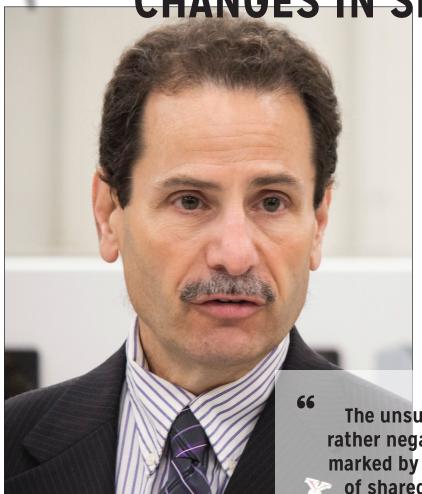
THEJAMB

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FACULTY AND STAFF DESIRE RADICAL CHANGES IN SENIOR LEADERSHIP



The unsurprising result is a rather negative campus climate marked by low morale, absence of shared governance and a widespread sense of lack of respect.



Several university employees analyzed comments from last month's open forums to discuss the results of the campus climate survey, and many respondents would like to see a radical change in management style or the complete removal of the provost.

Jim Tressel, president of Youngstown State University, said the provost position is one of the most difficult on campus, and Martin Abraham stepped into the position during a time of challenges, including declining enrollment, decreased state funding and a budget deficit.

He acknowledged that the provost, as well as himself and the rest of his administration, needs to communicate better

with faculty and staff regarding decisions that affect the university. He said they are looking for ways to address this.

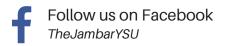
Abraham said he intends to maintain his position. The report suggested senior leadership should attend leadership training. There are no plans for leadership training at the moment, but Abraham said he wouldn't be opposed to it.

"Part of my objective is to make YSU

better," he said. "I'm always interested in getting better personally."

TOS BY BILLY LUDT / THE JAMBAR

A large number of comments received during the open forum process expressed frustration with Abraham. Respondents also disapproved of the way Abraham has hired, without going through the search process.





JAMBAR STAFF

AMBAK SIAFI	
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:	
MANAGING EDITOR:	-
	JCWIER@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
HEAD COPY EDITOR:	
	AMPALMER03@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
ASSISTANT COPY EDITORS:	
	PMSHARP@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
	SLWELCH01@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
	ELLEHMAN@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
DESIGN EDITOR:	LLMCDONOUGH@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
ASSISTANT DESIGNERS:	LLMCDONOUGH@510DEN1.150.ED0
	SNUSSLE@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
	ENGO@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
NEWS EDITOR:	EIVGO@010DEIV1.100.ED0
SAMANTHA PHILLIPS	SPHILLIPS@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR:	_
JORDAN UNGER	JAUNGER@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
REPORTERS:	
	DKGARNER@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
	ANTIMKO@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
	AMKRIM@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
	MBCORLEY@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR:	ANDEVORE@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
	ARLEHNERD@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT REPORT	
COLUMNIST:	
	JSMITH04@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
SPORTS EDITOR:	
	DGHINER@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
SPORTS REPORTERS:	
	ATZUHOSKY@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
	MRWEEMS01@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
WEB MANAGER:	ALPAWLUK@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
ASSISTANT WEB MANAGER:	ALPAWLUK@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
	BFSERRANO@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
SOCIAL MEDIA CURATOR:	DI OLITI I I I O GO I O D LIVI I I O O L D O
	MLWHITE01@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
HEAD OF VIDEO PRODUCTION:	_
GRAIG GRAZIOSI	GRGRAZIOSI@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
VIDEO JOURNALISTS:	
PHOTO EDITOR:	WELLET COTURENT VOLLER
	WRLUDT@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
PHOTOGRAPHER:	AMPFLUG@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
ADVERTISING AND PROMOTIONS	MANAGED.
	CMYOUNG04@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
ASSISTANT ADVERTISING AND PR	
	BMMARINELLI@STUDENT.YSU.EDU
BUSINESS MANAGER:	0 1 1 2 2 2 1 1 1 3 1 2 3
MARY DOTA	
ADVISER:	
MARY BETH EARNHEARDT	330.941.3095

CONTACT US



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LEADERSHIP

FRONT

Tressel took responsibility for the decision. He said problems needed addressed immediately, and he thought the university would be better served by forgoing the search process.

The report also expressed a desire for better commu-

nication and pay equity.

Tressel said the items need to be prioritized based on how they affect the entire university, not just the Board of Trustees, senior leadership or faculty and staff. He acknowledged that the university has been going through challenging times the last few years.

"When you face those realities and do what you need to do to get the enrollment and retention rate going back up and the budget deficit erased, that can be a painful time," he said. "Unfortunately that's where we were."

Now that the university is improving on those fronts, Tressel said they can address concerns raised by the survey.

"We had to gain stability," he said. "I feel good about the fact that after two years we gained good stability but that doesn't mean there aren't going to be challenges."

Gabriel Palmer-Fernandez, chief negotiator for the faculty union, said Tressel and Abraham inherited a mess, but they haven't remedied it.

"Once Tressel and Abraham took over the senior leadership, they brought to the university leadership styles and conceptualizations of power that adversely affected an already strained institutional culture," he said.

In addition to budget concerns and declining enrollment, Palmer-Fernandez said faculty and staff faced increased workloads, and collective-bargaining agreements that resulted in less take-home pay.

"The unsurprising result is a rather negative campus climate marked by low morale, absence of shared governance and a widespread sense of lack of respect," he said.

A need for shared governance has been a repeating theme in the discussions of the campus climate survey. Abraham said senior leadership wants to improve communication, but they're not sure how to go about doing that as of yet.

Chet Cooper, chair of the Academic Senate, said faculty and staff desire to be consulted by senior leadership in decision making — especially when it affects them.

"If you consult with people and collaborate with them, even if you have to make a decision that's not popular, people are more likely to accept that then if you make a top-down or arbitrary decision," he said.

The report asked senior leadership to attend training on shared governance, visit the various department offices, follow campus policies and institute a monthly communication process to send updates and changes before they are implemented.

In the report, respondents pointed to a "culture of fear" that prevented them from voicing their concerns to senior leadership.

Cooper said that perception hasn't gone away yet, but success in creating change will allow people to more readily take part in governing the university.

"From now on, people must engage in the process of changing the campus climate and holding everyone accountable to move forward," Cooper said. "We can't afford to slip backwards anymore."

Students Recovering from Addiction

BY JAMBAR CONTRIBUTOR AMELIA MACK

The drug epidemic in the Mahoning Valley is continuing to grow and has not discriminated on who it affects. Young people are being sucked into this lifestyle, and when they hit rock bottom, they are forced to drop out of school to recover.

Mark Hines is involved with many faith-based recovery programs and resources such as Celebrate Recovery, Teen Challenge and the Mahoning Valley Hope Center.

Hines said that when student addicts are ready to get sober, they must make the decision to drop out to put their recovery first.

"Trying to get sober and go to college — I have yet to see that work in 10 years," he said.

Recovery included dropping out of college for Brent Faler, who was a junior at Youngstown State University majoring in literature studies.

"Being an addict while going to school is like trying to tread water with concrete shoes," Faler said.

Faler said he started doing drugs for fun, but it took a dark turn when he realized he had lost control. "The thing about addiction is that it sneaks up on you, and it tends to follow a downward trajectory," Faler said. "It wasn't very long before I had a serious opioid addiction and finding drugs became a normal part of my day."

Eventually Faler got in trouble with the law and was forced to seek treatment.

"I feel like I had to hit a dead end before I was capable of trying to change," he said.

Faler has been clean for almost a year now and is looking to eventually return to YSU to finish his studies.

"It's only gotten easier as more time elapses, and my mind is less messed up," Faler said. "I feel like I have to constantly be on my guard though ... addiction is incredibly sneaky."

Hines said recovering takes the rest of your life.

"It doesn't mean it has to consume the rest of your life, but you're going to be in recovery forever," he said.

For Billy Johnson, a 22-year-old from Akron, helping other people recover has become part of his own recovery. He has now been clean for 19 months and works at Spirit Life, an inpatient rehabilitation center in Indiana, Pennsylvania.

"Having my own recovery story has helped me working at a rehab, because it reminds me every day what my life could be like if I went back to using drugs," Johnson said. "It helps the clients even more, because I can relate to them."

Johnson said he started using drugs at the age of 15. By the time he was 17, he had dropped out of high school

"I started doing heroin, and that's when things got bad quick. I started waking up every morning sick and just trying to get more," he said. "I started to not care about anything including myself and my family. My only goal for every day was to get more."

After many stays in and out of rehab, he finally got sober for good in April 2015.

"I was praying every day and trying to change my old ways," Johnson said. "I started to share with others how it worked for me and how much God has done for me and how important it is to have Him in your life. I realized that it's the only way to stay clean."

Committee Looks to Improve Campus Climate

BY SAMANTHA PHILLIPS

The campus climate survey brought to light the problems and complaints that faculty and staff have with the university. To combat this, a steering committee is being formed by the Academic Senate executive committee to find and implement solutions

The steering committee will be comprised of three faculty members, three staff, three senior administrators and one student. The student will be chosen by the Student Government Association.

A report that analyzed data collected at the open forums detailed 15 themes suggested by faculty and staff to improve campus climate, including changing senior leadership, calling for shared governance and improving communication and transparency.

Chet Cooper, chair of the Academic Senate, said the steering committee is in charge of prioritizing the actionable items, and deciding which ones can be implemented.

"There are a great number of individuals both within the faculty and staff who truly love the institution and will do what it takes to move the institution forward," he said. "Those are the kinds of people we are looking at and hope will be on the steering committee."

At an Academic Senate meeting discussing the report, a professor raised concerns that the university is only making changes because it's being assessed by the Higher Learning Commission in 2018. Cooper made it clear that they need to create lasting change that improves the culture of the university for years to come, not just to gain accreditation.

"This will not be a whitewash," he said.
"If they are using the Senate and this process of gathering input, then there will be consequences, and they won't be pretty."

YSU President Jim Tressel said the accreditation process was created to hold

universities to high standards, but they would be working towards improving the university regardless of the accreditation.

"It's to improve our overall excellence," he said. "In my opinion, the university making these changes [only] because of the HLC visit couldn't be farther from the truth."

There are multiple reasons for these changes taking place, Cooper said. Faculty and staff are frustrated because although enrollment is increasing, positions of people that were fired or resigned haven't been replaced so they are left with an increased workload to make up for it.

At the meeting, one woman voiced her concern that the steering committee will be too small to truly represent all areas of campus.

Cooper said the composition of the committee may change, but they want to keep it small because having too many people on the committee will impede progress.

The student on the committee has been

chosen. SGA President Tyler Miller-Gordon and Executive Vice President Gabriella Gessler selected Rayann Atway, SGA parliamentarian.

"She has a strong sense of academic integrity in terms of what we should do to make the institution a better place," Miller-Gordon said.

Other students wanted to be a part of the process, he said, so a consulting group is being formed to discuss ideas with Atway.

A timeline for action has not been reached, but Cooper and Miller-Gordon said it will be soon.

"I think we have had great momentum," Miller-Gordon said. "If we keep that momentum, we'll see results more quickly."

Although the problems in the survey don't directly affect students, he said they affect the academic environment that students are indirectly affected by. He said he looks forward to seeing how the campus will improve.

Musical Chairs:

YSU Searches for a New Computer Science and Information Systems Chair

BY JORDAN UNGER

Youngstown State University is looking to hire a chairperson for the department of computer science and information systems. Provost Martin Abraham said they are searching for a candidate from outside the university to fill the position.

"There's great opportunity to expand, to grow, to make [computer science] one of the showcase departments on campus," Abraham said. "We think that's going to happen with some external vision."

Faculty in the department agreed to work with the administration to find the best candidate on a national search, Abraham said.

"[The new chair is] going to lead the department in terms of helping to define future directions," Abraham said. "They have to have good collaborative skills, good consultative skills, they have to be able to work with the faculty [and] they have to be engaged to provide those types of activities."

Andrew Martin, a double major in computer science and electrical engineering, said getting an outside perspective is essential.

"As an engineer, we learn ways to look at and approach

problems in different ways," Martin said. "In order for a university, college and program to grow, it is of utmost importance to look at what others are doing and expand upon those ideas."

Abraham said the candidate needs to have research experience and scholarship credentials. Some staff in the department are engaged in innovative research, he said.

"Information technology and computer science are growing," Abraham said. "Everything we do now has some information technology component in it ... We would like our department to start having more of a role in developing those technologies, developing the software."

The current acting department chair is Kriss Schueller, who was previously the chair for five years. Abraham said this experience has helped Schueller stabilize the department and showcase its research capabilities.

"We appreciate all of the work he's done," Abraham said. "He's done well to get the department where it is right now."

It has been a pleasure to work with Schueller the past three years, Martin said.

"Dr. Schueller met one-on-one with me each semester to ensure I was on the right path," Martin said. "[He] has been very supportive with my future plans and was very cooperative in helping me figure out a viable schedule."

The new position was posted on the YSU website in August. Schueller's term as acting chair is scheduled to end this semester. Abraham said the position can be extended indefinitely if needed, but hopes to fill the chair soon.

"I've still got my fingers crossed that we'll get somebody by the beginning of the spring term or maybe shortly thereafter," Abraham said.

According to Schueller, staff cuts to the department will likely keep the position from being filled. Schueller said there are directions he would like to see the department go if it does happen.

"Bring in somebody who could be a better leader in research orientation and grant orientation," Schueller said. "I think there are people more capable [in that sense] than I am, and I think that we'd like to grow the department."

Schueller said the computer science and information technology department can only reach its potential if the administration and the faculty work together.

"I think this department is an area ripe for growth," Schueller said. "I think the administration would do well when listening to the people in the department on our ideas on how it should grow."

City Club Tackles Election Results

BY JORDAN UNGER

The City Club of the Mahoning Valley will be hosting its second event at Stambaugh Stadium on Nov. 14. Panelists at the event will discuss the results of the presidential election and their impact on the Valley.

Five political professionals were selected to speak out at the event: Marilyn Geewax, National Public Radio business editor; Karen Kasler, Ohio Statehouse News bureau chief; Doug Livingston, Akron Beacon Journal politics reporter; David Skolnick, Vindicator politics reporter; and Paul Sracic, Youngstown State University department of politics and international relations chair.

Phil Kidd, associate director of YSU CityScape and organizer of City Club, said they aim to bring a diverse panel of speakers to these events.

"We try to identify subject matter experts that bring a range of local, regional and national perspectives, and we thought this was a pretty good line-up," Kidd said.

Skolnick said he was more than glad to be a panelist for the evening.

"I have high hopes for the success of it, and I think it's something that's really fantastic for this area to have a place such as [Stambaugh] for an event like this," Skolnick said.

The discussion will start with the presidential election results and how they will impact the Mahoning Valley. From there, Kidd said the discussion will likely lead to the Ohio Senate race and local issues.

"It all depends on how the

discussion goes," Kidd said.
"They're round table discussions, so there will definitely be initial set of questions that are there to prompt the discussion, but it may lead into discussion about some hyperlocal things or the presidential election."

Skolnick said he expects this to be an interesting review and analysis of the presidential election

"It certainly has been the most interesting political campaign to come along in my 28 years of journalism," Skolnick said. "There's been a lot of the bizarre, a lot of the unbelievable and a lot of things that make you wonder what someone was thinking or if they were thinking at all."

The first City Club event sold more than 300 tickets, surpassing the goal they set. Kidd said he was pleased with the turnout.

"We received very strong [and positive] feedback," Kidd said. "We're hoping to just leverage that into the next event. We're hoping we'll have a similar turn out and a similar response."

Sracic attended the previous City Club event last month. He said it was one of the best policy discussions he has ever heard in the area.

"The level of information that's transmitted and the depth of the discussions is something that I haven't actually seen before," Sracic said. "I hope we match up with what they did last time, because they were so impressive last time."

City Club plans to do four large events each year and partner with organizations to do smaller events. The first large event of 2017 is expected to focus on public education in the Mahoning Valley.

Professor Sracic on the 2016 Election

BY JUSTIN WIER

Paul Sracic, chair of the department of politics and international relations at Youngstown State University, said the union vote was the story of the 2012 election.

While President Barack Obama won union families by nearly 20 points in 2012, they went for Republican Nominee Donald Trump by 9 points — a nearly 10-point shift.

"White working class voters — even if they were in unions — decided to support the Republican candidate this year," Sracic said.

Many were taken aback by the results, as polling models showed a high probability that Democratic Nominee Hillary Clinton would win the election

Sracic said one of the secrets of public opinion polling is that most people refuse to talk to pollsters. If those voters have a common characteristic or bias, he said the polls could be way off.

"It's not necessarily that they were lying, that they were saying they were going to vote for Hillary Clinton," Sracic said. "I think it's more likely they weren't responding to the pollsters."

But he said the obsession with polls, and the stories covering the latest predictions, bury more substantive discussions about candidates.

"This is not just a horse race where we are trying to predict who's going to win or lose," Sracic said. "We're supposed to be discussing the actual policies of the various candidates.

Many Republicans felt media coverage was biased towards Hillary Clinton, while many on the other side accused the media of enabling Donald Trump. Sracic said both things are basically true.

Trump got an unbelievable amount of free media time during the primaries.

"Why is that? Trump is our first celebrity candidate," Sracic said. "He was interesting. It brought viewers in."

He noted that CNN and other media companies are businesses, and they knew they could attract viewers by airing Trump rallies — in part because you never knew what he was going to say.

He also said that the perception that media

were biased toward Clinton led Republicans to doubt the charges that were being made.

"They didn't think the media was on their side, necessarily," Sracic said. "The media has lost credibility, and that was an advantage to Trump."

According to Sracic, some of Trump's policies — like reducing the corporate income tax rate — might be able to get through congress, but others that require large amounts of spending without a way to pay for it could cause problems.

"What we do know is that he's not a typical Republican," Sracic said. "So to anticipate really smooth relations between the President and Congress because they're all Republicans? I think that's yet to be determined."

This could create problems with building a wall, Sracic said, especially because many southern states, which tilt Republican, have trade relationships with Mexico.

Many pundits and some political scientists have suggested Trump poses a threat to America's constitutional democracy. Sracic said he's not worried.

"As I often tell people, James Madison always wins," he said. "Presidents often find when they get into office, they have much less power than they think under this constitutional system. I think Trump will find the same thing."

Attempts to bypass the Constitution can be stymied by congress or the Supreme Court. If Trump tried to push against that, Sracic predicted Trump would be a one-term President.

The surprise results could result in a major realignment of the two major political parties, Sracic said. Many Democratic voters switched over to vote for Trump, but he said it remains to be seen whether the Republican Party will cater to them.

On the other side, he also said the Democratic Party needs to rethink its tendency to keep more progressive candidates on the sidelines.

"Does this push the Democratic Party more to the left and make the Republican party adopt some more New Deal-like Democratic ideas?" Sracic said. "That's all yet to be seen."

But he doesn't see another Trump on the

"Trump is kind of a party unto himself," Sracic said. "He's a one-time phenomenon."



U.S. President Barack Obama makes his way to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery on Nov. 11, 2015 in Arlington, Va. (Olivier Douliery/Abaca Press/TNS)

BY JAMBAR CONTRIBUTOR JENNIFER RODRIGUEZ

There are roughly 360 student veterans attending Youngstown State University. If you are one of them, YSU offers many benefits — including several veterans' organizations.

Patrick Williams, the coordinator of Veterans Affairs for the past four years, is found in the Veterans Resource Center on Wick Avenue. Williams said the resource center is available to help veterans.

From educational assistance to personal issues, the staff exists to serve veterans' needs. Among other things, Williams helps students find "veteran friendly classes."

"Veteran friendly classes allow students to be with other veterans, so it can be a little less intimidating," said Williams.

Of the 360 veteran students attending YSU, 25 percent

still serve in the military. Attending Veteran Friendly classes is beneficial if still serving because the professors are equipped to work with students who still have military obligations.

The Veterans Resource Center also offers the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery exam on the second and fourth Wednesday of every month. The ASVAB is a military entrance exam for non-veteran students considering joining the armed forces.

Mauro Vescera served in the Marine Corps for five years. Now he's at YSU majoring in economics, and he works in the Veterans Resource Center.

"We have our own computer lab, there is a lounge where you can watch TV or play games like Xbox, Play-Station or foosball. People also donate food and snacks to us every month," Vescera said. "If you need help with tutoring we can also help with that."

Paul Arthur said the center also provides food during finals week. They have a cookout to help ease the

pressure of the exams.

Arthur has been working at the center for two years. He's a former Marine majoring in social work.

"We do a lot here to try and help people transition back into being a student," Arthur said.

He has been out of the military for about 15 years, but he said he will probably never fully transition.

The Veterans Resource Center has also been partnering with the VA clinic on Belmont Avenue. A doctor and a social worker come down twice a month to talk with the vets at the center.

The Armed Forces Student Association also caters to veterans at YSU. Arthur has been the president of AFSA for the last two years.

"One of the things the AFSA has recently done is team up with the Habitat for Humanity and helped build a house for a veteran," Arthur said.

YSU also has a ROTC program, which provides leadership training in different fields.

7

Major Upgrades to the YSU Website

BY RALEIGH BASINGER

Students and faculty may have noticed the Youngstown State University webpage had a facelift. The website was newly designed to be more user-friendly and interactive with social media, and it went live on Oct. 24.

The entire cost for the redesign was \$400,000. Bob Tupaj, website manager, said that New City, a web design and marketing company, redesigned the entire website.

"New City came in and did a whole bunch of focus groups and a lot of surveying with different groups of people like prospective students, current students, faculty, staff and parents," Tupaj said. "I think the idea is to present a little more user-friendly website.

Ross Morrone, YSU director of marketing, said they created advertisements that run on search engines and social media to draw prospective students and their parents to the website. He said doing this captures audiences that they wouldn't normally get, especially from other regions of the state.

"[We wanted] to help create better funnels for prospec-

tive students, or for the audience who is doing research on the website, to actually find what they are looking for," Morrone said.

Tupaj said that the main focus was to take more of a marketing approach and to make the website easier to navigate. They wanted to attract prospective students, which can lead to increased enrollment.

Certain pages feature social media posts, especially from Instagram, by YSU students. Morrone said this helps them engage and connect with a generation that uses social media daily.

The marketing team looked at analytics to see where webpage visitors go after the homepage. Their goal was to see where people ended up, and how many clicks it took to get there.

"We've created a better site architecture that allows people to achieve goals and conversions in shorter clicks. That is really what we focused on, building a website that had less clicks and less areas for people to get lost," Morrone said.

Based on the analytics there are two different types of audiences, Morrone said. The internal audience uses the YSU portal and checks their student e-mail account, and the external audience is using the website to research the university.

Steven Jeffries, accounting student, said the new website is showing improvements.

"I think it definitely is more user-friendly as they eliminated the other irrelevant distractions and it's more convenient to direct you where you're looking to go," Jeffries said.

The web is always evolving, Tupaj said, and it's important to evolve with the needs of the people who use it. Morrone said they will continue on enhancing it.

"We set it up that way, so we can continue to build and develop different things" Morrone said. "We know there is always going to be issues with a site this scale, but it's a living thing, so we are definitely working on improving the experience on going."

Rob Mielcusny, hospitality management student, said the overall experience on the new website is "phenomenal."

"It's much more up to date, and more appealing," Mielcusny said.

New Bookstore to Open Next Year

BY ANTHONY KRIM II

A stand-alone Barnes and Noble bookstore is on its way to Fifth Avenue at Youngstown State University, scheduled to open during the 2017-18 school year.

The university heard bids and presentations from multiple companies before deciding to choose Barnes and Noble for the stand-alone store. Tyler Miller-Gordon, YSU's Student Government Association president, said YSU students played a role in the decision and continue to do so as the project develops.

"Gabriella Gessler represented the student input in this process," Miller-Gordon said. "From here, there is a team of individuals, from YSU and Barnes and Noble, who are working to develop the aesthetic plans for the complex."

Miller-Gordon said the new bookstore will be a great addition to the campus for students to study and socialize.

"[It will] highlight Fifth Avenue as a growing entree towards downtown Youngstown," Miller-Gordon said. "[The bookstore will] open up more space within Kilcawley Center in order to allow the expansion of student spaces and services and serve as a spark plug for expanding YSU's presence in the surrounding community."

The new bookstore will offer more than just textbooks for students, according to YSU Bookstore Manager Heather White.

"The bookstore is also a welcoming space for the local community to enjoy with a general reading section," White said. "And community events that include author signings, VIP nights and faculty events."

Textbook affordability is a top priority of the new store, according to White. The bookstore will work closely with faculty and administration to deliver the most affordable solutions to students.

"Prices at Barnes and Noble



PHOTO BY BILLY LUDT / THE JAMBAR

college managed bookstores are very competitive with other retailers that offer textbooks and merchandise of similar quality and value," White said. "Students will find some of the lowest prices on many of the textbooks

offered at the bookstore."

White said the books will be sold in a variety of formats, including used, new and digital.

"[The bookstore] is dedicated to helping students find the course materials they need in the

format that best suits their learning style and budget," White said.

No decision has been finalized on the future spatial use of the campus bookstore in Kilcawley Center.



PHOTO BY BILLY LUDT / THE JAMBAR

BY DANIELLE GARNER

Hidden on the left hand side of the atrium in Moser Hall is the Clarence R. Smith Mineral Museum, which recently received \$20,000 in funding from Youngstown State University.

The funds for the museum are providing much needed renovations. Furniture is being added for the comfort of guests, and plaques with each specimen's name and formula are being added to the displays.

Displays are not being removed from the museum during the renovations. Robert Coller, director of the Mineral Museum, said upgrades such as furniture will be added to make the environment of the facility more

"We got all LED lights, which we did not have before," Coller said. "The whole place has been painted, including

Once the plaques for the mineral specimens arrive, the area will be cleaned and renovations will be complete.

More student workers were added through the extra funding. Michelle Klim, environmental studies student, has been able to experience the renovations at the museum first-hand.

The renovations make a big difference, Klim said.

"It looks a lot better than it did before. We used to have old wallpaper on here, but now it's all painted a uniform color," Klim said. "The lighting is a lot better too. Before it was really hot with the lightbulbs, but it's really good

Klim gives guests tours of the museum and cleans display cases. She encourages students to stop in and check out the minerals and rocks, especially since it's conveniently placed on campus.

"I know a lot of people wouldn't make trips to a museum," Coller said. "But it's right in the building. It's free, and we have a lot of specimens here that are worth a lot of money that normally you would have to pay to see."

Clarence Smith, for whom the museum is named, started to collect specimens as a young boy and gifted the collection to his son in his passing, Coller said. He said

the collection is worth about \$1.5 million.

Darius Sanders, a civil engineering student, said he would like to know more about the museum.

"It's not really advertised a lot, honestly, and when I come in here I go straight to class and I don't really notice it in the corner," Sanders said. "If there was a bigger sign and attractions inside that would bring people in, I would go in more."

More improvements to the museum, including a sign, are planned to draw in more guests. Coller said he is excited to see these changes unfold.

"We are just making adjustments as we go," Coller said.

Yumin Chung, an international student majoring in English, said she thinks the mineral museum, along with other museums as well, is important to have offered on

The museum is still open for guests and Coller and Klim are welcoming all students to come visit.

"It's part of our earth, and it's how we use the minerals for everyday things, and you don't even realize it, and its cool to learn where your things come from," Klim said.



NaNoWriMo Who?

BY WILL KEFFLER

National Novel Writing Month [NaNoWriMo] is a worldwide event that fosters the support of various schools, libraries and bookstores for writers to write a 50,000 word novel all in the month of November. The nonprofit organization is run through its website at www. nanowrimo.org but relies on volunteers in communities to run local chapters that motivate writers to complete the challenging task.

With nearly 450,000 participants this year, Grant Faulkner, its executive director, said that even though the program can seem daunting to many, it continues to gain followers willing to take the challenge.

"Too many people think they're not a 'creative type,' but to be human is to be a 'creative type,'" Faulkner said. "NaNoWriMo teaches you to believe that your story matters, to trust the gambols of your imagination and make the blank page a launching pad to explore new universes. That's important, because when we create, we cultivate

meaning."

In Youngstown, the Writing Center in Maag Library on the campus of Youngstown State University is one of the sponsored hubs. Students and community members gather in conjunction with a YSU creative writing workshop on Fridays at 2 p.m. to propel each other to make it to the end goal of 50,000 words.

Angela Messenger, the director of the Writing Center in Maag Library, said that she had noticed much more outreach for NaNoWriMo than in years past. She was pleased to see people attempting the project and working diligently on their passions of writing.

"Since I took over this position I wanted to have a better connection between the Writing Center and creative writers on campus," Messenger said. "I didn't want people to view the Writing Center as a remedial service but rather a hub for all types of writing. When I heard about NaNoWriMo, I knew we had to get on board."

Worldwide, less than 10 percent of writers who attempt the program come out with a rough draft at the end of 30 days. For Amanda Miller, a graduate assistant at YSU and leader of the creative writing workshop, the

task isn't always within reach, but the experience gained from the workshop makes all the effort worth it.

"The end goal is to have a complete first draft of a novel from start to finish," Miller said. "I've tried it every year since 2010, but I've never actually finished all 50,000 words in one month. However, I encourage everyone to do it, because it will open up their eyes to researching, concept forming and sitting down and being disciplined to write every single day for 30 days no matter what."

Bridgid Cassin, a graduate assistant at YSU, said she had tried the program many times, and it's not always conducive, but because of the creative people she has met and the atmosphere it fosters, she will keep attempting year after year.

"Communication and collaboration are a valuable part of the writing process, whether you're writing an academic paper or a creative piece," Cassin said. "Even if you're not getting a whole novel done, you're learning about the process. You're working through ideas and finding out what works and what doesn't, so it makes you a stronger writer. It's a challenge, but you have to make sure you're having fun with it."

YSU Dance Club Presents: 'Danza de la Noche'

BY AMANDA LEHNERD

Youngstown State University's Dance Club is having their annual fundraiser at Kuzman's in Girard Thursday at 8 p.m.

Rachael Penick, president of Dance Club, explains that the fundraiser is an annual tradition in the club, where people from the Youngstown area come together for a night of dancing.

"This fundraiser is a social dance," Penick said. "People from all over the Youngstown area come together for a night of fun social dancing. This year, our dance is Latin-themed."

People and students can participate in the fundraiser regardless of whether you are a member of the club.

"Anyone is welcome to participate! The fundraiser is open to the public 18 or older," Penick said. "Members of our club and dancers of all skill levels — from beginners to experts — from the Youngstown area come together to dance at this event."

People who attend the fundraiser will be able to participate in a variety of activities including an East Coast Swing competition.

"Everyone is welcome to dance starting at 8 p.m. There will also be an East Coast Swing competition for all in attendance with prizes for the top three couples," Pe-



PHOTO COURTESY OF ERREK PHAM

nick said. "For those who do not dance themselves but enjoy the art, I would still encourage them to attend. The fundraiser is a great opportunity to watch some wonderful local dancers, socialize and, perhaps, pick up a move or two." The theme of Latin Night will be represented through the various styles of dance that will be performed throughout the night.

"The theme for this dance is Latin Night, meaning that there will be a lot of Latin dances, such as cha-cha, Salsa, Tango and other Latin dances," Penick said. "However, we are not limited to just those types of dances. We will also throw in some other styles such as Waltz, Foxtrot, Hustle, Swing and many others."

The annual fundraiser is used to raise funds for the club. Without the fundraiser, the club wouldn't be able to have a private instructor come in and teach classes every week. Errek Pham, treasurer of Dance Club, feels that having an instructor is an important part of Dance Club.

"We have a professional dance instructor, Bob McPhail, who comes in and teaches us dances every week," Pham said. "The instructor teaches the officers a performance for the fundraiser."

According to Frank Bosso, adviser of Dance Club, there is a good group of members in the club. The fundraiser is mainly to pay the instructor. The dues students pay to participate in Dance Club are minimal and would not provide enough funds for a private instructor. The funds also pay for retreats and other activities the club members participate in, so that they may broaden their skill set and carry these skills into their future.

The Dance Club fundraiser is Thursday 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. at Kuzman's in Girard. Tickets are \$5 and will be sold at the door starting at 7:30 p.m. It is a informal event.

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CONTACT

Mary Dota 330-941-3094 mfdota@ysu.edu

OPINION

The Jambar Column

BEWARE

of the Cocoon of Curation

BY JILLIAN SMITH

Facebook and Spotify are wonderful, and I use both on a daily basis, but the two represent a phenomenon that may be perceived as the insanity of the 2016 presidential election. Now granted, I am writing this on the eve of Election Day, and so by the time you read this the whole world will be different, and you will be either in celebration or disbelief over your candidate's fate. One thing will not be different; our society is steadily marching toward customization and curation.

Curation, or the idea of collecting and sorting information based on taste and preferences, has been one of the great innovations of the digital age. We no longer have to suffer through a swamp of bad stuff to get to the good stuff. Social media and other digital platforms have created complex algorithms that do the curation for us based on our previous likes, dislikes and internet searches. In a world that is tailored to delivering your choices based on what you already want, shouldn't that make our lives better and richer?

From the news stories that show up at the top of our page based on previous likes to the songs suggested based on previously enjoyed artists, we are continually setting ourselves up for environments that maximize comfort and minimize challenge. This desire to surround ourselves with things we like and enjoy seems not just to live in the digital space, however, but even in the way we move about geographic space.

In Bill Bishop's book, "The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-minded America is Tearing us Apart," he explains that with increasing frequency, Americans are choosing to relocate to communities that are perceived to hold a majority political or philosophical worldview very similar to that of the potential inhabitant. He claims this micro-clustering is a major reason for what pundits observe as the "hyper-polarization" of American politics.

Americans, increasingly, are choosing content, news outlets, music and even neighborhoods that reaffirm their confirmation bias, or the tendency to interpret information in a way that validates one's previously held belief. This, I believe, is the major cause of a disparaging report put out by Pew Research Center over this past summer. The

report stated, "More than half of Democrats (55 percent) say the Republican Party makes them "afraid," while 49 percent of Republicans say the same about the Democratic Party. Among those highly engaged in politics - those who say they vote regularly and either volunteer for or donate to campaigns - fully 70 percent of Democrats and 62 percent of Republicans say they are afraid of the other party."

To be afraid of someone from another party is quite different from merely having an ideological opposition to another person. But this fear is entirely understandable when placed in the context of what psychology tells us is one of the main drivers of fear: the unknown. The cocoon of curation modern, digital society has created, in effect, has driven those who have opposing views to corners of fear, suspicion and unfamiliarity that invalidate any form of real intellectually based political dia-

Whatever happens Tuesday, the 2016 race indicates a far larger problem that may pose an immediate threat to the health of American democracy. We have stopped talking to each other and instead prefer to talk "at" each other. Rather than taking the time to understand the real problems of the "basket of deplorables" or "welfare queens," we delegitimize people's divergent interests with slick labels and further entomb ourselves in our cocoons of carefully curated content.

My solution? Use this election to prompt yourself to step outside of your comfort zone. Staunch liberal? Suspend your opinions for a moment and sit in on a College Conservatives meeting. Keep your calm even if a call for "Hillary for Prison" arises, and take the time to understand exactly why such people are making such a plea.

Dyed in the wool conservative? Head over to a College Democrats meeting. Put aside your ideological distaste for a time long enough to try to understand the viewpoint of your fellow citizen who may argue for increased reproductive rights.

Rational people are allowed to disagree. Indeed, the entirety of our democratic republic has been founded upon a concept. But to continue that process in a meaningful way, it requires that we make real, honest and legitimate effort to truly understand the point of view of the person with whom we disagree. This doesn't happen on Facebook. Go out and have some conversations.

Editorial

Well, That Happened

In a major upset, Donald Trump is now president-elect of the United States. Many were expecting us to elect our first female president, but instead the country decided to elect the first president without any military or political experience.

If YSU's population voted similarly to others in the 18-24 demographic, just over half of students voted for Hillary Clinton and just over a third voted for Trump.

Given some of the things Trump said during the campaign, many who voted for Clinton are feeling afraid, depressed, even angry. Given some of the things Trump said during the campaign, those feelings are legitimate.

News outlets made much of the fact that Canada's immigration site crashed last night. It's very difficult to immigrate to Canada, but let's just stop and address the urge.

There is a chance that Donald Trump won't be a terrible president. As reporters, The Jambar has talked to many of his supporters over the last year. When asked about the comments Trump made about Mexicans, the Mexican-American judge in the Trump University case or his comments about Muslims and women, the vast majority of supporters distanced themselves from those comments.

In Trump's acceptance speech, he pledged to represent all Americans.

It's still troubling to have a figurehead who has said the things Trump has said, to have an American president that has delegitimized the press, which often serves as a watchdog or the fourth estate.

But if Donald Trump follows through on some of his more objectionable statements if he attempts to bypass the constitution — the people who disagree with him are going to need to be around to express their disapproval.

With a Republican House and Senate, much of this will depend on the members of his own party. Republicans like Jeb Bush, Mitt Romney, Ohio Gov. John Kasich, Sen. Rob Portman and Sen. Mike Lee have admirably taken stands that place principle above par-

But part of it will come from the people. Those who support progressive values, who support diversity and inclusiveness, who support women's and minority rights need to stay and continue to fight for the things that matter to them.

Being able to leave the country is something of a privilege. Many of the most vulnerable among us - those who could fall victim to a government that targets minorities - would not be able to leave. Progressives deciding to abandon the country would leave them without

As President Obama said in his remarks today, history doesn't move in a straight line, it zigs and zags. So don't go to Canada, stay here and keep fighting for the fundamental values that make America great and move the line in the right direction.

Let's show the world how

OPINION

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I recently have learned how much influence the NRA (National Rifle Association) has on the medical field. I am not completely convinced that everything they have implemented is in everyone's best interest. The NRA, as well as all its members, are obviously strong advocates for our right to bear arms, as am I. However, they have influenced laws in such a way that physicians are no longer allowed to question whether there are any firearms in the homes of their patients. I think that this should be added to the list of questions that are asked.

If this question were to be asked and there were guns located in homes with children, information could be shared that could educate people on gun safety. A lot of people don't know how to teach their children safety with firearms because they don't know how to take care of guns themselves. Children, if they are residing in a home that contains firearms, should be fully aware and should be taught firearm safety. If a parent doesn't understand how to explain it to them and just hides them in the house, there is a potential risk that a child is going to think it is a toy and the outcome is hardly ever good.

The NRA's reasoning as far as I can tell must have to do with insurance rates increasing. Someone who has firearms in their home should not be penalized. Most of the people I know that have guns in their homes are avid hunters. Others have them for the safety of their families. Having firearms in your home doesn't necessarily increases the risk that someone can get hurt. Riding motorcycles or snow skiing are risky behaviors, should they be scrutinized as well? Is it a proven fact that because firearms are in a home that they

are more likely to be used improperly and cause trauma that wouldn't have been there without them?

I believe that if physicians are aware that their patients own guns, they can educate their patients on firearm safety as well as storage of firearms. They could also hand out information on how to educate children of different ages on the importance of firearm safety. I know this is a touchy subject and I appreciate any response and opinions because I am a parent and I would like to know how other parents feel about having firearms in their

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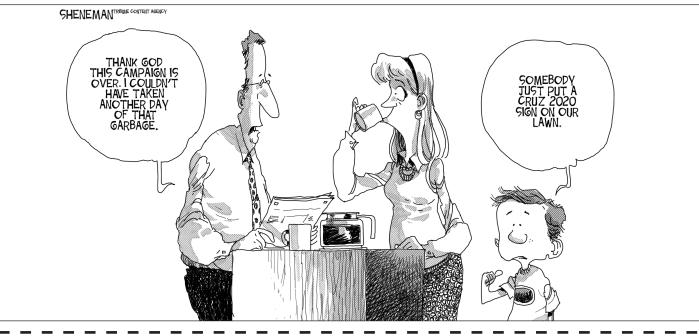
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YOUR-SIDE-POLICY

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SPORTS

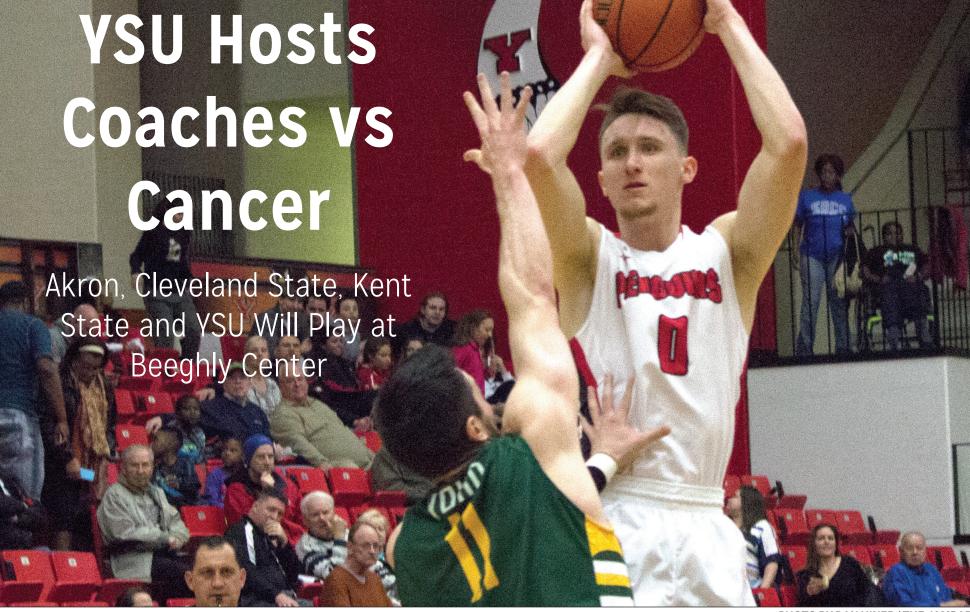


PHOTO BY DAN HINER / THE JAMBAR

Matt Donlan, forward for the Youngstown State University men's basketball team, pulls up for a jump shot over Wright State University's JT Yoho.

BY DAN HINER

Youngstown State University will be the site for the second annual Northeast Ohio Coaches vs. Cancer tournament on Saturday.

Coaches vs. Cancer is a partnership between YSU, Kent State University, Cleveland State University and the University of Akron. The tournament began in 2015 and was hosted by Kent State.

Former YSU coaches Bill Dailey and Dan Peters will be honored during half-time of YSU's season opener against Akron. The late Carmine Cassese will also be honored by the Penguins with his initials on their jerseys.

"All the ticket sales and proceeds are going to the American Cancer Society, thanks to Medical Mutual sponsoring the event," YSU head coach Jerry Slocum said. "We're honoring Dan Peters and Bill Dailey. We got special uniforms made with Carmine Cassese's initials on them. It's really an event for Youngstown State. I hope it's an event for the city of Youngstown; we put our best foot forward and give the American Cancer Society a nice check."

Slocum said approximately 30 members from both coaches' families will be in attendance on Saturday.

Slocum said he's talked to Akron head coach Keith Dambrot about the tournament and the emotions incorporated with the games.

"Obviously, Dan was with Keith [Dambrot] at Akron in his last spell before he succumbed to cancer," Slocum said. "It's kind of an emotional time for us here being able to host it. It's a rotating thing over a four-year period. I want us to have the best showing, I want us to raise the most money."

Cassese was the head equipment man-

ager at YSU for 26 years before retiring in 2012. In 2013, Cassese passed away from pancreatic cancer. Since 2012, the MVR has hosted the Carmine L. Cassese Memorial Bocce Tournament.

Dailey took the head coaching job in August 1987, but never had a chance to coach the team because he passed away from cancer before the start of the season.

Peters was the YSU men's basketball coach from 1993 to 1999. Peters is third all-time in wins in program history behind former head coach Dom Rosselli and Slocum.

Peters coached at Ohio State and Cincinnati following his time with the Penguins. In 2009, he was hired as the director of Basketball Operations for the Akron men's basketball team. In October 2014, Peters succumbed to pancreatic cancer.

"Dan and I go back to when he was at Walsh. When I was at Geneva and he was at Walsh, we scrimmaged and played each other," Slocum said. "I knew when Dan got his first Division I assistant's job at Western Carolina way back in the day. And obviously, when he was here. When he was here, I was thinking about taking the job here, and he and I spent a couple hours on the phone. I stayed in contact with him when he was at Cincinnati. At Ohio State, I saw him at practices. I saw him on the road recruiting.

"[I] had a good relationship with him. I wouldn't say that we were best friends, but he was a guy that I highly respected. And again, YSU's making a big deal. We're honoring his family and the fact that this is a fight against cancer and trying to do something special."

Kent State and Cleveland State will tipoff at 5 p.m. and the Penguins will play the final game of the night against Akron. Tipoff for YSU's game is scheduled for 7:45 p.m. at the Beeghly Center.

SPORTS

The Press Box Perspective:

Playoff Football in Canada

BY ANDREW ZUHOSKY

It's getting to be the middle of November, and we all know what that means in terms of football: It's time to start thinking about the playoffs.

No, I'm not talking about Ohio's high school football playoffs, nor am I talking about the Football Championship Subdivision Playoffs. Hey, I'm not even referring to the College Football Playoff or American football in general.

That's right, I'm talking about the Grey Cup Playoffs, the Canadian Football League's postseason tournament. Out of the nine CFL teams who began the season this summer, six remain in the chase for the Grey Cup trophy. Over the next three Sundays, the CFL postseason will play out.

First off, here is a little breakdown as to how the six-team bracket plays out. To start, the top teams in the CFL's East and West Divisions receive automatic byes as well as home-field advantage in next Sunday's Division Finals.

In the West division, the top seed is the Calgary Stampeders, who ended the 2016 regular season with a 15-2-1 record, while the East's No. 1 seed is the Ottawa Redblacks, who finished 2016 with an 8-9-1 record

This weekend, the No. 2 and No. 3 seeds from each division will play in the Division Semi-Finals on Sunday at 1 and 4:30 p.m. EST. Both of these games can be seen in the United States on ESPN2 for the East Division game and ESPN3 for

the West Division game.

Here's where it gets interesting and perhaps confusing if you don't follow Canadian football as closely as me.

In the East Division bracket, the Hamilton Tiger-Cats clinched the second seed and will play host to the Edmonton Eskimos, the fourth-place team in the West Division. Yes, the crossover rule went into effect this year.

The Eskimos crossed over to the East bracket on the grounds that they had a better regular season record (10-8) than the third-place team in the East standings, the Montreal Alouettes (7-11) this season.

Meanwhile, in the West Division, the BC Lions will play host to the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. Both BC and Winnipeg were separated in the final standings this year by only a single game, so that'll be a really good contest on Sunday in Vancouver, Canada.

Here's what I think as far as a pick for the West Division Semi-Final. BC vs. Winnipeg is intriguing.

Both teams are coming in strong, but BC Place Stadium is a really tough place to play a football game, especially with the raucous BC fan base pumped up. I like the Lions to advance in a close one.

Now, onto the pick for the East Division crossover game. This one is a little easier to pick. Although Hamilton will have homefield at Tim Hortons Field on Sunday, it's hard to pick against quarterback Mike Reilly, the best quarterback in the CFL. In addition, Edmonton posted a 5-1 mark in its last six regular season games this year. I like the Esks to advance and play Ottawa.

That'll bring us to the Division Finals next week.

The East Division Final between Edmonton and Ottawa could be an interesting game, but there's a discrepancy between the quarterbacks of both clubs. Reilly threw for 5,554 yards passing and 28 touchdowns this year, whereas Ottawa's Trevor Harris is the sixth-best QB in the league, throwing for over 3,301 yards passing and 16 touchdowns this year.

If Ottawa is to advance to the Grey Cup Game, Harris and his receivers will need to have the game of their careers. I think Ottawa could possibly spring an upset.

Now, onto the West Final. Calgary vs. BC would be an AWESOME game. Think about it, you'd have the second and third-best quarterbacks in the league in Bo Levi Mitchell and Jonathon Jennings playing each other. They combined for 59 touchdowns this season.

At the end of the day, I think the game will be decided by who scores last. Give me the Lions here.

Finally, we've come to the Grey Cup Game itself. Jonathon Jennings will lead his BC Lions to victory, and they'll be tops in the CFL two weeks from this Sunday night.

So, there you have it as far as my picks for this year's Grey Cup Playoffs. Best of luck to all teams and their fans over the next few weeks.



PHOTO BY DAN HINER / THE JAMBAR

Indiya Benjamin, point guard on the Youngstown State University women's basketball team, passes the ball from the top of the key during a home game last season.

Women's Basketball Deals With Injuries as Season Begins

BY DAN HINER

The Youngstown State University women's basketball team will open its season on Friday night against American University, but the team is still trying to find a way to cope without starting guard Nikki Arbanas.

Arbanas suffered a torn ACL during the first practice of the season, and the YSU coaching staff has been trying to find a way of replacing her since.

The Penguins' offense made a school record 299 3-pointers last season, but 89 came from Arbanas.

"Several of the players stepped up throughout the practice season," YSU head coach John Barnes said. "Nikki [Arbanas] went down the first practice of the year, so it's given us some time to give the other players extra reps, and I'm very excited about what some of the newcomers have done and some of the returners, how they've stepped up. We're looking to kinda fill her shoes collectively and so far so good."

Barnes said the Penguins' offense has always made scoring from the post a priority, and the offense will try to limit its outside shots since the team is without its best shooter.

Barnes also said forward Sarah Cash is day-to-day entering the game. Cash was in practice on Monday, but Barnes said he can't guarantee if she is going to play. Barnes said the decision to play Cash on Friday will depend on how she feels prior to tipoff.

"I think everyone needs to pick up the leadership and talk and communicate more on the court, because we're missing the key components we had last year," forward Kelsea Newman said. "If everyone makes that a priority this year, than missing those big people, that big impact role will a lot more effective."

Newman said the team has been trying to improve their chemistry with seven new members on the roster.

"With seven new people, the chemistry is important in just getting to know people," Newman said. "Obviously missing Nikki [Arbanas] and not having Sarah [Cash] in right now has been tough as a team — just getting to know each other and understanding what they're doing, what we're doing. I think as the team practices more together, we're getting better, and it will go a lot better."

Despite not having Arbanas, the chemistry of the starting rotation shouldn't be altered at the start of the season. Indiya Benjamin, Alison Smolinski, Sarah Cash, Kelley Wright and Newman all played in over 30 games last season.

Wright is replacing Arbanas in the starting five, but Wright started eight games last season after Arbanas missed some time with an injury.

This season's roster has seven juniors and seniors on the team, the most experienced group Barnes has coached since coming to YSU. The last time the Penguins had more than six was in 2012-13.

"It's nice to have experience. Obviously, it's important to be good leaders for the younger players that we do have," Barnes said. "In our rotation, right now, it looks like we'll have a good amount of experience coming in. When you get into game situations, it just creates a calm and helps you get through those times that might not be going so well. And [experience can] also be able to raise your level, raise the level of the younger players too when you have that kind of experience."

Tipoff is set for 7 p.m. on Friday at the Beeghly Center.

SPORTS All or Nothing

The YSU Football Team Must Win Out to Make Playoffs

BY MARC WEEMS

With the Youngstown State University football team coming off a 24-3 loss at North Dakota State University, the Penguins will look to redeem themselves against Southern Illinois University. Last season, YSU lost to SIU 38-31 in overtime.

"Well, all the games are important and our goals are to play in the playoffs and to go deep," YSU head coach Bo Pelini said. "We need to get better and we need to get better. It happens that Southern Illinois is the next one up."

Although YSU only mustered three points against NDSU while giving up 24 points, the defense has given up a Missouri Valley Football Conference leading 16.4 points per game. The offense, however, is at the bottom of the conference with 21.6 points per game.

"You just have to bounce back from things," YSU linebacker Jamar Pinnock said. "You can either lay down or are you going to get up and be a better team. I think we will be fine, and our confidence is up. We just have to do what we need to do."

Even with the defense still playing well, the offense has struggled in recent weeks having scored 20 points or less in five straight games.

YSU offensive lineman Justin Spencer said that the team's offensive struggles have come down to their execution of the offense. He said that they need to make sure they finish when they get close to the end zone.

Pelini said that some things have to change when it comes to how the offense executes. He said there are some things that the coaching staff has tweaked parts of the offense and that the team needs to change some stuff defensively.

"I wouldn't say that our backs are up against the wall," linebacker Jaylin Kelly said. "We know what's at stake, and we have to go out and win from here on out if we want to accomplish our goals."

With YSU's goal being to reach the playoffs, they will most likely need to win their last two games against Southern Illinois and Missouri State University.

The Salukis average 31.3 points per game on offense while giving up 31.4 points per game on defense. In the same token, the SIU offense gains almost 460 vards per game, while their defense is giving up 430 vards a game.

"This game is a huge game, and these next two games are must wins for us," Pinnock said. "I'm sure the coaches have a good game plan, so we will

The offense has struggled slightly because of the influx of quarterbacks, and they will be looking for some type of consistency in their offense.

"We have had too many mental mistakes, and we take ourselves out of drives," Spencer said. "Everything just comes back to our execution. We are just taking this thing one week, and obviously our goal is to make the playoffs."

Pelini said the team is aware of "consequences" associated with a loss this week and expects his players to work harder with the playoffs on the line.

"You earn the right to play good, and you earn the confidence by preparing the right way," Pelini said. "I'm not worried about what happens on Saturday, I'm worried about what happens today. There hasn't been a guy that has reached his potential yet, and we need to keep pushing.'

Kickoff is scheduled at noon on Saturday at Stambaugh Stadium.



PHOTO BY DAN HINER / THE JAMBAR

Youngstown State University guarterback Nathan Mays stands in the pocket and looks downfield during YSU's win over the University of Northern Iowa.

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