

# THE JAMBAR

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**NEW CLASS DEAN**  
PAGE 2 | NEWS



**MEN'S BASKETBALL**  
PAGE 6 | SPORTS



**ART SHOW**  
PAGE 4 | A&E

## AFRICANA STUDIES



### Seeks To Engage The Community With Black History Month Celebration

STORY: LAUREN FOOTE | LAURENLEONAL@GMAIL.COM | PHOTO: SCOTT WILLIAMS

Several artists and speakers will visit Youngstown State University this month as part of the department of Africana studies' Black History Month celebration.

There are four major events: a month-long exhibit in the Solomon Gallery in Bliss Hall, an African marketplace in the Chestnut Room on the 6th from 12 to 3 p.m., "It's Showtime at Pete's Apollo" fea-

turing student performances in the Hub on the 11th at 8 p.m. and a keynote speech by Angela Burt-Murray in Williamson Hall on the 24th at 2 p.m.

Tiffany Anderson, director of the department of Africana studies, said an effort was made to appeal to both campus and the community.

"I feel like the Africana studies department has this unique opportunity, unlike oth-

er departments in the university, to really engage the community because of... Black History Month," Anderson said.

"It's Showtime at Pete's Apollo" is entirely student-centered, with students organizing and performing in the event. The department of mathematics and statistics is holding an academic-focused colloquium with Shelby Wilson, who will talk about how math can cure cancer on

the 19th at 3 p.m., and the African marketplace is community-focused.

They chose Angela Burt-Murray, former editor-in-chief of Essence magazine and co-founder of Cocoa Media Group, as the keynote speaker because she will appeal to all three groups. Her presentation is entitled "Black Voices Matter: Race and Gender in the Age of Social Media."

"We have this move-

ment called Black Lives Matter, and either people feel disconnected to the movement or don't understand how they can participate," Anderson said. "The focus on how our voices can become a part of the movement is as simple as posting something on Facebook is going to be very empowering to people."

Shienne Williams, a student and member of the Black History Month

organizing committee, said she is excited to attend the keynote address because her family subscribed to Essence.

"Celebrities come to Youngstown, but I always think about what have they really done," Williams said. "And now we have someone that impacted my life as a child."

AFRICANA STUDIES  
PAGE 3



### YSU Looks for International Leader

Robert Eckhart, finalist for associate provost for international and global initiatives, addresses faculty, staff and community members in Tod Hall's Board of Trustees meeting room Friday afternoon.

STORY: JUSTIN WIER | JCWIER@STUDENT.YSU.EDU  
PHOTO: JUSTIN WIER

As part of a continued effort to expand its international footprint, Youngstown State University is looking to add an associate provost for international and global initiatives.

Martin Abraham, YSU provost, said the new associate provost will lead the Center for International Studies and Programs.

"The center doesn't have the leadership that we want," Abraham said. "[The new associate provost has] an operation that they're going to take over, but it's not an operation that is big enough, strong enough or knowledgeable enough in order to do the things that we need to do."

One of the new associate provost's duties will

be leading international recruitment efforts. According to Abraham, the university currently has about 300 international students, but universities similar in size to YSU often have more than 1000 international students.

"We believe that there's a population of international students who would come to Youngstown State if we made them aware that the opportunity was available to them," Abraham said.

The new associate provost will also be tasked with helping international students acclimate to the university and expanding opportunities for domestic students to study abroad.

"Going out and recruiting students is not

sufficient," Abraham said. "It's something that we have to do, but it's not enough."

Abraham said they have eliminated the current director's position at the CISP, so the new position will not expand the University's administrative ranks.

Robert Eckhart, the first of three finalists for the position, visited campus on Friday. Eckhart is the American director of the WHU-OSU Center for American Culture at Wuhan University — a collaboration between Wuhan University and The Ohio State University.

INTERNATIONAL LEADER  
PAGE 3



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# Dr. Ray Continues Energy and the Environment Lecture Series

STORY: JEFFERY BASH | JBASH@STUDENT.YSU.EDU

Ray Beiersdorfer, professor of geological and environmental sciences at Youngstown State University, has chosen a diverse field of speakers to discuss the importance of environmental efficiency for his spring 2016 lecture series on energy and the environment. The series has been running since 2012, and previous talks have invited an array of political and societal figures to give lectures on the environment and provide knowledge for those interested in helping prevent glob-

al warming. This semester is no different. "This is the most diverse lecture series of the four; I have scientists, medical doctors and even priests speaking on the topic," Beiersdorfer said. The lecture series covers a wide range of issues from the sustainability of fossil fuels to the threats of global warming and even the potential dangers of fracking. The James Dale Ethics Center has helped Beiersdorfer collect a wider and stronger series of speakers. Allowing lecturers

to hold conferences via Skype has also helped Beiersdorfer attract speakers. "If I wanted to just have Dr. [Richard] Wolff and Chris Hedges speak here for these events, it would have cost around \$10k apiece," Beiersdorfer said. Richard Wolff is an economics professor at the New School in New York, and Chris Hedges is a former foreign correspondent for the New York Times and an activist. "Asking these professionals for just a little bit of their time

from the comfort of their home gives us a special opportunity," Beiersdorfer said. Last week, Patricia DeMarco, a professor from Carnegie Mellon University, spoke about the pathway to a sustainable future. DeMarco, who has authored the book "Halfway to Our Sustainable Future," lectured on environmental sustainability, green energy and the politics to move society forward. "It's important to be informed about decisions that affect your future. This is the most

critical issue of your time," DeMarco said. She urged students to involve themselves in the fight for a sustainable future. "Students are tremendous stakeholders, and it's their future that is involved," DeMarco said. "Those same futures are being determined by individuals in office who may not have their best interest." DeMarco said democracy is not a passive sport. Chad Torres, a YSU freshman, said he enjoyed the lecture. "I was invited to attend, but decided to attend

more for my own curiosity on the subject," Torres said. Torres said he plans to attend the upcoming functions. "I made sure to get registered on an email list and keep informed about future lectures in the series," Torres said. He said DeMarco made the topic approachable. "The speaker was able to make a technical topic more understandable for people who are not completely invested in science," Torres said.

# New Dean of CLASS Selected Pending Board Approval



STORY: GRAIG GRAZIOSI | GRGRAZIOSI@STUDENT.YSU.EDU | PHOTO COURTESY OF: YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

A selection was made in the search for a new dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences at Youngstown State University. Kristine Blair, chair of the English department at Bowling Green State University, was selected for the position after a five-month search and will become the new dean of CLASS pending approval by the YSU Board of Trustees. Blair has been the chair of the English department at BGSU for the past nine years, has served on that college's faculty senate and is currently a member of the school's faculty association negotiating team. Student workplace preparedness — regardless of major within the

CLASS — will be one of Blair's areas of focus upon installation as dean. "[Managing CLASS] involves listening to what students at YSU need in order to be professionally successful, and — despite the difference across the curriculum — that includes hands-on or real world experiences in internships, community engagement opportunities ... all things that will help them engage professionally, whether that's for graduate school or that first job upon graduation," Blair said. Improving access to hands-on or real world experiences will require engagement with businesses and local government, according to

Blair. "Part of [finding internship opportunities] for any new leader, whether a dean or department chair or a faculty member, would involve getting to know the community, finding and making connections with business and industry with local government to determine what types of opportunities do exist, what types of new initiatives do develop and how we can work to make the talents of our students visible both locally and nationally," she said. Blair's tenure as dean of CLASS comes following a two-year interim period. Jane Kestner, the interim dean of CLASS, will become the interim associate dean of CLASS

upon Blair's arrival on May 16 through the end of the fiscal year. Kestner returned to the university from retirement in 2013 to become the interim dean. Offering her perspective, Kestner — who also served as associate dean of CLASS for nine years prior to her selection as interim dean — said a CLASS dean must appreciate both the college's eclectic subject matter as well as student's practical needs. "To have a true appreciation of the humanities and social sciences and see the value of them," Kestner said. "They have to be aware of the kinds of careers and opportunities that students graduating with those degrees have. ... I

think the willingness to development with the chairs and faculty in the college so that they get to know them." Whether or not Kestner remains with CLASS beyond the end of the fiscal year is up to Blair. "Beyond June 30, if I have any further role in the college, it'll be decided by Dean Blair," Kestner said. "I love my job, I love the university, so I'd certainly be willing to stay on in some capacity." Blair was selected after a five-month search. Sal Sanders, dean of the College of Graduate Studies, chaired the committee, which included members from the faculty, the student body and the Board of Trustees.

"As I mentioned during our phone conversation, our search committee completed the search process for the dean of CLASS very efficiently," Sanders said. "We had a great committee. The committee members were knowledgeable and worked tirelessly throughout this process of searching for and identifying those qualified to be recommended for further consideration for the position of dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences." The Board of Trustees will meet on March 16. They are expected to make a final ruling on Blair's hiring at that meeting.

### INTERNATIONAL LEADER FRONT

He said he has extensive experience in China, traveling there 22 times over the last 11 years. His presentation also documented trips to Turkey, Indonesia and Saudi Arabia.

Eckhart stressed that international students serve a purpose beyond just bringing money to the university.

“One of the greatest impacts internationalization can have is on domestic students,” Eckhart said. “And that’s really ... one of the largest benefits to continuing to internationalize this university.”

Eckhart said he embraces the CISP’s motto of “bringing the world to Youngstown” because not all domestic students will

have the chance to study abroad, and this allows them to increase their cultural competence.

He said the new associate provost would need to advocate for the expansion of the CISP.

“You can’t start adding a few hundred more international students without adding more staff,” Eckhart said. “It’s not even clear to me that you currently have enough staff to meet your current needs.”

He said it’s important to make sure the students enter a welcoming environment and cooperation has to come from the president, faculty, staff, students and the community.

Eckhart said YSU needs to market its strengths in order to attract new students — things like the Williamson College of Business,

the Dana School of Music and the College of Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics.

Eckhart said the chance to get in on the ground floor drew him to Youngstown State University.

“This university seems to me that it’s hungry,” Eckhart said. “Ohio State University is the big dog at the bowl; it’s very complacent. It has very little reason to try to do things in a very innovative way.”

Two more finalists are set to visit campus this week; Carrie Wojenski of Sacred Heart University on Tuesday and Nathan Myers of Ashland University this Thursday. The candidates will hold open forums for staff and faculty at 2:00 and for students at 3:00 in the Board of Trustees’ meeting room in Tod Hall.

### NEWS BRIEFS

## Renowned Media Artist Lectures Feb. 8 on Campus

As part of Youngstown State University art department’s visiting lecture series, Brian House, a teacher at Rhode Island School of Design, will be speaking on Feb. 8 at 5 p.m. in the McDonough Museum of Art. Some of House’s work was recognized in TIME magazine, and he designed courses for Parsons’ Design and Technology program, as well as Columbia’s Graduate School of Architecture. The lecture is free and open to the public with parking available in the Wick Avenue deck for a fee.

## YSU Ranks 17th on List of Nation’s Most Affordable Online Colleges

Youngstown State University was ranked 17th for Most Affordable Online Colleges for 2016 by Affordable Colleges Online. YSU is the only university from Ohio on the list. Ranks are determined based on cost-to-quality criteria and metrics that compare the colleges of similar costs and quality. YSU offers four undergraduate and seven master degrees online.

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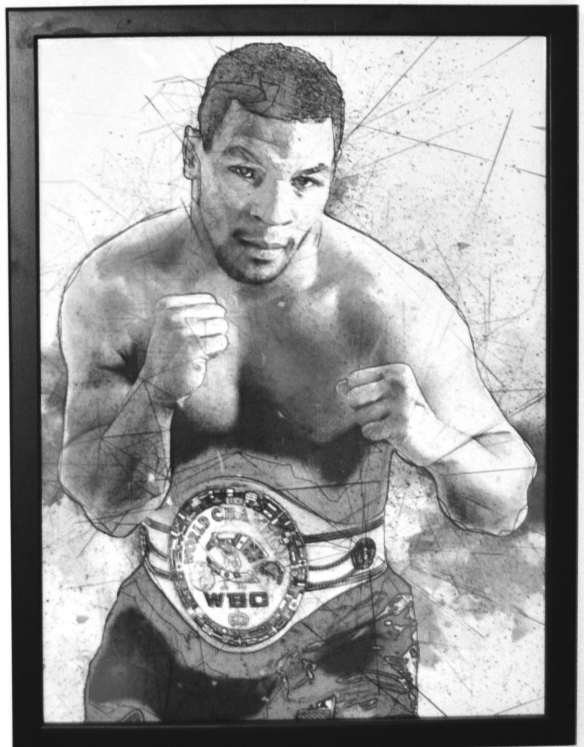
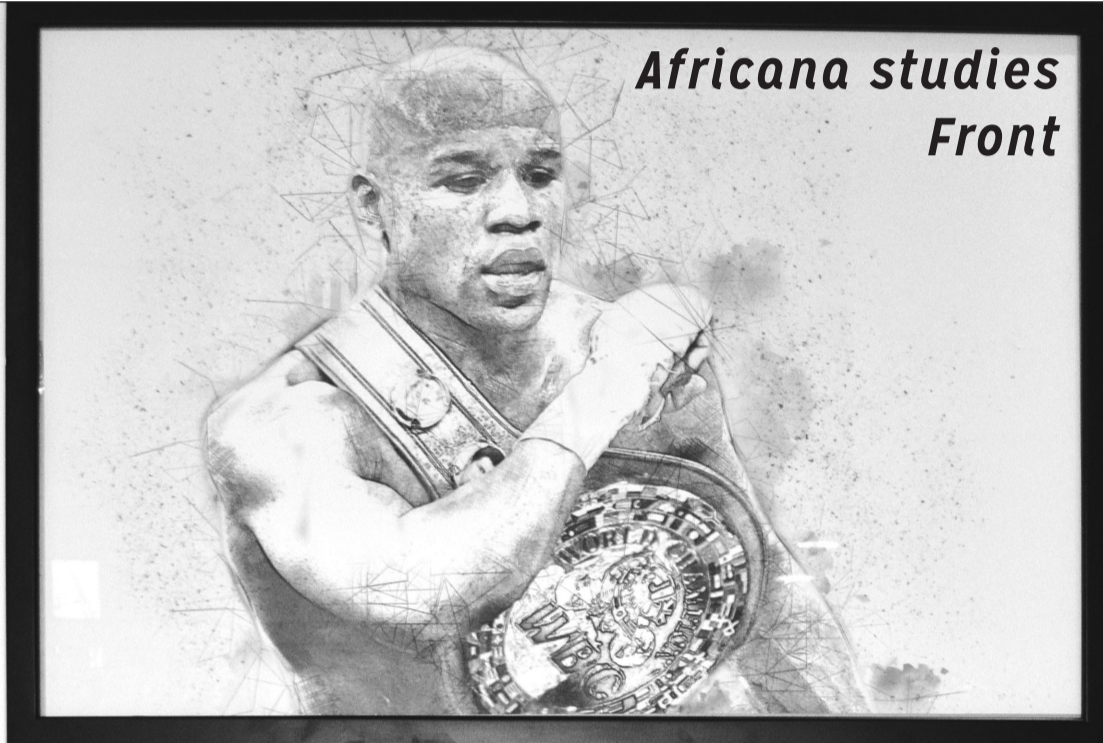
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## Africana studies Front



Williams said previous events have not received much attention, even from her.

“The only thing I really went to was the African Marketplace,” Williams said. “I noticed with Black History Month, we would not really have any African American speakers; it has always been predominantly African. I think it’ll be a great way to bridge the gap between black people across the water.”

William Blake, director of the Office of Student Diversity Programs, said there is a

need for the YSU community to be involved in the events. He said that in addition to the African Marketplace, the Black History Month art exhibit grabs the eye.

“We have [these artists] presenting artwork that reflects the richness of our African American heritage,” Blake said. “These men have been educated in some of the most renowned institutions in the world.”

Anderson said the art exhibit will showcase two generations of Youngstown artists.

“This will be impactful because there will be

people in the community who know who Maple Turner III is, and people in the community know who Henry Holden III’s family is, but not necessarily him as an artist,” Anderson said. “We are going to have these two different perspectives going on.”

There will be a reception with the artists in the Solomon Gallery on the 10th at 5 p.m. followed by a presentation and discussion led by the artists in the McDonough Museum of Art from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

In addition to the official events, the Re-

ligion and Philosophy club is holding a Black Lives Matter discussion at MVR this Thursday from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

“I really hope that this year’s Black History Month marks the beginning of a real connection between the Africana studies department and the community, and that it will last,” Anderson said. “I feel like the celebration of black people and our history cannot be isolated to academia, and it only works if it’s widespread throughout the community.”

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# Hidden Art at the Jewish Community Center

STORY: **ASHLEY CUSTER** | [AKCUSTER@STUDENT.YSU.EDU](mailto:AKCUSTER@STUDENT.YSU.EDU) | PHOTO: **SCOTT WILLIAMS**

The Thomases Gallery, located in the Jewish Community Center of Greater Youngstown on Gypsy Lane, has been operating since 2013.

It was created through the Thomases Family Endowment under the supervision of a gallery committee of five members of the Jewish Federation with strong ties to the Jewish Community Center. The gallery was curated by Joy White, a YSU department of art alumni.

Claudia Berlinski, assistant professor of art and interdisciplinary arts area coordinator, took over as curator of the gallery in spring 2015 as an outside consulting position.

“The Thomases Gallery typically has five to six exhibitions per year, running from August until May featuring regional artists,” Berlinski said. “We try to create a Jewish connection in at least one exhibition per year.”

The Thomases Gallery Exhibitions Committee reviews proposals for exhibitions several times per year, and artists are encouraged to apply at any time. Ber-

linski recently posted a call for entry on the gallery’s Facebook page and in the local newspapers. Eligibility is open to artists 18 years of age or older.

“We’re hoping to get a number of submissions by artists for consideration in our planning of next year’s exhibitions,” she said.

This year, YSU alumni have been featured in exhibitions, including the gallery’s next exhibition. It will feature paintings by Charlene Galose, who earned both her Bachelors and Masters degrees from YSU. She received the Youngstown Arts Council Outstanding Art Teacher Award while teaching art at Boardman High School. The exhibition will be Feb. 8 through March 18.

“Galose shows her work throughout the state of Ohio and has garnered a number of awards, including the Eileen Scragg Memorial Award at the YWCA Women Artists Annual and a Jury Award at the statewide All Ohio Juried Exhibition,” Berlinski said. “She has also had exhibitions at the Butler Institute of American Art and Trumbull Art Gallery.”

There will also be a women’s exhibition this spring, and collaborations with Lit Youngstown, a community of writers from the greater Youngstown area, will hold literary readings once during each show.

Three to four writers from the region will be invited to engage with pieces on exhibit or read from previous work. Lit Youngstown poets will be reading their work in the Thomases Family Gallery on Sunday Feb. 21 from 3 to 4 p.m.

Berlinski feels the artists and art community in general do not have the Thomases Family Gallery on their radar. The people of the art community tend to focus downtown.

Friends and family of the artists who can’t make it to the receptions usually stop by some other time throughout the month. The guest book generally yields 60 to 80 signatures per show.

“There could be larger numbers if the art community at large attended the receptions like they would at other galleries,” Berlinski said. “We’re a bit separate from downtown Youngstown, where all of the atten-

# YSU CROWs at Recognition Reading Event

STORY: **AMANDA LEHNERD** | [ARLEHNERD@GMAIL.COM](mailto:ARLEHNERD@GMAIL.COM)

Youngstown State University’s Compose: Review of Writing has partnered with Lit Youngstown for the first time since the program started in 2011 for a recognition reading event at Suzie’s Dogs and Drafts Feb. 3.

Angela Messenger, coordinator of the YSU Writing Center and part of the CROW committee, has helped create a place for students to exchange ideas and receive recognition for outstanding work in composition courses.

Lit Youngstown is a non-profit literary organization founded in 2015. The organization’s programs and events are focused on honing the craft of literary arts: publishing, performing and engaging with literature. They offer classes taught by writers and scholars each spring, summer and fall for all ages and experience levels.

“Lit Youngstown hosts

many events throughout the year including readings at Suzie’s Dogs & Drafts the first Wednesday of each month,” Messenger said.

YSU CROW is composed of students who have submitted their graded work from undergraduate English courses. When students submit their work, they have to remove their name and their professor’s name from the assignment, and it is goes through a double blind review process.

“The CROW subcommittee aims to publish a journal of the selected writing samples. This collection of student writing recognizes the curiosity, analysis and elegance that make a strong essay,” Messenger said. “The publication showcases works from the different levels of composition courses to celebrate the continuum of student writing.”

The students who composed the selected writing samples

are given the opportunity to read them at the recognition party. Not every student who has work selected is able to attend the event to read his or her work.

Philip Brady — professor at YSU, poet, essayist and editor — is one of the featured readers at the event. Brady has four of his students reading work that was selected. He will also be reading work from students who are not able to attend the event.

Brady will be presenting a chapter from his latest book, “To Banquet with the Ethiopians: a Memoir of Life Before the Alphabet.”

“The chapter will feature some great writers like Homer and Joyce, and they will come together at a poetry workshop,” Brady said. “The book takes place on the border between myth and time.”

According to Brady, this inclusive event is a great place

for the students and community to be heard and interact with well-known writers.

Lynn Lurie is the other featured speaker at the event. She is an attorney with a Master of Arts in international affairs and a Master of Fine Arts in writing. She is a mentor at Girls Write Now in New York City. Her latest novel is titled “Quick Kills.”

Guy Shebat, a YSU English professor, has been a supporter of the YSU CROW program from the beginning. Since the partnership with Lit Youngstown, the event is now taking place in the spring semester, whereas in the past the reading event was only offered in the fall.

“It is nice to see the reading event return to the local downtown area,” Shebat said. “The past year we partnered with the poetry center and presented readings in Kilcawley Center. In the years before

that, we rented a room at a local downtown restaurant for the reading event.”

Students whose work is selected not only have the chance to present it at the reading event, but they also receive an award.

“Student authors of selected works get a certificate and a gift card or small monetary prize dependent on donations received,” Messenger said. “There is often some swag included as well.”

YSU Writing Center has started collecting work from students from summer and fall 2015 semesters for the next volume and reading event. Composition students who are interested in submitting work from summer and fall and the current semester can email submissions to [composeysu@gmail.com](mailto:composeysu@gmail.com) or stop by the Writing Center in Maag Library.

**YO!**

YO Magazine, The Jambar’s semesterly features publication, is looking for YSU students to contribute. If you’re interested in writing, send an email to [yomagazine2@gmail.com](mailto:yomagazine2@gmail.com).

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## JAMBAR COLUMN

# Part-time Escape Artist

STORY: JORDAN MCNEIL  
JEMCNEIL@STUDENT.YSU.EDU

Over the weekend, I went with my sister and her friend to see the movie “The 5th Wave” at the local theater. It had been awhile since I saw a movie in the theater; I’d forgotten how much more enjoyable a movie is on a theater screen. I’d forgotten how much I loved it.

Seeing a movie on the big screen is an immersive experience. You get sucked into the world of the movie and for two hours, nothing else exists, nothing else is real. Let’s face it — the real world can be pretty terrible at times. It’s extremely nice to just dive into a fictional place with characters you’ve never met before every now and then and just forget about the world. Forget about stress, forget about work, school, that argument you had the other day that won’t leave your mind alone.

It’s good to get away sometimes. I mean, that’s why people take vacations, right?

Unfortunately, I don’t currently have the time or money to really do the whole vacation thing right now. So I have to get a little creative. Reading books, playing videogames, watching TV shows, movies and cute goat videos also have the capability of letting you escape your life for a bit. And they’re significantly cheaper than a vacation.

My sister and I are pretty good escape artists. We jump into whatever book we’re reading, game we’re playing, movie or TV show we’re watching completely, and then sometimes we lengthen the escape even further by getting into active discussions about this character or that plot point and what do you think would’ve happened if it went this way, instead of that?

There’s a danger in playing escape artist, though. It feels great to take a break from stress, to hide from your problems for a bit and forget they exist. The thing

is, they do exist. Just because you can’t see them at the moment doesn’t mean they’re not still there. You can’t escape them forever.

That doesn’t mean I’m completely condemning the idea of being a part-time escape artist — I rightfully can’t, because I am one myself. But I do find the value, despite what I’ve heard to the contrary, in disappearing into something else every once in a while.

If you’re feeling stressed, freaked out, worried or just plain need a break, I say do it. Take a mini-vacation via a videogame, escape through the next book in your favorite series. Lose yourself for a moment and let your head clear.

You can’t run from your problems, sure, not permanently. Not forever. But a small break, a short escape can do a world of difference for your mental state. I know this from experience.

# EDITORIAL



# #OscarsSoWhite But Hollywood is Changing

For the second consecutive year, the Academy Awards failed to nominate a single person of color in any of the four acting categories. People took to Twitter using the hashtag #OscarsSoWhite to take the Academy to task.

Not only are most nominees white, but also 94 percent of the people who vote in the Academy Awards are Caucasian. This could explain how only 35 Oscars have been awarded to black talent in the industry’s 87 years of award shows.

While the whitewashing of the Oscars may have satisfied viewers of years past, the recent numbers show that the Academy Awards aren’t doing as well as they used to.

In 2015, the awards show averaged 36.6 million viewers and a 10.8 rating in adults 18-49 — declines of 16 percent and 18 percent respectively from last year (43.7 million and 13.1). According to the ratings system, that’s the lowest total-viewer count in six years.

While the ratings for the SAG Awards have not been released, the organization is receiving a lot of

praise for including a diverse crew of nominees and winners for 2016.

Out of the 15 categories in the awards show, six awards were given to people of color or shows that accurately portray of people of color.

Idris Elba took home two awards, one for outstanding performance by a male actor in a supporting role and another for outstanding performance by a male actor in a television movie or miniseries.

Elba’s performance in “Beasts of No Nations” was conspicuously absent from the Oscar nominees.

The problem extends beyond awards shows. White men, 31 percent of the population, directed 82 percent of films in 2015. The institutions need to change as well.

Streaming services such as Netflix, Hulu and Amazon have been garnering accolades for their diverse selection of series and the characters within them.

These streaming services have gained more popularity over the past few years, running movie

rental places out of business and giving cable companies a run for their money because of their convenience and their content.

Original shows like the multi-award-winning “Transparent” and “Sense8,” which debuted this year, push Netflix, Amazon and other streaming services into the spotlight — not only for being diverse but realistic. They’ve bankrolled shows created by people of color like Jenji Kohan and Aziz Ansari.

The world we live in is more than white. It’s more than black too. It’s a glorious melting pot of colors, genders, orientations and talent. The more those different people are represented in the mainstream entertainment media, the more realistic it is to our world, and the more people it can connect with.

The way streaming sites push out content isn’t the only way they become successful. The colorful casts and inspirations behind ethnically diverse shows appeal to a wider audience.

Diversity in entertainment isn’t a trend that’s going away; the Oscars need to recognize that.

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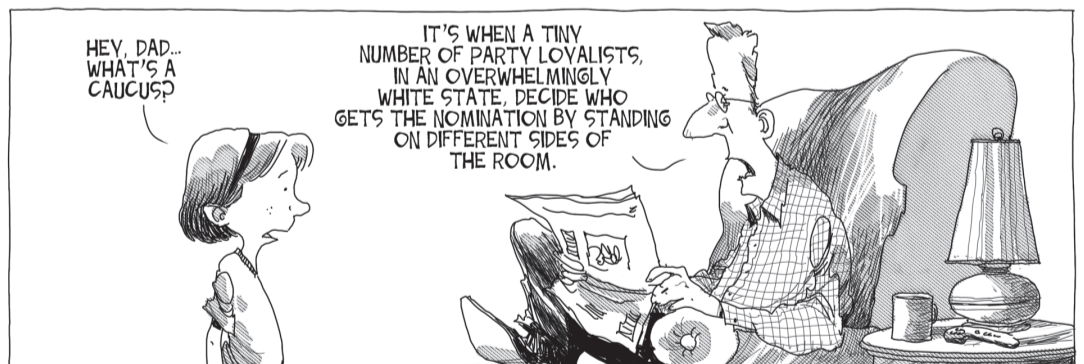
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# THE JAMBAR COM



## Men's Basketball Prepares for Longest Home Stand of Season

Youngstown State University guard Jordan Andrews dribbles the ball down the baseline during the Penguins' game against Cleveland State University.

STORY: DAN HINER | [DHINERJR@GMAIL.COM](mailto:DHINERJR@GMAIL.COM) | PHOTO: ALAN RODGES

The Youngstown State University men's basketball team will start its longest home stand of the season on Thursday, and the timing couldn't be better.

YSU is coming off a 97-68 loss to Valparaiso University on Saturday. YSU head coach Jerry Slocum said Valpo was "just better." But the Penguins think the four-game home stand could help the Penguins play more consistently.

YSU will have to overcome poor performances at the Beeghly Center this season. The Penguins have a 4-4 record at home, but YSU

is 1-2 since the start of Horizon League play.

"Sometimes we come out lethargic, like [against] Milwaukee, and other times like Green Bay we come out really focused," YSU guard Jordan Andrews said. "We have to learn how we played against Green Bay and [play like that] every time — be focused, be prepared and ready to go at the tip."

The Penguins have won two of their last three games, and Andrews said the timing of the home stand could improve the confidence of YSU's young roster.

"Two out of the last

three is a great confidence boost, and now you get to come to your own court," Andrews said. "You're comfortable here, you play all the time — its just good to get back in here and finally be back with the fans and everybody that supports you."

YSU will host the University of Oakland for the first game of the four-game stretch. Oakland (14-8, 6-3 in the Horizon League) won their last three games. With wins over some of the top teams in the conference, Oakland has moved into the third spot in the Horizon League stand-

ings.

The Penguins won their first game against Oakland on Jan. 4. YSU came away with a slim 100-98 at Oakland.

"It was a good first win for us at Oakland," Andrews said. "Now the second time around, we have to be more focused and more prepared because they are going to be better prepared for things that we did well. And we have to be better prepared for things we did well."

YSU is preparing for another high-scoring game with the Grizzlies. Both teams play an up-tempo style of

play.

"I feel like our defense has gotten better, but the way Oakland pushes the ball and gets up and down in transition," Andrews said. "It will be up-tempo, because it's the way we both play."

Slocum said YSU is focusing on the team's performance at home and stressed the importance of playing well against conference opponents while at the Beeghly Center.

"We need an effort like the one we had against Green Bay. These teams are coming in that are really, really good. You could

play really good in this league and lose games," Slocum said. "We need to come out and have a lot of intensity against an Oakland team, that obviously is going to have a little bur up their saddle about their last game against us. They're really good, and they're capable of winning it with the talent level that they have. We've got to come out fighting, and we've got to come out playing hard and well to have a chance to win this home stretch."

## YSU Track at an All-Time High

STORY: JEFF BROWN | [JRBROWN02@STUDENT.YSU.EDU](mailto:JRBROWN02@STUDENT.YSU.EDU) | GRAPHIC: DAN HINER

The Youngstown State University track and field team is on the verge of becoming one of the top mid-major programs in the country, and that talent was on display last weekend at the SPIRE Midwest Indoor Open and the Penn State National invitational.

At the SPIRE, throwers Jaynee Corbett and Conner Neu stole the spotlight both finishing in first place in the weight throw and shot put.

Coming off her second ACL reconstruction, Corbett has established herself as one of the top throwers in the conference. Corbett suffered a complete ACL tear to her right leg last January, which caused her to miss a majority of last season.

"I give all my credit to my strength coach

and my trainer here, because I just did what they told me to do," Corbett said. "No one really gave up on me, and we just pushed through it and now we're here, better than we were before."

Corbett believes the injury gave her a new mindset that will be beneficial to her as she competes this season.

"One thing it's definitely gave me is the mental toughness," Corbett said. "Going from less than a year ago, when I couldn't even fully extend my leg, to now, just fully functioning ... it worked out how it's suppose to work out."

For the men, Conner Neu continued his impressive season in both the shot put and weight throw. Neu is hoping to achieve first-team All-America this season in the weight

throw and to do so must place in the top eight in the country.

"I made second-team All-American in outdoor two seasons ago, and last year I had a rough year, but this year I'm coming out strong," Neu said. "I already qualified for indoor, but the goal is top eight this year."

Neu also hopes to earn a spot in an Olympic qualifier once the outdoor season is underway.

"I'm just very fortunate that my last year in college falls on an Olympic year, because now everything that I've done so far in college is all going to accumulate at the end, and I get to take it one step further and throw at the Olympic Trials," Neu said.

At the Penn State National Invitational,

Chad Zallow was once again the shining star for the Penguins as he broke his own school record in the 60-meter hurdles with a time of 7.79 seconds and finished in third for the event. The record also places Zallow at seventh in the nation.

Head coach Brian Gorby called the Penn State National Invitational the biggest meet in the nation as many of the top runners throughout the NCAA compete in the invitational.

"It's just incredible, the talent level and the coaching," Gorby said. "It was historical for us. We usually take four or five to Penn State. We took 24 to Penn State this year. Just the national level that our program's at, in my eyes, is definitely historical."

Up next for the

UPCOMING YSU SPORTS EVENTS
Women's Basketball vs. Oakland Feb. 4
Men's Basketball vs. Oakland Feb. 4
Track & Field @ YSU Invitational Feb. 5 & 6
Track & Field @ Armory Elite Invitational Feb. 5 & 6
Women's Tennis @ Pitt Feb. 5
Men's Tennis @ St. John's (NY) Feb. 5
Swimming & Diving @ Bowling Green Feb. 5
Women's Basketball vs. Detroit Feb. 6
Men's Basketball vs. Detroit Feb. 6
Women's Golf @ Cleveland State Feb. 6 & 7
Men's Tennis @ NYIT Feb. 6
Women's Tennis @ Toledo Feb. 6
Swimming & Diving @ YSU Diving Invitational Feb. 7

Penguins is the YSU National Invitational on Feb. 5-6 at the Watson and Tressel Training Site. Gorby said that this marks the time of year where the individual athletes stop to focus on themselves individually and start to focus on the

team goals. "We kind of set up the meet like it's a preview of the Horizon League Championships," Gorby said. "We start to move from the individual side of things to more of a team type focus."