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HELPING STUDENTS FIND SUCCESS



Photo by Elizabeth Coss / The Jambar

Kelly Wilkinson joins the YSU community Feb. 1 as the next dean to serve the Williamson College of Business Administration.

Williamson College of Business Administration welcomes new dean

By Elizabeth Coss
The Jambar

Kelly Wilkinson has been named the new dean of Williamson College of Business Administration following the retirement of Betty Jo Licata last semester. Licata served as the dean of Williamson for 26 years.

Wilkinson has previously worked as a professor, chair and associate dean at Indiana State University. She said part of the reason she chose Youngstown State University is because she enjoys helping students find their future occupations.

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COVID-19 update

Cases surge during break

By Sydney Stalnecker
The Jambar

As students, faculty and staff make their way back to Youngstown State University's campus this semester, COVID-19 lingers out of sight but not out of mind.

According to YSU's COVID-19 dashboard, 214 cases were reported during the three-week winter break. Of those, 151 were students living off campus, 17 were students living on campus and 46 were employees.

Of the 214 cases, 131 were reported last week, Jan. 2-8.

Last week, 119 students were tested through the asymptomatic voluntary surveillance testing program. Four tests came back positive.

YSU isn't alone in the rise of cases. According to the New York Times, the state of Ohio is seeing an average of 19,115 new cases per day. Within the last 14 days, there has been a 53% increase in cases.

Provost Brien Smith sent out a campus-wide email over the break to remind students, faculty and staff that the COVID-19 guidelines remain in place throughout

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Dean

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“I enjoy helping students find their passion and their career choices, and that was one of the things that led me here,” Wilkinson said.

One of the first things she plans to work on is communication and economics in the college, as well as adapting it to the changing environments students have been facing.

“[There are] gaps in learning from students who haven’t been in the classroom that are coming into college,” Wilkinson said. “There are going to be things we haven’t even thought of yet, and we’re going to have to be ready to pivot to those needs.”

Wilkinson also plans on working with students and making sure their needs are met by helping them figure out what their purpose in the Mahoning Valley is in terms

of industry.

“There [are] entrepreneurial opportunities, as well as making sure we’re meeting the needs for the traditional students as well,” Wilkinson said.

Provost Brien Smith was pleased with the decision to hire Wilkinson as dean and looks forward to the expertise she can offer the university.

“Kelly brings with her years of experience in higher education and business school administration,” Smith said. “Her accomplishments align well with YSU’s Plan for Strategic Actions to Take Charge of Our Future, particularly in student success and life-long learning. I believe she will demonstrate her ability to work well with others, both at YSU and within the Youngstown community.”

Wilkinson will officially be at the university starting Feb. 1.

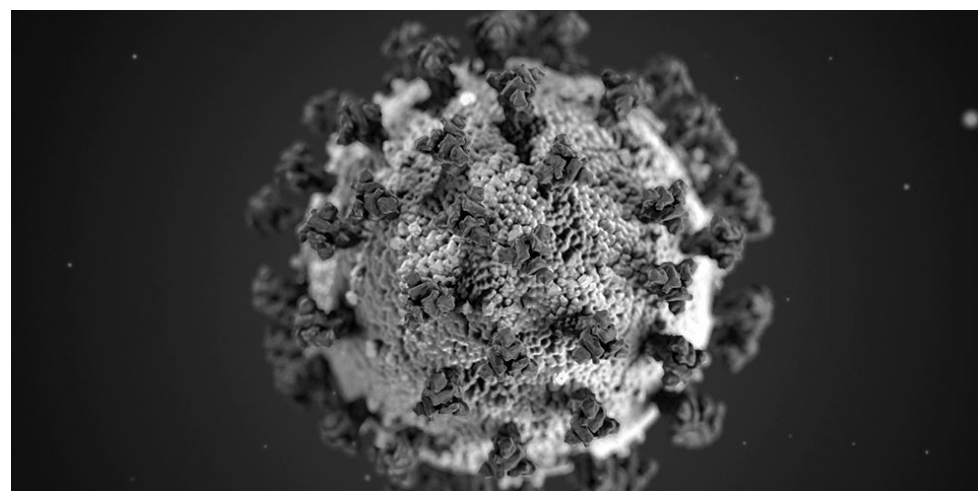


Photo courtesy of Pexels.com

COVID

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the spring semester.

Masks are still required in all campus facilities, and everyone is expected to do a daily health assessment before coming to campus. Anyone who feels ill is recommended to stay home.

YSU offers two methods of COVID-19 testing.

Those actively experiencing COVID-19 symptoms can visit Mercy Health on Wick Avenue for a test. This location is open from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. weekdays.

Those who are not ex-

periencing symptoms but still wish to get tested can visit rooms 2214 or 2303 in Cushwa Hall where at-home tests are available from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays. Instructions for administering the at-home testing kits is available at ysu.edu/coronavirus-information/testing

YSU has not established a COVID-19 vaccine mandate, but the university will provide opportunities for students to get vaccinated.

Vaccine and booster clinics will be available on campus in the Ohio Room located in Kilcawley Center

on Feb. 3, March 3, March 28 and April 28. YSU offers the Moderna, Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson vaccines. Appointments for the vaccine or booster can be made at ysu-covid.com

“These precautions have kept the YSU campus safe for the past several months, and we remain committed to moving forward with in-person classes,” Smith said.

The COVID-19 dashboard is updated every Monday.

Stay safe, Penguins!

BLOOMING WITH CHANGE



Photo by Sydney Stalnecker / The Jambar

The greenhouse attached to Ward Beecher Hall will soon be fixed to become an independently powered building.

Rays of growth in YSU greenhouse

By Sydney Stalnecker
The Jambar

Broken tiles, cracked glass and extreme temperatures will no longer characterize Youngstown State University's greenhouse.

The greenhouse, attached to the end of Ward Beecher Hall, is undergoing a three-phase construction project which, according to university architect Summer Barker, began in October 2021.

Wim Steelant, dean of the science, technology, engineering and mathematics department, said the project's goals are to make repairs, fix the climate control and make it independent from oil and gas. It will be powered with the solar panels on the roof of Moser Hall.

"From the donor's perspective, he wanted us to fix it up. It's been here a long, long time," Steelant said. "It was deteriorating quick — the tiles were falling off the walls and glass was getting broken."

To make the greenhouse completely independent, batteries will be used to store energy from the solar panels. This allows for the greenhouse to be used at all times without any connection to Ward Beecher's power sources.

The STEM college was able to make these renovations due to a donation it received.

"A donor owned a horse farm, and so there's a house and the land, and they decided to give it to the YSU Foundation that then had to sell it off," Steelant said. "The profits of that sale came to the STEM college to fund the cleanup — or remodel, if you wish — of the greenhouse which is a little bit above \$420,000."

Ian Renne, associate professor of ecology, has attempted to fund the renovation of the greenhouse in the past by writing three National Science Foundation grants, but ultimately did not receive them.

"I have written three NSF grants — 2007, 2008 and 2009 — collectively totalling around nearly \$1 million," Renne said. "My third attempt was very close to being funded, but it ultimately did not get funded."

Both Steelant and Renne are happy to see the greenhouse being renovated and are excited to use it for future education and research at YSU.

"This roughly \$420,000 that has been put into this current renovation is a wonderful first step," Renne said. "It's going to increase functionality, particularly in the research-ready chamber."

A major part of the construction was focused on bay

three of the greenhouse, which will be used as a research-ready chamber once the project is finished.

"With that budget we were given, we were able to focus renovation to greenhouse bay number three, which was formerly a rainforest greenhouse," Barker said.

Renne said the third bay has been in a state of disrepair since before he began his career at the university in 2006.

The greenhouse consists of three bays. The first two needed few major renovations, but bay three contained a large crater where a banana tree had grown in the 1990s. Renne said the crater is known as "death valley" among those who frequent the greenhouse.

"They installed a tropical rainforest, and it seemed to function just for a short amount of time," Renne said. "They ran into a lot of maintenance issues, and it has been a deadzone — a big eyesore — since the greenhouse faces Lincoln [Avenue], one of the most traveled areas on Youngstown State's campus."

Steelant expects the project to be complete within the next month. When it is finished, there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the renovation.

FEWER PLACES TO EAT

Restaurants close, dining options limited around campus

By **Jessica Stamp**
The Jambar

Over winter break, restaurants close to campus, such as Jimmy John's and Pizza Joe's, shut their doors for the last time. In addition to these closures, on-campus dining options have cut their hours, making it more difficult for students to find a place to eat.

The sandwich servicing restaurant Jimmy John's on Youngstown State University's campus closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic's impact. The business is centered around on-the-go rush-hour lunches, but with more jobs becoming remote, Jimmy John's and similar businesses have lost that flow of customers coming in for a quick and easy meal.

Nicholas Koupiaris, Student Government Association president, hopes more businesses will move to Lincoln Avenue so students can have a variety of food and entertainment options close to campus.

"Considering that students do eat at a lot of locations around here on campus, it's definitely something to kind of keep into the conversation with the university — trying to see if we can get a push for something else to move into there so students have more food options," Koupiaris said.

Another business that is closing in the

area is Pizza Joe's in the 20 Federal Place located in downtown Youngstown.

This location has experienced a reduced number of foot traffic and as a result is closed permanently.

Koupiaris said more businesses on Lincoln Avenue would offer students a better campus life.

"All I can really do is provide my support for Lincoln Avenue to become a prosperous place for students to be able to go to for food or entertainment," Koupiaris said. "What [SGA] really values is our students' campus life, and we really think that places like Lincoln Avenue being so close to the university could help provide better value to student's campus life."

The Jimmy John's location on campus has not released a statement on why it has closed.

In addition to restaurants closing around campus, many on-campus options have limited hours this semester. Many eateries in Kilcawley Center have cut their hours from previous semesters, such as Dunkin' Donuts, Wendy's and the KC Food Court. With the exception of Chick-fil-A, all other dining options in Kilcawley Center close by 5 p.m., with various options closing at 2 or 3 p.m.



Photo by Jessica Stamp / The Jambar
Where Jimmy John's used to serve sandwiches to the **YSU** community now sits an empty building.

Kilcawley Center Dining Option Hours

Dunkin' Donuts	Mon.-Thurs. Fri.	7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. 7:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Hissho Sushi	Mon.-Fri.	10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Wendy's	Mon.-Thurs. Fri.	10 a.m. – 4 p.m. 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
The Den	Mon.-Thurs. Fri.	9 a.m. – 3 p.m. 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.
2mato	Mon.-Fri.	10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Chop'd & Wrap'd	Mon.-Fri.	10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Chick-fil-A	Mon.-Thurs. Fri. and Sat.	11 a.m. – 7 p.m. 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Jamba Juice	Mon.-Fri.	8 a.m. – 3 p.m.

HONORING A KING

YSU honors MLK with campus events

C. Aileen Blaine and Elizabeth Coss
The Jambar

Youngstown State University's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is honoring Martin Luther King Jr. Day by hosting several in-person events.

Carol Bennett, assistant provost at the office of DEI, said this year's events focused more on social activism and the individuals who worked with King to promote equality and civil rights.

"A lot of the other presentations and workshops in the past talked about Dr. King as he was in 1968, or they just gave a history of him," Bennett said. "So [now], we're talking about the importance of social activism and about how some things have changed, but they haven't changed."

The events started off with a presentation titled "Black Social Movements," which explored Black Americans' fight for equality since emancipation. Held Tuesday evening in Kilcawley Center's Jones Room, the topics discussed included anti-lynching movements, the Tulsa race riots and the 1960s civil rights movements.

Bennett led the discussion by speaking on the history and truth of King by highlighting events from the 1800s

"When we learn more about a historical event, we're not trying to change history, we're just adding another piece to the puzzle."

— Carol Bennett,
Assistant provost, office of DEI

through the 1960s and how these have unfolded in the modern day.

"I want people to know the truth, not only about Reverend Dr. [Martin Luther] King," Bennett said. "When we learn more about a historical event, we're not trying to change history, we're just adding another piece to the puzzle."

Wednesday evening brought a viewing of the film "Selma," a historical drama that chronicles King's 1965 march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, in an effort to secure equal voting rights.

Thursday brings a keynote address by the Reverend Lewis W. Macklin II at 12:30 p.m. in Kilcawley Center's Chestnut Room. The address will reflect on the life of King and how his impact and legacy can still be felt today.

"The main goal is to get people talking," Bennett said. "We're really trying to get students engaged, getting them to think about the world they live in and how things are impacting them."

The office of DEI is planning for more events to be set throughout the month into February for Black History Month.

Travel yoga with Brooke Crissman

Samantha Smith
The Jambar

Youngstown State University's Andrews Student Recreation and Wellness Center offers a broad array of activities to keep students active. The rec recently added travel yoga — yoga classes offered in a variety of locations around campus — to its repertoire.

Brooke Crissman, a junior biology major, will be hosting the travel yoga classes around campus.

"It's the same yoga that I normally teach, which is kind of like a power yoga, but I adjust it and I give options to make it easier or to make it harder," Crissman said.

"I think it's really beneficial for anyone who is stressed with anything."

— Brooke Crissman,
Junior biology major/ travel yoga instructor

There will be six total travel yoga classes this semester. Locations include Maag Library, Jones Hall and the meditation room in the rec center. The first class is scheduled for Jan. 24 on the third floor of Maag Library. An official posting of dates and locations will be provided in the future.

Crissman explained the general practice of yoga and its benefits, such as decreasing everyday stress.

"I know it's more of a spiritual experience, which sounds super cliché, but it's supposed to be matching your breath with your movement, and your mind is supposed to be centered. It's kind of like a journey," she said. "I think it's really beneficial for anyone who is stressed

with school, anyone who is stressed with anything. It's a good way to bring yourself back down."

Students can register for travel yoga classes through the recreation center's website. If they have any problems doing so, they can email Crissman at becrissman@student.ysu.edu or Dina Fabry, fitness and wellness coordinator, at dmfabry@ysu.edu. For more information on the travel yoga class, visit the recreation center's website.

"I just want to tell people that it's an open and judge-free zone," Crissman said. "It's not this intimidating environment. You're always welcome."

DRAW IN 2022

McDonough to feature 4 new exhibitions this month

By C. Aileen Blaine
The Jambar

In the wake of a new year, the McDonough Museum of Art will kick off 2022 with four new exhibitions by artists from across the country. Covering a variety of themes — from the pandemic to purgatory — the exhibitions showcase the complexity of modern life through a multitude of mediums.

Museum director Claudia Berlinski said despite the ongoing pandemic, the museum has found ways of roll-

“I was interested in looking at spaces there that were, on one hand, very contemplative, and then on the other hand, very high-tech and very fast.”

— Matthew Kolodziej,
Artist and University of Akron professor

ing with the punches and staying adaptable.

“We’ve learned so much during the initial surge [of the pandemic] about planning and being flexible and trying alternatives,” she said.

Artist and professor at the University of Akron Matthew Kolodziej’s exhibit, titled “Open Storage,” uses depictions of architecture and archeology to convey ideas of time, dislocation and the formation of one’s perception.

“Right before COVID, I was able to go to Japan,” Kolodziej said. “I was interested in looking at spaces there that were, on the one hand, very contemplative, and then on the other hand, very high-tech and very fast.”

The works on display are connected to each other, but change scale, perspective and detail. They come together in a collection showcasing textured paintings and a large graphite airbrushed work that covers the walls of the gallery where the pieces are displayed. Kolodziej has also created large scrolls that will hang from the gallery’s ceilings.

“We will have some musical recitals in this space — which we’ve been doing for a few years — and that’s always been interesting,” Berlinski said. “With Matthew’s scrolls hanging, I think it will be a dynamic addition to the performances.”

Kolodziej will host an artist talk at 5:10 p.m. Jan. 27 at the museum.

The exhibition will also feature a photography exhibit by Donald Black Jr., a Cleveland native. His series “A Day No One Will Remember” focuses on the ordinary days of childhood play, imagination, innocence and creative expression through the eyes of Black children. The inner-city setting serves as a way to communicate the impacts violence, poverty, grief and trauma have on children living in such “stark and gritty” conditions while also bringing light to the resilience of children’s imaginations. Black will host an artist talk at 5:10 p.m. Feb. 23 at the museum.

Piotr Szyhalski’s “COVID-19: Labor Camp Report” series uses ink drawings and accompanying captions to attempt to make sense of and document the current crisis amid the pandemic. The artist, whose works have been shown at venues such as the International Center

“It’s always fun for me to see how students react to the work and having professors bring in their classes.”

— Claudia Berlinski,
McDonough Museum director

of Photography and the New York Expo Film Festival, is a professor of media arts at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design.

Artists Sarah Bowling, Han Diaspora Group, Laura Hudspith, Rosabel Rosalind and Rebecca Shapass have come together in a collaborative effort that combines painting, installation, sculpture and performance art to explore such themes as control, power, memory and transformation. The collection, titled “There Are Seams in Purgatory,” presents the works of the Carnegie Mellon University graduate students in an emerging artists showcase.

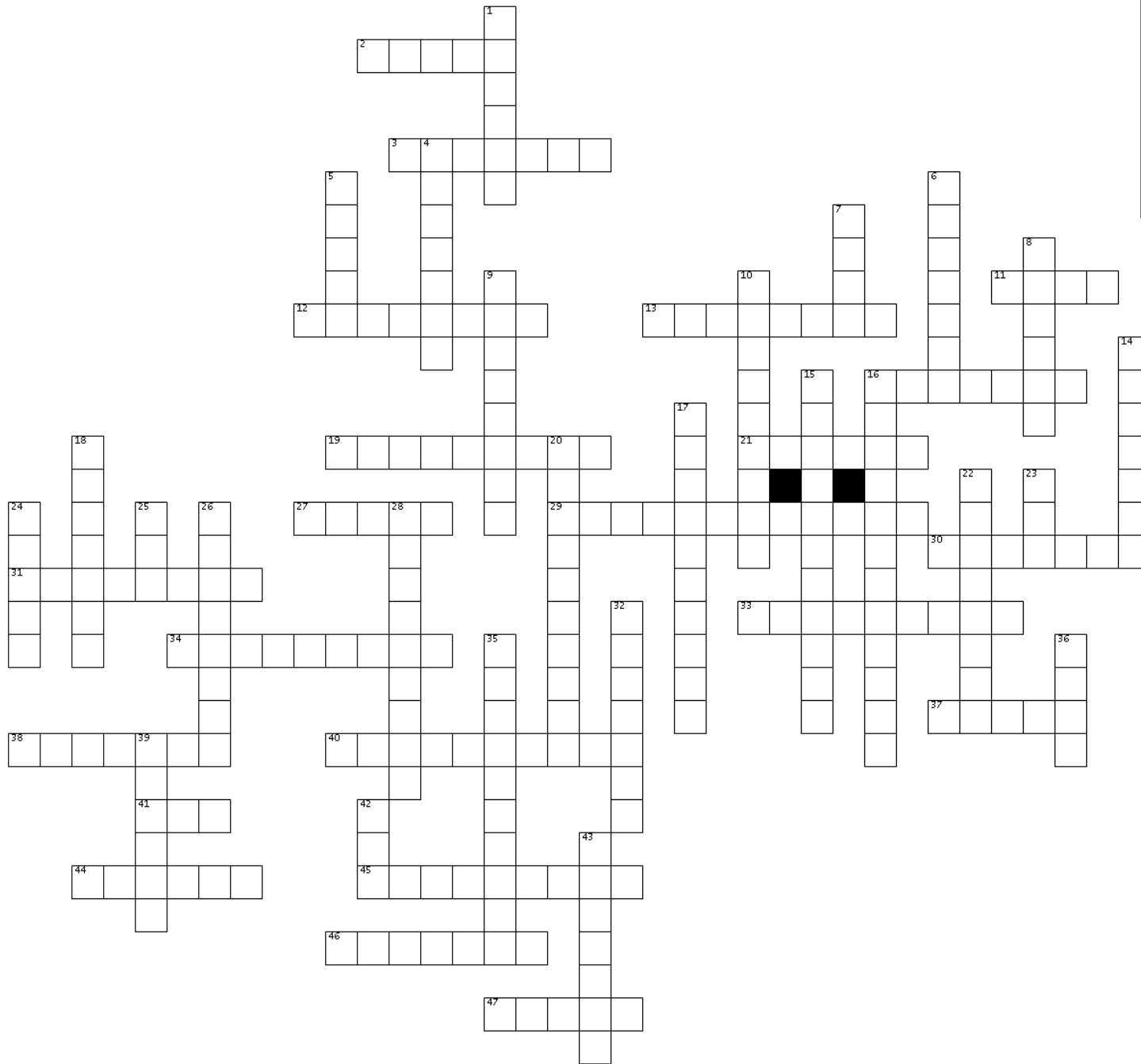
“It’s always fun for me to see how students react to the work and having professors bring in their classes,” Berlinski said.

An opening ceremony will take place from 5–7 p.m. Jan. 21 at the museum. Guests are asked to wear face coverings regardless of vaccination status and to refrain from attending if feeling unwell. For more information, visit ysu.edu/mcdonough-museum



Photo by C. Aileen Blaine / The Jambar
Artist Matthew Zolodziej installs a graphite air-brushed piece onto the gallery walls of the McDonough Museum of Art. His exhibit "Open Storage" will open with a reception at 5:10 p.m. Jan. 21.

**CHECK NEXT WEEK'S
PAPER FOR THE
SOLUTION TO THIS
WEEK'S PUZZLE.**

**Across**

2. Pete's wife
3. league most YSU athletics fall under
11. you must wear a
12. the roads have many
13. "___watching club"
16. a hot spot for coffee and brunch
19. Youngstown stadium
21. helps to adjust your clocks "___ ahead"
27. Women's History Month
29. self-paced virtual classes
30. the deck between DeBartolo and Cushwa Halls
31. team runner up in 2016 FCS championship
33. YSU's dance marathon
34. platform to connect students to employers
37. a law that protects access and disclosure of students records (abbr.)

38. Shaklee's class goes on a trip here
40. the holiday of romance
44. a place to workout (2 wds.)
45. center, the heart of campus
46. rain location for graduation
47. "red and ___ are waving"

Down

1. a mix of virtual and in-person classes
4. YSU email
5. "Not your Granny's ___"
6. Moderna and Pfizer, for example
7. our school mascot
8. "___ & Noble"
9. Black History Month
10. formerly Phelps
14. YSU's sports show
15. the pandemic
16. YSU's emergency alert system
17. submit your work here
18. "___Week"
20. what senior students look forward to
22. food with a kick
23. an apple and computer

24. application opens in October
25. where The Jambar office is located
26. course outline created by professor
28. closed on Sundays
32. president of YSU
35. "Peter___" Chief Easter Bunny
36. the library
39. connected to Wick Deck
42. the first holiday of the semester will honor (abbr.)
43. YSU staff created this flag

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The Jambar Editorial

New year, new challenges

Whether you are just starting out at Youngstown State University or getting ready to finish your degree, the start of the spring semester can be daunting. The start of new classes, deadlines and responsibilities are all part of the new year. Though it is easy to get caught up in the fast pace of student life, it is important to check in with yourself often.

Many college students shy away from taking time for themselves simply because they do not want to fall behind. In the age of the pandemic, this concern becomes even more pressing. The rampant spread of COVID-19 in recent weeks makes us all the more likely to be

stressed and at risk for burnout.

Don't let yourself get so caught up in school that you neglect your hobbies and the things that bring you joy. This isn't to say you should forsake your studies entirely — there is a happy medium between devoting a healthy portion of time to academics and doing things for enjoyment. Allow yourself to take study breaks. Set a goal for the amount of schoolwork you need to accomplish in a day and allow yourself time after to unwind and let your mind relax.

College can bring a lot of stress to many students. Many think pushing through will help get them to their destination,

but fail to notice how sometimes pushing through can make matters worse. Learning how to take care of yourself is an important life lesson to learn and is a major key to happiness.

We at The Jambar would like to welcome you into the spring 2022 semester and remind you to take time for yourself. Self-care is always important, even more so when going into a new semester during a pandemic. Whether it be spending time with friends or family, taking a mental health day or even just taking time to be by yourself, practice taking care of yourself when you need to.

The Jambar Column

On Dec. 21, 2021, a great tragedy struck the nation. Just a day before the new year, and weeks before her 100th birthday, Betty White passed away.

For those of you who don't know who Betty White is, I am very sorry about that. She was one of the earliest stars of television, and probably one of the most popular actresses of all time.

Her work includes "The Betty White Show," "Ponyo," "The Golden Girls" and many



Mac Pomeroy

other titles. Even if you think you haven't seen her work, you probably have without realizing it.

She started her career in the late 1930s, and only stopped acting in 2019. If there is anyone

who can be described as the true end of an era, it is her.

Her work was able to build bridges between people and generations. At the same time, she helped create the world we know today by pushing forward.

So, all of that being said, sad isn't enough of a word to describe how it felt to learn about her passing. It was absolutely shocking, despite being something that was naturally coming.

Even though celebrities and

icons, such as Betty White, are so far from our daily lives, we grow an attachment to them. We watch them for comfort in our favorite shows and movies, and we keep up with their lives through social media.

When they pass away, there is a subtle grief that can be felt by many. But we can still keep remembering them through their work and smiling in their memory.



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TheJambarYSU

Men's basketball falls at home

By John Ostapowicz
The Jambar

This past weekend, the Youngstown State University men's basketball team went toe-to-toe with two of the team's Horizon League conference opponents at Beeghly Center. In Friday's game, it lost 61-71 against Indiana University — Purdue University Fort Wayne, giving up 20 points off of 14 turnovers.

The team offensively struggled to protect the ball, committing 14 turnovers in the game, eight coming from the first half. In the second half, the team tried to handle the ball better but still committed six turnovers.

Penguins head coach Jerrod Calhoun said in his post-game press conference that turnovers were a problem and is something to correct.

"You can't win off of giving up that many turnovers and letting the other team score off of them," Calhoun said.

Despite the turnovers, there were many bright spots in this game as freshman guard Luke Chicone had a career-high game with 13 points going 5-for-7 from the

floor, snagging three rebounds and three assists. Senior guard Tevin Olison also stood out as he finished with 11 points and five rebounds.

In Sunday's game, Youngstown State faced Cleveland State University in a nail-biter that came down to overtime. The men's team would come up short, losing 86-80.

As a team, its 3-point percentage overall was 10-of-23 beyond the arc while holding Cleveland State 5-for-22 from deep.

Offensively, the team still struggled to keep control of the ball, committing 16 turnovers. Cleveland State was able to capitalize by scoring 14 points off turnovers.

After the game, Calhoun said that it's crucial for the team to come out with more intensity and be more mentally focused.

"From Thursday to Saturday, there has been a change of urgency to the program, and we're not quite there yet," Calhoun said.

Despite the loss, sophomore guard Shemar Rathan-Mayes had a fantastic game, recording 21 points, a career high. Rathan-Mayes also went 7-of-9 from the

floor, 3-of-4 when shooting behind the arc and was a perfect 4-for-4 when shooting from the free-throw line.

Junior guard Dwayne Cohill added to the total by contributing 19 points, and senior guard Tevin Olison put up 15 points to help lead the Penguins into overtime.

In Calhoun's weekly press conference, he stated that there was a lot of frustration regarding the team and its play style. The team has to play possession to possession in order to bounce back against both Wright State and Northern Kentucky Universities.

"We are playing two of the perennial powers in the Horizon League. It's a good opportunity to bounce back," Calhoun said.

The men's basketball team is back in action tonight against as it looks to get its first home win of 2022. Northern Kentucky is 1-3 in conference play and 5-8 overall.

The Penguins also have another home game Saturday, Jan. 15 against Wright State, another conference opponent. Wright State is 5-1 in conference play and 8-7 overall.

Basketball season highlights

Women's Basketball

Dec. 17	Davis & Elkins, 27 (1-9)	VS	YSU, 71 (9-1)
Dec. 21	Point Park, 41 (8-5)	VS	YSU, 87 (10-1)
Dec. 30	Purdue Fort Wayne, 41 (4-8)	VS	YSU, 64 (11-1)

Men's Basketball

Dec. 18	Westminster (Pa.), 54 (5-4)	VS	YSU, 83 (7-3)
Dec. 22	West Virginia, 82 (11-1)	VS	YSU, 52 (7-4)
Dec. 29	Defiance, 56 (4-4)	VS	YSU, 96 (8-5)
Jan. 1	Oakland, 87 (9-4)	VS	YSU, 72 (8-6)

SCORING POINTS



Photo courtesy of YSU Sports Information

YSU women's basketball team gather together before the start of the game to cheer for and encourage each other.

Women's basketball 8-0 in conference

By Kyle Wills
The Jambar

The Youngstown State University women's basketball team continued its stellar season, improving to 14-1 while also remaining undefeated in the Horizon League.

To start off the new year, the women defeated Cleveland State University 70-59 on Jan. 1 in what was a physical matchup. Forty-eight fouls were called, including two technicals, and both teams combined shot 55 free throws in the game. There were also several video reviews and a delay to fix the shot clock after being hit on a half-court attempt.

The women's 27-point second quarter helped them power past the Vikings.

Shining in the contest was senior forward Lilly Ritz as she finished with 20 points and a season-high 14 rebounds. Off the bench, sophomore guard Lexi Wagner was finding the nylon in the second period when she scored 14 of her career-best 19 points. Senior guard Megan Callahan added 14 points and three steals.

Junior guard Mady Aulbach took on the challenge of guarding Cleveland State's Destiny Leo and held her to 16 points, which tied for her season-low.

Wagner said when she comes into games, she's looking to shoot when she can and credited being mentally focused for her stellar performance.

"[What helped me was] always being mentally focused and mentally in the game, knowing what defense they play and how to play against them," Wagner said.

The Penguins had scheduled games Jan. 7 and Jan. 9

against Wright State University and Northern Kentucky University, but were both canceled due to COVID-19 cases. Wright State and Northern Kentucky both had positive cases within their programs, and the Horizon League office matched YSU and Robert Morris University as healthy teams looking for an opponent.

Northern Kentucky sought to deem missed competition that week as "no contests" since it was unable to field a team due to many cases among vaccinated student-athletes. Horizon League commissioner Julie Roe Lach granted the requested relief, noting that it satisfied the extraordinary standard. Wright State also sought to deem missed competition that week as "no contests," but relief was not granted as circumstances did not meet the extraordinary threshold.

As a result of the rulings, Youngstown State received a forfeit victory over Wright State, and the team's game against Northern Kentucky was declared a "no contest."

On Jan. 8, the women hosted Robert Morris for their recently scheduled matchup, defeating the Colonials 59-53. The win pushes the Penguins to 8-0 in conference play and is the only team left undefeated in the Horizon League.

Ritz continued her phenomenal season play, scoring 17 points on 8-for-12 shooting under the rim and snagging 8 rebounds. Senior guard Chelsea Olson recorded a near double-double of 15 points and nine assists. The connection between Ritz and Olson proved to be a problem for the Colonial defense as six of Ritz's eight baskets were assisted by Olson.

Ritz said scoring 17 points against a physical defense

was a confidence boost, but Olson continued to find her in positions to score.

"I wouldn't be able to do it without my teammates. Chelsea's obviously a great passer and she just knows where I'm going to be. She just lobs it up, which is a good thing," Ritz said.

Against her former team, senior guard Megan Callahan scored in double figures as well, scoring 12 points in 37 minutes.

As a team, Youngstown State was able to shoot 22-for-50 from the field, 6-for-19 from 3-point, while holding Robert Morris 20-for-52 overall, 6-for-15 beyond the arc.

Head coach John Barnes said the team struggled to handle the ball in the first half, but a cleaner second half helped the team prevail.

"The biggest thing was we took care of the ball in the second half. We only had three turnovers in the second half. We had eight in the first quarter and when you play a team like [Robert Morris] that plays really hard, the margin of error is small," Barnes said.

On Jan. 12, the Horizon League released this week's College Insider Women's Mid-Major Top-25 poll, ranking Youngstown State at 20.

The women's basketball team will continue its season in conference play, hosting the University of Illinois Chicago at 7 p.m. Jan. 14 and Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis at 2 p.m. Jan. 16. These games can be listened to on 570 WKBN or watched on ESPN+.