

BO ON THE BAYOU: YSU'S PELINI HEADS TO LSU



Former Penguins coach Bo Pelini will be the defensive coordinator at Louisiana State University. Photo by **Brent Bigelow/The Jambar**

BRIAN YAUGER NATHANAEL HAWTHORNE

The face of Youngstown State University football over the past five years has moved on to a new career. Former head coach Bo Pelini accepted the role of defensive coordinator for Louisiana State University.

"The past five years have been terrific," Pelini said in a press release. "I can't thank President Jim Tressel and [athletic director] Ron Strollo enough for the opportunity here and support along the way. For all of the people, honestly too many to name, who were part of my YSU experience, I also want to extend a heartfelt thank you."

Pelini started his career at YSU after being hired from the University of Nebraska. In his time at YSU, he led the Penguins to a national championship in 2016. While at YSU, he posted a record of 33-28, and he secured his 100th career collegiate win as a head coach this season.

Pelini takes over an LSU team fresh off a national title. The Tigers had the 31st ranked defense last season and could improve drastically considering Pelini's prior success in the defensive coordinator role.

"The opportunity to return to LSU is truly unique," Pelini said. "Culturally, with my prior experience at LSU, I know it is a great fit for me. The chance to work with coach Orgeron, the ability to take charge of the Tigers' defense. All of that in a place that both my family and I immensely enjoyed when we were there before is very exciting for us. We are very honored and are looking forward to this next chapter."

Holding the job at YSU was special for Pelini, a Youngstown native and Cardinal Mooney High School graduate.

"The experience for me professionally to coach my hometown university and to appear in a championship game is something I will always treasure," Pelini said. "For Mary Pat and I, Youngstown will always hold an element of home for us with our children graduating from Cardinal Mooney High School and so many of our family members residing here. My YSU days will always be special for the entire Pelini family."

Going forward, Pelini sees a bright future for his hometown team and is excited to see what they can accomplish.

"And trust me, I will be checking in every week in the fall to follow the Penguins as they continue to build on our successes, and I know they have great days ahead."

In a statement from Ron Strollo, executive director of intercollegiate athletics, he thanked Pelini for returning home and for the passion he brought to the football program. He also said the university will work tirelessly to find a replacement coach to build on the foundation Pelini established.

The loss of a coach can be hard for players in any program, especially when that coach is responsible for the players being in their current position. Defensive end James Jackson said he anticipated Pelini leaving YSU after hearing rumors about the move, but he is excited for Pelini despite him being the coach who personally recruited him.

"I was just proud of him," Jackson said. "He was one of the big reasons I came [to YSU]. He instilled a lot of hard work and dedication into to me."

According to linebacker Jaylen Hewlett, he doesn't blame Pelini for leaving because of the opportunity to win another national championship.

"He [made] the best decision for his family," Hewlett said. "I

just want the best for [Pelini]. If [Pelini] going to LSU was the best for him to make his career even better, I'm glad for him."

When there's a change in direction in any program, there is a guaranteed change in the program dynamic. With a new coach, in most cases, comes a different playing style and defensive and offensive scheme, among many other changes. But neither Hewlett nor Jackson anticipate a drastic change.

"I think nothing's going to really change. You're still going to work hard [and] make sure everything is done the right way to the YSU standard," Hewlett said.

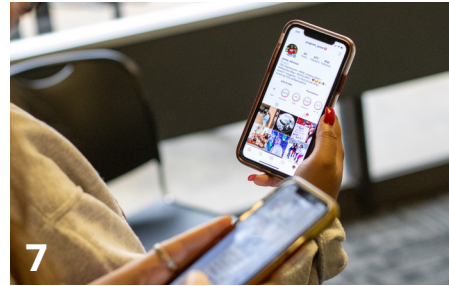
Jackson also said there will be a few tweaks, but the team should still be the same.

At the time of publication, a replacement head coach has not been named.



Screenshot of Bo Pelini's Twitter profile when he accepted the job at LSU on Monday.

FEATURES



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

NEWS / OPINION

- 3 Student Hero
- 4 Working on Minimum Wage
- 5 Generous Facebook Group
- 6 Healthier YOUNGSTOWN
- 7 Social Media Ambassadors
- 10 Mindfulness Column / Editorial
- 11 Tea Time For Parents / News Briefs
- 12 McDonough Advertisement

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

- 8 Abandoned Spaces
- 9 Trading Card Club

SPORTS

- 14 Bowling / Men's Basketball
- 15 Women's Basketball
- 16 Remembering Kobe

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YSU STUDENT PERFORMS LIFESAVING ACT, BECOMES HOMETOWN HERO

Shamara Golden is a senior graduate student in the Master of Athletic Training program. Photo by Kamron Meyers/The Jambar

AMANDA JOERNDT

What started out as an ordinary day for Shamara Golden soon turned into one of the most terrifying days of her athletic training education.

Golden, a senior graduate student in the Master of Athletic Training program, was working in the field with a certified athletic trainer at a Warren G. Harding High School football practice on a September afternoon.



Golden straps up Morgan Bagley, assistant professor in the athletic training program, on a stretcher for in-field practice. Photo courtesy of Morgan Bagley

Then, the unthinkable happened.

Golden and her supervisor, Alex McCaskey, jumped into fight-or-flight mode, performing immediate CPR on a boy who was limp and turning white and unresponsive.

Golden said the pair were walking across the field away from practice when she noticed a group of boys not associated with the team trying to pick up the unresponsive boy. This alerted Golden that something was dangerously wrong.

"Immediately, Alex gets down and starts taking pulse. I take off and run to our equipment across the field where we were supposed to be at," she said. "I grab the AED, automated external defibrillator, because I remember seeing what that looks like in class. I ran, got the AED, got back and Alex was starting compressions at that point."

As the two hooked up the AED and continued to give the boy compressions and breaths, a crowd formed around the incident, watching in awe.

"Me and Alex were just in the zone. ... We knew exactly what to do together like we have been doing it together for forever, and that was our first time for both of us ever doing it," Golden said. "I took over compressions and he started up the machine. The shock happens and he literally was revived."

With a pulse regained after use of the AED, the boy still received breaths to keep him conscious. Golden guided the EMS to the scene and helped get the boy onto the stretcher. He was taken to the hospital and put on a ventilator.

Golden said without knowing the correct CPR procedures and caution signs from her class work at Youngstown State University, she would not have known what to look for in an emergency.

"I remember learning what that sign is [in this classroom]. Our teachers teach us the signs, and I told [Alex] that we needed to head over there," she said. "That day, I did have to use it. That

stuff is no joke, and really pay attention to those classes because everything I learned, it helped saved his life."

After the incident, Golden called her professor for someone to turn to after the traumatic experience.

"I was driving home, and I was crying, and she was like 'Shamara, you did what you needed to do, and I'm so proud of you,'" she said. "She's happy about the outcome, but she also put a lot of work into us."

Golden said being able to know the signs of an emergency like she experienced was the ultimate lifesaver.

"Pay attention in class because if I were to never see the video they showed me, I would have never have known that sign," she said. "Don't just think you're there for the athletes. ... He wasn't even an athlete; he was a kid coming out of school. Trust what you know and know that it's there."

Morgan Bagley, assistant professor and interim program director for the athletic training program, said when she received that phone call that night, she could tell how much Golden cared through the tone in her voice.

"I kept telling her, 'Shamara, I know you did great. I've seen you practice. But just remember, you did everything you knew you could do,'" she said. "She sent this boy off with the EMS, but she really had no idea. At that point, was he going to live?"

According to Bagley, the boy is now doing well.

"We were all very happy to hear that he was doing well, but it had taken a couple of days to do much better," she said. "I told her, 'That boy could have been anywhere, but you were there that day, so just remember that.'"

Bagley said she makes her students review CPR skills each semester to be prepared for emergency situations.

"They come in and the first thing they learn is CPR, but I want to make sure that it's a refresher. ... Our students refresh it every single semester," she said.



MAXIMUM WORK ON A MINIMUM WAGE SALARY

Allyson Carnahan, a junior business major at Youngstown State University, lives on her own and works two jobs. Photo by Kamron Meyers/The Jambar

BRIANNA GLEGHORN

For many Youngstown State University students, being a full-time student and a full-time employee is a part of their regular routine. But what price, physically and mentally, do students pay to earn a degree and provide a stable income?

One issue for students who work several jobs to afford living on their own is that they may have a hard time focusing on their schoolwork.

An article from the American Psychological Association states, “A full-time worker making the federal minimum wage earns \$15,080 per year — an annual income that sits below the federal poverty level of \$16,020 for a family of two.”

Krystal Marcum, a chemistry and forensic science major, describes her weekly schedule as “exhausting.”

“It’s freeing in a way to not have to rely on anybody, but it’s exhausting,” Marcum said. “I literally have 10 minutes of downtime with work and school some days, and I’m up until 3 a.m. doing homework and it’s a lot.”

Marcum said there have been times she had to choose between her schoolwork and working to pay bills that month.

“There’s been many times where I’ll get called to pick up a shift and it’s like, ‘OK, do I want an A on this paper, or do I want to pay the electric bill this month?’ It’s little stuff like that,” she said.

In Marcum’s opinion, having a full-time job would be easier than working two part-time jobs.

“If more full-time employment would be open to working with students, it would be different, I feel,” she said. “There’s been many times where grades have suffered.”

Marcum said being focused and organized is what gets her through the excessive workload.

“I think for those of us students like me that have to do so much extra, I write everything down,” she said. “And I always remember that your job will, most of the time, always be there.”

The YSU website states, “Each semester hour of credit represents an average of three hours of study and instruction every week through the term.”

A YSU student taking the 12-credit-hour minimum is considered a full-time student and is suggested to spend an additional 36 hours outside of the classroom to complete assignments.

Huaiyu Peter Chen, an associate professor of finance, said college should be a time for learning and getting involved in student organizations.

“I think the most important thing in going to college is to get good grades, learning while you’re supposed to learn, get an internship, find a decent job, make connections with your classmates, make friends and engage in student organizations,” Chen said.

In January 2020, the minimum wage in Ohio increased by 15 cents from \$8.55 per hour to \$8.70 per hour. For tipped employees, it increased from \$4.30 per hour to \$4.35.

“Some people support it. Some people are against it,” Chen said. “What the studies show is once you increase the minimum wage to a certain degree, you decrease the number of jobs available, so you have to take a look at the unintended consequences.”

He said if the minimum wage is raised too high, it could put smaller businesses in financial trouble if they cannot afford to pay the salaries.

“For example, a city in the West Coast, Seattle, like California, when they increased the minimum wage to \$14, I believe, so you have to be aware of unintended consequences,” Chen said.

“Once we increase the minimum wages to a certain degree, a lot of jobs will disappear.”

A proposed amendment to the Ohio Constitution will go to the Ohio Ballot Board to annually raise the minimum wage to \$13 an hour by 2025.

Those for the amendment hope to put it on the November ballot.

In Chen’s opinion, focusing on receiving a quality education is more important than working a minimum wage job.

“A lot of the students have to take a part-time job to go through college,” he said. “I’m not against anyone taking a part-time job, I encourage my kids to take a part-time job when they grow up because that’s the way to appreciate hard working.”

Allyson Carnahan, a junior business major, said living on her own while working two jobs is challenging.

“It’s very stressful at times and overwhelming,” Carnahan said. “It’s definitely worth it. I was always taught growing up to work hard for what you want and strive to be successful.”

She said seeing other students enjoy their free time and extracurricular activities can be hard while she juggles school and her two jobs at Aldi and TanFastic.

“At times, I get a little bit jealous of people who just go to school and don’t really have to worry about anything else,” she said. “Sometimes I think, ‘Oh I wish I had that’ or ‘That would be nice,’ but at the same time I think it’d be a little bit boring.”

Carnahan said she pushed through because she knows after graduation it will be rewarding.

“I think you’ll get to do what you want to do, and you won’t always have to go to school at the same time and work,” she said. “Just keep pushing because there is a finish line even if you can’t see it yet.”



KIND HEARTS, BLESSED SOULS: YSU STUDENT CREATES UPLIFTING FACEBOOK COMMUNITY

Michelle McDonald, a senior social work major at Youngstown State University, is the founder of a Facebook group called Kind Hearts, Blessed Souls. Photo by Kelcey Norris/The Jambar

KELCEY NORRIS

Seeing a need in her community, a Youngstown State University student created a Facebook group called "Kind Hearts, Blessed Souls." Her idea snowballed into a close-knit community she never anticipated.

Michelle McDonald, a senior social work major, explained the group is similar to a buy, sell, trade group but with a catch.

"There is absolutely no money, no selling transactions whatsoever," McDonald said. "You get on, say, things you need, and someone basically is like, 'Oh, I have that lying around my house,' then they gift it to them without any payment."

McDonald created the group on Dec. 15, 2019, and has watched it flourish in followers beyond her expectations.

She said the majority of the members are from Northeast Ohio and Western Pennsylvania.

"Within 24 hours of that first day, we had 1,000 followers," McDonald said. "It just exploded. People just kept sharing the link."

The group now has over 11,000 followers.

Her inspiration came during the holiday season, a time where many are struggling to provide for their families as well as purchase gifts.

"I've always wanted to sponsor a family for Christmas, and I never have any money. I'm a student and I'm a mom," she said. "I was looking around the house and saw I had all this stuff and thought, 'Why don't I just donate it? Why don't we do that?'"

She said donors often give their unwanted items to stores like the Salvation Army and Goodwill, but those businesses sell the items for profit, which defeats the purpose of donation.

"It really helps people in need because you don't have to pay for it," McDonald said. "You meet up with somebody, pick a meet date for the drop-off at your convenience. ... It really helps people because it's literally free."

She said being a donor matches members of the community to their neighbors and serves as another outlet to give back.

"One of the neat things about our page is that you get to pick who you're giving your stuff to, so it's a little more personal," McDonald said. "And as a giver, you have the benefits of helping someone and it gets rid of your clutter."

Trish Kuzel, a Hubbard native, was one of the first members

of Kind Hearts, Blessed Souls before the number of followers skyrocketed.

Kuzel said she participated as both a donor and a recipient in the group.

"We may need things, but if we have something we're not using that's just sitting around or no longer fits, it's a great feeling to help those that need that stuff," Kuzel said. "To see how happy we made people is one of the greatest feelings."

Another member of the Facebook group, Amanda Oesch, is originally from Youngstown, Ohio. She said McDonald's influence in her life has been tremendous.

"She's a true inspiration," Oesch said. "I wonder how many hardened hearts have already melted and warmed just because of one tiny little idea. You can feel the love radiating off this page."

Oesch said she is grateful for the new friends she's made in the group.

"I would never have guessed so many people truly cared. ... So wonderful to know," Oesch said. "It's like I can relax a little and breathe knowing ... if I need something, truly need something and can't get it for myself, some kind heart will have my back."



ACTION led a “Healthier YOU” event Jan. 26 at the B&O Station in Youngstown. Photo by **Kamron Meyers/The Jambar**

TINA KALENITS

Thirty-eight percent of Youngstown citizens, which is 17,500 people, do not have access to grocery stores as of 2020, according to Theodore Brown.

Brown is the executive co-chair of the Alliance for Congregational Transformation Influencing Our Neighborhoods, called ACTION, Food Task Force.

To promote healthier eating and access to resources in Youngstown, ACTION led a “Healthier YOU” event Jan. 26 at the B&O Station.

The event included line dancing, meditation and blood pressure screenings.



Food was served at the ACTION event. Photo by **Kamron Meyers/The Jambar**

In 2016, Youngstown Mayor Jamael Tito Brown declared the city of Youngstown a food desert because of the lack of access residents have to full-service grocery stores.

Jamael Tito Brown said the Healthier YOU event was the first step in helping the Valley.

“It’s got to be more than just a city. It’s got to be everyone who’s taken a part of this, and you’re going to need private and public partnerships,” he said. “If we all play our part, we’re collectively having more power to remove this insecurity in our community.”

Jamael Tito Brown said pop-up farmers markets or even home deliveries are excellent opportunities for healthy food options.

“This is just a first start, but many of these groups and organizations, they’ve been doing this on their own,” Jamael Tito Brown said. “And now we’re bringing them collectively together to say, ‘Let’s all come together and have a greater power to remove that insecurity in our community.’”

Theodore Brown said the United States is supposed to be the wealthiest country in the world. Meanwhile, many people in the U.S. do not have access to food.

“We, as a faith-based organization, as well as other community organizations, trying to do what we can to help reverse that tide, as well as educate the people on eating a lot better,” he said.

Theodore Brown said there will be a dietitian on-site of the 10 locations.

“What they’re going to do is the dietitian will actually come in, and we’ll show you exactly how to prepare the food so that you can eat healthier. Maybe introduce you to some different foods that you may not be accustomed to eating,”



A group of women took line dancing lessons during the ACTION event. Photo by **Kamron Meyers/The Jambar**

Theodore Brown said.

Rose Carter, the executive director of ACTION, said while waiting for a grocery store in the city to be developed, the alternative is to provide healthy food options through churches and institutions.

“What we did is we kicked off this so that others would be able to know how to conduct themselves healthy and to be able to find ways to keep us from diabetes, high blood pressure, hypertension, all of those things,” she said.

Carter said Healthier YOU is the kickoff event for cooking classes and promoting healthier foods and lifestyles across 10 locations in Mahoning County.



YSU SOCIAL MEDIA EVOLVES WITH THE TIMES

Francine Hazy (left) and Janae Johnson (right) scroll through social media on their cellphones. They're both YSU social media ambassadors. Photo by **Kamron Meyers/The Jambar**

ABIGAIL CLOUTIER

Youngstown State University's social media approach has developed over the last year, and it's also taken on more student-run social media accounts.

YSU's social media team has worked to include student account takeovers and nine new social media ambassadors and develop an award-winning Twitter platform.



Photo by **Kamron Meyers/The Jambar**

The social media ambassador program has expanded throughout the academic year by nearly doubling the number of student accounts, going from 10 YSUgram accounts on Instagram to 19.

"We had a lot of success with the first 10 that we realized we needed a few more [ambassadors]," Kati Hartwig, the social media and digital marketing coordinator at YSU, said. "We ended up adding nine more. ... It's really all about having the students tell the story."

Francine Hazy, a graduate student majoring in student affairs, has been with the program since its inception and would like to see the campaign continue to grow.

"I would love to see potential YSU students who might be in high school and aren't sure where they want to end up for college turn to the YSU ambassadors to get a feel for what it would be like if they came to campus," Hazy said.

Janae Johnson, a sophomore business major, used her social media ambassador title to help new students during her time as an orientation leader.

"It was really cool connecting with my students that way. ... I was also an IGNITE leader, and they'll [direct message] me questions or anything they have," Johnson said. "So getting that all out for students and having students say that they can see [my] student perspective right now by clicking on Instagram is really cool."

According to Hartwig, the YSUgram accounts showcase what life is like as a student on campus.

"I can post on our social media channels and our Youngstown State channels, but really what it comes down to is when the

students are able to tell that story themselves, it's a lot more relatable and intriguing to other students and prospective students," Hartwig said.

But as social media evolves, YSU is looking to a new platform: TikTok.

Hartwig said the team is currently exploring this platform.

"We're kind of just experimenting with it, trying to figure out what our audience likes to see, figuring out what trends on TikTok we can engage with," she said.

Though YSU's TikTok account is currently experimental, it has just over 200 followers and over 900 combined likes on its videos.

According to Hartwig, the implementation of the YSU TikTok account is a part of a marketing change to use more user-generated content.

"Marketing on TikTok is totally different on marketing on any other platform," Hartwig said. "TikTok is a place people go to where they don't want ads right in their face, or they don't want a big call to action because they want to keep scrolling through and watching videos."

"A lot of our content [from 2019] that was shared from other users did really well," she added. "We're getting more into YouTube and TikTok as well."

The YSU social media team is currently moving away from using Snapchat as a marketing and social media tool and is exploring the world of TikTok, according to Hartwig.

"We're trying to steer away from Snapchat and focus more on TikTok, so there might be other opportunities to do takeovers, like maybe a TikTok takeover," she said.



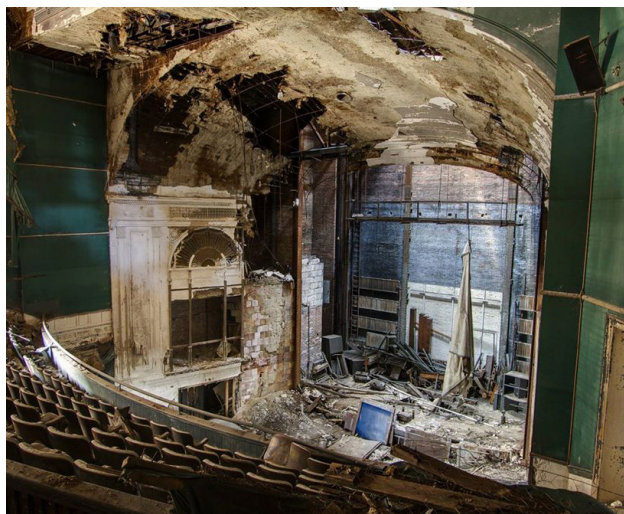
CAPTURING YOUNGSTOWN THROUGH ABANDONED SPACES

Lincoln Behavioral Center in Youngstown closed its doors in 2008, laying off staff and relocating 50 clients to their home counties. Photo courtesy of **Johnny Joo**

FRANCES CLAUSE

Although many wouldn't venture inside abandoned buildings themselves, the eerie atmosphere of these locations inspires photographers to capture what is left of the past.

Sean Posey, photographer and author of "Lost Youngstown" and "Historic Theaters of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley," said there is an unspoken history that lies beneath this photography.



The Paramount Theatre opened its doors in 1918 and could hold a crowd of 1,600 to 1,700 people. Photo courtesy of **Johnny Joo**

"We're seeing the photographs, but we're not seeing the people that were once there," he said. "We're just seeing this one current moment of a place in its abandoned state."

Posey believes receiving answers relating to the legacy of these places and how they became abandoned requires a photographer with an interest in history.

One of these photographers is Johnny Joo, an internationally acclaimed artist who grew up between the rural fields of Northeast Ohio and the urban cityscape of Cleveland.

"I got into abandoned photography at the same time I started [photography] in 2006 around high school," he said. "I was always into horror video games and horror movies, so I found some creepy abandoned buildings and started from there."

When Joo began finding items left behind in abandoned buildings, he decided to research their history.

"At first, I just thought the places were cool, but the more I looked into it, the more I thought, 'Why was this here?'" he said.

Joo kept this question in mind as he traveled to Youngstown, where he captured what once was the Paramount Theatre on West Federal Street and Hazel Avenue.

But one of his favorite projects was the Lincoln Behavioral Center, formerly known as Woodside Hospital, on Indianola Avenue.

"I found tons of books and documents and patient logs, and since [the behavioral center] closed in 2008, it wasn't long before I found former patients on Facebook," he said. "I ended up talking to this one girl who ended up getting her whole life straightened out and went to college for a medical field."

Although the Lincoln Behavioral Center has since been torn down, its memory lives on through Joo's blog, architecturalafterlife.com. While his photos provide a reminder of the building's past, the historical descriptions that accompany are just as eerie.

Like Joo, Sherman Cahal, a historian and photographer based in upstate New York, found himself in Youngstown's abandoned locations that were once thriving with life.

"I grew up in a Rust Belt. My dad worked in a steel mill and my mom worked more in the service industry," Cahal said. "So, I could relate to Youngstown."

Cahal photographed Youngstown Sheet and Tube, abbreviated as YS&T, company housing, where he describes its past through his blog, abandonedonline.net.

YS&T offered affordable company housing in Campbell, which cost a worker \$15 to \$20 per month or a quarter of their monthly wages, according to the blog. The YS&T divested of their company housing in the 1940s.

"There goes that legacy of what someone might have done with their life," he said, referring to former employees of YS&T. "It has to be a profound sadness that something that you put your whole life toward has been completely demolished."

Unlike Lincoln Behavioral Center and YS&T, some places in Youngstown will always remain a mystery.

"I used to go to a lot of old homes, especially on the south side [of Youngstown]," Posey said. "There would be family photographs left on the wall or diplomas. ... All you can do is speculate [about what happened], and that's the interesting part of the mystery to it."



YSU TRADING CARD CLUB: CONSIDERATION FOR THE CRAFT

Members of YSU's new Trading Card Club played *Magic: The Gathering*, a collectible card game created by Richard Garfield. Photo by *Kaitlyn Kelley/The Jambar*

KAITLYN KELLEY

"The college experience is an optimal environment for trading, playing and learning card games," Nick Rauschenbauch, a former student of Eastern Gateway Community College, said.

Rauschenbauch, one of the many members of Youngstown State University's new Trading Card Club, feels college has



George Rovnak (left) and Josh Mansfield (right) play *Yu-Gi-Oh!* at YSU's Trading Card Club meeting in Kilcawley Center. Photo by *Kaitlyn Kelley/The Jambar*

been a great place to partake in hobbies.

With greater diversity and a variety of venues, universities offer opportunities for people to find those with similar hobbies and form a group.

"The demographic of different people in college is more diverse, so there are so many more people to interact with," said Michael Wildman, a part-time information technology major. "You could be the only person into something like card games in high school, but college isn't like that."

With over 12,000 students at YSU, the formation of diverse clubs is prevalent, so students can make more connections and form friendships with people that share their interests — something that may have been difficult to do in high school.

The Trading Card Club was formed in fall 2017 by many who remain officers of the club today. One of those students is Danielle Trybala, a senior theatre major who has been a member of the club since it started.

"I had cards as a kid that my neighbor gave me but never learned how to play until I joined this club," she said.

Trybala decided to help build the club alongside the current president and another founder of the club, Steven Bowers, a senior anthropology major.

Bowers has created helpful events for new members of the club, from "learn to play" days where members can learn a variety of card games to regular playing days where any

student can jump in.

People who may not have had the chance to try card games in high school can now give it a shot.

Since many students aren't seeing the same people every day for several hours like in high school, many people tend to mind their own business and do their own thing, according to some members.

Josh Mansfield, a senior religious studies major and the secretary of the Trading Card Club, said people can still be considered "nerdy," but everyone has their own niches in college.

The club members feel this breeds a much healthier and accepting environment, allowing people to feel more comfortable joining different clubs and partaking in hobbies that may have made them feel ostracized in high school, especially at smaller schools.

"In high school, we played card games in the cafeteria. ... It was never much of a club," Bowers said. "I believe that college in itself is an environment for many different types of audiences, including people who just like playing card games."

With the Trading Card Club now added to YSU's list of organizations, there are more ways for students to find others who have similar hobbies, make connections, play games and create lifelong friendships.

MINDFULNESS AND THE POWER OF THE PRESENT

MAC POMEROY

Being born physically weak, my childhood was different from the usual.

While most children like to dream and joke about growing up to be princesses or tigers or some other absurd thing, I knew I had to be realistic. Even if I couldn't walk for longer than two minutes to save my life, my mind was sharp as a tack. I knew I had to take advantage in order to live my life to the fullest.

So I decided I wanted to become a lawyer. Instantly my life became consumed with running after my goals. By the time I was 12, I knew exactly what area of law I wanted to study and the best schools for that specific type. I had my whole path set ahead, and I didn't want to look around at anything else.

Now, needless to say, that changed. In my senior year of high school, I realized that I would rather do anything else but sit in a courtroom all day, so any intentions I had of becoming an attorney went down the drain. It felt like

I had wasted years of my life working on a goal, not even considering what was around me.

Of course, it isn't exactly a major loss. But remembering it all made me realize it's not uncommon that we become so focused on the future and forget the present. This doesn't just mean intense long-term goals but rather goals in general.

Have you ever had a test coming up and were so busy preparing that you forgot your parent's birthday? Or planned to go out with your friends and spent so much time deciding what to do that you didn't finish the rest of your errands?

It happens to everyone, regardless of whether we notice it. It's a very easy pattern to fall into. Most people naturally prefer to plan and be prepared for any scheduled happenings in their lives. This isn't exactly a problem. The problem arises when you spend too much time planning and not enough time living.

Even now that I am on a totally different path than I was working toward as a child, I've fallen under this category many times. This happens both academically and personally. I mean, I am guilty of focusing on eventually getting my

doctorate when I am not even done with my sophomore year of my bachelor's degree.

There is no exact way to get over this habit. As I mentioned prior, it isn't always a bad thing, but it can be when it causes you to neglect what is happening in the present. If this becomes the case, then it's important to remind yourself to keep your priorities in line.

Before fussing over anything, ask yourself: Does this matter right now? Will this be relevant to your life today or tomorrow or within the next week? Or is this something that won't affect you for a while? Does it need your attention now? If the answer is that it won't matter for a while, then maybe it isn't important right now.

Living in the moment is an extremely important trait. All around you, every day, are many different experiences and opportunities. If you have your head in your schedule all the time, only focusing on what comes tomorrow, you risk missing what is happening today.

Life happens in the present.

THE JAMBAR[®] — EDITORIAL —

2020 IS OFF TO A ROUGH START

Going into 2020, we all had an idea of how it would go. "Got that 2020 vision" was December's catchphrase, so we expected this year to be a change from the depressing last few years.

Well, we're off to a bumpy start to say the least.

Three days into the year, good ol' President Donald Trump escalated tensions with Iran to world-war highs by ordering an assassination on an Iranian military leader.

Republican senators refuse to be objective in Trump's impeachment trial. This moment in history is historical, though. A president is going through an impeachment trial, and sometimes we don't realize the scale of what is happening in the United States.

Prince Harry and Meghan Markle renounced their royal duties and moved to Canada — though that may only be a concern if you're British or Canadian.

Then, a never-before-seen illness, the novel coronavirus, killed over a hundred in China and is slowly spreading.

The Trump administration rolled back water pollution protections and raised the threshold for legal immigration.

Kobe Bryant, basketball legend, and his daughter Gianna died tragically in a helicopter crash.

No matter who you are, the news of Kobe's death was shocking. Deaths happen every day, but it's not often that someone of such global relevance leaves this world.

While we may have never met these people, whether it's an athlete, a politician or a musician, people in the limelight leave an impact.

If you're one of those people who "doesn't get" the reaction to celebrity deaths, think of it this way:

Kobe influenced athletes to work harder to achieve their goals, Prince and Michael Jackson influenced decade's

worth of musicians. You don't have to establish a mutual connection with someone for them to be a part of your life.

But enough about that.

This is the point when people give up on having a good year, but you can't give up now. There are 11 months left in 2020. Sure, the political situation is crazy, but you can vote in the primaries and elections. Yes, people die, and it hurts more when it's someone you've looked up to, but their legacy isn't lost.

If you lose faith in the world, society or yourself, then it will stay that way. If you keep your head up, good things will come solely because of the positive energy you bring.

Positivity attracts and begets positivity, so keep your head high, friend.

TEA TIME FOR PARENTS: BUILDING RESOURCES FOR PARENTING STUDENTS

ALYSSA WESTON

Last semester, Isebella Greathouse was ready to drop out of college.

In addition to working a couple of jobs and going to class full time, the senior geography major at Youngstown State University is also a single parent to her 2-year-old daughter.

Greathouse struggled with finding resources for parents on campus. But, instead of continuing to feel defeated, she decided to create an organization for other students who are parents.

That's when the group Tea Time For Parents was formulated.

"We were sitting there trying to think of a name, and I was like, 'What about Tea Time For Parents?' Like, children get teatime, we need our time," Greathouse said.

The group aims to support and uplift its members and other parenting students as well as provide access to resources like clothes and food. The group wants to help not only at YSU but nationally as well.

After talking with the Office of Student Outreach and Support and receiving support from university President Jim Tressel, Greathouse met with the YSU Student Government Association to make the organization official.

Additionally, the organization is looking to find solutions to issues that affect parenting students.

"We're exploring tuition to help pay for day care or what we could do to lower the cost of day care for parents. I extended the food pantry to help parents and children, so we're taking donations like baby formula, snacks, juice pouches, stuff like that," Greathouse said.

Ryan Donchess, media engineer for the department of communication, serves as the faculty adviser for Tea Time For Parents.

Donchess said within two months or less, Greathouse was able to get everything together on her own and organize enough group members, officers and an adviser to get the group started.

"[Greathouse] identified a need through her own experience as a single mother, found that there wasn't enough support through the university, and it was suggested to her to start to organize a group. That clicked for her. She got the idea and she took it off from there," he said.

Donchess believes this organization is the start of aiding families where it's needed and marketing resources that are available in the community to those that could use the support.

Alex Godoy, a sophomore computer science major, started pursuing his degree at YSU 12 years after his high school graduation while parenting his 5-year-old daughter.

Godoy said he decided to go back to school so he could do something his daughter would be proud of.

After talking with Greathouse about her goals to bring more accessible day care options to campus, Godoy was on board.

"The reason why you're going to school, especially if you're a parent, is not only to better your life but your child," he said. "How are you going to do that if you don't have the time to do that?"

Godoy plans to reach out to other groups who need support through Tea Time For Parents, such as YSU student veterans who are parents.

Godoy said he advises other parenting students to not be afraid to ask for help.

"I think as a single parent, especially because you're trying to take care of another human yourself, I think you get some type of pride sometimes, and it doesn't allow you to reach out

and get the help that you need," he said.

Greathouse is working to show other parents that they don't have to feel defeated when it comes to obtaining their college degree.

"I went from feeling hopeless and that there are no resources on campus because it's not talked about, but now that I started getting involved that changed my experience completely. I realized that I can help other parents so they don't feel the way I felt," she said.



Tea Time For Parents president Isebella Greathouse walks hand in hand with her 2-year-old daughter, Ariana Porter. Photo by Kamron Meyers/The Jambar

NEWS BRIEFS

YOUNGSTOWN NATIVE CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST PASSES AWAY

Youngstown native, lawyer and civil rights activist Judge Nathaniel Jones passed away at 93 years old on Jan. 26 from congestive heart failure in his home in Cincinnati.

Jones was raised in Youngstown and attended public school in Youngstown. Jones served in the United States Army Air Corps in World War II.

He then received his undergraduate and law degrees at Youngstown State University under the GI Bill.

Jones served as the executive director of the Fair Employment Practices Commission in Youngstown and

was also the first African American assistant United States attorney one year after practicing law. He also served as the assistant general counsel to President Johnson's National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders in 1967.

In 1979, Jones was appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit by President Carter. For 23 years, Jones published "scores of opinions and law review articles," and he served on several government committees and special bodies, according to a 21 WFMJ-TV article.

In 2016, Judge Jones was awarded the NAACP's 101st

Spingarn Medal, which is the organization's highest honor.

The Nathaniel R. Jones Federal Building and U.S. Courthouse opened in Youngstown in 2003.

He was also awarded the first Simeon Booker Award for Courage from Mahoning Valley Sojourn to the Past in September 2016.

Calling hours took place Wednesday, Jan. 29, in Cincinnati to honor Jones' legacy. Read more about the impact he had on the Youngstown and the YSU community in next week's edition of The Jambar.

NEW COMMENCEMENT VENUE FOR YSU SPRING 2020 GRADUATES

Instead of two packed commencement ceremonies in Beeghly Center, Youngstown State University spring 2020 graduates will be walking across the field in Stambaugh Stadium on May 9.

In previous years, the overwhelming number of graduates required the commencements to be broken up into two separate ceremonies.

Jackie LeViseur, director of alumni and events at YSU, said the packed ceremonies were a safety issue and allowed graduates to only invite four to five guests.

"We didn't want to limit guests coming by giving every graduate four or five tickets for their guests," LeViseur said. "We wanted everybody to have the opportunity to come and celebrate with their graduate."

After holding a focus group with faculty, staff and students, the Division of University Relations and the provost decided that having one event in Stambaugh Stadium was the solution for this academic achievement.

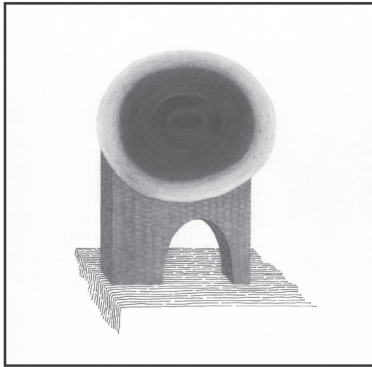
The ceremony will begin at 10 a.m., and Thomas Shipka will be the commencement keynote speaker.

MCDONOUGH MUSEUM OF ART

YSU's Center for Contemporary Art

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DECENNIAL CELEBRATION

Spring Exhibitions | January 24 – March 7 | 2020
5:10 at the McDonough | Lectures and Gallery Talk



Kristina Paabus | Artist Lecture | Thursday | January 30 | 5:10pm

Kristina Paabus | Something to Believe In

An exhibit of drawings and sculptures by acclaimed Cleveland artist, Kristina Paabus. Her work examines the systems that we use to control our surroundings – as well as the structures that try to control us. Through abstraction and metaphor Paabus investigates the operations, fractures, and perceptions of these strategies to uncover the underlying common codes of our shared experiences.



Ken Rinaldo | Artist Lecture | Monday | February 3 | 5:10pm

Ken Rinaldo | Scatter Surge

Scatter Surge consists of two art series by internationally recognized Columbus artist, Ken Rinaldo. *I Pluripotent* is a worldwide premiere installation surrounding microbiome and holobiome portraits. The portraits will be collected and grown for all those entering the exhibition. The Seed Series are post nature portraits of phantasmagorical seeds; imagined manipulations with CrisprCas9 targeted gene splicing.



Kimberly Chapman | Gallery Talk | Wednesday | March 4 | 5:10pm

Kimberly Chapman | hush.

Ohio artist, Kimberly Chapman, is our 2020 Emerging Visual Artist. She produces porcelain sculptures that balance the beautiful and the macabre. The artwork calls upon past experiences as well as emotionally charged sociopolitical issues for their content. As part of the Scribe literary collaborative, this exhibition is accompanied by journals created by YSU students. The booklets contain written and visual art inspired by themes presented in the artist's work.

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY



Cliffe College of
Creative Arts
& Communication

DEPARTMENT
YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

Hours at the McDonough Museum of Art: Tuesday through Saturday, 11am until 4pm

The Museum is open to the public & admission is free | For information please call 330-941-1400

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Ohio Arts
COUNCIL 

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CLASSIFIEDS

HELP WANTED

IRON AND STRING LIFE ENHANCEMENT, ISLE, IS LOOKING FOR MEN AND WOMEN WHO ARE RELIABLE AND CARING

ISLE provided assistance at home and in the community to persons who are "differently abled." Our motto is "WORK HARD, BE KIND, HAVE FUN." We offer a competitive starting wage, where past experience may determine higher wage. Must be able to pass a background check/drug screen and have a high school diploma. If you would like to join our team, stop in and fill out an application. Our lobby hours are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday-Friday. We are located at 32 Fifth Ave. in downtown Youngstown. Resumes can be sent to Melissa@goldenstringradio.org. For more information, please call 330-743-3444.

ALL STAR DRIVING SCHOOL NOW HIRING!

Earn \$12.00 per hour and make your own schedule! We are looking for instructors who are 21+, and have had a valid driver's license for at least 5 years with a good driving record. You must be able to pass a background check and a basic physical. We offer full-time, part-time, and seasonal work schedules. For more information please call 330-726-3377 or email tbarrett@allstardriving.net

HELP WANTED

Wanted people for milking dairy cattle - morning and evening hours. Location - Western PA - 15 miles from campus. \$8.00-\$12.00 per hour. Please contact John - 724-946-8394.

THE MOCHA HOUSE IS HIRING

The Mocha House of Youngstown, 120 East Boardman St. (Eastern Gateway Building) is hiring all positions. Cooks, servers and dishwashers. Flexible hours in a friendly environment. Please apply in person.

HELP WANTED

Part-time, Telemarketers \$10.00 per hour, Web designers 12 hours per week @ \$15.00 per hour, Social Marketing \$10.00 per hour, Event Coordinator % fee, Real Estate Agent % fee, Web Trainee 70% of revenue. Contact: art@ippv.com. Art Cell - 909-844-2886

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Nice all-inclusive homes with individual leases for your group of four or more from \$485 each. Call Chris: 330-743-7368.

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TWO BEDROOM APARTMENT LOCATED NEAR THE YSU CAMPUS

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PENGUIN REVIEW IS ACCEPTING CREATIVE WORKS SUCH AS
POETRY, SHORT STORIES AND ART
FROM YSU UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS.

DEADLINE SUBMISSION IS **FEBRUARY 7.**

YOUR WORK WILL BE PRINTED IN THE PENGUIN REVIEW, WHICH
WILL BE PUBLISHED AT THE END OF SPRING SEMESTER 2020.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION IS ON OUR WEBSITE
PENGUINREVIEWYSU.WEEBLY.COM

THANKS,
EMMA HAMILTON, EDITOR, PENGUIN REVIEW

BOWLERS HAVE 20/20 VISION ON TITLE

PRESTON BYERS

For Youngstown State University bowling coach Doug Kuberski and his 10 bowlers, it didn't take long to capture gold in the 2019-20 season.

During the team's first tournament in October, the Columbia 300 Penguin Classic, YSU plowed through its seven opponents en route to the tournament title. The Penguins did much of the same the following weekend, when they won the 16-team Mount Shootout in Maryland.

While the team didn't have nearly as much success in the subsequent three tournaments, an extended break from competition, which lasted nearly two months, seemed to rejuvenate the roster at the Northeast Invitational in mid-January.

In a tournament with 26 teams, the largest field the Penguins have had to face this season, they finished fifth.

Kuberski said he gave his bowlers notes on areas in which they could improve before the break.

That advice, in addition to staying in touch through texting and FaceTime, as well as some bowlers using their time to play in extra tournaments, seemed to help clear off any rust the team may have acquired otherwise.

"We came out of the gates in the first tournament, and we were pretty strong," Kuberski said. "The lanes were very challenging, and we were, I think, one of the sharpest teams there, especially with spares. That's a testament to the team working hard over break because it's definitely a challenge when you're away for almost a month and a half."

A long holiday break is not the only challenge the Penguins

face, though. Of the four remaining tournaments before nationals, the closest is in Smyrna, Tennessee, which is nearly 600 miles away from Youngstown. Other destinations for the YSU bowling team include Lincoln, Nebraska, Jonesboro, Arkansas and the team's longest trek, Conroe, Texas, which will be about a 1,300-mile trip for the bowlers.

A trip the team certainly wouldn't mind making is one to Allen Park, Michigan, which is the site of the 2020 NCAA Women's Bowling Championships in April.

Before the season, senior bowler Nikki Mendez had set goals for herself and the team, but making it to Allen Park was near the top of her list.

"I wanted us to make nationals, and we have a really good chance of getting there," Mendez said. "I wanted us to at least win one tournament because I know we have a lot of talent, and we did do that — we actually did twice. And I wanted us to be ranked in the top 15 in the National Tenpin Coaches Association."

In the most recent NTCA poll, which was released Dec. 4, the Penguins sat at No. 9, a 14-spot improvement from the preseason poll released at the beginning of October. YSU finished last season at No. 24 in the NTCA poll, which was the highest end-of-season ranking in program history.

Kuberski understands it won't be easy to stay so high in the polls. In addition to a crazy travel schedule, as Mendez put it, the team will face some of the best teams in the country over the next two months. But they hope it's all in preparation for the national tournament.

"We want to be there [at the national tournament]. So that's the goal," Kuberski said. "I think we're in a position to do so, and we're just going to keep playing our game and kind of let all that rankings and all that the selection stuff take care of itself, but we definitely plan on being there in April and hopefully making a deep run."



Emma Wrenn celebrates with her team at the Columbia 300 Penguin Classic in October. Photo courtesy of YSU Sports Information

YSU MEN'S BASKETBALL LOOKS AHEAD TO UIC

NATHANAEL HAWTHORNE

The Youngstown State University men's basketball team continues its five-game homestand after a 98-94 overtime win against the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay.

Heading into the middle of the homestand, YSU will play the University of Illinois at Chicago on Jan. 30, and Penguins coach Jerrod Calhoun said this time around, it's going to be different.

In their previous matchup, YSU beat UIC 70-64 on the road.

"Any time you're getting ready to play a team for the second time, a lot of things have changed," Calhoun said. "We played them really early in the season, but you look at what worked against them, what things you may try to adjust. We've tried to identify three things we've done really well and three things that we need to do a better job at."

According to Calhoun, defensive rebounding needs to improve. YSU gave up 34 offensive rebounds in its last two games. While Calhoun acknowledges the team is getting better, he is erring on the side of caution when it comes to UIC.

"UIC's coming in [and] they're really hot," Calhoun said. "They're a very, very dangerous team that has been battle tested."

Calhoun also believes both teams are better offensively

than they were when they previously met in December.

Another aspect Calhoun would like to see improve is the defense. He believes there is a solid foundation, but overall the team isn't completely happy with the defense.

"One of the things we've done a much better job of is fouling. We're a year older. We're playing a lot smarter," Calhoun said. "We've really put an emphasis on taking care of the basketball and not fouling. Those are the two biggest keys going into every game."

Heading into the UIC game, senior guard Donel Cathcart III knows UIC has talented guards, but if YSU is able to shut them down, it will help the team in the long run.

According to Cathcart, the key is to not let UIC's good players get started early. Cathcart wants to keep the ball out of their hands and to make other players make plays.

While wins at any point in the season are essential, to win during the thick of the season helps teams push for the playoffs, which is exactly what YSU wants to do.

"This is a time where you need to win in February so you can play a postseason. It's big for us to be consistent every day," Cathcart said.

Following the UIC game, YSU will have two more home games before taking a road trip. The team squares off against Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis on Feb. 1 and Cleveland State University on Feb. 8.

Tipoff against UIC is scheduled for Thursday at 7 p.m.



Donel Cathcart III tries to put a shot up for the Penguins in their overtime victory against the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. Photo courtesy of YSU Sports Information



YSU WOMEN'S HOOPS DROPS KEY CONFERENCE GAMES AT HOME

Taylor Petit looks for an open teammate while being guarded by a University of Wisconsin-Green Bay defender. Photo courtesy of **YSU Sports Information**

CHRISTINA SAINOVICH

Youngstown State University women's basketball team has faced difficulties throughout the season, causing it to have an up-and-down year. Last weekend, the Penguins closed a two-game homestand with two losses.



Penguins freshman Jen Wendler tries to push past a Cleveland State University defender to score a basket. Photo courtesy of **YSU Sports Information**

YSU hosted the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay on Jan. 24. Despite a tough effort and forcing their conference foe into double overtime, the Penguins fell short, 70-63.

Bright spots for the team were junior Chelsea Olson and redshirt freshman Taylor Petit. Both players recorded double-doubles in the game. Olson scored 15 points while grabbing 13 rebounds, and Petit added 11 points and 10 boards.

Just two days later, the women looked again to defend the Beeghly Center against the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. While the team looked to bounce back from Thursday's loss, it couldn't quite get the job done. Milwaukee proved to be too tough a task for Olson and company, as the final score was 74-62 in favor of the Panthers.

Petit again made her presence known, leading YSU in scoring with 10 points, alongside Gabby Lupardus, who also put up 10.

Freshman center Jen Wendler got fouls in both games, which coach John Barnes said was a factor in the losses.

"Jen [Wendler] got in foul trouble right away in the last two games. So one, we have to play small, and two, that's just another player out in terms of minutes," Barnes said.

The team is playing with a very shallow bench due to injuries. Petit has recently returned from injury. Barnes and his team are anxiously awaiting the return of key players McKenah Peters and Emma VanZanten.

Depleted numbers means more playing time for the healthy players, which Barnes says is a disadvantage to the Penguins.

"All of our players are playing quite a few minutes as it is because of our numbers, but then when we get in foul trouble, it even increases their numbers," Barnes said.

Fouling early in games was one of the mistakes YSU made in its back-to-back losses over the weekend. Olson said they need to work on the mental aspect of the game to be successful.

"Just the mental aspect of things. ... Against Green Bay we had a lot of mental breakdowns late and throughout the whole game," Olson said.

YSU takes on the University of Illinois-Chicago on the road Thursday, and Saturday the team plays at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

Olson said sticking to the basics is key to winning these next games.

"I think the biggest thing is just containing and doing our job defensively," Olson said, "And then being offensively just being aggressive like we've been in the past."

The team is currently sitting at 11-9 overall and 4-5 in conference play. YSU is currently fifth in the Horizon League and will look to move up the ranks in the coming weeks.

Looking past this weekend, the Penguins will play five of their last seven games in the Beeghly Center.

YSU BASKETBALL PLAYERS REMEMBER KOBE BRYANT

PRESTON BYERS
NATHANAEAL HAWTHORNE

The sudden death of NBA legend Kobe Bryant had an immediate and substantial impact on basketball fans, players and many others. Youngstown State University is no exception.

To many people, Bryant was more than simply a basketball player. He was a role model, an inspiration and a figure of nearly mythical status. At 17, he was drafted straight out of high school and the rest, as they say, is history.

Bryant was an 18-time All-Star, five-time NBA champion, league MVP for the 2007-2008 season and a two-time NBA Finals MVP, in addition to many other accolades collected throughout his 20-year career with the Los Angeles Lakers.

He also stands at the fourth all-time highest in NBA points, being passed in the standings by LeBron James, a friend and current Laker, just a day before Bryant's death.

Many of the current YSU men's and women's basketball players idolized Bryant, whether he was on or off the court. Junior guard McKenah Peters said his support for women's sports meant the most to her.

"He did so much for women's sports, and there's just no one like him. It's hard to see him go," Peters said. "I'd say my favorite interview of his was when Jimmy Fallon asked Kobe how his girls were going to carry on his legacy because he didn't have a son. And he said, 'I'm a girl dad. I'm super proud of it. And one of my daughters will carry on my basketball legacy.'"

She also said he influenced the way she and many of her teammates approach the game.

"He's known for his 'Mamba Mentality,' and every time I step foot on the court, I try to take pride in working harder

than everyone else," Peters said. "As long as you're working harder than everyone, you can put forth the effort, and you can do good things on the court. And I just take pride in that and just working in the offseason and just doing the extra work. Kobe always did that. He was literally the hardest worker ever."

Peters is not the only player expressing the impact of "Mamba Mentality." In fact, it's a common theme among YSU players to speak about their basketball idol's unique mindset.

Freshman guard Taylor Petit said Bryant meant a lot to her and her family. He was not only her favorite player but her father's as well. So when her father approached her after YSU's game against the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee on Jan. 26, she was stunned with the message he carried.

"My dad walked onto the court as I was walking off, and he just mentioned how Kobe passed away in a helicopter accident," Petit said. "I didn't believe it was true. ... But I saw the tears in his eyes, and that's when I knew."

Petit and Peters both use Bryant's work ethic as inspirations for their own basketball careers.

Sophomore guard Tyler Foster, whose father also idolized Bryant, said "Mamba Mentality" was his favorite part about Bryant.

"What other people thought, it didn't bother him at all," Foster said. "And I just love that about Kobe. I wish I could do like him. Kobe's just great. Kobe was great."

To sophomore guard Darius Quisenberry, "Mamba Mentality" means determination in every facet of life.

"He really showed everybody what work ethic is," Quisenberry said. "I think he showed everybody, not just basketball players, if you really love something you need to put your all into it and great things will come."

The accomplishments of Kobe Bryant will be etched in history. From his 81-point performance to his final 60-point game, the game of basketball is synonymous with number 24. So, in memory of Kobe, if you have a crumpled piece of paper and a trash can nearby, you know what to do.



A Kobe Bryant jersey pictured on the Howard Jones statue in the center of campus. Photo by Kamron Meyers/The Jambar

COLUMN: GOODBYE BLACK MAMBA

BRIAN YAUGER

Rest in peace Kobe Bryant. I never thought I'd have to say those words anytime soon.

Hell, I thought Kobe would outlive me. He just seemed like one of those guys who would be around forever. He seemed like one of those legends of the game we'd see for a long time after he retired, like Bill Russell or Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.

Every time I read it, it still doesn't seem real. I don't know how long it'll take to settle in.

When the news broke Sunday, it felt like the entire world came to a screeching halt. I typed this in a press box while covering a game because it's the only thing that I could think about. I sat there almost in tears writing this while trying to work because I haven't been able to even begin to comprehend what happened.

ESPN personalities cried on-air and players were in tears on the bench. Mike Breen, announcer for the New York Knicks, fought through tears, just as the players on the court did.

"I just don't feel like broadcasting, and I know a lot of

players don't feel like playing," Breen said.

I didn't really become a basketball fan until I became an adult, but even I remember the 81-point game against the Toronto Raptors, and I watched Bryant's final game live on TV.

I can't even fathom how someone who grew up watching Kobe feels if this is how I'm feeling despite not growing up watching him.

Watching him as a kid or not, there's no denying his impact. I mean, you don't see anyone yelling "Jordan" or "LeBron" when throwing something in the trash. Little things like that show how influential he was to the game.

On the playgrounds of middle schools, if they weren't pretending to be LeBron, every kid wanted to be Kobe.

We've all known about Kobe Bryant the legendary basketball player, but since his retirement we've begun to meet Bryant the father.

While never publicly repenting for his prior legal issues, by all accounts Kobe appeared to have turned over a new leaf, taking care of four daughters with his wife Vanessa as well as becoming one of the biggest advocates for women's basketball.

Kobe coached his daughter, Gianna, who also passed, in Amateur Athletic Union basketball. By watching her highlights, you could tell she was a chip off the old block.

In a story told on "Jimmy Kimmel Live!," Kobe explained that people would come up to him and say they hoped he would have a son to continue that legacy. Gianna would be right by his side, and without missing a beat, she'd reply:

"Wait, I got this."

He definitely began to soften as he got older.

In the last post he made on social media, not even 24 hours before his passing, Bryant, the most ruthless competitor on the court, praised LeBron for passing his all-time scoring record.

As fierce as he was, there's no doubt he loved the game and loved watching the younger generation grow the game, just as he did during the '90s and 2000s.

Thanks for everything Kobe. What you did for the game will never be forgotten. This is my "Kobe Year," (24) and I hope to carry a little bit of that "Mamba Mentality" with me every day.

Rest easy, Kobe and Gianna; my thoughts are with everyone affected.