

# THE JAMBAR

Volume 100 | Issue 10 | 2.16.16 | The Student Voice of Youngstown State University since 1931



**YSU STAY IN THE FCS**  
PAGE 2 | NEWS



**RICK & ROTH**  
PAGE 6 | SPORTS

THE CITY OF  
**YOUNGSTOWN**  
OHIO

**THE CITY OF YOU**  
PAGE 4 | A&E

For many college campuses across the country, the athletic department's expenditures have been a hot-button topic for years. This is no different at Youngstown State University.

YSU takes over \$10 million from the general budget to fund the athletics department every year. Meanwhile, the faculty fights for salary increases and buildings needing repairs.

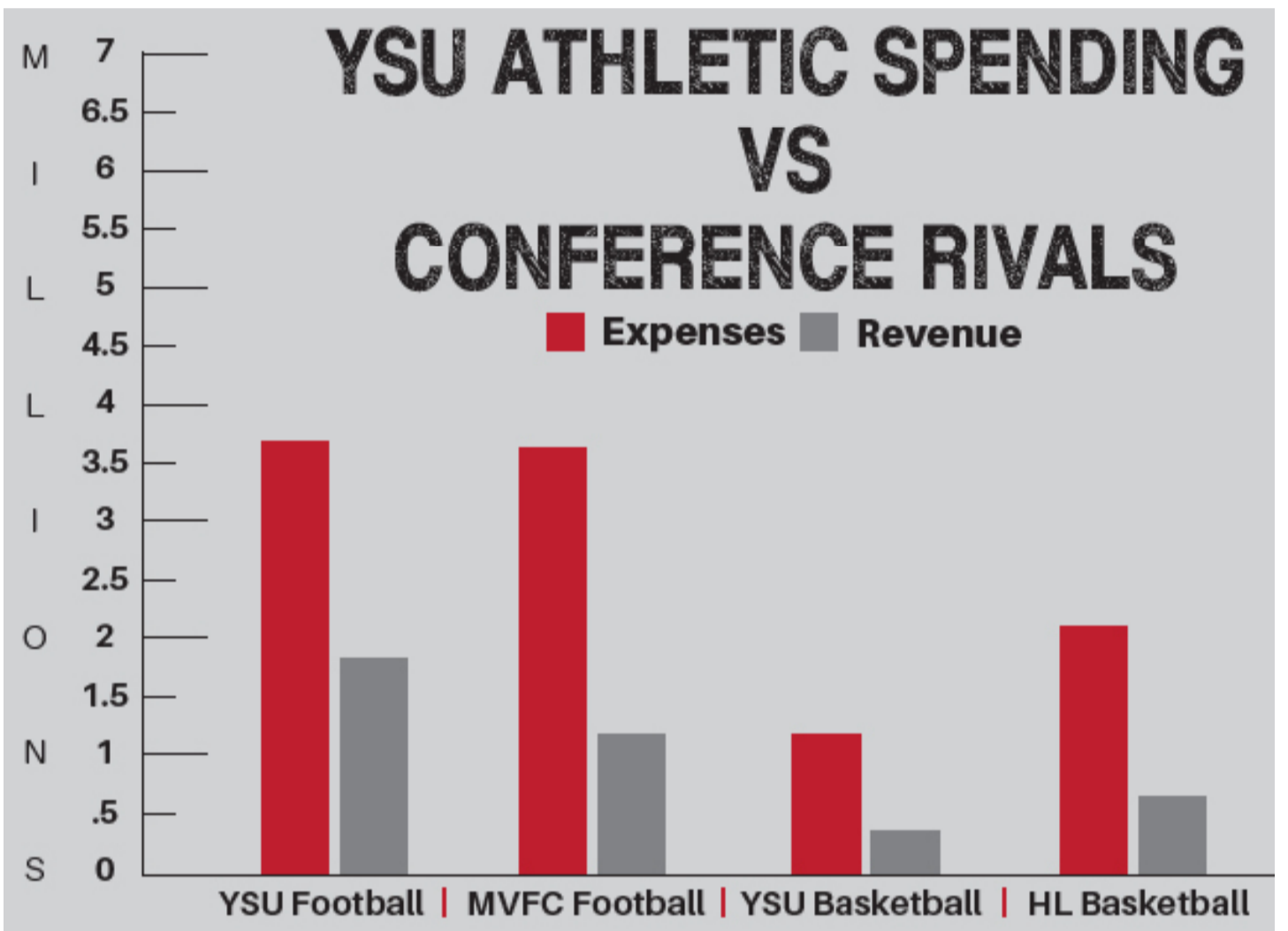
With growing frustration towards the increasing need to fund collegiate athletics, attention has turned to how much funding goes to academics and facilities — a point of contention in last year's faculty contract negotiation.

Chet Cooper, academic liaison officer between faculty and the NCAA for student-athletes at YSU, understands the faculty's frustrations.

"They're frustrated. They're seeing money being spent in different areas, and athletics happens to be a target because [the faculty] see the athletic budget growing," he said. "But they don't see the hows and the whys and the wheres of the [athletic] budget."

Cooper said there are other, bigger financial problems the university is creating for itself like hiring new administrators for jobs that have never existed before.

"You can understand where [the faculty members] are coming from. They have every right to be frustrated," Cooper said.



STORY: KATIE MONTGOMERY | [KFMONTGOMERY@STUDENT.YSU.EDU](mailto:kfmontgomery@student.ysu.edu) | GRAPHIC: LAURA MCDONOUGH

Cooper cautions people about attacking athletics before they fully understand the amount of money generated by student-athletes attending YSU.

YSU Athletic Director Ron Strollo presents the Intercollegiate Athletics Fiscal Year Report to the YSU Board of Trustees every year — a document compiled by Strollo and assistant athletic directors.

The report exceeds standards set by the

Equity of Athletics Disclosure Act and the NCAA, but Strollo said it was important to incorporate every possible financial factor to give the most realistic picture of the athletics department.

The numbers show that YSU generates more money from athletics than its rival institutions in the Missouri Valley Conference and the Horizon League with less initial investment. The numbers

also show that a significant portion of the money given from YSU to athletics goes directly to scholarship costs.

The YSU football team made changes in the past few years to help save money. These include reducing staff salaries by 5 percent, not requiring all athletes to live in the dorms during pre-season training and leaving for away games later to avoid excessive hotel and food costs.

Both Cooper and Strollo agree that one of the biggest public misunderstandings in regards to the athletics budget is the assumption that most, if not all, student-athletes are on full athletic scholarships.

About \$4 million of the original \$10 million from the university's general fund is used for scholarships.

"That money is essentially circular," Cooper says. "It's in and it's

out." According to Cooper, the cost of running the university is the same regardless of whether student-athletes are in the classroom or not. Since student-athletes are fairly scattered throughout all of the colleges and programs, it would be difficult for YSU to save on tuition costs caused by athletes' presence in classrooms.

YSU ATHLETIC SPENDING  
PAGE 3

## A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT ANIMAL

HOW COLLEGE ATHLETICS CHANGED THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL MEDIA

STORY: DAN HINER | [DHINERJR@GMAIL.COM](mailto:dhinerjr@gmail.com)

College athletics can be seen everywhere. Every Saturday throughout the year you can turn on any local, regional or ESPN station and see a college football or basketball game.

Doug Lesmerises, the Ohio State University football and basketball beat writer for the Cleveland Plain Dealer, said the increasing influence of the Internet on the media has changed the sports media landscape.

Lesmerises said coverage of NCAA games and events have seen a decrease in newspaper coverage since 2005, his first year covering Ohio State, and led to an increase in online publications that are tailored to schools such as the Ohio State University and the University of Alabama.

"There are obviously a lot of papers around Ohio that have interest in Ohio State. The amount of

interest has definitely dropped out — that's just a function, not an interest in college athletics, but a function of the newspaper business," Lesmerises said. "There are more and more websites. I know ESPN made a push a couple years ago, and they have a beat writer in Columbus that primarily covers Ohio State."

"I do think that in the growing digital world, sports websites have identified college athletics as a very popular thing to cover because of the huge alumni base because the fan bases can be spread out a little bit — you're not covering just for the people in that town. People go to college then move away or maybe you grew up in Ohio and you like the college or you grew up near a college, then you moved.

DIFFERENT ANIMAL  
PAGE 2

## WHY YSU WILL STAY IN THE FCS

STORY: DAN HINER  
[DHINERJR@GMAIL.COM](mailto:dhinerjr@gmail.com)

Several years ago college football was thrown into chaos as Division I Football Bowl Subdivision conferences tried to reconfigure in order to meet the requirements to create a conference championship game.

After a number of teams left their original conferences to join the Big Ten, Atlantic Coastal Conference and the Big 12, the smaller conferences looked to the fill holes left by some of their most successful teams.

The smaller conferences turned to the Football Championship Subdivision. They picked up some of the more-successful programs from the FCS to try to reinstate balance and stay competitive with other FBS conferences.

YSU STAY IN THE FCS  
PAGE 2



VISIT [THEJAMBAR.COM](http://THEJAMBAR.COM)  
For information on breaking news as well as complete access to these stories and more.



LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!  
[Facebook.com/thejambaratYSU](https://www.facebook.com/thejambaratYSU)



FOLLOW US ON TWITTER!  
[Twitter.com/TheJambar](https://twitter.com/TheJambar)



PHONE  
330-941-1990



EMAIL  
[jambarad@gmail.com](mailto:jambarad@gmail.com)

THE JAMBAR ADVERTISING



### YSU STAY IN THE FCS FRONT

Since the '90s, the fans of the Youngstown State University football team had hopes the program would move from the FCS to the FBS. YSU considered a potential expansion team a couple times while YSU President Jim Tressel was the head coach, but the change was never made.

YSU Athletic Director Ron Strollo discussed why the Penguins' football program is content on staying in the FCS and potential avenues YSU might explore if the change was ever instated.

YSU flirted with the Mid-American Conference in the past, but Strollo said YSU is currently not interested in moving to the highest level of college football and is content staying in the FCS.

The University of Massachusetts temporarily joined the MAC but left the conference after the 2015 season. Now the conference is looking to add another team to its list of schools to replace UMASS.

Strollo said there were several key factors that play into the university's decision to stay in the FCS. Travel, coaches, and most importantly, finances. He said he wouldn't rule out a move to the FBS in the future, but he said the university's finances would more than likely prevent any moves, specifically FBS schools paying for the cost of attendance for their student athletes.

"There's very few FCS schools ... well there's some that give the cost of attendance, but I don't know any FBS schools that aren't giving the cost of attendance," Strollo said. "So it would be assumed, in order to try to be competitive, that you would move to the cost of attendance."

### Travel

The MAC would be a perfect fit for the Penguins. The MAC currently has 12 teams; six of those teams are in Ohio. Geographically, the cost of travel would be a better fit than the Missouri Valley Football Conference, which stretches from Ohio to North and South Dakota.

Other than the MAC, Conference USA is another conference that has

schools in the area. The travel would cost more in Conference USA due to schools located in the south but Western Kentucky University, Marshall University and Old Dominion University are Conference USA schools in surrounding states.

When asked if YSU would be open to moving to another FBS conference other than the MAC, Strollo said if the program ever changed subdivisions, the MAC would be the leading candidate, but he wouldn't rule out

on average MAC schools pay approximately \$1.3 million for their coaching staffs. This includes the salaries of the head coach and the nine full-time assistant coaches at each university. Strollo said the Penguins would have to stay competitive with the payroll for the other teams in the FBS.

"You allow more coaches, and obviously the coaches you have are getting paid quite a bit more than what we are paying," Strollo said. "Then you're allowed 22

ery coach was 'hey we're facing tough economic times, and we need to do our part and give back. It was, hey, this is something that we're gonna do before anyone was even offered the position."

### Finances

In a report issued to the YSU Board of Trustees on Sept. 8, Strollo and the Athletic Department concluded that a move to the MAC would require YSU to increase their current football ex-

have to pay a one-time entrance fee of "anywhere from \$1 million to \$5 million."

The number of scholarship athletes would need to be taken into account as well. FBS schools have 85 scholarship players on their rosters but FCS programs are restricted to 63 football scholarships. Adding 22 scholarships in football would increase the total number of scholarships awarded by the university to all of its student athletes.

The athletic depart-

per level of Stambaugh Stadium.

"The challenge with dropping down to Division II is how does that affect your income string," Strollo said. "Right now, we're getting half a million dollars from our loges holders. I'm going to be honest with you; I don't think our loges holders would be interested in paying the rates that they pay for a Division II program."

Strollo said factors like the number of scholarships, national recognition and the 'guarantee game', which is played early in the football season against a Power Five program, would negatively impact the university's revenue.

"Some of the money that you would save by dropping — I think it's 18 scholarships — you would probably lose that or more in revenue," Strollo said. "You also won't be able to play Ohio State [University] for \$750,000. So between the loges and the 'guarantee game', and if you starting adding in if you go to Division II, is your signage worth the same amount? You start dropping down all those things because you're not getting the TV recognition."

"Now all of our games are on ESPN 3, on a national network. Where you really would get burned is they're really dealing with the same amount of coaches," Strollo said. "Where your savings is going to be is the scholarships. Your revenue loss would be a lot more than the savings on the scholarships."

According to the 2016 university operating budget, YSU athletics has seen 9 percent increase in revenue during 2015, most of the revenue was generated due to "guarantee payments for football and basketball."

The YSU football team kicked off its 2015 season against the University of Pittsburg. YSU received \$450,000 for participating in the game and putting Pittsburg on their schedule. Originally Ohio State University was supposed to start the season, but a change in the Big Ten's scheduling policy forced Ohio State to take the Penguins off the schedule. If YSU had played the Buckeyes, YSU would have received \$750,000.

### Division II

Even though there aren't any rumors of moving to Division II, it is still a good measuring stick to understand that any move could have a negative impact on YSU's finances.

YSU has no interest in moving down, and one main reason is the perception the program would have in the eyes of the loge holders, the people who pay for season tickets and sit in the up-



Youngstown State University wide receiver Andrew Williams (80) breaks a tackle during YSU's 47-7 win over Missouri State University on Nov. 7.

another conference that has schools near YSU.

"It's hard to say. Obviously you look at geographies first, but the MAC's membership hasn't changed in quite a long time," Strollo said. "They weren't affected by all the conference changes that happened the past three or four years — they're a pretty stable group. If that was something that we were interested in, which we are not, I'm not sure where the right fit would be for us."

### Coaches

One factor that may get overlooked by most fans would be the cost of travel would be a better fit than the Missouri Valley Football Conference, which stretches from Ohio to North and South Dakota.

Other than the MAC, Conference USA is another conference that has

more scholarships and those schools are also giving the cost of attendance — which means the cost of each scholarship is probably 20 percent higher than ours."

Strollo said YSU current football coaches took less money to join the program last season. "[We] began to address YSU's structural budget deficit by requiring that each division of the University take steps to permanently reduce expense budgets." He said the university wanted the coaching candidates to understand the current financial situation for the university before any contracts were signed.

"We're spending 5 percent less on this current coaching staff than we did under Eric Wolford's staff," Strollo said. "It was in recognition of what was going on on-campus. So part of our discussion with ev-

penses to \$6,805,010, almost double the university's current expenses.

Strollo said the FCS allows the YSU to generate more revenue. If YSU were to move to the FBS, the university's budget would go into the red.

"You're going to have to go out and compete for coaches at that level. So those would obviously be challenges," Strollo said. "I think the real challenge when you look at that is although those schools are spending \$3 million more than us, if you look at their ticket sales and corporate sponsorships, they're not raising that much more than us—if not sometimes we're raising more than them."

Strollo said in addition to the \$3,025,680 YSU would need to spend to reach the average expenses the MAC schools use on their football program, YSU would also

ment is using a 2 percent increase from the YSU general fund to help pay for the scholarships of its current student athletes and the Title IX Gender Equality Plan. The current university operating budget projects the athletic department will spend approximately \$5,167,474 on scholarships and grants for YSU student athletes.

### DIFFERENT ANIMAL FRONT

In college athletics, that loyalty sticks with you no matter where you are. As apposed to pro sports, more often you root for the team that you're near."

Since Lesmerises began, media organizations have focused on putting their content on websites due to the extra reach that the Internet provides. Lesmerises said the Plain Dealer originally asked him to write one story a day and if he had more time he was supposed to write any additional content, but after the interest in Ohio State started to expand, the Plain Dealer added two more Ohio State beat writers.

"The amount of content that we produce during football season is busying. We understand that everybody is probably not going

to read everything, but we give people a variety," Lesmerises said. "So if you want to read a long story, we have a long story, if you want to read something quick and funny, we have something quick and funny. If you want a video, there's a video. We want to give different formats so we could appeal to different types of people which we know are voracious Ohio State fans."

Lesmerises went on to say the digital outlets are focusing on the "ingrained loyalty, that ingrained passion" that college sports fans experience when they grow up watching a team, and that's what allowed the media coverage to balloon to its current state.

"I think to some degree, the Ohio State market is saturated just because there are so many websites," Lesmerises said. "But at the same time, you couldn't

give them enough ... the fans want more. There is such great interest in these flagship college programs whether it's Ohio State, or Alabama, or Michigan or Oklahoma. I think it is a select group that drives interest to that degree, but I think when you have a place like that, and especially a place like that which is winning, you could write about it everyday and there are enough people who want to read about it."

### Youngstown

In Youngstown, however, the coverage of Youngstown State University athletics is bordering on the verge of oversaturating the market. Between the Vindicator, Warren Tribune Chronicle, WFMJ, WKBN and local television and radio stations, you'll see coverage of every YSU game or event during the calendar year.

Joe Scalzo, former YSU beat writer for the Vindicator, said YSU has seen a decrease in interest since former head coach Jim Tressel left the program to join Ohio State. Since that time, the football program has fallen from a national championship contender and so has attendance numbers.

"I think in the case of YSU, it was always dependent upon if they were winning or not," Scalzo said. "When Eric Wolford got hired [as the head coach of the YSU football team] there was a lot of interest, when Bo Pelini first got hired there was a lot of interest and the other times I noticed there was a lot of interest was when they were losing — that probably applies to the football team and the men's basketball team."

"In terms of a trend, I think in Youngstown State's case it actually trended downward just

because it had been so big under Tressel, and they lost interest under [Jon] Haycock. Although I think the interest in college sports has really skyrocketed. I think in Youngstown State's case, ever since the '90s, it's trended downward."

"In college football, the FCS has gotten more marginalized with the exception of North Dakota State, and I think YSU has kind of suffered a little bit because a lot of the higher level football programs have moved up to the FBS level," Scalzo said.

Prior to covering Ohio State, Lesmerises spent time covering the University of Delaware. He said the coverage of smaller programs is "a completely different animal" and gave some advice for anyone willing to cover a smaller collegiate program.

"At a place like Youngstown State or Delaware, you better

come with an idea. You better be ready to ask questions and you better be ready to bring something to the table because nobody's going to do it for you. I think it is very different in a lot of ways. I think the key is not to give people the big story — the 'What's wrong with the team? What's happening?' kinda stuff, but the weird little things like 'Why does this guy wear different color socks than everybody else?'. Those kind of stories matter these days. When you are on a group beat with a bunch of different writers, you have to find a way to differentiate yourself, but even if you're the only one covering a team where there's not as many beat writers, it's still on you. You still need to find those weird little things."



### CLASSIFIEDS

#### HOUSING

##### YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE

Licensed and Inspected one-bedroom apartment includes all utilities, appliances and laundry. Plus ADT, cable, dual broadband Internet. From \$595. Call Chris 330-743-7368.

##### IT TAKES TWO

Licensed and inspected two-bedroom apartment includes all utilities, appliances and laundry. Plus ADT, cable, dual broadband internet. \$455 each. Call Chris 330-743-7368.

##### CHECK THIS OUT

CT Rentals has nice, city licensed, all inclusive houses and apartments. Now leasing for August tenancy. Our package includes: All appliances plus over 90 channels of cable T.V., broadband Internet with Wi-Fi and ADT Security. All private bedrooms with individual leases and all utilities, maintenance and grounds keeping included from \$445 a month per person. Call Chris 330-743-7368.

#### HELP WANTED

All Star Driving School - Hiring full time or part time. Great opportunity for college students looking for a job to fit around their school schedule. Must be 21 years old. No experience necessary - will train. For more information, call 330-726-3377 Email: info@allstardriving.net.

#### OTHER

Need Birth Control, Plan B, Pap Smear, STD Test, 3D/4D Ultrasound, Pregnant?  
Dr. Hill, 1350 Fifth Ave., near YSU campus, all insurances, walk-ins. 330-746-7007, askthedoctor@ai-health.com, answered confidentially.

#### ADVERTISE WITH THE JAMBAR

Need a place to live? Lost a tarantula? Need music lessons? Own a local business and need exposure? Sold your soul to the university book store and need to sell your collectibles to buy it back?  
Consider taking out a classified with The Jambar!

Rates as low as \$4 for local classifieds

## THE JAMBAR

COM

### NEWS BRIEF

#### Judge Rigelhaupt and Bert Rigelhaupt Pre-Law Scholarship

Applications are being accepted for the Judge Sidney Rigelhaupt and Bert Rigelhaupt Pre-Law Scholarship. This is a full scholarship for YSU students in all majors who are intending to go to law school. Eligibility is based on the financial needs of the residents of Mahoning and Trumbull County in Ohio. It is a renewable scholarship for undergraduates. Applications are to be submitted by Monday, March 7, 2016. Printable applications are available on the YSU web-page [www.ysu.edu/finaid](http://www.ysu.edu/finaid) and in the Department of Politics and International Affairs. Please bring in completed applications, fax to 330-941-3439 or mail to the following:

Youngstown State University  
Department of Politics and International Affairs  
Rigelhaupt Pre-Law Center  
One University Plaza  
Youngstown, OH 44555

#### Former NYPD Commissioner Presents YSU Skeggs Lecture

Raymond Kelly, former commissioner of the New York Police Department and a leading expert on national security, hosts Youngstown State University's Skeggs Lecture in Stambaugh Auditorium on Fifth Avenue at 7 p.m. April 5. The lecture is free and open to the public. However, tickets are required and are available at the Stambaugh box office starting Feb. 24. The box office is open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information, please call 330-941-2136 or email [jmleviser@ysu.edu](mailto:jmleviser@ysu.edu).

#### YSU ATHLETIC SPENDING FRONT

"We have some that are on partial scholarships, we have some that are just on book money and we have some that aren't on scholarship," Cooper said. "So they have to pay the going rate for tuition.

We also have scholars that are on different athletic teams that are bringing in scholarships in another way [academically]."

With that reasoning, Strollo subtracted the \$4 million cost of scholarships from the total \$10.17 million cost of running the athletics department, leaving his report with a total of \$6.12 million in actual costs to YSU.

According to the official Intercollegiate Athletics 2013-14 Fiscal Year Report, only 123 student-athletes received full-ride athletics scholarships that year.

In contrast, 224 student-athletes had partial scholarships, and 92 student-athletes had no athletics scholarships at all. This means that a total of 316 athletes were paying for tuition, books and state fees in some way to YSU. All student-athletes are required to be full-time students, and therefore

must pay the full-time student price for their education. Many also live on campus because of their distance from home.

In total, Strollo found that YSU earned \$3.18 million from tuition, room and board and other schooling fees from the 316 athletes with partial or no scholarship. This is the reported revenue brought to the university by the athletics department.

The revenue that is actually earned and kept by the athletic department is \$2.7 million, as reported in the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act. In addition, \$3.32 million comes from contributions from the NCAA and the state of Ohio for student completion and success. In the 2013-14 fiscal year, YSU athletics made \$6.5 million on its own.

Between the NCAA contributions and team revenues of \$6.5 million, YSU is left with a profit of \$378,137 from athletics, according to Strollo.

In comparison, YSU spends an average of \$5.2 million less per year on athletics than other Missouri Valley Conference schools with high-level basketball and football programs and \$10 million

less than Mid-American Conference schools such as Akron, Kent and Toledo.

"The MAC institutions expend approximately twice as much as we do while providing the same services to roughly the same number of athletic programs and student-athletes," Strollo says. "We're doing more with less."

YSU also spends less money on its men's basketball team, the second largest direct revenue source for the athletics department, than the average amount that Horizon League MVC and MAC schools spend on their women's basketball teams.

The university earns money, indirectly, just by having athletics on campus. Selling athletic-related apparel at the bookstore, game-day parking fees and campus dining all benefit by having more fans on campus for events as well as by having student-athletes living and eating on campus.

Another intangible benefit not reflected in the budget is the diversity brought by student-athletes. Besides just bringing in more men and women from across the country, 28 percent of the international students enrolled

at YSU this year are athletes.

Part of the athletics budget goes directly to ensuring Title IX compliance, which must be maintained for the entire university — not just athletics.

"If we aren't compliant with Title IX, it's going to be worse for the institution ... athletics provides diversity. They provide equality to a certain extent between males and females, and all of that combines to a better institution," Cooper said.

Besides encouraging diversity, athletics provides better students for YSU. Over the past five years, student-athletes have achieved almost twice the graduation rate of the average YSU student population.

"On average, student athletes perform better academically," Cooper said. "Since they perform better academically, they have higher graduation rates . . . so that generates money. Retention is better for student-athletes than the general population." While the athletic department budget is sizable, according to the information Strollo presented, the benefits outweigh the costs.

## CHICKEN DINNER, \$8.00

Wednesdays, 1130 AM-1PM

BAKED CHICKEN (LIGHT OR DARK)\* SALAD\*

VEGETABLE\*MASHED POTATOES & GRAVY\*

BREAD\*DESSERT AND "BOTTOMLESS" COFFEE OR TEA

\*AVAILABLE ASH WEDNESDAY

AND WEDNESDAYS IN LENT\*

LEMON BUTTER BAKED FISH

MACARONI AND CHEESE

### ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

323 Wick Ave.- across Wick from YSU's Jones Hall

For preorder or take out call 330.743.3175



Supporting Recovery and Prevention in the Valley

sponsored by  
**HOME SAVINGS**  
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

Mill Creek MetroParks  
Canfield Bike Trail  
**Saturday, Feb. 20, 2016**

Registration begins at 8:00 am

<b>4-MILE RUN</b> 9:00AM Registration Fee: \$35	<b>2-MILE WALK</b> 9:45AM Registration Fee: \$30
---	--

www.MeridianHealthCare.net



LIKE US ON FACEBOOK THE JAMBAR

## JAMBAR STAFF

#### EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

GRAIG GRAZIOSI

#### MANAGING EDITOR:

GABBY FELLOWS

#### COPY EDITOR:

AMBER PALMER

#### NEWS EDITOR:

JUSTIN WIER

#### ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR:

BILLY LUDT

#### SPORTS EDITOR:

DANIEL HINER

#### ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR:

LAUREN FOOTE

#### WEB MANAGER:

ALYSSA PAWLUK

#### ASSISTANT WEB MANAGER:

ALEXIS RUFENER

#### DESIGN EDITOR:

GWENASIA GADSDEN

#### ASSISTANT DESIGNERS:

LAURA MCDONOUGH

KOLBY BROWN

#### ADS MANAGER:

CHRISTIANA YOUNG

#### ASSISTANT ADS MANAGER:

EMILY FRAZZINI

#### COLUMNISTS:

JORDAN MCNEIL

GINO DIGUILIO

#### ASSISTANT COPY EDITORS:

PATRICIA SHARP

SAMANTHA WELCH

#### MULTIMEDIA EDITOR:

ALAN RODGES

#### MULTIMEDIA REPORTERS:

SCOTT WILLIAMS

COREY MCCRAE

#### SPORTS REPORTERS:

WILL CLARK

ANDREW ZUHOOSKY

JEFFERY BROWN

#### ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT REPORTERS:

ASHLEY CUSTER

AMANDA LEHNERD

#### GENERAL ASSIGNMENT REPORTERS:

JEFF BASH

SAMANTHA PHILLIPS

KATIE MONTGOMERY

#### BUSINESS MANAGER:

MARY DOTA

#### ADVISER:

MARY BETH EARNHEARDT

EMAIL [THEJAMBAR@GMAIL.COM](mailto:THEJAMBAR@GMAIL.COM)

FAX .....330.941.2322

PHONE .....330.941.1991



## THE CITY OF YOUNGSTOWN

OHIO

# The City of YOUNGSTOWN

STORY: WILL KEFFLER | PHOTO: WILL KEFFLER

RJ Thompson, a Youngstown State University assistant professor of graphic and interactive design, said he decided it's finally time for a change in the city that has changed him.

His plan is called "The City of You," and it will focus on changing the negative perceptions of the town by rebranding Youngstown and telling individual stories of its citizens.

"In Youngstown, the people are the life-force. They're the blood of the city, so essentially it's 'the city of you,'" Thompson said. "Everyone's got a story to tell, and I want to bring those stories out."

It all began about a year and a half ago with a partnership between the City of Youngstown and YSU's Regional Economic Development Initiative.

Dominic Marchionda, city and university planning coordinator for REDI, took hold of the reins with his team to develop a plan for how to tackle the challenge of revitalizing of the city.

"We studied different strategies peer cities are implementing that have faced the same struggle and are about the same

size of Youngstown in terms of post-industrial, chronic abandonment, vacancy issues and disinvestment," Marchionda said.

Marchionda said he also found that many of the luxuries that most people take for granted, such as access to capital, financial literacy and even broadband, were scarce in the neighborhoods.

"We've identified that we're a highly disenfranchised city, and a lot of amenities that are available to people in the Mahoning Valley are not available to people in the neighborhoods," Marchionda said. "We wanted to figure out how to deploy this help to the people of the neighborhoods."

The first order of business was to begin a rebranding campaign to show citizens that with the new leadership of the city, change really is coming.

Thompson began by redesigning a new, modern logo for the city. He said he wanted it to be something that all of Youngstown's citizens could take pride in.

Thompson's design firm, Youngstown Design Works, along with help from REDI, was

able to work through the larger strategic planning effort and quickly determined the direction they would take.

"[YDW] came up with 'The City of You' concept, which employs the idea that this is your town, this is your university, this is your city hall, this is your Covelli Centre and this is your Mahoning River. Tell us how you could better access it," Marchionda said. "Tell us your story."

Mayor John McNally, who praised the idea in its origins, has approved the campaign's continuation.

"A marketing campaign like this can change the way we think about the city itself," McNally said. "It's not just a seal. It can be something to each one of us. It's all about changing perceptions."

McNally understands Thompson's concept of focusing on the neighborhoods to better the city, and a focus on the citizens themselves helping to create a better Youngstown.

"We needed to get out into neighborhood groups across the city," McNally said. "I wanted different viewpoints,

and, by and large, everybody understood what the message of the campaign is: It's all about you, and what you want to make this city be."

The City of You campaign encourages all of Youngstown's residents to reach out and become a part of the betterment of the city.

"You don't have to be an art person or an economic developer or a planning person to be involved," Marchionda said. "You just have to be authentic and willing to roll up the sleeves."

Of course, any project of this size will take time, effort and certainly a good budgeting plan, but Mayor McNally said the budgeting is already in the works.

"It's not a cheap proposition to do a marketing campaign like we want to do," McNally said. "It's not enough to put things on social media or put a couple of banners up. We need a concerted effort. Our Community Planning and Economic Development Division is requesting in our 2016 budget around \$100,000 to commit to a larger marketing program based on the City of You campaign."

Luckily for Thompson's campaign, the project isn't starting from scratch. There are so many untapped resources that can help raise the perception and cultures of Youngstown.

"We have the second largest metropolitan park system [in the U.S.] with Mill Creek Parks," Marchionda said. "We have world-class museums. Butler Art, McDonough, Stambaugh Auditorium. We have a 30-acre historical park on our city's north side. We have the Covelli Centre, which brings in everything from monster trucks, to Elton John. Historic buildings being rehabbed and an amphitheater planned along the front of the Mahoning River."

In past years Youngstown has been infamous for the commonly reused phrase, "There's nothing to do here," but the city is finally turning over and becoming a desirable home, rather than a burnt-out former steel town.

"Our biggest challenge is the perception of being a former steel town with all the problems that stem from industrial de-

cline," Marchionda said. "This campaign will tell people, 'you can own a house here, you can start a business here, you can be a parent here, you can live, work and play in Youngstown.'"

As for the people that already live, work and play in Youngstown, Thompson wants to tell their stories and have everyone be heard through a series of podcasts.

"We're asking, 'How has Youngstown transformed you? And how, in turn, are you transforming it?'" Thompson said.

The podcasts can be found on the John J. McDonough Museum of Art's website, YSU's art department website, the City of Youngstown website and eventually iTunes podcasts.

Once the budget is approved, the official launch is planned for this spring, and businesses and neighborhoods will be incorporating the City of You logo into their own brands.

"We want people that are choosing to live and work here to tell their story to the rest of the country and the world," Marchionda said.



PHOTO: SCOTT WILLIAMS

THE PARKING LOT ADJACENT TO THE COVELLI CENTRE ON EAST FRONT STREET WILL BE THE SITE OF THE IN AUGURAL YOUNGSTOWN FLEA, ON APRIL 23 FROM 11 AM. TO 4 P.M. YOUNGSTOWN FLEA WILL BE A MARKET OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL VENDORS, SELLING WARES RANGING FROM ARTS, CRAFTS, VINTAGE ITEMS, RECLAIMED METALS AND WOODS, COLLECTIBLES, FURNITURE AND APPAREL. DERRICK MCDOWELL, VISUAL ARTIST AND OWNER OF WARDROBE CLOTHING LINE, IS THE MIND AND SOLE ORGANIZER BEHIND YOUNGSTOWN FLEA.

"WHAT WE WANT TO PRESENT TO THE COMMUNITY IS EXCITING," HE SAID.

IN PREVIOUS CAREER ENDEAVORS, MCDOWELL TRAVELED TO DIFFERENT CITIES ACROSS THE U.S. AND TOOK NOTE OF THE

MANY FLEA MARKETS IN CHICAGO, WASHINGTON, D.C. AND NEW YORK. HE SAID THE FLEA MARKETS ENCOURAGED ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY GROWTH AND PRESENTS A PLATFORM FOR VENDORS TO SHOWCASE THEIR TALENTS.

"WE JUST NEED PEOPLE TO SEE WHAT COMMUNITY WITHIN A COMMUNITY IS LIKE," MCDOWELL SAID. "WE BELIEVE THAT THIS CAN EXCEED YOUNGSTOWN'S LIMITS FOR WHO CAN BE INVOLVED."

YOUNGSTOWN FLEA'S SEASON RUNS FROM APRIL TO OCTOBER, AROUND THE THIRD SATURDAY OF THOSE MONTHS. MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ATTENDING OR PARTICIPATING IN YOUNGSTOWN FLEA IS AVAILABLE ON THEIR FACEBOOK PAGE AND WEBSITE, WWW.YOUNGSTOWNFLEA.COM.

## YSUnity Presents

YSUnity is hosting a free showing of the 2007 American documentary film "For The Bible Tells Me So" on Wednesday, Feb. 17 at 5 p.m. in the Ohio Room of Kilcawley Center. The showing is free and open to the public, and food will be provided. Afterwards, there will be a discussion of the film and its concepts. "For The Bible Tells Me So" talks about homosexuality and its believed conflicts with

Christianity. The movie talks with religious parents who raised homosexual kids, including House Majority Leader Dick Gephardt and the parents of Bishop V. Gene Robinson.

The movie also interviews their children concerning their religious upbringing. "For The Bible Tells Me So" premiered at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival and currently has a 98 percent positive rating on Rotten Tomatoes.

# 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.



## ..... THE JAMBAR COLUMN .....

# LET'S TALK ABOUT IT *INSTEAD* OF BANNING IT

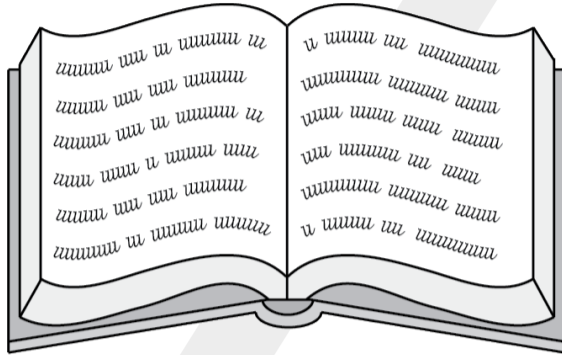
Last week, a friend of mine shared an article on Twitter about “This One Summer,” a Young Adult graphic novel, being pulled from school libraries in Florida. He shared it with one single word of commentary: “Shame.” And I agree.

This column would probably fit best during Banned Books Week in the fall, but since this instance was recent and I’ve been stewing on it for a week, I’m going to talk for a bit about it now.

“This One Summer” by Jillian Tamaki and Mariko Tamaki is a graphic novel about two young girls on summer vacation, pre-teens dealing with puberty, crushes, family tensions, friend tensions and the intense drama of the local teens — which includes some “mature” language, pregnancy and alcohol, among other things. I enjoyed reading it and did not find any of the content out of place for the age rating it was given, which is 12 and up.

Two school districts in Florida removed the book after a mother of a third-grader complained about it, asking “How do you explain to a 9-year-old the graphic things that were in this book?” I’ll come back to this question later; first, I want to say OK. I can see the reasoning behind taking the book out of elementary schools, as the rating given by the publisher and libraries is, in fact, 12 and up.

The problem is the fact that after this complaint and removal happened at the elementary level, it also started being pulled at the high school level once a local station reported about an Amazon re-



STORY: **JORDAN MCNEIL**  
JEMCNEIL@STUDENT.YSU.EDU

view — which is highly inaccurate, in my opinion — that called it “practically porn for kids.”

Yes, there’s mention of sex. Yes, there are discussions about teen pregnancy. But it was all done tastefully, practically with zero visual depiction of anything of that nature. Practically porn? I don’t think so.

But the book was then recalled from high schools, and there’s been mention that the districts will now look into their book choosing policies. There are loads of reasons why this is wrong, and you can find a lot of arguments online already. Here’s the

main reason why this riles me up: books can be important to a child’s development.

Reading gives kids a safe place to explore the world and figure things out for themselves. They can try new identities, experience new cultures, learn new things about the world without fear of failure or embarrassment or danger. Reading about something that doesn’t affect them, or occur in their day-to-day life, can open up conversations — useful, helpful, healthy conversations — about the world around them.

“How do you explain to a 9-year-old the graphic things that were in this book?” You do so by sitting down with them and having an honest discussion of what they’ve read and what it means. Sure, most 9-year-olds may not be able to actually grasp everything pertaining to sex or pregnancy yet, or understand completely the crude language from the teen characters, but you never know until you sit down with them and talk about it. But I guarantee that high schoolers and middle schoolers are capable of understanding, are capable of having a legitimate conversation about it all.

By removing or banning books from schools, you are depriving the students from having these experiences and learning from them. You stop protecting them from the world and start damaging their growth and ability to live in it properly. Banning hurts more than it helps, and when it happens, no one wins.

## EDITORIAL



# PELL GRANT RECIPIENTS GRADUATE LESS THAT'S *NOT* GOOD

If Stafford loans are like borrowing money from your stingy but understanding friend and private loans are like borrowing from a loan shark that will break your legs and kill your family, the Pell Grant is like a buddy buying you a beer without fuss about repayment.

Everyone loves the Pell Grant — a need based grant created to help reduce debt accrued by low income students — and its devil may care attitude towards doling out school cash, but recent Gallup data suggests recipients aren’t holding up their end of the deal.

In a poll of over 400 college and university presidents, Gallup found that half of those respondents reported that less than 50 percent of Pell recipients were graduating in six years or less.

A more narrow study released in August of last year by Hechinger Report — an independent, non-profit journalism outfit focused on education research — found that of the major universities polled -- 32 private and 50 public -- less than a third of Pell Grant recipients graduated in six years.

In fiscal year 2015, Pell Grants cost taxpayers \$31.4 billion dollars. Since 2000, it’s cost taxpayers over \$300 billion. It’s the country’s most expensive education program, and if things don’t change, future Penguins may need to find other ways to fund their schooling.

There are reasons for this beyond “poor people are lazy.” For starters, 91 percent of students receiving Pell Grants come from families earning less than \$50,000, and over half come from families earning less than \$20,000 a year. Students from lower income families often have less of a support structure and — based on how school systems are funded — Pell recipients also make up the majority

of students in community and for-profit colleges, both of which have poor graduation rates across the board.

Despite this, last April Republican leaders proposed legislation that would cap the Pell Grant at its current maximum award of \$5,775 for the next 10 years.

In 2005, the average cost of attending a public university as a resident was \$12,127 and the Pell Grant maximum was \$4,050. Today, 10 years later, the average cost is \$24,061, just shy of double. Over 10 years, tuition doubled and the Pell Grant only received a \$1,725 increase.

Tuition doubling again 10 years from now may not be a guarantee, but expecting an increase in tuition isn’t unreasonable. The Pell Grant was meant as a means to help low-income students take on less debt while pursuing higher education. Freezing the cap when it already offsets such a small part of student loans might as well be gutting it for future students.

That being said, there is obviously a problem when the graduation rate for Pell recipients is so low.

Universities need to increase institutional support to help low-income students succeed, and there needs to be a serious investigation into whether or not students pursuing degrees at for profit institutions should be eligible for federal financial aid.

Either way, ensuring that graduation rates increase — especially those of students receiving Pell Grants — needs to be a priority. Otherwise, that money will eventually be stripped from the students that actually use the money to earn their degrees.

### JAMBAR POLICY

Since being founded by Burke Lyden in 1931, The Jambar has won nine Associated Collegiate Press honors. The Jambar is published twice weekly during the fall and spring semesters and weekly during the first summer session. Mail subscriptions are \$25 per academic year. The first copy of The Jambar is free. Additional copies of The Jambar are \$1 each.

### OUR SIDE POLICY

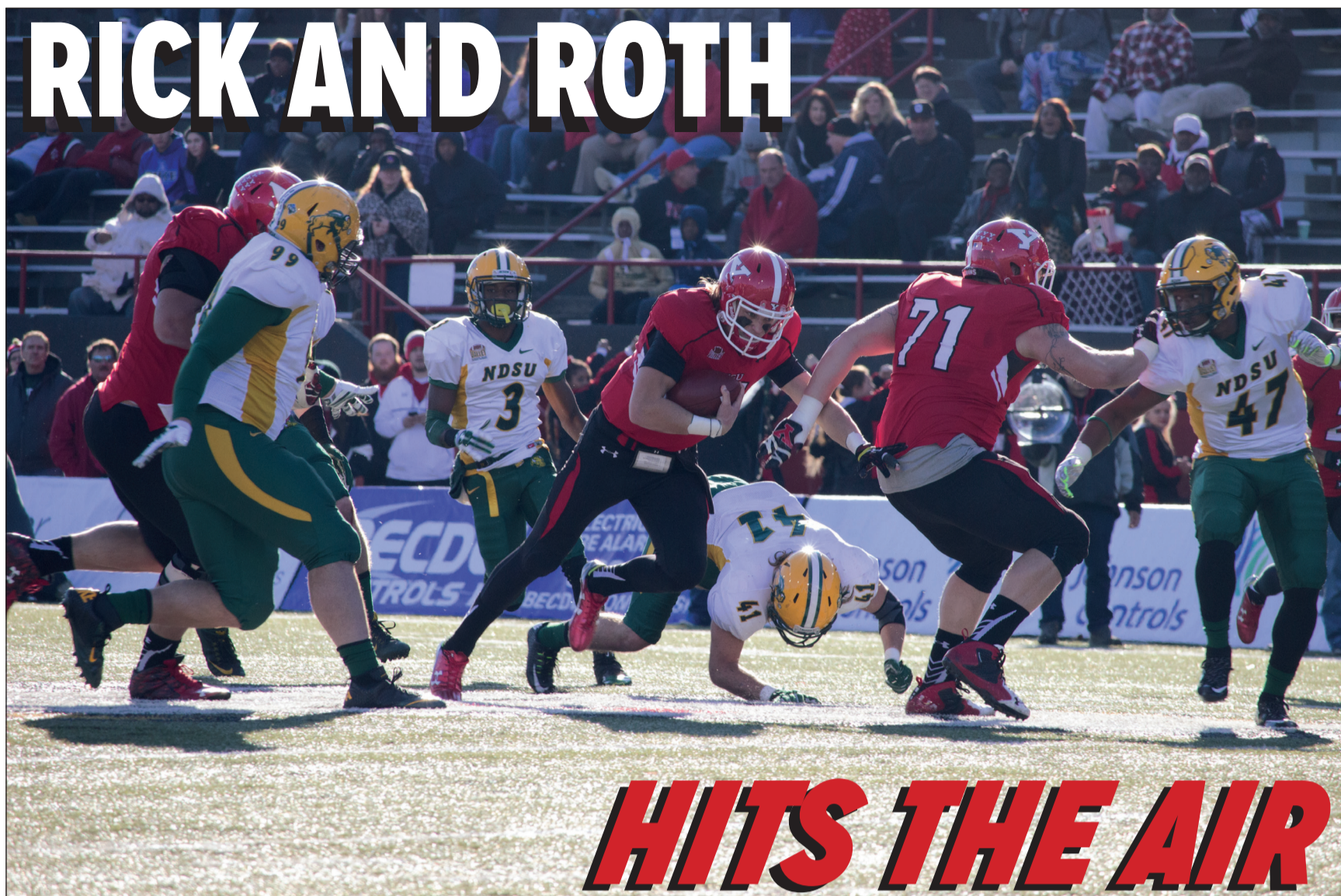
The editorial board that writes our editorials consists of the editor-in-chief, the managing editor, the copy editor and the news editor. These opinion pieces are written separately from news articles. They draw on the opinions of the entire writing staff and do not reflect the opinions of any individual staff member. The Jambar’s business manager and non-writing staff do not contribute to editorials, and the adviser does not have final approval.

### YOUR SIDE POLICY

The Jambar encourages letters to the editor. Submissions are welcome at thejambar@gmail.com or by following the “Submit a Letter” link on thejambar.com. Letters should concern campus issues, must be typed and must not exceed 500 words. Submissions must include the writer’s name and telephone number for verification, along with the writer’s city of residence for printing. The Jambar does not withhold the names of guest commentators. Letters are subject to editing for spelling, grammar and clarity. Letters will not be rejected based on the views expressed in them. The editorial board reserves the right to reject commentaries and letters if they are not relevant to our readers, seek free publicity, fail to defend opinion with facts from reliable sources or if the editorial staff decides that the subject has been sufficiently aired. The editorial board will request a rewrite from the submitting writer based on these requirements. The Jambar will not print letters that are libelous, threatening, obscene or indecent. The views and opinions expressed in letters and commentaries on the opinion page do not necessarily reflect those of The Jambar staff. Editorials do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the faculty, staff or administration of YSU.



## RICK AND ROTH



## HITS THE AIR

Youngstown State University quarterback Ricky Davis is the host of "Rick and Roth in the Morning." The show airs on Rookery Radio Wednesdays at 8 a.m.

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

Rookery Radio has its fair share of sports-themed programming, but the station created a new radio show that tackles YSU football from a different point of view. On Wednesday, "Rick and Roth in the Morning" aired for the first time.

Every Wednesday morning Youngstown State University quarterback Ricky Davis and his co-host Jeff Rotheram sit in front of the mics for a weekly discussion on YSU football.

Davis said the first show went "really well." Davis and Rotheram talked about YSU tight ends coach Kyle Brey leaving to take another job at Ohio State University.

A show featuring YSU athletics isn't anything special, but Davis said "Rick and Roth" focuses on the latest YSU athletics news from the perspective of the student-athletes.

"We give the athletes' side of it. We're in the team meetings, we're in the locker room and we know what it's all about," Rotheram said.

The show began as Davis' assignment for Keny Reyes', Maag library media technical assistant, radio workshop class. Davis chose Rotheram when

he decided to add a co-host to his program.

Rotheram said the program appeals to die-hard sports fans and casual fans. He said his chemistry with Davis provides some entertaining conversations because they "don't take it too seriously."

"I think even if you're not a big Penguin football fan, you can still listen from Wednesdays from 8-9 and enjoy listening to it," Rotheram said. "We're good friends, we go back and forth pretty well, and I think it's fun to listen to even if you're not the biggest football fan or sports fan."

Davis and Rotheram will focus on YSU football and will bring guests on the show every week from the team. Davis said future guests will include defensive end Derek Rivers and YSU offensive coordinator Shane Montgomery.

"So on the last one we talked about coach [Bo] Pelini, his introduction back to the city, how the season went, past and future of coach Pelini, and we talked about the coaching staff, the new additions he brought in and those he kept," Davis said. "And then we talked about some attendance problems on Saturdays — what can we do as a team to

fix it and what can we control.

"As far as topics in the future, I know next Wednesday we're bringing on Armand Dellovade, who played linebacker as a true freshman. He's from western PA [Pennsylvania], and offensively we're going to talk about some individuals. He's going to help us branch off defensively. We're going to ask him how he thought the season went, how his first year went and goals for next year."

"Rick and Roth" is supposed to end at the conclusion of the semester, but Davis said Reyes is interested in extending the program past the spring. Davis doesn't know how long the show will last.

Davis and Rotheram have received support from the athletic department since the start of the show. Davis said their teammates have been the most supportive and have tried to spread the word about the program.

"I know our teammates are very excited about our show," Davis said. "It seems like on social media they're trying to spread the word. We're kinda giving the team a voice. We have fun, and we get the facts across."



Youngstown State University guard Brett Frantz (15) drives to the basket during the Penguins' 64-59 loss to Cleveland State University on Saturday night.

PHOTO: DAN HINER

## YSU LEARNED FROM FIRST GAME WITH UIC

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

The Youngstown State University men's basketball team is preparing for its upcoming game against the University of Illinois at Chicago.

YSU (9-17, 4-9 in the Horizon League) held a 51-31 lead at the start of the second half of its first game, but inconsistency by the Penguins and the aggressive Flames offense allowed UIC to close the gap.

The Penguins are aware that the Flames' record doesn't properly represent the talent on the UIC roster. UIC freshman forward Dikembe Dixon leads the team in scoring with 18.1 points per game and is the third-leading scorer in the Horizon League.

"We knew going in the first time that they weren't what their record showed," YSU guard Matt Donlan said. "Obviously they're a young group, but they're very athletic. They got a guy that scores the ball really well — a freshman. They drive it hard ... they're a good team. They're definitely not creeping up on us by any means. This is a big game for us."

The Penguins walked away with an 82-78 win, but the second half of the game jumpstarted the Flames' season. Since its game with YSU, UIC (5-19, 3-10) has won three of its last four games, including a win over Wright State University.

"This is a team that in a lot of ways is similar to us with freshmen and sophomores on the floor. [They've] had their ups and downs," YSU head coach Jerry Slocum said. "They're really athletic, they really drive it, they really put a lot of pressure on your de-

fense. There's been a couple of games this year where they shot like 38 or 44 foul shots. So they really put the pressure on your defense by just driving it. Some might say a little out of control, but they're creating contact all the time."

Donlan said the team's 20-point lead lulled the team into a false sense of security during the teams' first meeting.

"That game was kinda weird for us. We got up big ... I think it was by 20. We shot the ball lights out in the first half," Donlan said. "I think because we're young we thought we could kinda put it on cruise control. That's a game that we should have won by 15 or 20, but again, not being mature we put the breaks on and let them get back into it and that's our fault. When we have a team down like that we got to take care of business."

YSU has won four of the last five games against UIC, including back-to-back wins in the last two matchups. This game couldn't come at a better time. The Penguins are in the middle of a four-game losing streak and have lost the first three games of the current four-game home stand.

"We got to take care of the ball. We got to take care of the ball better, and I think for us the best offense is when everyone's involved, and sometimes the ball gets a little stagnant," Donlan said. "So when we move the ball, and we start seeing passes going into the post and moving it around the wings that's when we're at our best."