

COVID-19 PANDEMIC HITS YSU IN ITS WALLET

AMANDA JOERNDT, RACHEL GOBEP & PRESTON BYERS

Youngstown State University is making decisions to reduce personnel costs through possible furloughs and layoffs, and it is assessing its budgets after being financially affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, according to YSU President Jim Tressel.

Tressel announced May 5 that he's taking a 15% pay reduction from his \$309,575 annual salary and over 100 additional nonunion personnel will be taking a temporary salary cut between 2% and 10%, depending on their salary.

This will lead to \$700,000 in savings.

The university is currently under a hiring freeze, and Tressel said any exceptions to the freeze will require his approval.

Health care contributions for nonunion personnel will increase from 15% to 20% in 2021, and

the university will review divisional budgets and the intercollegiate athletics budgets.

YSU will seek opportunities for restructuring, and all university-sponsored travel has been paused.

Additionally, the sudden shift to online instruction has resulted in increased expenses for the university.

The largest expense is an investment of about \$1 million into information technology, according to Neal McNally, the vice president for finance and business operations. This bump in expenses is combined with a dip in revenue due to partial student refunds.

He said a reduction in state funding to universities is possible, and in response to "plummeting state tax receipts," Gov. Mike DeWine could order budget reductions of up to 20%, which could result in YSU's funding being trimmed by as much as \$8 million.

McNally will convene the Financial Realities group for the

university, which is one of five of YSU's "Take Charge of Our Future" focus groups.

The financial realities group will help navigate "financial challenges and help ensure longer term sustainability of the university," McNally said during a board of trustees meeting May 1.

The group consists of McNally; Katrena Davidson, controller and co-convenor; Rich White, director of planning and construction; Jeff Coldren, chair of the psychology department and member of the Budget Advisory Council; Terri Orlando, budget officer in the Office of Academic Affairs; Mike Hrishenko, director of Information Technology Services; and Danny O'Connell, director of Support Services.

"[The group will] foster a clear understanding of the financial challenges that are facing YSU pre-COVID as well as the new challenges that have prevented themselves," McNally said.

Additionally, he said the university will consider cutting back on smaller projects and requests first.

"Suspending building maintenance projects, suspending computer replacement initiatives," he said. "I'm really anticipating a fruitful discussion with that group moving forward."

The city as a whole, not unlike others, will likely struggle for years to come following the pandemic. Albert Sumell, an economics professor at YSU, said there are two ways to view the economic impact of the pandemic in Youngstown.

First, since Youngstown's economy was relatively weak beforehand, the pandemic may further weaken it. Sumell likened it to "punching somebody while they're already down."

The second way, which Sumell was reluctant to call optimistic, is that Youngstown may not be hit as hard as other cities, most notably New York and Los Angeles, because it is not a popular tourist destination.

"We're less dependent on things like entertainment. We're less dependent on tourism. We're to some degree less dependent on basic leisure and hospitality compared to other areas," Sumell said. "And those are the sectors that are getting hit the hardest as a result of the pandemic."

However, Sumell was quick to say the impact felt in the Mahoning Valley would be immense.

"We're certainly going to be feeling the impact," Sumell said. "And it's going to be really bad."

In response to financial hardships universities across the country are facing, the U.S. Department of Education distributed millions of dollars to college campuses through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, also known as the CARES Act.

YSU received nearly \$10.38 million, and half will go to the students. Eastern Gateway Community College, the only other college in Youngstown, will receive nearly \$1 million.



Nearly \$10.4 million was given to Youngstown State University through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, given by the U.S. Department of Education. Half of the money will go directly to students. Photo by **Kamron Myers/The Jambar**

U.S. Rep. Tim Ryan announced that over \$50 million in federal funds would go to northeast Ohio higher education institutions and students.

"Unfortunately, too often the coronavirus' impact on our students has been under appreciated," Ryan said in a press release. "Like other Americans, our students' lives have been upended by this crisis and need the financial support this money will give them to provide for their basic needs."

"Our colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher education are important to our communities — first as centers of learning for our students, but also for the employment and services they provide," he continued. "This funding will ensure that they have the financial resources they need to serve their students and pay their employees."

Additionally Ryan said the CARES Act aid could offset some of the additional expenses by the university.

Students' Financial Hardships

Through the disbursement of CARES Act money, YSU established the \$1,000 Penguins CARE Emergency Grant.

More than 3,500 YSU students who received Federal Pell Grants during the spring 2020 semester are eligible to apply for \$1,000 in emergency payments to help defray the expenses related to COVID-19, according to Eddie Howard, vice president for student affairs, in a press release on May 1.

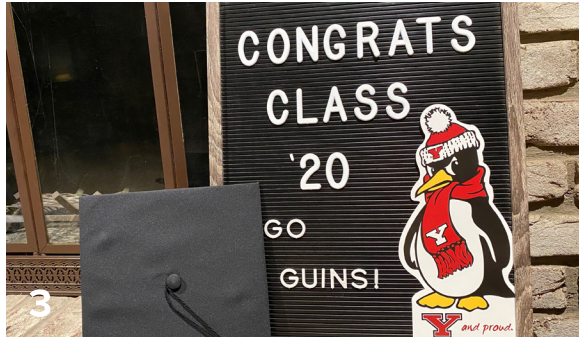
To be eligible for the grant, students must have also been enrolled in an on-campus degree program during the spring 2020 semester and incurred pandemic-related expenses for housing, food, course materials, technology, health care and child care.

Howard said this is the first phase of the university's federal CARES Act funds.



Youngstown State University is looking at possible furloughs and layoffs and is currently on a hiring freeze as a result of the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Photo by **Rachel Gobep/The Jambar**

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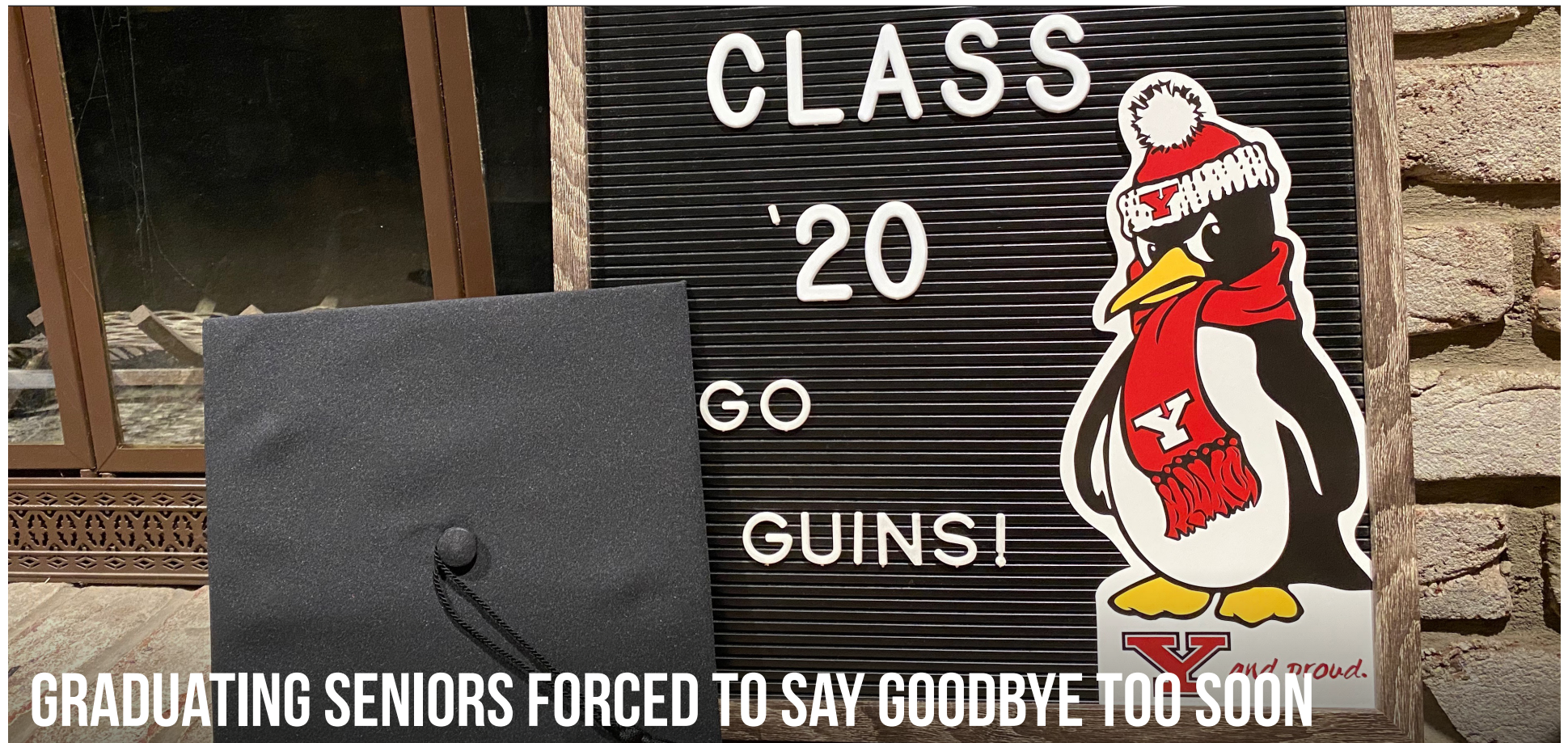
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GRADUATING SENIORS FORCED TO SAY GOODBYE TOO SOON

Youngstown State University seniors will attend a virtual commencement at 10 a.m. on Saturday. Photo by Brianna Gleghorn/The Jambar

BRIANNA GLEGHORN

The final semester of college is the time for final projects, job searching and making major life decisions, but Youngstown State University's graduating seniors are spending their final semester quarantined.

On March 10, an email to the YSU community announced spring break would be extended an extra week to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus. The extended spring break led to the rest of the spring semester being moved online.

The graduating class of spring 2020 is made up of a variety of students all working on the same goal: a diploma.

Brian Thomas, a senior life secondary science education major, said he was hurt when he first found out he would not be returning to YSU for his last semester.

"I understand that it was for a very important and serious reason," he said. "But it felt like everything that I had worked so hard for was just taken away."

Thomas said the six years of hard work he put into his degree meant a lot because he is a first-generation college graduate.

"I have always dreamed about walking across that state as a first-generation college graduate," he said. "Then all of a sudden, it was gone."

According to Thomas, he began to look for a job for after graduation, but several postings have closed due to the pandemic.

"Employers just aren't hiring right now," he said. "It is unfortunate for all of us so close to graduating and getting

ready to jump headfirst into the workforce."

Claire Berardini, associate provost for student success, said though she is disappointed in how the semester ended, seniors should still be proud to graduate.

"They're not alone in feeling disappointment. Faculty and staff are disappointed for them," she said. "As important as the graduation ceremony is, not having it doesn't lessen the accomplishment or the value of the degree."

According to Berardini, even though the 2020 spring commencement is virtual, she hopes students will celebrate their accomplishment.

"I hope families will find ways to mark the occasion and recognize their students' hard work and sacrifice," she said. "I hope graduates will be grateful for the sacrifices others have made for them. The parties will come. Friends and families will celebrate together."

As graduating seniors are going out into the workforce, Berardini said they may have to expand their ideas for jobs.

"People are expecting that fewer immediate opportunities will be available in some fields," she said. "It's important for students to understand that they have been well-educated and that they can apply their skills to different job environments. Our graduating seniors might find themselves starting out in a position they didn't imagine they would."

Berardini said that the COVID-19 pandemic has given the spring class of 2020 something to look back on and remember their hard work during this time.

"They've learned so much, met great teachers, made friends they'll have for life and made so many great memories that

COVID-19 can't take away," she said. "If there is a silver lining, maybe it's that some gained family time or had time to reflect on their years at YSU in ways they might not have had otherwise."

In Berardini's opinion, graduating seniors will be remembered for their dedication and persistence during the pandemic.

"Our seniors will truly be missed on this campus, and the impact they've had on YSU will be long lasting," she said. "They've set an example on how to persevere."

Due to the current Stay Safe Ohio Order prohibiting large public and private gatherings, the spring 2020 commencement ceremony will be online through Facebook, YouTube and the YSU website.

Jackie LeViseur, director of the Office of Alumni and Events, said the virtual commencement will follow the same schedule as the in-person ceremony would have.

"The president will be speaking, and the provost will be speaking," LeViseur said. "All the graduating seniors' names will be scrolling through the presentation."

Tom Shipka, former department chair and professor of philosophy and religious studies, will be the keynote speaker, and Rosemary Bresson, a musical theatre major, will be the student speaker on the online format.

"We will pretty much have all the elements of a normal ceremony, but it will all be online," LeViseur said.

The virtual graduation will begin at 10 a.m. on Saturday.

YSU NURSING GRADUATES COMBAT COVID-19 ON THE FRONTLINES

AMANDA JOERNDT
KELCEY NORRIS

While most of the community is being advised to take social distancing precautions during the coronavirus pandemic, some Youngstown residents have no choice but to show up for work.

Youngstown State University nursing graduates are taking risks of their own to help provide respiratory care services for those with COVID-19.

Carly Berlon graduated with a nursing degree in May 2019 and currently works in the COVID-19 intensive care unit at the Cleveland Clinic.

Berlon said her COVID-19 ICU floor is working with a lot of young and healthy patients, which is different from what she is used to.

“We’re used to people with a huge past medical history and these people are fairly healthy, which is very scary,” she said. “Really just ventilating them, and we put them on a ventilator.”

Berlon said the turnover rate is fairly high in her facility.



Brandon Rigelsky is also a 2019 YSU nursing graduate and works as a licensed nurse at Trumbull Regional Medical Center's ICU. Photo courtesy of **Brandon Rigelsky**.

“We probably have five or six submissions every single day,” she said. “They have to come back if they’re being ruled out or if they’re positive, and only stay with us if they’re positive.”

The nurses are provided with scrubs, disposable gowns, surgical masks and goggles on a daily basis.

“The surgical masks are just one-time use per patient, and then we do have our N95 respirators for if we need to use them and those are actually getting resanitized and we’ll use them again,” Berlon said.

She said she didn’t expect to be on the frontlines of a pandemic this early in her health care career.

“I remember sitting through Wendy Thomas’ class and thinking, ‘I’ll probably never see this. Why do we have to learn about pandemics and why does the 1918 flu matter?’ But amazingly, we’re using it within our first year,” Berlon said.

She said she’s constantly worrying about her loved ones.

“You go to work and you worry about your patients for 12 and a half hours and then come home and on your nights and days off, you’re worried about your family for the rest of the time,” she said.

Steven Pavlak is a 1980 and 1983 graduate from YSU’s nursing program and currently works as the system manager at Mercy Health.

He is a registered respiratory therapist in Ohio and works with about 80 respiratory therapists, giving them assistance on the frontlines.

“They are involved with mechanical ventilation, the intubation of these patients, meaning we’re putting breathing tubes in them, so they’re literally right in the face of these COVID-19 patients,” Pavlak said.

He said his respiratory therapists have proper personal protective equipment and “are ready for just about anything” they encounter.

“In my 40 years, I have never seen the intensity of the level of respiratory distress, as far as a disorder,” Pavlak said. “We’re running the most ventilators that we’ve ever run in my career that I’ve ever seen.”

Pavlak said his facility is in a good position to provide care for the community.

“Currently, we’re not doing sleep lab procedures so we’re reeducating and redeploying, so we have plenty of staff,” he said. “So that’s really been a blessing in disguise actually.”

According to Pavlak, his facility is hopeful for a “gentle rise and a gentle drop.”

“I wouldn’t say that we’re in a steep uprise,” he said. “It seems to have plateaued at this point, and we’re very hopeful that it’s going to start to go the other way.”

Brandon Rigelsky, a 2019 YSU nursing graduate, is a licensed nurse at Trumbull Regional Medical Center’s ICU. The reason he became a nurse was to help others and solve problems.

“COVID-19 has been a great learning experience,” he said. “Almost all of our patients go into renal failure and require dialysis. Many of them need to be paralyzed and pronated for many hours of the day, which requires antiviral meds I have never heard of before this outbreak.”

In the ICU, Rigelsky said changes to routines and practices



Carly Berlon graduated in May 2019 and works in the COVID-19 intensive care unit at the Cleveland Clinic. Photo courtesy of **Carly Berlon**

have been implemented with everyone’s safety in mind.

“There aren’t rooms you can freely walk in and out of,” he said. “Every single time you go in you must gown up correctly to protect not only yourself but your co-workers and families at home.”

Patients at the Trumbull Regional Medical Center in the ICU are predominantly patients infected with COVID-19.

“When I first saw COVID, it worried me. I was shaking in the rooms,” Rigelsky said. “Now I don’t worry. I treat every day the same as 6 months ago. I clock in, do the best I can, use my YSU knowledge, report things to physicians, try to provide excellent patient care in the little things.”

In addition to a solution to the virus, Rigelsky said in the meantime he wants his community to simply be kinder to one another.

“I want people to quit buying into all the fear,” he said. “There is no more being friendly to people anymore; everyone’s mad. There are far fewer friendly hellos, and everyone looks at each other with suspicion.”



CONSTRUCTION AT YSU NOT SLOWING DOWN IN PANDEMIC

On the corner of East Rayen and Wick avenues, Campus Lofts, an over 100,000-square-foot, 190-unit apartment complex, is being built. Photo by **Kamron Myers/The Jambar**

PRESTON BYERS

While life may be different for many during the COVID-19 global pandemic, construction on the Youngstown State University campus hasn't changed much.

As a part of Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton and Gov. Mike DeWine's stay-at-home order, "essential infrastructure" is permitted, meaning YSU can and will move forward with many of the projects it had scheduled for this summer.

In fact, some projects are beginning sooner than anticipated due to the unusually low number of people on campus, according to Rich White, YSU's director of planning and construction.

"We're actually letting the [Stavich Family Bridge project] go a couple of weeks early," White said. "Typically, we wouldn't start that until probably after graduation, but we're starting that a couple of weeks early."

In addition to the bridge's roof replacement, YSU is working

on a structural issue at Ward Beecher Hall. A roof replacement at Fok Hall and projects at Stambaugh Stadium and Beeghly Center are set for this summer as well, White said.

Those working on these projects, almost all of whom are contractors, are supposed to follow social distancing guidelines set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which suggest staying at least 6 feet away from others.

YSU project managers are on the site every day, according to John Hyden, YSU's associate vice president of facilities maintenance, although the safety of the contracted employees lies with the contractors.

"The onus for the health and safety of the contracted employees falls on the company that they're working for," Hyden said.

"Now, that being said, if our health and safety or project management people go through a job site and find a contractor that's doing something that's overtly unsafe, we're going to call it to their attention," Hyden continued. "And we have gone as far as to shut them down for unsafe work practices. But it's

very, very unusual to do that."

One of the biggest summer construction projects isn't a YSU project, however.

On the corner of East Rayen and Wick avenues, Campus Lofts, an over 100,000-square-foot, 190-unit apartment complex, is being built. The off-campus housing option is still planned to open in time for the fall 2020 semester, according to owner James Sabatine Jr.

Although the status of the fall 2020 semester is unknown, Sabatine said he isn't worried students won't move on campus when classes begin in August.

"Everybody's summer is going to be in the fall this year," Sabatine said. "I think there's going to be a push for kids from this area to go to school in Ohio State and their parents want them a little bit closer to home. But they're not going to want to live at home. They're going to want the college experience."

The tentative fall 2020 semester start date is Aug. 17.

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Wednesday, September 12, 2001

FEAR HITS YSU

YSU closed at noon Tuesday because of alleged terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, D.C. Many students left campus crying, teachers huddled around televisions and radios, and the campus community mourned one of the largest national tragedies in U.S. history.

LIKE 9/11, COVID-19 PANDEMIC CHANGES EVERYDAY LIFE

The Jambar's front page on Sept. 12, 2001, the day after the 9/11 attacks. Courtesy of [The Jambar Archive](#)

PRESTON BYERS JAMBAR CONTRIBUTOR

For many, life has changed since the World Health Organization characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic.

In addition to an ever-increasing death total, which is nearly 70,000 in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as of May 5, millions of Americans have been left without jobs, waiting at home for life to return to some form of normal. For some, though, there is a possibility normal will look different after the pandemic.

Like in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, certain things will likely be different when adults go back to work, kids return to school and life resumes in a post-pandemic world.

"There were a lot of new security measures [after 9/11], like the USA PATRIOT Act, in terms of individual freedoms and power of government to survey and collect evidence and arrest and hold people on charges," said Bill Lawson, the executive director of the Mahoning Valley Historical Society.

"Coronavirus will affect domestic policy and foreign policy. ... That will mainly mean more inspections of people, produce and products coming in that may carry the virus," Lawson continued.

While the differences between a series of sudden terrorist

attacks and a highly contagious virus are plentiful, the ways people react to each do have similarities.

In both instances, the American economy suffered greatly. On Sept. 17, 2001, the first day the New York Stock Exchange opened after the attacks, the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell over 684 points, a 7.1% decline, the 14th largest single-day percentage loss in history to that point.

However, three separate days in March 2020 — March 9, March 12 and March 16 — surpassed Sept. 17. March 16, in particular, a day in which the market fell a record 2,997 points, or 12.9%, is already considered one of the worst days in stock market history.

The panic that arose from 9/11 also is comparable to the pandemic. In the weeks and months after 9/11, there was a sense of fear and anger that similar attacks would happen, according to Brian Brennan, the Maag Library operations supervisor.

"There was a lot of fear [after 9/11], a lot of fear locally as well as nationally, because this has happened so suddenly and without warning," Brennan said. "But there was also a lot of anger. There was a lot of anger to get back at whoever did this. And it was very hard to direct their anger at the time."

Fear and anger appear to be common during the coronavirus pandemic as well. Some angered by the closing of nonessential

businesses have begun protesting. Hundreds of protesters gathered at the Ohio Statehouse in Columbus on April 18 to "Open Ohio Now" and "Unlock Our Economy."

Mark Sweetwood, a local editor for Mahoning Matters, was working in a newsroom and suburban Chicago in 2001. While New York and Washington were affected, Sweetwood said most lives likely didn't "fundamentally change."

"Our parallel today is everyone in the country is sort of facing the same thing," Sweetwood said. "It's one thing being a localized trauma in New York City at ground zero. The rest of the country lived that trauma from afar, but when you look at it now, it's like, 'Wow, we're all sort of sharing the same reality.'"

That reality can range from suddenly becoming a stay-at-home parent to taking on the role of a teacher for children or even changing old habits in public to prevent spreading illnesses. The new normal may be uncomfortable and frustrating, but there is reason to look ahead, Brennan says.

"It is kind of eerie when I go out of the house, having to wear a mask and going to the supermarket and waiting your turn to get in," Brennan said.

"It's just developed a whole new situation of living, which is very sad," he added. "But I do tell myself that this is temporary. This is a crisis we'll meet head-on. We'll get through it."

PREVENTING CAMPUS CONTAMINATION: HOW YSU IS FIGHTING COVID-19

KELCEY NORRIS

Staff members began working to disinfect the university in response to the COVID-19 pandemic after the university made the decision to suspend face-to-face classes and move to online instruction in March.

Martyn Moss, manager of building services, said the janitorial staff is vigorously decontaminating the entire campus and focusing on “disinfecting all touch-point surfaces.”

“We’re making sure we get the door handles and all the entrances into offices. We’ve gone through all the classrooms and disinfected all of the desks and chairs,” he said. “Anything someone might have touched, we’ve already been disinfecting it.”

In addition to heightened disinfecting, the staff still performs routine janitorial work such as mopping floors and dusting.

“There are still germs in the air and in the ventilation systems, so we’re trying to keep that clean as well,” Moss said.

He said his staff quickly went to work but acknowledges YSU has always kept things germ-free.

“We’ve always disinfected doorknobs and that, but we make sure we pay a little more attention and get to those more often now,” Moss said. “After the students and staff went on spring break, that’s when we really hit the classrooms hard and are still cleaning them now.”

He said janitorial duties are a great defense to keeping everyone safe but added that people also need to take responsibility for

precautions.

“We need to be washing our hands continuously, using hand sanitizer and not touching our eyes or faces,” Moss said

Julie Gentile, director of environmental and occupational health and safety, also said the best way to fight the disease is to take a personal initiative.

“There are recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and basically what they’re saying is typical household cleaners we would all have, like Clorox wipes and Lysol spray, are very effective at cleaning and disinfecting, even with COVID-19,” she said.

Gentile said her department was directly involved in planning how the university would uphold recommendations for social distancing and disinfecting.

“We would make sure that areas were identified that could accommodate social distancing,” she said. “We also worked with our janitors and crew on site to make sure the cleaning products were in accordance with EPA guidelines, making sure they were the best to disinfect and kill these viruses.”

Gentile said YSU was already strategizing for COVID-19 to hit before it was considered a pandemic.

“There were a lot of us who started meeting a couple times a week in the beginning of February,” she said. “We were just in the preplanning phases when China had the outbreak, but we started meeting and planning at that point.”

Gentile said while the virus is still being tested, medical professionals can agree that it is extremely contagious.

“It’s two times more contagious than a normal flu virus, so making sure surfaces are clean and at a higher frequency will help decrease the risk that it’s passed on from person to person,” she said.

The Andrews Student Recreation and Wellness Center staff have also been taking an active role on social media, showing their followers diligent cleaning methods.

Ryan McNicholas, associate director of campus recreation, said the cleaning products the rec center uses are graded for fitness facilities.

“We always have the highest standards of cleaning for our department,” he said. “We have scheduled maintenance of the Andrews Student Recreation and Wellness Center.”



Photo by Kamron Myers/The Jambar

VIRTUAL LECTURE PROVIDES WELLNESS TIPS FOR YSU COMMUNITY

AMANDA JOERNDT

The Youngstown State University Office of Alumni and Events is helping YSU students, faculty and alumni stay virtually connected during the coronavirus pandemic through Facebook Live discussions.

Heather Belgin, associate director of the Office of Alumni and Events, said this is the office’s first attempt at hosting a virtual presentation, and she hopes it won’t be the last.

“We plan to do more Facebook Live lectures on our page throughout this time of staying at home and likely into the future,” she said.

Tammy Sos, a part-time instructor in the Department of Kinesiology and Sports Science at YSU, hosted the first Facebook Live discussion sharing the six dimensions of wellness: spiritual, emotional, physical, social, intellectual and environmental awareness.

The discussion currently has over 700 views on the Youngstown State Alumni Engagement Facebook page.

“In addition to the numbers, we were happy with the interaction during and after the lecture between viewers and Tammy and the positive comments received from those who watch it,” she said.

Sos started the discussion by expressing how important

mental health awareness is, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“There’s a lot of change happening right now and it’s happening very fast. Some people are unsure of how to address those things,” she said. “There’s six dimensions that go into feeling whole and well.”

Sos explained how easy it is to get caught up in negativity during challenging times.

“We are bombarded with news and a lot of it is not great news,” she said. “Connecting with yourself and others more and just to check back in with yourself.”

Self-care allows an individual to feel more control during uncertain times.

“We can’t take care of others until we are OK and we can take care of ourselves,” Sos said. “We’re just trying to develop those personal ethics and values that help us find a purpose and something bigger.”

Sos said learning new skills and activities are productive ways to spend your time indoors.

“Take this time to catch up on things and learn something, learn a new language, try furthering your education about something in your field,” she said. “I picked up a coloring book a couple weeks ago, and it feels good. It’s just a mindless activity.”

Sos explained when people experience heightened emotions

such as fear and worry, the first thing they should do is recognize those emotions and take action on them.

“We can’t just let it sit here and simmer on the burner because it’s going to boil,” she said. “It’s important to redirect that energy. Connect with somebody that shares the same kind of humor you do and relieve that stress.”

“A lot of times a person will go and sit in nature somewhere, and they just take the time to breathe the air and hear the sounds around them,” Sos added.

Sos said being able to volunteer and stay mindful of your community during stressful times is an addition to keeping busy during the COVID-19 crisis.

Students should also try to stick with a normal schedule to feel motivated and encouraged to finish their courses.

“One of the things you can do is try to stick to as normal of a schedule as possible. If you’re supposed to be at work by 8 a.m., get yourself up and read to work at 8 a.m.,” Sos said. “When you’re doing your schoolwork, make sure you’re working on that topic at the time you would be in that class.”

Sos ended the discussion by saying when all else fails, go outside.

“Keep it simple. Don’t overthink what you’re doing,” she said. “Move more and sit less. Definitely do that as much as possible.”

LOCAL MUSIC INDUSTRY ADAPTS DURING PANDEMIC

KELCEY NORRIS
JAMBAR CONTRIBUTOR

In order to cope with the statewide stay-at-home order, many members of the music industry in northeast Ohio are going digital to make a living.

Westside Bowl, a popular Youngstown concert venue and restaurant, was excited to bring a multitude of musicians together for a mini festival called West Fest.

Nate Offerdahl, owner of Westside Bowl, said the venue had booked gigs practically every day in March, including the anniversary concert, which all had to be canceled.

“[In March] we had bands coming from all over the country, like Los Angeles, New York, Seattle,” he said. “It was going to not only be a chance for us to celebrate our two-year anniversary but to see friends of ours who were in bands all over the country.”

Offerdahl said canceling the performances in both March and April was “soul crushing.”

“The reason that I got into this was to be a music venue and to have live music,” he said. “This big building — it’s all about live music and being full of, you know, life and laughter and loud music and people having fun. To be here and have it so empty is really tough to deal with.”

When this loss of revenue and excitement began to set in, Offerdahl said the community stepped in to help. Local musicians and small businesses began a pay-it-forward campaign for Westside Bowl carry-out food.

“It wasn’t really our decision to be made,” he said. “Good friends of ours in a band called Rebreather that plays here regularly ... they said they wanted to pay for free pizza for the next 10 people who ordered.”

Offerdahl said this turned into a ripple effect. Other musicians and small businesses followed in Rebreather’s footsteps and bought pizza for their community members.

Bareknuckle Tattoo & Barber Shop, Little Blackbird Photo and a band called DAGGRS are among the many who donated.

“Before you know it, we had a lot of people donating,” Offerdahl said. “As of right now we have about 500 pizzas that are prepaid.”

He said the success of his business will likely depend on this pay-it-forward chain going through his kitchen.

“It really took on a life of its own. And the crazy thing is that the generosity of others is probably what will keep us in business through this next couple of months,” Offerdahl said.

He’s advertising the generous donations on social media, particularly on Facebook and Instagram. Offerdahl explained how all patrons benefit from the generosity of donors.

“So if you call in and say you want a 12-inch pizza with pepperoni and sausage, and when you get here we let the customer know that we’ve had a lot of very generous folks donate in advance,” he said. “Instead of paying \$12, they’ll pay just four.”

Offerdahl said his staff also gives away discounted pizzas to fellow members of the music industry feeling the financial effects of the stay-at-home order.

“A lot of people who are in local bands who like to hang out here are taking advantage of it as well as a lot of folks in our neighborhood,” he said. “We’re just happy we can help by giving this stuff away.”

Because of the generosity of his local community, Offerdahl said his business and his state of mind were saved.

“It’s sort of been a lifesaver for me,” he said. “We’re able to give stuff to folks who need it at a time when a lot of life, generally speaking, is uncertain.”

One of the music groups scheduled to play at Westside Bowl in March was Frayle, originally from Cleveland. Guitarist Sean Bilovecky and frontwoman Gwyn Strang decided to use social media as a way to continue making music.

“After our live shows were canceled, we switched into thinking about what else we could do,” said Bilovecky. “Gwyn and I live together, so we thought we could livestream and do two-fifths of Frayle without violating any of the mandates of social distancing. So first we had to learn how to livestream.”

Bilovecky said their adjustment to the digital platform seemed difficult at first, but it allowed them an opportunity to reach a wider audience.

“The first livestream we did on our own, but then an influencer in the doom metal genre in Europe got ahold of us and asked if we’d want to do one on his Facebook page, which had a much broader audience than our page,” he said.

The band said gaining this exposure helped it gain more listeners.

“Our followers on social media have gone up. Our sales have been steady on bandcamp.com and our Spotify streaming numbers have gone up,” Bilovecky said. “We’re definitely gaining new fans.”

Strang and Bilovecky work full time with apparel companies developing innovative reusable masks for health care workers. Strang said continuing to play music gives them an opportunity to show appreciation for their supporters.

“As an artist, it’s easy to chase the next shiny object and get distracted, but sometimes you ... have to make sure you’re putting content out there to keep people engaged,” Strang said. “There are a bunch of bored people out there wanting to go to shows and we really wanted to do something for our awesome friends and fans.”

Bilovecky said people should support a musician during these uncertain times and canceled events.

“There are a lot of bands out there who are in pretty bad shape right now who were gearing up for tours and had invested heavily in merch,” he said. “Right now, they’ve got garages full of merch that they just fronted a lot of money on, so if you can support a band that you’re into, buy a T-shirt online to help them out.”

Frank Toncar, a musician originally from Youngstown, has also performed at Westside Bowl during his career and was booked for West Fest last month.

“I float around with a bunch of different bands, and I like performing all kinds of music. I play a little bit of everything,” he said.

Like many musicians, Toncar said he has been using a heightened presence on social media to attract listeners



Frayle guitarist Sean Bilovecky and frontwoman Gwyn Strang said the best ways to support your favorite local music groups are buying merchandise and checking out livestreams. Photo courtesy of Sean Bilovecky

looking for new music.

“I’ve been filming a few videos and posting those and will probably get around to doing a livestream here soon,” he said. “I’ve been working a lot on [a new single] that will be coming out soon. I’ve been trying to advertise that on my social media channels.”

Toncar said his income comes from his job as a sound engineer as well as performing at various gigs.

“I get most of my income from summer Cedar Point gigs I play, which is a nice chunk of reserve, so while I’ve been back in Youngstown I’d been preparing to go on tour ... and running a recording studio here,” he said.

He’s been working on postproduction editing of music from the recording studio but lost out on local gigs he’d had planned.

“I’ve definitely been able to make a little bit of income during this time, so it hasn’t hit me as hard as people who depend on touring,” Toncar said. “I’m definitely thankful for that.”

Toncar said finding new music, movies and other entertainment during this time is helpful. He has released some new music covers and plans to continue giving his fans more content.

“Mental health is going to be a big deal with all of this going on for everybody, and the best thing to do is keep your head up and stay busy doing things you enjoy,” he said.



Alaina Woofter's "Porch-rai" series captures her subjects from a safe distance. Photo courtesy of Alaina Woofter

FRANCES CLAUSE

Navigating uncertain times as a photographer has never been more difficult – from canceled weddings to sporting events, photography sessions have become a casualty of COVID-19.

But this isn't stopping photographers from getting behind the lens to pursue their passion at a safe distance, including Youngstown State University students and local artists.

Elijah DuPonty, a senior photography major, has created high-fashion editorial portraits of a Barbie doll in a series titled, "My Barbie Collection." The portraits depict Barbie wearing handmade replicas of pieces that would not typically be found in her wardrobe.

"These fashion pieces are iconic in history, yet they would be deemed as too risqué and or provocative to be mass marketed toward children," he said. "I felt like these pieces deserved to be replicated for a Barbie due to their social impact."

Some of the fashion moments DuPonty recreated include Lady Gaga's meat dress worn at the 2010 MTV Video Music Awards and Donatella Versace's dress from her brother's Miss S&M collection.

"In my photographic imagery, I mainly work in portraiture. Since the pandemic, I felt that using Barbie as my model was an easy way to continue to make portraits during this pandemic," DuPonty said.

With physical exhibitions being canceled, DuPonty has been displaying these portraits through Instagram and virtual exhibitions, including Bliss Kids Collective.

Bliss Kids Collective is a coalition of Youngstown artists that has created its first digital art show, titled "STAYHOME," to support artists that are financially affected due to COVID-19.

The group is accepting a range of mediums, from prints and paintings to gifs and sculptures, through May 15 and posting the pieces to its Instagram page.

"We are constantly being exposed to imagery of people wearing masks, disease and death during this time, and we deserve to see

something different," DuPonty said.

DuPonty feels continuing to create can help artists cope through this pandemic, and his advice to artists is to follow through with their projects.

"Art always reflects the times it was created, and we do not want to lose this interesting time in art history," he said.

Alaina Woofter, another senior photography major, has continued to work with models in person. She has made social distancing a priority through her series "Porch-raits."

"This is a project for my advanced photography class. I am working toward making this series a book," she said. "I have been sharing the photos by email to everyone who has participated, and I will be posting some on Instagram and to my website, Alainalouise.com."

Woofter is appreciative of how her subjects were willing to come together to participate despite the current circumstances.

"I stayed more than 6 feet from everyone, but the interaction they had with me, since all the people had been quarantined, missed the human interaction," she said.

Although she echoed some of DuPonty's advice, Woofter believes it's also important for photographers to know their limits.

"If you are having a rut in one series or project, take a break and make something else," she said. "Or even create a small, fun miniseries that will get you back into the groove. I found that creating other work that was just for me helped me create and further my other projects."

A local photographer that has been able to experiment and stray from his comfort zone is Julian Ford. He has continued working with his models during FaceTime photoshoots.

"I honestly saw a YouTuber do [FaceTime shoots], and I was planning on editing the pictures people sent me," he said.

Ford believes the FaceTime photoshoots opened up new creative opportunities to photograph people he normally wouldn't be able

to work with due to distance.

"[A challenge was] being on the same schedule as people, or sometimes the connection is bad," he said, referring to the obstacles in FaceTime sessions. "Honestly, slowing down on the photography has helped me [through this time.]"

For more tips and resources for photographers, visit lensculture.com to discover new inspiration or join a supportive photography community.



Elijah DuPonty's series titled, "My Barbie Collection" is a way for him to continue portrait photography in a creative way. Photo courtesy of Elijah DuPonty

LIFE CONTINUES, EVEN IN A PANDEMIC

MAC POMEROY

This past semester has been unlike any other. As students, we must be prepared for anything that could come up in our education, but I think it's safe to say no one ever expected this.

Looking back, if I knew that day before spring break would be the last, I would have made sure to go hug my friends. But now that we are in this situation, we must not continue looking at the past with mourning.

Instead, even now, it's important to focus on the present. For many, this is a difficult time beyond simply having classes interrupted and being unable to hang out with friends.

This may be the first time students feel overwhelmed with the unknown and are struggling with depressive emotions. Due to these feelings, many may also forget to stop and take care of themselves. Or perhaps you already struggled with mental health and this is just

making it worse.

Believe me, I understand. We are all struggling together.

But you need to remember that regardless of what is going on, you are still important to someone. Neglecting to take care of yourself will not help the situation. It will only make you feel worse.

It's important to remember to keep up with habits like showering, eating and getting proper rest. I have seen too many friends develop bad habits such as not eating or staying up for hours due to stress. One of my friends has even developed a bad caffeine habit as a way of coping. Oh, wait, she already had that. Love you, Franny.

Part of the way is to set up some sort of a daily schedule, even if it's much different than usual. Wake up at 10 a.m., go to bed at midnight. Eat at 11 a.m., 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Shower every other day. Whatever works for you.

This will help add a sense of normalcy to your days along with simply helping you keep track of them.

Also remember to pick up hobbies and do what makes you happy. As I am sure many of you have, I got the Animal Crossing: New Horizons video game when this started, and it has consumed a lot of my time lately. You need to be able to remain happy, or else these days will carry on a lot longer than they need to.

Also, as we are all missing our friends and family, take advantage of technology and stay in touch. Social distancing does not mean social isolation. In fact, it can be the opposite. Take advantage of Facebook, Snapchat, phone calls, whatever. Just make sure to keep in touch with those you love. They need you as much as you need them.

Remember, Youngstown, we are strong. We have been through so much, and this will not defeat us. We will go through this together. Just stay home and stay safe.

Have a great finals week. I hope to see you all again next semester. Good luck, Guins.

THE JAMBAR: WHERE I FOUND A HOME, A 'JAMILY'

RACHEL GOBEP

I'll be virtually graduating from Youngstown State University on Saturday. This isn't what I thought I'd be feeling at the end of my college career.

I'm trying to be optimistic because my time at YSU was absolutely unforgettable. I met friends I know I will have for a lifetime. I gained a plethora of knowledge. I traveled with my fellow journalism students, and I worked tirelessly in The Jambar newsroom.

The Jambar is the single element of YSU that shaped my college career and shaped who I am as a person today. Without it, I can't even comprehend who I'd be.

I stepped into that newsroom on the first floor of Kilcawley Center as a clueless freshman. At that time, I didn't realize how much that day would affect my life.

From that point forward, I spent more time in the newsroom than I did in the classroom. It's where I found a home, a family, or what we call at The Jambar a "Jamily," and a place to have the deepest intellectual conversations.

The Jambar is a mix of all kinds of people. From sports-obsessed men and theater-loving women to rugby players, bassoon slayers, foodies, churchgoers, jokesters, anime lovers, consistent Taco Bell eaters and kind hearts, we have it all.

Walking into our newsroom is like seeing a bunch of people who probably wouldn't have been friends otherwise become

inseparable.

Yes, we've had our qualms and disagreements. But I wouldn't change the memories we have had for the world. My time at The Jambar is unforgettable.

What hurts me the most is that I won't step in that newsroom again as the editor in chief. I won't see the reporters working on their stories. I won't see the other editors give insightful advice or even a hug if someone is having a rough day.

Today, I'll see my name printed on a newspaper that's hot off the presses for the last time, and I get to see each reporter's final stories of the semester, which is something I'm truly grateful for. But frankly, I just want the newsroom and my friends back.

There were days that I wished I wasn't there on Wednesday's production night, which is the night we put the newspaper together. There were days where I wished I could be anywhere else. And, boy, am I cursing myself.

I'll never experience my last production night in the newsroom, and damn, does that hurt. Our last in-person production night was March 4. On Wednesday, May 6, two months later, we put the paper together virtually to have one final issue.

The staff at The Jambar has done so much this academic year. We started Jambar TV, YSU's first online news broadcast. We covered the closure of The Vindicator, Youngstown's daily newspaper that closed after 150 years.

Now, we're covering

COVID-19, which is the biggest story of my career at The Jambar. Although the semester didn't turn out how I expected it to, being the editor of YSU's student-run newspaper during a pandemic has been an unforgettable experience.

If there's one thing I have gained from this experience, it's that you should really cherish the time you have with people. Enjoy these moments because you never know if they will be suddenly taken away from you when you least expect it.

To the upcoming editor of The Jambar, Kelcey Norris, and the executive producer of Jambar TV, Abigail Cloutier, I know you're going to do great. I'm sorry I didn't get to mentor you like I wanted to. But please know I'm just a phone call away. You both are strong, intelligent and are capable of just about anything. Don't lose your sense of self and continue to tell the stories of YSU during this odd and difficult time.

Thank you to The Jambar staff for being everything I ever wished for as the editor. I am so sorry our time together was cut short, but I know for damn sure that we'll be friends for a lifetime. So this is Rachel Gobep, the 2019-2020 editor in chief of The Jambar, passing the torch onto the next administration.

LIFE WITHOUT SPORTS

BRIAN YAUGER

It's odd to say that this is the last issue of The Jambar I'll be taking part in. It's even more odd that for this last issue, I have no sports to talk about.

With my entire life revolving around sports for basically forever, going from nonstop sports to absolutely nothing overnight was pretty overwhelming.

Tournament basketball, my busiest time of the year, was just about over. I could see the light at the end of the tunnel. I only had a handful of games left, and then it was on to baseball, softball and a far more relaxed schedule.

Just before everything started shutting down, I was dreading the possibility of having to drive to Columbus for a state title game.

I guess I got my wish.

When the NBA started canceling everything, including games that were just about to start, I think that's when it set in as to how serious it was.

I couldn't be sorer for the high school seniors who had their last season of spring sports ripped away. I'm just happy the college seniors were given another year of eligibility.

With no sports came no job. For the last month and the foreseeable future, I've been furloughed at my job with the Tribune Chronicle.

I'll admit I was incredibly depressed for a while — like probably the worst hole I've been in in some time. I didn't see an end to this and I was scared.

This couldn't have come at a worse time. I'm graduating and I'll need a full-time job, but there are no sports for me to cover, and

papers are laying people off left and right. It's the worst possible time to try and find a job.

I'm sure you can see why I was in such a rough spot.

Thankfully, I've adjusted now, and honestly, I'm in a much better place than I have been in a long time.

I kind of forgot what it's like to not be bouncing around from job to job and game to game.

I'm trying to remind myself that this will probably be the last time I'll ever be able to have this free time considering retirement is just a fantasy, so I want to enjoy myself as best as I can.

It's almost been kind of nice in a way without sports. I've been able to catch up on things I haven't done or been able to do.

I was able to make my senior project better than I ever anticipated because of the extra time. I still expected more out of myself, but I'm still going to work on finishing the stories I couldn't now that it's all over.

I'm actually able to go through all the pictures I've taken at games. I still have probably 60 games worth of photos to go through, but I'm making progress.

I started blogging about personal stuff, which is something I never thought I'd say.

It's been a real adjustment without sports, but it's almost been a blessing in a way. I feel I've been able to put some work in on myself as opposed to the constant grind. I definitely think I'll come out of this as a much more well-rounded person.

But since this is my last story here, some thank you's are in order.

Thanks to the sports information staff for helping me

get through to people. Because of you guys, I was able to tell some really cool stories that I'm still proud of.

Thanks to my fellow editors for catching all the stuff I missed.

Thanks to all my professors who took on a college dropout with no real writing experience and molding me into the writer I am now. I've always wanted to be a writer for a living, and thanks to all the polishing I received from all of you, for the first time in my life, I can say that I believe I'll actually be able to do it.

I was lucky enough to meet people who will be lifelong friends, and I'll forever be grateful for that. So first, thanks for putting up with me guys. I'm sure my constant stress was really fun. Thanks for always being there to try and ease that stress. I appreciate you guys more than you could know.

And as corny as it is to say, thanks to all of you for reading. Knowing that what I wrote was generating the interest that it did is not only humbling but also such a great feeling.

Just know that this isn't a goodbye. In fact, I'm almost relieved that I don't have to say goodbye now. I'm not good at goodbyes.

This is just a see you later. It might be a while before we get to see that "later," but we'll see it soon enough.

So with that, see you later, Jambar. See you later, YSU. It's been fun.



STUDENT'S MASK STRAPS HELP HUNDREDS

John Galvin, a senior computer science major, is making 3D-printed mask straps for essential personnel. The mask straps are designed to relieve pressure on a wearer's ears. Photos courtesy of **John Galvin**

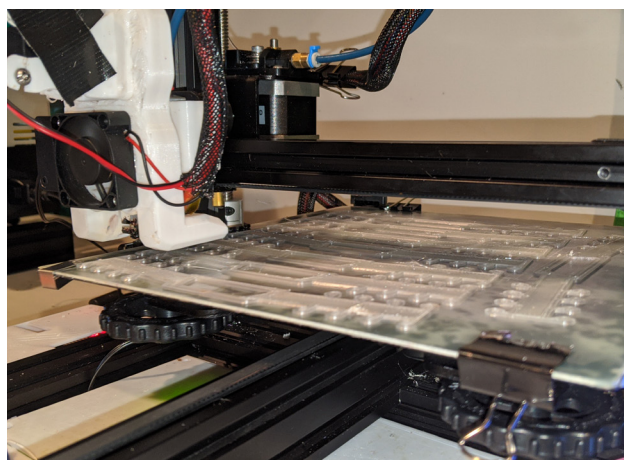
ABIGAIL CLOUTIER JAMBAR CONTRIBUTOR

A 3D printer, open-source blueprint and over 1,000 face mask straps are how Youngstown State University senior John Galvin is using his time in self-isolation.

The information technology major is giving the mask straps, which are designed to relieve pressure from the wearer's ears, to essential personnel for free. He's spent countless hours printing, sanitizing and shipping the flexible plastic straps.

"Currently, it is just me [printing the straps]. No one is helping me," he said. "I actually bought a second 3D printer to keep up."

Due to the demand, he has temporarily stopped taking requests, but Galvin has received orders from Ohio, Pennsylvania, several states in the Midwest and even an individual in Florida. Both individuals in essential fields and department heads have made requests from as little as two



straps to over a hundred.

"I sanitize them and ship them out as soon as they're done printing," Galvin said.

He makes at least one trip to the post office per day. Currently, he is covering the cost of sanitizing the straps, postage and 3D printer filament himself, but he has created a GoFundMe fundraiser to help with the cost.

"The filament [rolls] are about \$20 apiece, and I'm not positive about how many I can get out of one," he said. "A few hundred would be my guess."

Jennifer Nance works for Kemper House, a company that manages several long-term care and assisted living facilities in northeast Ohio. Every employee is using the mask straps donated by Galvin.

"It's uncomfortable wearing a mask all day, and it rubs behind your ears," Nance said. "It can be really irritating."

Many of her employees work eight-hour shifts without taking off their masks.

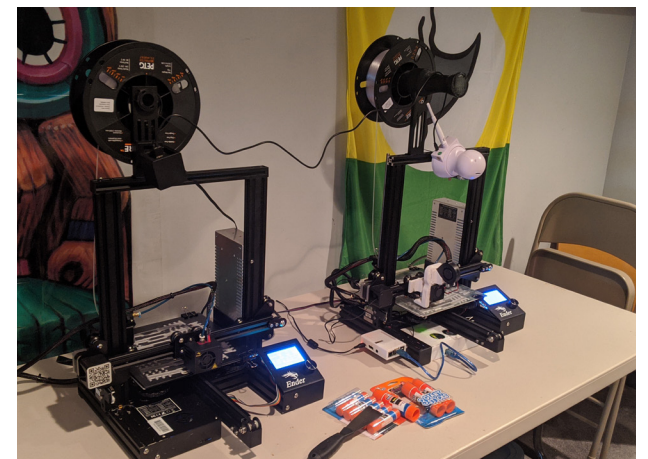
"Not only do the bands that John made help prevent that, but it also helps the mask fit better and more snug to your face. There's less chance of air or germs getting through the sides," she said.

Nance also noted that the straps are very easy to sanitize and reuse since they are printed from plastic.

Tom Reed is the station manager and paramedic supervisor at EMT Ambulance in Warren. It is one of the largest ambulance providers in the area and responds to emergency calls and medical transfers between hospitals.

"Before COVID-19, the biggest risks were hepatitis and AIDS," he said. "But that's transmitted pretty much from blood-to-blood contact. With COVID, we have to treat pretty much everyone like they're infected."

Reed's EMTs work 24-hour shifts on and then have 48



hours off. During that 24-hour shift, they are always on call.

"Across the board, I made it mandatory to wear a mask and gloves, bare minimum, on call," he said. "If we have calls that are shortness of breath, fevers, anything that has COVID symptoms, we're going with goggles, gowns, gloves and masks."

Reed estimates that the company is going through 40 to 60 times the number of personal protective equipment than it did prior to the pandemic.

"These clips, they are adjustable and strap behind your head instead of your ears, so you really can't feel that you're wearing a mask," he said.

Reed stressed the importance of safety during this time.

"This disease is invisible. [We're] fighting an invisible enemy," he said.



YOUNGSTOWN RESTAURANTS STRUGGLE AMID COVID-19 CLOSURES

V2 Wine Bar and Trattoria opened for takeout on May 6 after a brief hiatus. Photo by *Abigail Cloutier/The Jambar*

ABIGAIL CLOUTIER JAMBAR CONTRIBUTOR

About two months ago, several new restaurants and bars were slated to open soon in Youngstown.

Gringo's Tacos, Tequila Coyote, Prima Cucina Italiana and Rev's Ribs were all in various stages of preparation to open during the summer months.

Now, Gov. Mike DeWine's statewide restrictions with food operations due to the coronavirus pandemic put those opening dates in jeopardy as even existing restaurants are forced to lay off workers and serve takeout only.

Jorge Carreño, co-owner of Gringo's Tacos, originally aimed to open the establishment April 16 on North Phelps Street.

"All of our construction has slowed down, so our opening day is going to have to be put back until further notice," he said. "We're taking it day by day. Even if we make a decision and put a date on it, it doesn't depend on us anymore. It depends on what the government tells us."

Carreño is also co-owner of Margherita's Grille in Girard. The restaurant closed after hearing only essential businesses

should remain open.

Ultimately, the restaurant reopened with limited hours for takeout orders only, Carreño said.

"Many of our employees were concerned to be in contact with the public, especially after hearing all of the news," he said.

Carreño said much of the staff has been laid off, and Margherita's Grille is operating with only a handful of staff members to reduce person-to-person contact.

"This is affecting us all the same way. Even the people that have a job are concerned about how long they're going to be able to perform that job," he said.

Ed Moses, co-owner of V2 Wine Bar and Trattoria by Vernon in downtown Youngstown, said the establishment would be closed as of the last week of March.

"There's an impact on our employees; it's not good," he said. "It's an impact on the city and downtown Youngstown overall. It's dead downtown."

Moses said there was difficulty in the logistics of doing takeout orders only.

"I'm not sure what everyone else is doing, but we're closed

because there's no parking downtown," he said. "They can't pull up and come in and pick up and go. We're very limited downtown, and it's very hard to do that."

Moses said it was a "waiting game and very frustrating" to reopen and get back to normal.

Even before the spread of COVID-19, community members noted specific difficulties that came with the creation of new restaurants in the Youngstown area.

Carmella Williams, director of supplier diversity and inclusion at the Youngstown Business Incubator, said issues such as profit margins can make it hard for restaurants operating even in better economic times.

"For instance, in the food business, the profit margin is so low. So the question is how long will it take you to even break even?" she said. "And they don't really predict that well, so you'll see people going out of business in two to three, four years. If you make over the five-year mark, you're really doing something."



MASS MOVE OUT: STUDENTS LEAVE DORMITORIES FOR SPRING SEMESTER

YSU students living in residence halls picked an hourlong move-out slot during the week of March 16 after the university announced it was moving face-to-face instruction to online-only instruction on March 13. Photo by *Abigail Cloutier/The Jambar*

ABIGAIL CLOUTIER

Youngstown State University students living in on-campus housing were allowed to come and go from the residence halls until March 13, which is the same day the university announced its decision for remote learning instruction due to the coronavirus outbreak.

Kelly Beers, director of university housing, closed off residence halls several hours later to any student not currently in the dorms until their instructed move-out time.

Students were required to pick an hour-long move-out slot for the week of March 16, and residence halls limited the number of people in the building. Students were also required to wear gloves during move out.

Although students were instructed to pack and move out the weekend of March 13, the Office of Housing and Residence Life made accommodations for students who cannot move off campus.

Thomas Kushner, a junior communication studies major, elected to stay in his position as a resident assistant in Cafaro House. As of March 19, he was still living in the dorms.

“My home has three high-risk individuals living in it right now,” Kushner said. “I am going to try and live on campus for as long as I can because I know that being in the dorm means exposing myself to a lot of things that I do not want to bring home.”

Kushner has been a resident assistant for three years and said he feels a sense of loss in his residents.

“Seeing so many people I care about just completely heartbroken about having to move out is really tough,” he said. “People are going to forget things and leave things and have to sacrifice things due to not having enough space or enough time to pack.”

Kushner said for freshman students, having to leave their new friend groups is especially tough.

“This is their first time building a community like this,” he said. “I hope that no one will be too discouraged and know that they will find this community again.”

Abbey Cochran, a sophomore human resources management major, had lived in Cafaro House since her freshman year and said when she was moving out, she was able to say goodbye to some of her closest friends.

“We saw each other outside with our red carts, and she came over and we talked for 20 minutes about how surreal this all is, and then I realized, I’m not going to see her until August because she lives in Minnesota,” she said.

Like many students, Cochran said she felt little closure when she learned she wouldn’t be able to return to campus.

“I didn’t know that the last time I was in class was the last time I was going to see my classmates, and I didn’t know that the last time I went to Stone Fruit or Dunkin’ was the last time I was going to see my friends,” she said.

Karleen Schroyer, a freshman graphic design major who lived in Lyden House, said she felt a sense of isolation after moving out.

“Moving away from my friends and boyfriend has been very hard for me. I went from seeing my boyfriend almost every day to not seeing him at all for I don’t know how long,” she said. “Not being able to socialize with my friends like I did at college is hard.”

Moving back home also changed Schroyer’s lifestyle in a short amount of time.

“Living in the dorms gave me the freedom that I needed. If I needed space or wanted a change in scenery, I could go somewhere; it was ultimately my decision,” Schroyer said. “Now that I’m home and leaving the house is limited, I lose a bit of that freedom.”

Despite a rushed move out and students’ safety and hygiene concerns, Kushner stressed how hard the Office of Housing and Residence Life has worked to maintain order.

“The response to this pandemic by Residence Life has been fantastic,” he said. “Students may be frustrated by the decision of a mass move out midsemester, but trust me when I say that that was not an easy decision to make.”

The university also processed housing refunds for the students who have moved out.

FOOD BANKS FACE INCREASED NEED

ABIGAIL CLOUTIER

As millions of Americans file for unemployment — 4.4 million in the last week alone — food banks are experiencing an increase in need. In the Mahoning Valley, food banks aren't only receiving an increase in requests but are also requesting donations outside of their locations to keep up.

Dan Wakefield, the HIV/AIDS ministry director for the Ursuline Sisters, stated there has been a decrease in the amount of donations the organization usually receives.

"We're seeing a decrease in donations from grocery stores because people are shopping more," he said. "Places like Pizza Hut usually have a lunch buffet and they donate food from that, but they haven't been able to have that. As a consequence, we've had to purchase a little more than we typically have, and supplies are down."

However, it is receiving support in other ways, such as through donated gift cards from Aldi and Pizza Hut and grant requests.

The Ursuline Sisters, which encompasses organizations like the Beatitude House, usually serves clients well below the poverty line.

Under usual circumstances, it has a cafe and social support groups for clients with HIV and AIDS. Instead, the organization is doing home deliveries of food and personal hygiene items for clients who are homebound and has adjusted its cafe for takeout only.

"It's important for people to understand you hear a lot about

essential employees like medical professionals, and our heart goes out to those people," he said. "Essential employees are also social workers, those serving the poor or other nonprofit agencies. It's important to continue to provide services for those in need."

Wakefield stressed how grateful he was for the generosity and community support the Ursuline Sisters have received.

"It's humbling to see during these times how generous people are, with organizations opening up grant requests and things like that," he said. "We are grateful to have such a helpful community."

Second Harvest Food Bank, which serves 160 member organizations, has already distributed 41% more food than in the same time period last year. In 2019, it distributed a record 11.5 million pounds, and it reports it is on track to outpace that with over one million pounds of food in April alone.

"Prior to the virus situation, these pantries and soup kitchens were seeing about 13,000 people a week," executive director Mike Iberis said. "Since the coronavirus pandemic, they're reporting that they're seeing about 18,000 people a week."

Though Second Harvest doesn't usually do direct distribution, it has organized several traveling food pantry events to address the need.

"I think it's become necessary to do these pop-up distributions," Iberis said. "At the one at the fairgrounds, we saw about 625 cars come through and distributed approximately 70,000 pounds of

food."

Second Harvest worked with the National Guard to have several other pop-up events at local high schools.

"The community has been very generous. We've had a lot of organizations and individuals step up to have to give us donations," Iberis said. "In order for us to bring in more food, so we're just going to continue doing what we're doing, and hopefully we'll be able to stay ahead of the need."

Additionally, Youngstown Clothing Co. recently launched a new T-shirt called "City With Heart," with 100% of the proceeds going to Second Harvest Food Bank.

Joe Lordi, the executive director of Youngstown Community Food Center, has also seen the community come together to help those in need.

"We've had organizations reach out and request food for veterans," he said. "Not only the veterans, but we've had mental health groups [and] a group of ladies pick up food to take to seniors. They were here Wednesday and picked up 60 boxes of food, and they've been doing that for four weeks now."

Like Second Harvest and the Ursuline Sisters, Lordi is grateful to receive support from other organizations. Businesses like Berk Paper Company have donated bags and boxes to help Youngstown Community Food Center with distribution, which are products it normally purchases out of pocket.

COVID-19 FINANCIAL IMPACT

Continued from Page 1

"These grants will certainly help ease the financial burden that many of our students are feeling as a result of the pandemic," he said.

To aid those most affected by the pandemic, the YSU Foundation has begun the Penguin-to-Penguin campaign. This campaign, which launched March 26, aimed to raise \$50,000 for YSU students that are in "dire need of basic necessities," according to YSU Foundation President Paul McFadden.

Howard said the fund has received more than \$75,000 in private donations as of May 1.

"We have been humbled and overwhelmed by the response to the Penguin-to-Penguin campaign that will provide immediate funding for students adversely affected by the outbreak," McFadden said. "The response by alumni, staff and friends has been immediate and extraordinary."

The campaign will provide the university's most vulnerable students with up to \$500 for housing, medical bills, food, safety needs, travel costs related to a death or illness, rent, utilities and other basic necessities.

Tressel said he knew the university needed to act fast to help students in financial emergency situations during the COVID-19 crisis.

"The purpose is for us to make sure that we can handle any ongoing things for students who really have just an unusual moment ... whether it's a medical bill or transportation," he said.

Tressel said the university is trying to accommodate the different situations students face.

"We're just trying to think of every way and every incident that

could be coming someone's way that we can be helpful," he said.

Nathan Myers, associate provost for international and global initiatives, said his department conducted a survey and discovered the top two needs international students face during this pandemic.

"We got a response rate of 40, and the top two things were financial help more than usual. I think that was coming from a place where a lot of them worked student jobs," he said. "Then No. 2 in the list was actually finding food."

Taufeeque Mohammad, a former international student at YSU, said international students rely heavily on student employment for their main source of income.

"The biggest issue is employment because international students can just work on campus," he said. "We are here on talent. We are here on the scholarships."

Mohammad said he also knows what his family is going through back at home in Nepal with COVID-19 spreading worldwide.

"It's messed up back home too," he said. "So even at this point of time, I can't get help from my family."

Myers said any amount of compensation would be beneficial for international students.

"You know 35 or 50 bucks. ... That could be a real difference maker in order simply to buy groceries or order them for delivery," he said. "I will say they do a pretty good job of looking after each other."

International students aren't the only ones needing assistance during the pandemic. Myers said domestic students are in the same position.

"I know a lot of our domestic students, they're losing jobs too," he said. "It's not only the international students that need help."

Nicole Kent-Strollo, director of the Office of Student Outreach

and Support, said she is responsible for administering funds to the students, and applications started coming in right after the application was posted.

"The biggest challenge right now is we're counting on those funds coming in. I think if we had our way, we would help everyone," she said.

Kent-Strollo said it's amazing to see the Youngstown community support the fund through different donations.

"What we've seen so far with regard to our alum, our faculty, our staff who have, like, jumped into a system anyway, even before the funds started," she said.

Tressel said he urges students to reach out to the university for any needed assistance.

"Know that we're here for you," he said. "Sometimes all of us are so immersed in trying to take classes online or deliver classes online and being on all these conference calls."

Students can apply for the Penguins CARE Emergency Grant at ysu.edu/caresgrant. Once eligibility is verified, \$1,000 will be disbursed through check or direct deposit. There is no application deadline, but any funds not disbursed in 12 months will be returned to the federal government.

To apply for the Penguin-to-Penguin fund, go to the financial aid and scholarships portion of the YSU website. Donations to the Penguin-to-Penguin campaign can be made on the YSU Foundation's website.

For more information on the Take Charge of Our Future Focus Groups that were organized to consider the university's future, visit YSU's website.



Throughout the remainder of the spring 2020 semester, YSU student employees in every department were given the opportunity to receive a paycheck for remote work they complete online, according to Claire Berardini, associate provost for student success. Photo by **Kamron Myers/The Jambar**

BRIANNA GLEGHORN

Student employment opportunities at Youngstown State University are open for all YSU students to take advantage of, but with the coronavirus pandemic resulting in the closure of campus, some student employees' positions have been altered.

Claire Berardini, associate provost for student success, said YSU student employees in every department were opportunity to receive a paycheck for remote work they complete online.

"We didn't want a single student who wants to work to have their wages discontinued," she said.

According to Berardini, some on-campus jobs were easier to transition remotely than others.

"The only difference is that instead of working in an office on campus, they'll be doing it from home," she said.

Berardini said the transition to working remotely online hasn't been easy for all student employees.

"Their jobs just don't readily make that possible," she said.

"We have given this direction to supervisors that all of our current employees will be able to work remotely."

According to Berardini, supervisors can create work for employees to help their department while working from home.

"We've given supervisors a lot of examples and ideas about how they can find new types of work for their students to do within their department that can be done remotely," she said.

Berardini said she acknowledges this work style will not fit every department and has a second option for supervisors.

"There's going to be a group of supervisors who really just absolutely cannot think of anything," she said. "There's nothing that can be done to advance or assist their

departments. So, we've created about three or four kinds of out-of-the-box projects that any student can work on."

Student employees that chose to continue working but can't complete their job remotely can be given projects that help the university while maintaining their income, according to Berardini.

"The supervisors are going to continue to act as the supervisor for their student employees, and they're going to consult with those students about which of those projects the students would be interested in completing," she said.

Even with these options, Berardini said some student employees have decided not to continue working for the remainder of the spring semester.

"That's okay; that's their choice," she said. "But we don't want to leave a single student who's relying on those wages without the ability to earn those wages."

Cameron Oleksa, a sophomore accounting major, said he was stressed when he first heard about all classes being moved online, and he wasn't sure if he would still have a job.

"I commute to campus and worked on campus for parking services as a main source of income," he said. "I have to work on schoolwork while being stressed out if I'm going to be able to pay my bills."

Oleksa said his job with parking services has taken a different direction than expected.

"I don't think this is a job you can perform at home," he said. "But this week one of the managers called me with a task for me to perform."

Oleksa also works at a movie theater that has been closed due to Gov. Mike DeWine's stay-at-home order that closed

all nonessential businesses.

"At the same time, I work for a movie theater, so I had two jobs and then I had none," he said.

YSU student employees went back to work remotely online on March 30 and will continue until the end of the semester if they chose, according to Berardini.

Michael Greco, assistant director of student tutorial services, said moving classes online was a big transition for student tutors.

"We had over 1,000 appointments scheduled that recur on a weekly basis," Greco said. "When the announcement was made that everything would be shifting to online, all those preexisting appointments were going to have to shift."

Greco said student tutors underwent training to learn Cisco Webex, a software used for video conferencing, to continue tutoring students.

Student tutors were given the option of continuing employment, and several decided not to for various reasons, according to Greco.

"I lost about 20 of them due to this transition," he said. "They all gave a variety of reasons why they wouldn't be available. There were some of them that online was going to be a huge task for them to transition."

According to Greco, the transition would not have been successful without the work and support of the tutoring staff.

"I could not have transitioned without their help," he said. "I mean, they've been really great at attending the training, asking questions, communicating with one another, reaching out to their students and so they've been doing a great job in this transition period."



YSU FACULTY JOIN FORCES IN FIGHTING COVID-19

Faculty members designed this filtration device using 3D technology, attachable to conventional masks and able to filter out large particles. Photo courtesy of **Eric MacDonald**

KELCEY NORRIS

A team of Youngstown State University faculty members joined forces to design unique personal protective equipment for health care professionals during the coronavirus pandemic.

Their final product, which is a filtration device that can be attached to commercial masks, is awaiting approval from the National Institutes of Health.

Darrell Wallace, manufacturing engineering professor and program coordinator, and Brian Vuksanovich, mechanical engineering technology professor, designed the device using 3D printing technology as well as traditional N95 commercial mask production.

The design was created with input from the Rayen School of Engineering and Engineering Technology faculty, the Bitonte College of Health and Human Services faculty and Mercy Health medical professionals.

“We met with some local health care professionals who were concerned about PPE equipment,” Wallace said. “We focused on how to address the need for N95 masks, which are able to filter out virus-sized particles.”

Because many of the masks are manufactured in large quantities overseas, the YSU engineering professors wanted to bring the equipment closer to home.

They decided to use commercially available, tight-fitting masks with attached filtration.

“We made it possible to use commercially available masks that aren’t able to be used as filtration devices by themselves, then we could come up with a way to put the filtration media on there, essentially making your own filtration mask,” Wallace said.

The benefits of the filtration device for health care workers include comfort, reusability and effectiveness.

“It’s a recyclable, reusable solution. All you have to do is

replace the filtration media and wash the masks,” Wallace said. “Traditional paper masks require a lot of material and are made mostly overseas.”

While other manufacturers are using 3D printing technology to create N95 masks that filter out large particles, Wallace said the 3D-printed design does not fit tightly enough to the face.

“The 3D-printed masks out there are not certain to fit your face. You don’t have a lot of control of whether or not it’ll be a good mask for consumers,” he said.

Mary Yacovone, a professor in the Department of Health Professions, said she was involved in the project mainly as an adviser to the designers, explaining how the different masks protect workers from respiratory infection.

The team’s main goal was to use less material to build a device equally protective as other surgical masks, which are in short supply nationwide.

“What does this device mean for me as a practitioner?” Yacovone said. “It means that I can wear that mask with the N95 filtration material in the apparatus. At the end of the day, simply change out the filtration material and clean the mask instead of throwing out the entire mask.”

Essentially, the only part of the design that needs replaced after use is the small filtration paper inside the 3D-printed cartridges attached.

Yacovone said without the effort and perspectives of multiple YSU faculty members, this could not have been possible.

“Faculty collaboration is probably not talked about so much, but it’s done a lot,” she said. “The amount of collaboration remotely and the time we’ve spent on this shows how much we love what we’re doing.”

Working remotely with the engineers and Yacovone were Jason Walker, assistant professor of mechanical and industrial engineering; Pedro Cortes, associate professor of chemical engineering; John Martin, associate professor of mechanical

engineering technology; Taci Turel, associate professor of human ecology; Joseph D’Uva, associate professor of art; Julie Gentile, director of environmental, occupational, health, and safety; Diana Palardy, associate professor of world languages and culture; and Eric MacDonald, the Friedman chair for manufacturing.

“Each one of these people have their own expertise and their own passions, so to bring that together as a group was a very awesome experience for all of us,” Yacovone said.



Emily Jane MacDonald models the 3-M style mask with attached filtration devices awaiting approval from the National Institutes of Health. Photo courtesy of **Eric MacDonald**