house," Mohammad said. "In my country, they don't let women in the mosque. I don't understand why, but up here it's a different scenario."

He said when the International Programs Office mentioned forming an Islamic center on campus, not many students seemed interested.

"Many people just find it better to go to the mosques," Mohammad said.

According to Devenburgh, the International Programs Office will be welcoming a new coordinator to YSU in hopes of bringing innovative ideas to connect different cultures on campus.

"We're anxious to see what ideas she might have and how she might connect with students, so this might be one of those areas that we could work on," Devenburgh said.

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## 'SAVE STATION 7,' FIRE STATION CLOSURE SPARKS CONFLICT

Youngstown's Fire Station 7 has been serving the Youngstown area for 116 years. Photo by **Abigail Cloutier/The Jambar**

### ABIGAIL CLOUTIER

Youngstown's Fire Department manages and operates Station 7, located on the corner of Madison Avenue and Elm Street. With the station's plan to close Dec. 1, Youngstown residents and business owners have questions.

Station 7 is the only station in Youngstown's North Side.

The closure will add two to four minutes of response time to the area, according to Johnathan Blackshire, president of the Wick Park Neighborhood Association.

The city discussed the closure on Oct. 24 during a safety committee meeting. The issue was not brought before general council.

In response to the closure, the Wick Park Neighborhood Association held a rally at the station on Nov. 3, encouraging community members to express their concerns and frustration.

Blackshire said eight citizens spoke against the closure of Station 7 at a Youngstown City Council meeting Nov. 13.

He said, "A fire, according to experts, can double every 30 seconds."

"The bottom line is the station is critically located in an area where it can respond to emergencies on the North Side," he said.

According to the Oct. 24 Youngstown Safety Committee meeting, the city budget was cited as a primary reason for closing Station 7, and the Fire Department is looking at several sites for a new station.

Building instability is also a reason for closure, according to Youngstown fire Chief Barry Finley, who spoke at the October meeting.

Tressel said student safety is a priority to the university, and he is concerned about the increased response time.

"Every minute, every 30 seconds, when you're in dangerous situations like a fire, in this whole infrastructure discussion we've

been having with more students living on or around campus, there are things that you have to keep in mind," Tressel said. "We'll have to figure out how we can be the most safe."

According to Tressel, he does not expect YSU's relationship with the Fire Department to change.

Businesses operating around Station 7 and residents living in the area are most concerned about the increased response time.

Though Station 1 is roughly a mile away from Station 7, issues such as rush-hour traffic and a major renovation that will narrow Fifth Avenue will increase response time by four minutes, according to Blackshire.

Melanie Buonavolonta, owner of Mel's Habitat, operates her business on Elm Street and said she is concerned not only for her business but also for her family.

"Because I'm a business owner who happens to be able to bring my child to work with me, and I do occasionally, it's extra concerning because there's just one more soul to care for," Buonavolonta said.

She said she is also worried for the safety of the surrounding businesses.

"When I'm not there, there are sweet young women that work for me, and I want to protect them and my neighbors," Buonavolonta said.

Jim Converse, community economic development director at Common Wealth Inc., said his concerns are directed toward the economic development of Elm Street.

"[Common Wealth] has spent almost \$11 million fixing up businesses on this end of the street," Converse said. "Most of these are older houses. They're wood frames and would burn very quickly, so response time is critical."

He said Elm Street is a business-invested block.

"We want to protect the investment; that's our main concern," Converse said. "To simply say that they're not going to protect

us anymore is not a fair way to do business as a city."

The Jambar reached out to Mayor Jamael Tito Brown and 1st Ward Councilman Julius Oliver for a statement, but both were unavailable for comment by the time of publication. Youngstown's fire Chief Finley also declined to comment on the issue.



A lone sign sits in front of Station 7 on Elm Street. Photo by **Abigail Cloutier/The Jambar**





Mark McKenzie (right) promotes men's and women's lacrosse in the Kilcawley Center arcade. Photo by J. Harvard Feldhouse/The Jambar

## J. HARVARD FELDHOUSE

Animosity festered last year between Youngstown State University's Campus Recreation and club sports administration and the students involved in club sports.

Students and administration could not come to an agreement about policies surrounding the payment of coaches for certain clubs, and a lack of leadership in club sports made communication and general operations difficult for all involved.

This year, however, it appears club sports students and administration are working together to create an experience that works for both sides.

### Background

Last year, campus recreation was able to pay \$1,000 per year to nonstudent coaches of club sports considered "high-risk," according to a Dec. 20, 2018, Jambar article titled, "Club Sports Debate Priorities." The term high risk means injuries occur more frequently and tend to be more severe by nature of a sport's gameplay. Men's and women's lacrosse, men's soccer, ice hockey and women's rugby make this list.

However, many within club sports, such as Ricky Koewach, former men's lacrosse president and YSU mechanical engineering graduate, thought \$1,000 wasn't enough to draw coaches in.

"It's money, time and the lack thereof," Koewach said in the December Jambar article. "When you're only offering \$1,000 a year, it's really difficult to find someone who's going to dedicate the time."

If a club sport wants to pay its coaches more, it would have to acquire money through other means.

Campus Recreation understood the frustration expressed by club sports members, but it considered coach payment a secondary priority to ensuring the safety and well-being of their student-athletes.

"If I had a choice in the funding, I'm always going to look at risk management and safety of our players, and then move along the line in priorities for what our clubs need," Joy Polkabra Byers, director of Campus Recreation, said in the article.

YSU Campus Recreation and club sports players differed on how to ensure the safety of players when interviewed in December 2018. Players believed having professionals teach proper techniques was the answer, while Campus Recreation

believed implementing more extensive safety protocols was a better alternative.

These disagreements occurred amid a transitional period for campus recreation. Club sports usually has a coordinator to help facilitate discussions between students and administrators and negotiate practice schedules with YSU athletics and YSU facilities.

Until Domonique Sak, the new coordinator of club sports and summer camps, was hired in the late spring 2019 semester, club sports players felt unguided.

### A Budgetless Budget

The club sports program has an operating budget of \$113,402, according to the YSU fiscal year 2019 operating budget.

As well as paying the coordinator and graduate assistants' salaries, this budget pays coaches in the high-risk clubs, pays student practice monitors and provides scholarships for select incoming freshmen players, as well as covers office supplies and other necessities.

However, there is no general fund or budget dispersed to each of the club sports like that of some other universities, such as Xavier University.

This year, high-risk club sports' coaches aren't paid a \$1,000 stipend. Rather, they are paid for three hours each week at a rate above minimum wage, according to Sak. For coaches of low-risk club sports — clubs in which injury is unlikely or minimal — they are not paid because the sport is low risk.

Joe Laughlin, a club sports graduate assistant, came to YSU from Xavier. He said he was surprised the university had no budget for club sports.

He said Xavier had a university-appropriated club sports budget, but he insisted there are pros and cons to both YSU and Xavier's models.

"Money equals engagement, right?" Laughlin said. "So, with more money that gives [club sports] more possibilities to create and do more things. It's already built in there for them, so they don't have to go create it themselves."

"Now, the downside to that is that it's given to them, so they don't really have to show much initiative towards charging dues and having fundraising events. Whereas here, we survive off that," Laughlin added.

Even if YSU had a general fund for club sports, Sak said

money would be given to the clubs themselves, not to coaches' salaries.

At YSU, if club sports teams want to have extra money to pay for coaches, they must either charge dues, raise funds or vie for appropriations from the Student Government Association.

SGA appropriates 3% of its budget to each club, according to Mark Slavens, vice president of financial affairs for SGA and senior biology pre-veterinary major. For 2019, that's a little more than \$4,600 per club.

However, clubs cannot apply for all that money at once, nor are they guaranteed that SGA will award money for the purpose of paying a coach. As a result, club sports may either rely on multiple revenue sources or forgo paying a coach, opting for a volunteer willing to coach for free.

While the YSU club sports program and Campus Recreation know that this is a frustrating topic for some of the club sports members, they are working to provide other programs and services clubs should find helpful.

### Creating a Club Sports Culture

Byers, Sak and Laughlin have worked together to make changes to the club sports program that focuses on culture and is student focused. They want to promote club sports autonomy, well-rounded safety protocols, community engagement and professional development.

Byers said she wants to steer club sports away from coaches that take an administrative role as they have in the past, preferring the students to take that role and let the coaches simply coach.

"We have a coaches' contract that [says] the coach's job is to coach the players, it is not to run the club," Byers said. "Domonique has been working hard these past six months to establish the coaches' role versus student-leadership role. I think sometimes that gets a little interwoven; we have to work on making sure that the students are always involved in decisions."

"We want the students and student leaders by the time they graduate from [YSU] to have a good foundation for leadership, fundraising and community service," Sak said. "We hope that this makes them better humans when they leave out the door."

Club sports created a Club Sports Council and is working to develop a tiered system to track club engagement.

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Sarah Elisabeth Odidika, Noor Khalayleh, Jasmine Smyles and Marta Hergenrother lead the discussion at the YSU Students United Poverty Panel. Photo by **Kelcey Norris/The Jambar**

## KELCEY NORRIS

Youngstown State University students participated in a discussion about their experiences with poverty and food insecurity in the Youngstown area in Kilcawley Center's Chestnut Room.

YSU Students United collaborated with the PAYO, Poverty Awareness in Youngstown, focusing on a simulation of poverty.

Students were divided into several groups based on an assigned social class to receive a designated meal to eat.

While one individual received a three-course meal with dessert to finish, most of that individual's peers ate an entirely different meal.

Marta Hergenrother, a senior psychology major, said there was one student per table that received the "high-class" meal.

"We had four other people at the table who had what we called a 'middle-class' meal, a protein and potatoes," Hergenrother said. "Then we had our low-class meal, which was just rice and beans."

As students began to contemplate why their meal looked different from their peers, there was a fourth group of participants that did not receive food.

Jasmine Smyles, senior exercise science major, said YSU President Jim Tressel gave the student organizers ideas about how to make the activity more diverse.

"He said to have the extra students sit on the side so they can have no meal," Smyles said. "And when [they] saw the uneaten food going back, it sat with me that the people on the side aren't eating at all. This is real life; this is reality."

Smyles said she was able to gauge the students' reactions to the meals as they were served.

"I think it's a testament to our first reaction about how we think about food insecurity," she said.

"I don't think that people know how to dive in deep with that perspective, but the simulation helped, and the videos helped to explain that," Smyles added.

The students watched videos on poverty and homelessness among their demographic.

After being shown that 725 people in Youngstown were identified as "chronically homeless" as of the 2017 census, they were encouraged to engage in the discussion.

Noor Khalayleh, a senior psychology major, led the students through the discussion and asked for their reactions.

"Every single time that we have these conversations, we want it to be a student-led discussion because it's important for students to have a discussion among themselves so that they're aware," Khalayleh said. "We're going to be the leaders of the future, and it's important that we're aware of these almost hot-button topics."

Mackenzie Dalton, a freshman education major, spoke of her difference in experiences between her hometown of Cleveland and her new home in Youngstown.

"I'm from Cleveland, and I grew up in a nicer area," Dalton said. "So to hear that it's this bad and only an hour away from me makes me think, 'What can I do to help? Are my friends living like this?'"

Dalton agreed with many in the audience that the lack of tourism and booming business in Youngstown may be a factor contributing to the high poverty rate.

"When people hear Youngstown, they think there's lots of crime," Dalton said. "Cleveland and Columbus, they have more opportunities for employment. Youngstown doesn't have some of those things that could attract people to the area."

Hergenrother also reminded the students of campus resources available to those in need.

"There are many resources on campus that we want students to be aware of, like the food pantry, the career closet. So if you have an interview and you need professional clothes, they can help," Hergenrother said. "Reaching out to those resources to see how they can help you is important."

Khalayleh left the discussion with a final message to always be considerate of the battles your roommates, classmates and professors are facing.

"My biggest message is always be kind to one another," Khalayleh said. "You never know what the person sitting next to you, what the person you're walking by between your classes ... You never know what they're going through."

YSU Students United has hosted two other panel discussions this semester that serve as opportunities for students to debate and discuss differences among the student body.

# HOW TO MANAGE THE OPIOID CRISIS THROUGH THE SCOPE OF A DENTIST

## BRIANNA GLEGHORN

College students have a greater possibility of participating in high-risk behaviors, according to Dr. Frank Beck, regional chief of opioids officer for Mercy Health.

Beck spoke about the opioid crisis to Youngstown State University students Nov. 13 in Kilcawley Center's Ohio Room.

The presentation, titled "Lessons Learned - A Decade of Experience Addressing the Opioid Crisis," educated students on Beck's perspective of pain management working in dentistry.

According to Beck, a patient seeking dental care could be immediately treated and therefore avoid the use of an opioid.

"We actually developed a definitive care program where we depopulate the emergency room. Patients come to the hospital dental clinic and they get immediate definitive care, thereby eliminating the need for an opioid" he said.

Beck said the best way to manage pain is not with opioids, but with a "pain cocktail."

"The most effective pain management protocol they have is 600 milligrams of ibuprofen taken together with 1000 milligrams of acetaminophen," he said.

According to Beck, the first time adolescents, those aged between 10 and 19, are introduced to opioids is after a wisdom tooth extraction.

"Most importantly, with adolescents we need to be very stringent with regards to understanding the likelihood of an adolescent with an amateur prefrontal cortex developing an addiction after exposure to an opioid," Beck said.

Beck said the American population consumes 80% of opioids manufactured in the world.

"We're 4% of the population," he said. "Eighty-three percent of the world's population has zero access. They still get operated on, they have babies, they have trauma, they have gunshot wounds."

In Beck's opinion, opioids are needed but usually for no longer than three to five days.

"Sometimes it's as little as one dose or one day's worth and you can indeed become addicted," he said.

Jessica Handel, program director of the family medicine residency at the St. Elizabeth Youngstown Hospital, described the opioid crisis as complex and multifaceted.

"Many factors coincided to start this crisis, so there are no simple solutions," Handel said. "Therefore, it is incumbent upon each of us to do what we can to address this crisis."

In Handel's opinion, physicians and health care providers should be cautious when prescribing opioids.

"We need to identify those at risk for addiction and those who are already addicted to facilitate best treatment," Handel said.

"We need to ensure access to appropriate treatment for opioid addiction for our patients."

According to Handel, this type of presentation is important for college students because they "will soon be leading our country and shaping our policies."

"There is a high likelihood that the opioid crisis has already impacted or is currently affecting someone you know," Handel said. "You have the opportunity to save lives by starting and continuing this conversation."

Students from Choose Ohio First, a program for Ohio residents majoring in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine, attended Beck's presentation.

Cole Sexton, a sophomore chemical engineering major and a member of Choose Ohio First, said he feels it's vital to educate college students on the opioid crisis.

"Most of the people I know see it as mostly the same people overdosing constantly," Sexton said. "It helps the college-aged people see drug users as human beings."

Sexton said he was surprised to hear that out of 768 revivals of those who overdosed in Trumbull County, only 13 were repeat offenders.

"Having these conversations can help to clear up misconceptions," he said.



# YSU AND IBM CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PENGUINS SEEKING IT SKILLS

**AMANDA JOERNDT**

A new initiative is in the works for Youngstown State University students and local community members who are eager to have a diverse range of credentials on their resumes.

YSU recently partnered with IBM to bring a new and innovative program called the IT Workforce Accelerator to the community for jobs in technology and hardware industries.

The program will provide pre-apprenticeship training and an apprenticeship program for individuals on the hunt to gain versatile IT skills.

Participants will become ready for work in fields such as software engineering, data science, analytics, cybersecurity and mainframe systems administration.

YSU President Jim Tressel said this program will be a “bonus opportunity” for individuals looking to gain an extra skill set.

“It’s a separate entity, and the curriculum is created at no cost,” Tressel said. “It’s a bonus opportunity for our people on campus to find another pathway, another badge to add to their list of things on their transcript, and also perhaps some of our students that have stepped out.”

According to Tressel, the program is a reaction to the “needs of the IT world.”

“In this world, versatility is critical, especially IT versatility,” Tressel said. “It’s really just another pathway.”

Tressel said this is an opportunity for someone who may have fallen off the four-year degree path.

“Maybe someone that’s further along in their life that’s displaced in their job and not really loving their job, boom, they can come back. And it might lead them to want to get their four-year degree along with it,” he said.

Tim Wood, a vice president at IBM Global Business Services and IBM’s senior Ohio executive, said over 700,000 jobs are

unfilled in the technology workforce across the United States.

“Closing the scale gaps is critical for moving not only as an individual’s challenge, but it’s becoming a national imperative,” Wood said. “Companies in areas such as health care and agriculture are struggling to find candidates with the right skills.”

According to Wood, IBM plans to partner with public and private sectors to work together in addressing this nationwide problem.

“According to a panel of experts assembled by the Institute of the Future, up to 85% of the jobs in 2030 have not yet been invented,” he said. “This IBM-designed initiative will provide pre-apprentice training and apprenticeship-program advocate enablement so local companies can train area workers.”

Wood said not only is this an initiative to help close the IT job gap but it also helps individuals in their “learning journey.”

“Whether they are students, individuals switching careers or just trying to improve their technical proficiency, IBM wants to build on this initiative so we can adapt to the communities nationwide and get people ready for these jobs in the future,” he said.

According to Wood, YSU is leading the way for a successful initiative that will create opportunity and fill the needs within the community.

“IBM applauds Youngstown State University for its leadership and is proud to partner with the university to make this happen,” he said.

Brien Smith, provost and vice president for academic affairs at YSU, said YSU looks for ways to assist in Youngstown’s economic development.

“With this IBM workforce accelerator, one of the main visions is for people in the local area who are out of a job or

looking for a way to advance their career. They can take part in an apprenticeship with significant local companies,” Smith said.

He said although the initiative is not a degree program, students can learn different skills during their education career at YSU.

“IBM is allowing us to use their course work for free,” Smith said. “They can earn those IBM credentials and be able to stack on top of a YSU degree.”

For more information on the pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, visit the YSU website at [ysu.edu/workforce-accelerator](http://ysu.edu/workforce-accelerator).



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Brien Smith, Tim Wood, Jennifer Oddo and YSU President Jim Tressel. Photo by **Amanda Joerndt/The Jambar**

# YSU STUDENT’S RECOVERY DECLARED MIRACLE BY VATICAN

**ALYSSA WESTON**

October marked the five-year anniversary of a Youngstown State University student’s miraculous recovery from drowning being declared a miracle by the Vatican.

Jack Sebest, a senior communication studies and nonprofit leadership major, died from drowning, was revived and fully recovered within three days in 2003. Sebest was 5 years old.

“I was under the water for about 14 minutes; no one could find me,” he said. “When they pulled me up, I was completely blue. They pronounced me dead on the scene, and they brought me to the hospital. I got put into an induced coma.”

While Sebest was in a coma at Tod Children’s Hospital, he was prayed for by family, friends and the Oblate Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Liberty, where Sebest attended preschool at the time.

The Oblate Sisters placed a prayer card of their foundress, Mother Teresa Casini, under Sebest’s pillow and sent out the same prayer cards to local churches, asking them to pray through the intercession of Mother Teresa Casini.

Sister Vittoria Nisi was the principal at the Oblate Sisters at the time and encouraged the community to pray for Sebest even when doctors didn’t think he would recover.

“The doctor called and asked to see the family. They invited me to

go with them and have a meeting with the doctor. The doctor said, ‘I just want you to know, there is nothing to be done for your son, and tomorrow we are going to remove all the wires. If he survives, don’t expect the same child you had before,’” she said.



This October marked the five-year anniversary of YSU student Jack Sebest’s miraculous recovery from drowning being declared a miracle by the Vatican. Photo by **Shawn Williams/The Jambar**

Two days later, on the feast day of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Sebest moved his finger. Shortly after that, he was awake and acting normal.

Before sending documentation to Rome, Nisi wanted to confirm with the doctor that the incident was unusual.

“[The doctor] said, ‘Sister, I am not a Catholic. I am a Muslim. But scientifically, he would not have survived,’” she said.

Monsignor Michael Cariglio managed the miracle investigation for the Diocese of Youngstown.

“In this case, 13 doctors unanimously said this cannot be explained by science alone, and that there had to be an intervention by God, therefore, a miracle. All of the evidence and testimony given

under oath was also examined by a theological commission. They determined that Jack was healed through Mother Casini’s intercession,” Cariglio said in a 2015 WFMJ article.

According to Sebest, it took 12 years to gather evidence and for the incident to be officially declared a miracle.

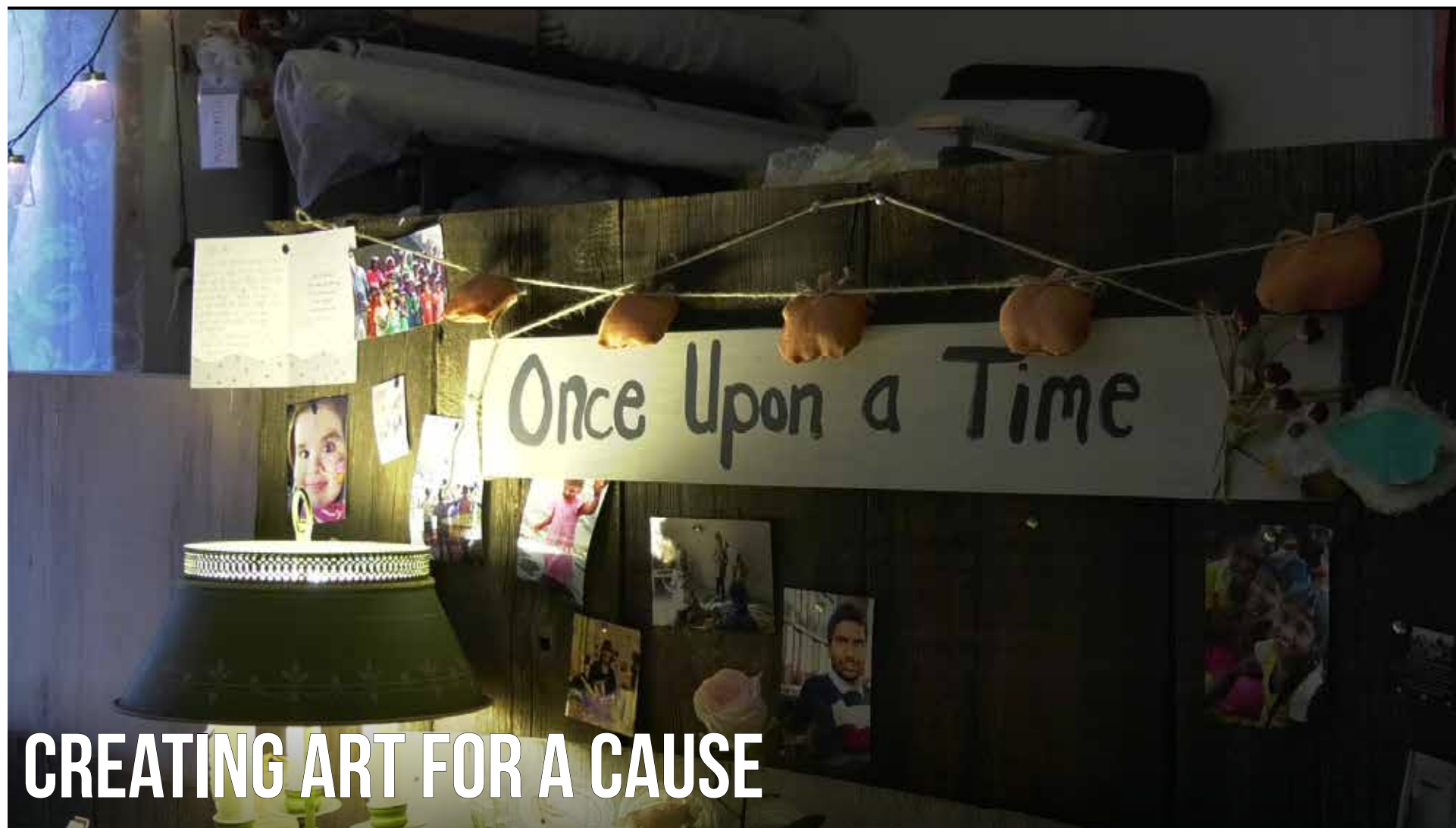
“They needed to prove year after year that I wasn’t having any [health issues] from it. They needed to prove that people were praying,” he said. “It’s kind of a big deal when they make something a miracle. They have to get custom boxes made for transporting the paperwork.”

In 2015, Sebest visited the Vatican with the Oblate Sisters and the Youngstown Diocese for a ceremony to celebrate the miracle where he met Pope Francis.

The miracle also declared Mother Teresa Casini as blessed. If another miracle is brought through her intercession, she will gain sainthood.

Although Sebest’s faith is still strong, the incident didn’t change his view on religion too much. He even was going to school to become a priest before he ultimately decided to study at YSU.

“I happened, and we were thankful and blessed for it. And because of that, we were able to grow deeper in our faith,” he said. “I still am religious. I go to church on Sunday, but it’s not like it was before. But I still definitely think I need to do something impactful with my life because I was so blessed.”



## CREATING ART FOR A CAUSE

Christa Franklin's desk is where she paints at Once Upon a Time Art Studio on Elm Street. Photo by **Frances Clause/The Jambar**

### FRANCES CLAUSE

Supporting locally owned businesses in Youngstown has never been easier with the continuous growth of shops on Elm Street, and one shop's goal is to create art for a cause.

Christa Franklin's space in Once Upon a Time Art Studio contains handmade paintings on recycled wood, fair-trade items, baskets and sewn dolls visitors can purchase to fund her mission trips.

Franklin began creating art at a young age and said she has been able to combine this passion with meeting and helping people from different countries through the support of the Youngstown community.

"Last year was my first mission trip to India, and that one costs a lot of money," she said. "Through the support of people and their donations, I've been able to accomplish what I really need to accomplish."

Franklin's next stops include New York, Russia, India and Ethiopia.

"My family is very diversified in culture, so being able to go to these [countries] just brings me joy and then building relationships with the people," she said. "So, I never go just once. I always go back several times."

An experience that stuck with Franklin during her trip to India last year was when she was driving with a missionary and they witnessed children building swings from old cloth on the

side of the road.

"Just seeing the poverty that [the children] go through but they still try to make the best of it ... Coming back to America after that experience just made me appreciate the little things more," she said.

To raise more money for her cause, Franklin collected donations as a guest artist at a Sip and Paint Family Night event hosted by U.N.Act at the Rust Belt Theater on Sunday.

Monica Beasley-Martin of U.N.Act said her son started the program to get people of different generations to come together.

"We do this every third Sunday, and we started 10 years ago," she said. "We shine a light on somebody who has a creative talent and is doing positive things with it, so we picked [Franklin] as our featured artist."

Franklin led attendees in a holiday craft, and she said U.N.Act drew attention to her shop in its beginnings because of her past as the featured artist.

"[Beasley-Martin] kind of got me more exposed and out there because I kind of was [creating art] from home, and I really didn't think about creating a studio space where people can come in," Franklin said.

According to Franklin, another supporter who she views as a motherly figure, other than Beasley-Martin, is Rebecca Banks, a Youngstown State University alumna who supports her shop and U.N.Act's events.

"I feel like I'm with family," Banks said, referring to Franklin and Beasley-Martin. "I love that U.N.Act is unstructured in a way, so you're free, and it's a safe place to express yourself. You can come here and show your art and not be judged."

Banks said Franklin and U.N.Act promote positivity, growing, exploring and the idea that everyone has talent inside of them.

To support Franklin's cause, visit 818 Elm St. or follow Once Upon a Time Art Line Studio on Facebook.



Christa Franklin leads a Sip and Paint event hosted by U.N. Act of Youngstown to create a holiday craft. Photo by **Frances Clause/The Jambar**





## THE SOUTHERN PARK MALL: A NEW ERA OF SHOPPING

A drone captures an aerial shot of all of the happenings at Youngstown Clothing Company's grand opening. Photo courtesy of **Dante DiRusso**

### CAILEY BARNHART

Local apparel brand Youngstown Clothing Company held its grand opening in the Southern Park Mall on Nov. 14.

The event featured a fully renovated storefront, cornhole tournaments, giveaways and an abundance of local food and spirits, including White House Fruit Farm doughnuts, Penguin City beer and DiRusso's sausages.

The store, which opened seasonally last year, is now open year-round, along with the clothing company's smaller collection available at StoneFruit Coffee Company in Boardman.

Dante DiRusso of DiRusso's Sausage set up a stand to hand out samples of Italian sausage and celebrate the grand opening.

"[Youngstown Clothing Company] has done some T-shirts for us in the past. We did a marketing campaign with them and we worked with them throughout the Canfield Fair. We wanted to come out and support them during their big grand opening," he said.

Catie Komsa, a sophomore human resources major at Youngstown State University, saw the event promoted on Facebook and brought her mom along to holiday shop for her father, who loves Youngstown-themed clothing.

"I love [the store]. I'm hoping they expand and offer more sweatshirts and hoodies and zip ups. I love that it's more than just T-shirts," she said.

Komsa has worked at the mall, and she talked about the changes that are underway.

"It has dwindled down and a lot of places aren't as popular anymore, so it's cool to have someone bring in a store that's going to bring in customers."

The Youngstown Phantoms were also at the event to promote their next game, and Michigan native Aiden Gallacher was excited to have access to Youngstown gear.

"I think opening the store in the mall was really smart. With this time of year, you have a lot of holiday shoppers, and they should be getting a lot of traffic," he said.

Youngstown Clothing Company, which began in 2015, highlights the pride of Youngstown by creating apparel revolving around everything the city has offered throughout the years, from Idora Park to the Canfield Fair. The company wants to "not just create designs but tell stories."

The opening of the Southern Park Mall storefront comes as major changes are underway at the mall. Washington Prime Group, which owns the mall, is planning to turn the closed Sears into a 4-acre green space named DeBartolo Commons that can host events year-round.

"DeBartolo Commons will be a place where people can hang out. We are working with Boardman Township about this being a hub for youth sports. We hope to have a great concert series. Whether it's coffee, craft brewery, if it's the best, we are interested in having it here," Lou Conforti, CEO of Washington Prime Group, said in an interview with WMFJ.

It was announced Monday that Joshua Langenheim, owner

of StoneFruit Coffee, plans to open a craft brewery in the newly renovated mall.

Steel Valley Brew Works is said to offer "local craft beers, specialty coffee, baked goods and a state-of-the-art coffee roasting facility."

The brewery will feature indoor recreation, such as bocce courts, billiards, pinball and foosball tables, and is said to occupy approximately 12,500 square feet of mall space.

The renovations are estimated to be complete by fall 2020.



A small collection of shirts Youngstown Clothing Company offers at its brand new retail space in the Southern Park Mall. Photo by **Cailey Barnhart/The Jambar**



# RELIGION

Continued from Page 3

## The Teachings of Judaism and YSU Students

The Jewish population in the greater Youngstown area is “not the size that it once was,” according to Hunter Thomas, a YSU alumnus and a program director for the Jewish Community Center of Youngstown.

Thomas is in the process of converting to Judaism after finding his passion for the religion through his experience at the JCC.

“It was like this pull that some of my coworkers who aren’t Jewish really didn’t have,” Thomas said. “I went to synagogue for the first time in August 2018, and it just clicked, and I felt right at home.”

He said he found his passion in the middle of his senior year in 2018, making it challenging at times to balance school and religious priorities.

“There was a really great learning opportunity there for me to help my classmates and professors understand what a student who is practicing Judaism and going to school might need,” Thomas said.

According to Thomas, he spent his time practicing at Congregation Rodef Sholom on Elm Street, giving him a place to study his religion during his free time.

“I started meeting with Rabbi [Franklin] Muller at Congregation Rodef Sholom to do more deep dives into topics that I was interested in, which for me are the idea of God and social justice,” he said.

Sarah Wilschek, executive director of Congregation Rodef Sholom, said the synagogue welcomes YSU students who are seeking a place for religious studies.

“We’re right off the campus of YSU,” Wilschek said. “We most notably host students for high holidays, so if they’re Jewish students on campus that really look for a place to go for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, they are welcome to come here and it’s open to all.”

According to Wilschek, students frequently attend Shabbat services to learn more about the religion for class purposes or their personal benefit.

“We also host Shabbat services almost every Friday night and one Saturday a month,” she said. “We’ll get YSU students coming from different classes that need to observe services from a different religion from their own or students who want to know more about the religion.”

Jacob Labendz, assistant professor of Judaic and Holocaust Studies, said although his job is to educate students about Jewish culture, he is still open to talking with students about Judaism.

“In terms of religious programming, we don’t have anyone on campus doing that. ... I’m happy to teach about and through religion, but we don’t have any place for students to go officially,” he said.

## Buddhism and Hinduism Practices

Michael Jerryson, an associate professor in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, said, in his opinion, most people are not educated on different Buddhist practices.

According to Jerryson, holidays that follow the Christian celebrations are widely accepted and observed, whereas celebrations of other religions are not.

“Sadly, people don’t know enough about Buddhism,” he said. “We can see this also in the fact that the Buddhist holidays are just ignored.”

Jerryson said when international students travel to YSU, they are outside of their familiar traditions and placed in a new environment.

“When you travel abroad outside the United States, you want to find these expat communities,” Jerryson said. “Where you can go to a church and at least feel like if you’re Christian that, ‘Ah, there’s some familiarity’ because you get bombarded with culture shock.”

Shilpa Bhandari, a junior math and computer science major, said as a member of the Nepalese Student Association she encourages domestic and international students to engage and intermix more frequently.

“I just think it would be better if domestic students hung



The Andrews Rec Center meditation room gives students a quiet and peaceful place for prayer or meditation needs. Photo by **Heather Newsome/The Jambar**



The meditation room provides students with different cultural items for the appropriate prayer or worship. Photo by **Heather Newsome/The Jambar**

out with international students,” she said. “Even in our events, we do not see a lot of domestic students, but we want to promote that diversity, right?”

She said the only issue she has encountered on campus is with her dietary restrictions.

“In the Hindu religion, we do not eat beef, pork. We worship cows. So, for me, the food part has been a little challenge because beef is everywhere,” Bhandari said.





## DEFYING THE ODDS: ETHICS BOWL TEAM SWEEPS FOURTH REGIONAL COMPETITION

Alan Tomhave, Mark Vopat and Moataz Abdelrasoul (back row from left to right) pictured with Jacob Tomory, Samantha Fritz, Eva Lamberson and Michael Factor (front row from left to right) after the Ethics Bowl team won its regional tournament. Photo courtesy of **Robyn Gaier**

### ABIGAIL CLOUTIER

Youngstown State University's Ethics Bowl team is no stranger to fierce competition.

The team won its fourth consecutive regional competition earlier this month leading by 10 points, just seven points shy of a perfect score.

Mark Vopat and Alan Tomhave, professors in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at YSU, work together to coach the team on a regular basis.

Once the team begins preparation on the cases, the members meet several nights a week to discuss ethical stances and debate among themselves.

There are eight members on the team — five of whom will compete in the national competition — which allows formal debates between members.

According to Vopat, the team's success is due to its unique practice model, but the real key to success is the guest faculty judges supporting the team's strategy.

"They face judges who come from industry or academics," Vopat said. "We try to make the cases relevant to their specialty. ... One time we had an engineering case about manufacturing guns with 3D printers."

Vopat said faculty members often stay after class to help the professors with debates.

"We really appreciate what they've done," Vopat said.

Samantha Fritz, a senior philosophy and political science major, has been on the Ethics Bowl team since her freshman year and is one of two people responsible for deciding the main points of the team's presentation during the tournament.

"My debate coach in high school suggested my high school debate partner and I should look into it because we were both coming in as philosophy majors and both coming from debate," Fritz said.

She considers Ethics Bowl to be a hidden gem at YSU.

"Being able to be a part of a team that is still successful from YSU makes me very proud of my school," Fritz said. "The school has very good resources for making sure that people do great

things and come out of YSU having done those good things."

Jacob Tomory, a senior philosophy and political science major, has been on the team for four years and enjoys the conversational nature of the tournaments.

"There is a 10-minute period at the end of each round where the team is questioned by judges. Those conversations are always incredibly interesting," Tomory said. "I begin to stop paying attention to the fact that we are being scored and just start enjoying the conversation itself."

Tomory said Ethics Bowl has sharpened his critical thinking, speaking and analysis skills, and he encourages students to participate regardless of their major.

"I can honestly say some of my best memories from college are from Ethics Bowl," Tomory said. "It's a great opportunity to learn but also just to have fun."

This victory qualifies the team for its fifth national competition, which will take place Feb. 22 and 23 in Atlanta, Georgia.

## CLUB SPORTS CONTINUED

The Club Sports Council is a club that advocates on behalf of the club sports in the council while encouraging its member clubs to follow procedures to ensure efficiency.

"With the Club Sports Council, we meet on a monthly basis," Sak said. "We talk about professional development. We promote student autonomy [within] the Club Sports Council. If there are changes that should be made with the program, we allow the students to voice their opinions in the council meetings."

At the meetings, each club sport must have two representatives present, who are usually executive board members. The council also has its own executive board who represents the clubs and their interests directly to the club sports and Campus Recreation administration.

"Right now, Joe and I are leading those meetings. But eventually, we want the executive board to lead those meetings because it's student-driven, staff-facilitated and we want more student autonomy within our program," Sak said.

According to Sak, the quality that sets varsity athletics apart from club athletics is self-actualization, and she wants club sports players to appreciate that.

### From Deprecation to Appreciation

The men's lacrosse club was one of club sports' primary critics last year. This year, however, the club seems to support the direction it is headed in.

Mark McKenzie, senior physics and astronomy major and current men's lacrosse president, believes having a dedicated club sports program coordinator has made a significant difference from prior years.

"I think the rules on paperwork and what has to be done in order to be able to practice has definitely helped with not only the organization of clubs but also for the safety," McKenzie said. "It's still a little up in the air how all the rules and standards and policies and everything like that [work], but it's definitely [making] a lot more sense. A lot more things are set in line for what needs to be done."

McKenzie is also the president of the Club Sports Council, working directly with Byers, Sak and Laughlin on helping progress the club sports program.

"I get to start up decisions made for club sports, as the executive board," McKenzie said. "We can kind of decide if we

want a club, a new club, to be able to join within club sports or if we don't think they're ready yet. We have the power to [decline their request]."

While the council can make improvements, McKenzie has been patient with Sak and Laughlin because the council is only in its infancy.

"I know Dominique and Joe are taking this from what they've done when they were in college and in club sports and stuff like that," he said. "So, they're trying to kind of push that concept to YSU. Right now, we're still in the process of figuring out what's best for YSU and what procedures work best to kind of fit the needs of the clubs here."

McKenzie is optimistic about the future of club sports, and he plans to work hard to help build a stable foundation for the program.

"I think this year is a lot different than the past couple years," McKenzie said. "We still are in that growing process as clubs, and I think soon we'll have something that will fit the majority of all club sports' needs."

# THE JAMBAR<sup>o</sup>

## — EDITORIAL —

## THE SEASON OF THANKS

This year has been an absolute whirlwind. I have gone through trying times. I have experienced serious life changes. I have failed. I have doubted myself. But, overall, I'm so thankful that even when I thought it was the end of the world — I pushed through it. Being the editor-in-chief of a student-run newspaper comes with a lot of responsibility and headaches, but at the end of the day, I'm surrounded by co-workers who are so supportive and caring. This is something I am so grateful for because I don't know what I would do without them. At the end of the day, I'm most thankful for my gorgeous Cavalier King Charles puppy, Luke. His kisses make everything better.

**Rachel Gobep**  
Editor-in-Chief

This year has blessed me with so many new job and academic opportunities. If you told me this time last year I would be producing Jambar TV and working as the managing editor along with four other jobs, I would have laughed in your face. But with these new roles, I've grown to be stronger and more confident in my skills as a journalist. I'm thankful for my friends and family who stick by me through all the ups and downs of college life. Additionally, I'm thankful for life's little happy moments and my guilty pleasures, like StoneFruit iced coffee, my derma roller and cheesy 2000s teen movies.

**Alyssa Weston**  
Managing Editor

With the 2019 year almost over, there are a couple things that I have gained more appreciation for than in the past. First, I am most thankful for my health. My family has overcome health obstacles in the past year, and I am so thankful that everyone is still here with me today. Second, I am thankful for the learning opportunities I have received through Youngstown State University during my senior year. I feel more ready than ever to graduate from the university and (hopefully) tackle the news industry and perform to the best of my ability. Lastly, I am thankful for all of the wonderful people I surround myself with on a daily basis. Between my family and friends, I couldn't be more blessed. P.S. I am also extremely grateful for sleep. Yippie!

**Amanda Joerndt**  
News Editor

Although I'm thankful for being able to make music with my bassoon family at YSU and contribute to organizations I'm passionate about here, like our Jamly's, I think I'm most thankful for surviving this semester. All of us ultimately pull through, but the process can definitely be a struggle, especially when you're pulled in a million different directions. A special thank-you goes to those that have warmed my heart through our Mental Health Mondays. I hope everyone is able to surround themselves with positivity, growth and friendships during this holiday season like I have throughout the semester. Yay, sleep!

**Frances Clause**  
Arts and Entertainment Editor

I'm thankful to have a great support system in my family, friends and dogs, a job in my field of study, the sports that keep me employed and the financial security to be able to treat myself with a pair of shoes now and then. Also, the Oxford comma.

**Brian Yaeger**  
Sports Editor

It's difficult to pinpoint specific things and people that I'm thankful for this Thanksgiving. Fall 2019 has easily been the most difficult semester of my entire school life, and I wouldn't have been able to do it without my family, friends, teammates, professors and co-workers. They made sure I knew they supported me at every step and misstep. I could not be more thankful for their presence in my life.

**J. Harvard Feldhouse**  
Enterprise Editor

## THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

**MAC POMEROY**

I have a habit of making dumb jokes at every opportunity. Last year, I had operations on both of my shoulders and ended up in arm slings twice. Each time, I slipped a Push Pop down there and said I had some arm candy. As I said before, I make dumb jokes.

However, no matter how stupid they are, these jokes mean a lot to me. Even after something as major and painful as shoulder reconstruction, these jokes made me laugh and let me have something to be happy about.

Often, we overlook the value of humor. We roll our eyes at puns, scoff at sarcasm and treat comedy like it is a waste of time. But actually, humor and the ability to laugh are some of the most important things in life.

Life doesn't always seem so bright. Whether you're faced

with a loss in the family, medical problems or simply handling the end of the semester, it's not always easy to find a reason to smile.

But it is very important to try. Happiness is a difficult goal to pursue, but it's something that you must try for. And inevitably, no one can get your happiness for you.

But just because we must each find our own happiness doesn't mean we can't help each other along the way.

Humor is a simple way to find happiness. For me, making other people laugh is one of the greatest things in the world. I like making my stupid jokes and seeing people try their best not to laugh at it or seeing them downright fall over, howling with amusement.

Jokes allow us to connect with each other. They even allow complete strangers to find a common ground. Just a basic joke about how terrible the weather in Ohio is can break

down walls and allow for new, interesting interactions.

On my first day of college, I didn't know anyone. But sitting at a table nearby was a student wearing a floral print, just as I was. So, I made a joke that one of us was going to have to change. Admittedly, it is a bit awkward looking back, but that person didn't care. That person started laughing, and we started talking.

Jokes allowed me to make one of my first really good friends here on campus.

So, go on. Make that stupid dad pun. Tell a knock-knock joke. Go full-on existential if that is what you find funny.

Don't be afraid to show your sense of humor. As long as you aren't being harmful, who knows? Maybe the person beside you shares in your laughter.

Maybe humor can be your way to connect and find your own happiness.



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# FEES

## Continued from Page 1

Additionally, university enrollment is down 4.3%.

According to YSU's official preliminary 14th-day count, enrollment is at 12,155 students, which is a decline of 541. Full-time equivalent enrollment also dropped by 3.6%, or 381 students.

Smith said universities use a general rule for relating enrollment to revenue: For every 100 full-time equivalent students lost in enrollment, there is \$1 million of lost revenue.

McNally said the fees are part of the university's general fund, and there is currently an assessment and review of how the funds are distributed.

Mike Sherman, vice president for institutional effectiveness and board professional at YSU, said the administration understands the university must function differently.

"The provost has made the point. The president has made the point. ... It just can't be business as usual," he said.

Smith said although several college deans, department chairs and faculty members are upset with this, the intention was not to affect students.

"The fees will be directed to make sure that not only the student's education but the student experience will be everything that it needs to be," Smith said.

He said communication on his end could have been better, but it's a two-way street.

"They need to communicate with me, and I'm still waiting on someone to tell me ... how student learning has been deprecated," Smith said.

He said if a department does not have enough funds, the fees will be distributed to it.

To request course fees, department chairs must fill out a course fee change form. The form must be approved at multiple levels.

Betty Jo Licata, dean of the Williamson College of Business Administration, said colleges and departments are diligent about spending lab fees and investing them in the students' educational experience.

"[The fees] are spent on the kinds of materials, supplies, programming that goes directly to supporting the students' education," she said.

The Jambar reached out to the David Deibel, chair of the board of trustees, but he did not respond to requests for comment in time for publication.



Youngstown's Fire Station 7 has been serving the Youngstown area for 116 years. Photo by **Abigail Cloutier/The Jambar**



Tafeeque Mohammad stands in the entrance of the center, where the building breaks off into two sections for men's and women's prayer rooms. Photo by **Heather Newsome/The Jambar**



## NFL 'STRAPS IN' TO YOUNGSTOWN

Riddell, one of the major football helmet companies, brought helmet prototypes to Youngstown for the NFL Helmet Challenge. Video screencap provided by **Ben Luli/Jambar TV**

### BRIAN YAUGER

A saying in the Mahoning Valley is that “everything goes through Youngstown.” The NFL is one thing that keeps finding its way back here.

For the second time this year, the NFL made a stop in Youngstown, this time for the NFL Helmet Challenge Symposium.

In a collaboration between the NFL and Youngstown-based company America Makes, the goal of the symposium is to kick off a contest to develop safer football helmets that will reduce the risk of concussions for athletes.

“We’re hoping to encourage innovation to see a really transformative advancement in football helmets, particularly helmets that can be used in the NFL,” Amy Jorgensen, director of health and safety initiatives for the NFL, said.

The league is hoping the competition aspect will lead to the safest possible equipment for the players.

“We have biomechanical engineers that work in conjunction with the NFLPA, and we test all helmets that are on our fields,” Jennifer Langton, senior vice president of health and safety innovation for the NFL, said. “What we want here is to introduce those helmets, but we want to stimulate the marketplace so they will make a better helmet that outperforms those that are on our field today.”

One person associated with the NFL’s Department of Player Health and Innovation helped to bring the event to Youngstown.

“Our owner, Dr. John York, is from here, and he has a very good relationship with America Makes,” Langton said. “The

Cleveland, Ohio, team is right here in the backyard as well. It serves for a very good location because of the disciplines that we’re pulling together that did have the footprint here.”

That footprint extends back to the beginning of Youngstown, which has been an industry capital throughout its history.

Being involved with the NFL Helmet Challenge is seen as a way for Youngstown to maintain its industry roots while coming into the 21st century.

“We were always on the cutting-edge in the industrial revolution,” Ohio Congressman Tim Ryan said. “Now we’re on the cutting-edge of this next revolution, the fourth industrial revolution here in Youngstown. It’s fitting that you are here, and it’s fitting that we’re doing this for football.”

Ryan was one of several guest speakers in the three-day event, and he talked about how sports are ingrained in the DNA of the city and the teamwork that made that happen.

“We’re a hotbed for sports,” he said. “You can’t turn the TV on Saturday or Sunday and not hear about the York Family, the DeBartolo family, or coaches all over the United States who they say are from Youngstown, Ohio, or are from the Mahoning Valley. But all of our victories here came from teamwork. All of them.”

The winner of the contest will receive \$1 million to continue research. As for when football fans could see these prototypes hit the field, Langton estimates the wait isn’t as long as you may expect.

“We have 18 months where we can really fund research and developmental programs so that they can design and manufacture a helmet to be submitted for that challenge,” Langton said. “It’s

about 18 months of development, processing that we’ll do and fund. Then, in 2020, we’ll ask for a full submission of a helmet to be tested.”

When the testing process is over, production could start as early as late 2021.



The winner of the NFL Helmet Challenge receives a grant to continue their research. Video screencap provided by **Ben Luli/Jambar TV**





## YSU WOMEN'S LACROSSE ADDED, JOINS THE MAC

Cafaro Family Field will host the Youngstown State University women's lacrosse team for its debut season in 2021. Photo by **Brian Yauger/The Jambar**

### NATHANAEL HAWTHORNE

The Youngstown State University athletic department has a storied tradition of championship teams, with accomplishments from football and cross country. As of the 2020-2021 academic year, another sport has been added to the YSU tradition: women's lacrosse.

In February 2019, YSU's athletic department announced the establishment of a women's lacrosse team. In just nine short months, the Mid-American Conference, known as the MAC, announced that YSU and the University of Detroit Mercy would be joining the conference as an affiliate.

The inaugural season for the MAC also coincides with the first season YSU will participate in the sport. Other teams in the conference include the University of Akron, Kent State University and Eastern Michigan University.

In a press release, MAC Commissioner Jon Steinbrecher announced the addition of these programs and the sport to the conference was a historic occasion.

"This is truly a historic day as women's lacrosse has been a topic of conversation among our membership," Steinbrecher said. "The addition of women's lacrosse adds to our already broad offering of championship opportunities for student-athletes. I am already looking forward to the inaugural season."

With the creation of the program, YSU hired the program's first coach, Theresa Walton, in July. Despite this being her first head coaching job, Walton doesn't lack experience. She was an assistant coach at Virginia Commonwealth University and played at Canisius College.

Now, that a coach has been hired, the process of recruiting players to build a roster begins.

According to Walton, the team has the opportunity to start with a blank slate. She plans to pull players from all over the East Coast.

"Within the 2020 class, we have 10 different states represented [and] a couple Canadian [players], so Canada will be a big draw just with how close we are to that as well," she said.

Walton said a typical lacrosse team carries roughly 30 to 35

players at any time. During a game, anywhere from 18 to 25 players are rotated on and off the field.

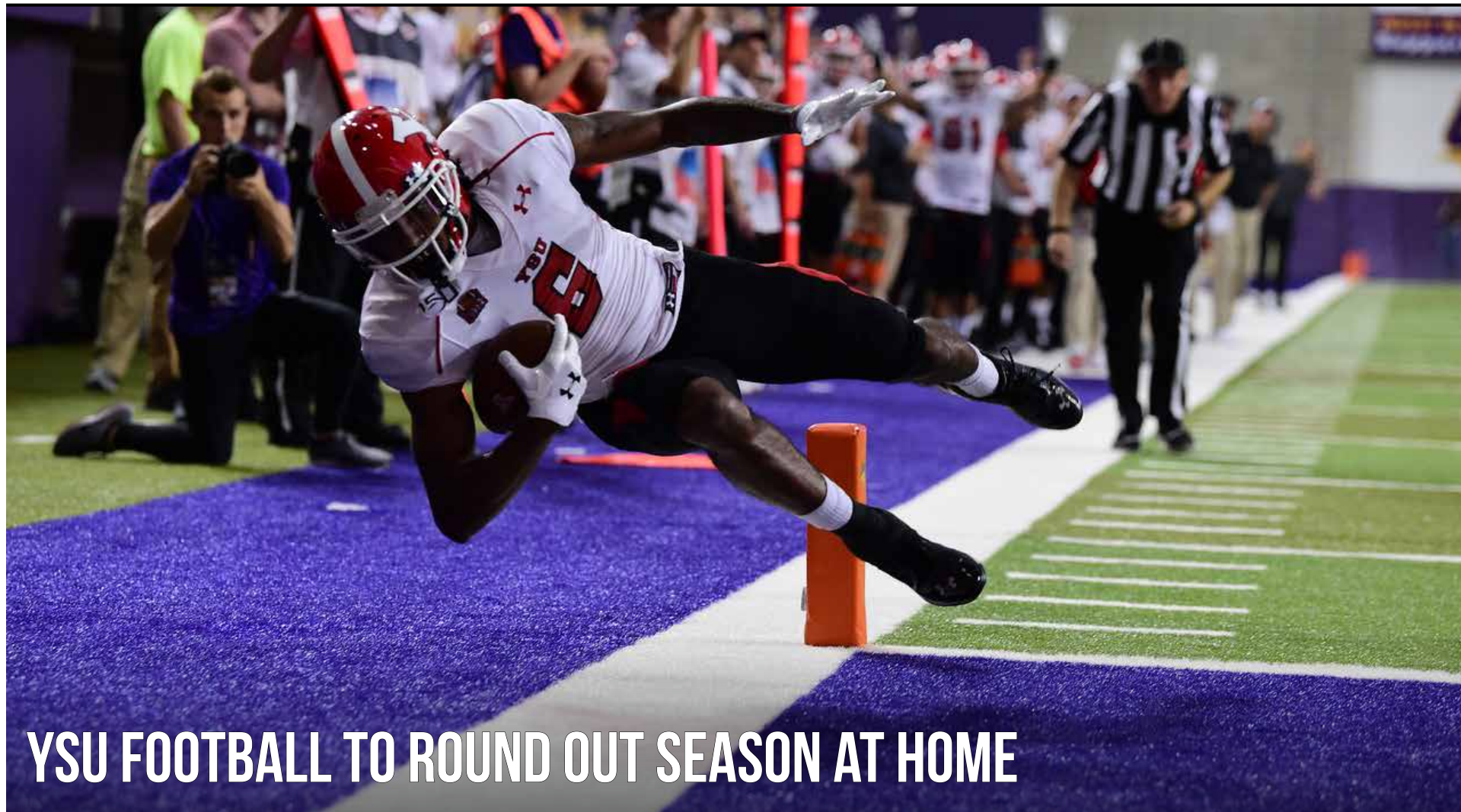
"It's a fast sport, so there's a lot of subbing in between the box lines and then making sure that you're playing that transition game up and down the field fast," she said. "It'll be nice [to] play around the systems [this] first year and then really start to recruit the players that are going to fit into certain spots within the team."

The lacrosse practices will take place at the new Cafaro Family Field on YSU's campus. For now, the team will be playing home games at the Covelli Sports Complex. Walton also plans to use the Watson and Tressel Training Site.

"Sharing the Farmers Field with women's soccer won't cause a problem with scheduling," Walton said. "It's great to have the WATTS indoor facility, but it'll be nice to use that new turf field for camps, clinics and practices in the fall when necessary."

The first season will start in the spring of 2021, and the schedule will be made available soon.





## YSU FOOTBALL TO ROUND OUT SEASON AT HOME

Penguins wide receiver Kendric Mallory dives into the end zone for a touchdown against the University of Northern Iowa. Photo courtesy of **YSU Sports Information**

### NATHANAEL HAWTHORNE

The 2019 football season has had many ups and downs for Youngstown State University. What started out as a promising year quickly turned disastrous for the Penguins.

Like all things, the season must come to an end, and YSU will close out the season at home against the sixth-ranked Illinois State University.

The Penguins went on a tear early in the season by going undefeated. The offense seemed to be clicking and the defensive output was substantially better than the 2018 season.

The winning record was short-lived once the team entered play in the Missouri Valley Football Conference.

After last week's loss, the team sits at a 5-6 overall record and a 1-6 conference record.

Compared to last season, the team has had a statistically better season. A few things to note are the overall team record, total points scored and, most notably, the defensive output. YSU defense has almost doubled the number of turnovers it had during all of last season.

Freshman linebacker Griffin Hoak said he believes the season is an improvement from last year.

"It definitely is some ups and downs of the season that are upsetting, and I think there's a lot to work on in the offseason," he said.

These small statistics, however, don't sell tickets or put fans in the stands. Penguins coach Bo Pelini knows that when a team is

winning, people are more likely to attend games.

"I get it. I get how it goes," Pelini said. "If we have 10 people in the stands or 10,000, we've got to be ready to play. We've had good support here since I've been here. ... You're going to get more people when the games mean more."

"I don't know what's going to happen Saturday, how many people we're going to get or how they're going to react, but I hope we get a good crowd," he added. "We're going to play football no matter what."

The contest against Illinois State University is also going to be an emotional day. The game doubles as a senior night for the seniors on the team, but Pelini has to make a decision about who is going to take the field for YSU.

"We've been playing more young guys and giving them some experience," Pelini said. "I want to win. We want to win in the here and now, but this is about the future and about honoring these seniors playing their last football game. There's a lot that goes into it. But at the end of the day, we want to play well and win the football game."

When it comes down to it, the Penguins have had a more successful season, though the record doesn't reflect the success.

"The record might reflect what you are at the time, but this team could be a lot better than what the record shows," Hoak said. "I just think we could be better than what 5-6 shows."

Kickoff for the final game of the season is scheduled for Nov. 23 at noon at the Ice Castle.



Christian Turner rushes toward the end zone in Youngstown State University's home opening win over Duquesne University. Photo courtesy of **YSU Sports Information**