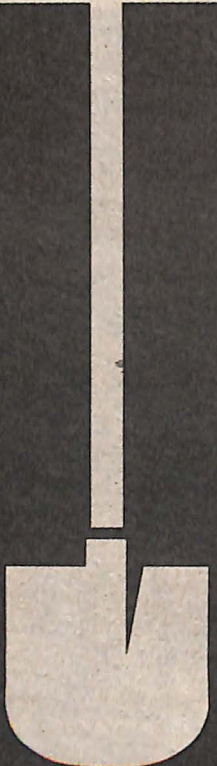


A photograph of a demolition site. In the foreground, a large pile of dark, charred debris is visible. In the middle ground, a yellow Kobelco excavator is positioned, with its arm extended towards a large, partially demolished structure. The structure's interior is exposed, showing a complex network of dark metal beams and wooden planks. The background shows a hazy, overcast sky and some distant trees. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is overlaid in the center of the image, containing the text 'YO MAGAZINE'.

YO
MAGAZINE



DIGGING INTO
YOUNGSTOWN

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EDITORS' LETTER

Dear Readers:

Nothing is as simple as it seems.

The world is far more complex than it first appears — especially Youngstown. Something as common as ice cream (Scoop It Up!) can hold a special place in our hearts and memories with familiar businesses like the Original Handel's Ice Cream. There is much more that goes into theater productions than first meets the eye (The Show Backstage) and the history of Youngstown's artistic venues, such as the Youngstown Playhouse.

People in Youngstown are typically known for a blue-collar work ethic that stems from the city's history of industry. Traveling with Hamza Kamal (The American Dream Comes True), we lift the veil of culture shock that a Youngstown State University grad student faced after arriving from India to see the unifying factors of the city. Even people that we see every day can have problems hiding just beneath the surface that we may never pick up on, including a dancer diagnosed with Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis (Wake-up Call).

Even the world of sports is more complex than it seems at first glance. There is the side of Youngstown sports that everyone knows. Coaching families like the Stoopses and the Pelinis have their roots in Youngstown; one of the great Ohio high school football rivalries plays out every autumn at The Ice Castle and new venues are being built. Take a look inside of the Ursuline/Mooney football rivalry (More Than Just a Game) that takes over the Mahoning Valley every fall and see what more the Covelli Centre offers aside from junior league hockey (More Than Just a Hockey Hotspot).

Inside of this issue of the Yo Magazine are stories that delve deep into our warmest memories, our biggest challenges and even venture outside of our comfort zones.

This is the heart of Youngstown. This is the Yo.

Rachael Kerr
Josh Medore
Cassandra Twoey



PHOTO BY JENNA MEDINA

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The Yo Magazine is published twice each academic year (once in the fall, once in the spring) by The Jambar, Youngstown State University's student-run newspaper.

The Yo Magazine was first distributed as part of The Jambar in spring 2007, and it won the Associated College Press' Best in Show award in 2008.

We're always looking for writers, editors, designers and photographers, so contact us if you're interested. The Yo must go on!

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SCOOP IT UP!

A TASTE OF LOCAL ICE CREAM

ROSE BONILLA

Ice cream.

It's chilling to think of biting into a perfectly swirled vanilla cone from Dairy Queen or an over-stuffed waffle cone from Handel's in the middle of winter.

As summer turned into fall and then fall into winter, the long lines of sweaty guests awaiting their sweet treats have slowly dwindled. The last of any ice cream trucks are now hibernating in a garage or storage shed for the winter season.

Over the years, local ice cream shops have scooped up dedicated ice cream lovers. The San Francisco 49'ers purposefully stay right across from the Handel's on South Avenue to enjoy the unique local flavor of Handel's ice cream whenever they come to Youngtown.

Also, if you haven't noticed, many people still get ice cream in December. My question is why do people want ice cream in the cold?

Jenny Glossen of Lisbon doesn't let the winter's cold weather get in the way of waiting outside for ice cream at places like Handel's or Katie's Korner.

"Usually the places that make you stand outside to order have the best ice cream, rather than something from Dairy Queen, McDonalds, or Burger King," said Glossen.

Ice cream has official qualifications or standards that need to be met in order to call the product ice cream and only certain places meet those standards.

The International Dairy Foods Association defines regular ice cream as a product which contains at least 10 percent milk fat and has to weigh no less than 4.5 pounds a gallon.

Milk fat plays an important role in the structure of ice cream. Most premium ice creams are made of 14 percent milk fat; higher fat content leads to better, richer taste and a creamier texture. Premium ice cream is the most popular variety among consumers.

"The years may melt away, but Handel's ice cream will be forever frozen in my heart."

-SHELBY CUNNINGHAM

Ice cream normally doesn't exceed 16 percent of milk fat in the product because it would be expensive and also very high in calories, not good for ice cream lovers. An ice cream with too much milk fat would also taste too rich. More than likely, people would eat ice cream in smaller amounts because of the rich taste and that would lead to bad news for people who sell ice cream for a living.

Doug Goff has written over 100 scientific and technical articles about ice cream as well as a major textbook on the subject, "Ice Cream", 7th edition, published 2013.

Goff is also a professor of food science,

teaches about the technology involved with making ice cream at the University of Guelph in Canada, and has been educating others on ice cream science and technology for industry people since 1914.

"Ice cream is made by combining liquid and dry ingredients, from dairy and non-dairy sources, into a liquid mix that is then pasteurized and homogenized," he said. "Pasteurization renders the mix safe for consumption by killing harmful pathogenic bacteria that

may be transmitted from the ingredients, especially raw milk and eggs."

Goff defines ice cream as foam because approximately half of its volume is air.

"After it [ice cream] has achieved a temperature of about 20-25°F, it is stiff enough so that nuts, candy pieces, fruit pieces, ripple sauces etc., can be blended into it, and then it is packaged and further frozen until it is hard and ready for shipping."

Once ice cream is shipped to the local branches of the ice cream shops, it can be sold.

According to Peggy Armstrong, vice president of the International Dairy Foods Association, more than 100.5 million gallons of regular ice cream were produced in 2011, and more than 1,535 million gallons of frozen dairy products – such as regular ice cream, low-fat ice cream, non-fat ice cream, sherbet, frozen yogurt and more – were produced.

However, over the years, the appreciation of ice cream in our culture has changed.

The IDFA also found that for three years in a row, per capita production of ice cream and frozen dairy desserts have sunk to a record low level. Production of regular fat ice cream sunk in 2011, by 3.1 percent to 900.2 million gallons, the lowest level since 1996.

Putting toppings on ice cream is also very popular. The International Dairy Foods Association found



PHOTOS BY JOSH MEDORE

that pecans are the most popular nut, followed by almonds and peanuts. Also, 86 percent of companies said that strawberry was the number one choice for a fruit topping, followed by cherry.

Shelby Cunningham, 23 of Youngstown, reminisces of her childhood ice cream visits with her grandparents, claiming that she got her love for ice cream from her grandmother.

"I remember days when my parents would both have to work and my grandparents would pick me up from school. I was always excited for these occasions because I knew we would stop at Handel's. It could have been a hot muggy day in August or a freezing cold day in January, the weather was always right for ice cream," said Cunningham.

Cunningham recalls her ice cream shop visits to be like a family ritual.

"My sweet reward for putting in a long hard day of learning," she said.

But, as time changed, so did the rituals.

"While we may not go to Handel's for an ice cream cone after school, it's a safe bet that at any family party there will be a few Handel's pints for dessert. The years may melt away, but Handel's ice cream will be forever frozen in my heart."

Though many people may stop old traditions, some still include ice cream in their daily routine. Monica Lewis, a volunteer for Katie's Korner, shares her experience of a customer's love for ice cream that keeps her coming back almost every day of the week.

"We get new customers from I-80 every day and we also have an old customer who come every day of the year (or at least 360 days) and buys a coffee on a regular cone. You would think she would get tired of it but she doesn't," said Lewis.

The loyal Katie's Korner fan's name is Dorothy and she has been going to Katie's Korner almost every day for the last 22 years.

"She goes swimming then comes up to us and buys her favorite ice cream, coffee. She always gets a 'large single scoop, a little bigger than a regular scoop but not a double scoop,'" explained Lewis.

Terry, the franchise owner of the Hubbard's Katie's Korner, knows how to make it perfect for her.

"The kids we hire during the summer have a hard time getting it just right for



rard, but don't be fooled thinking that Katie's Korner is only a local sweet treat. "We supply twelve states now... seventeen franchise locations," said Martin.

Katie's Korner's is still active in the Youngstown area.

"I'm always giving out products for raffles or fundraisers or for anything I can do for the community, I do. Giving product or gift certificates; whatever we can do... We always give back to the community," said Martin.

As far as future plans, Katie's Korner plans to continue to expand their chain and will have stores in the south. Already, they can be found in North Carolina, South Carolina and Florida where Katherine Martin currently lives.

Northeastern Ohio and ice cream. Two things

I wouldn't necessarily associate with each other, but surprisingly enough, ice cream has a strong local presence here in the Mahoning valley.

As you may know, Handel's Homemade Ice Cream & Yogurt is locally owned and operated. Handel's has been around since 1945 and makes its ice cream fresh at each and every location. That is quite a feat for a local ice cream shop that thrives here in Youngstown, Ohio.

Jody Nerone, marketing and franchise liaison of Handel's, has been with the company for over 14 years and explained why Handel's is unique.

"Handel's is made fresh each day at each location. We pride ourselves with way our ice cream is made and the ingredients that go into it. Our ice cream recipes have not changed. Many of are the same as they were when Handel's started in 1945. We have a premium ice cream at a reasonable cost, making it something everyone can enjoy," said

Nerone.

Jacqui Sepesy said she has always had a positive experience with Handel's.

"I would pull into the parking lot and they would see my white Sunfire and have my Girl's Scout thin mint cookie ice cream milkshake ready."

Handel's has a treat for everyone to enjoy. There are baby cones for babies to delight in and even dog-friendly ice cream. Nerone said she believes that ice cream still holds a special place in everyone's heart and has been a part of many family traditions.

When tender love and care go into a quality ice cream product that is locally made, people can taste the difference and will stay loyal to the product, no matter how cold.

"We have regular customers that get ice cream on a daily or weekly basis to enjoy. They will come in blistering heat or when the snow flies to get their favorite flavor," said Nerone. "We are also lucky enough to be a part of someone's special day; we have been a baby's first cone, a great treat at graduation party as well as a dessert for a wedding."

More ice cream is sold on Sunday than any other day of the week.

The top three cities in America that purchase the most ice cream on a per capita basis are: Portland, Oregon; St. Louis, Missouri; and Seattle, Washington.

Children ages 2-12, and adults 45 and over, eat the most ice cream per person.

Facts provided by Jody Nerone from Handel's.

GRAPHIC BY CORIN MILLER & KEELEY BLACK

THE SHOW BACKSTAGE

PHOTO BY DUSTIN LIVESAY

JOHN DEPINTO

In the lobby of the Youngstown Playhouse, the audience is getting ready to see the premiere of the new musical, "Steel My Heart: The Story of Youngstown."

Some are still outside, chatting and milling about, still getting their tickets. Others are getting some snacks — chips for some and M&Ms for others — from the concession stands.

There is no food allowed in the seats, so they try to cram the food before they get in.

Eventually the doors open and the audience eagerly makes their way to their seats.

However, backstage is a different story. The lead actor hasn't arrived yet, and the lead actress is having a panic at-

tack. Near them, the stage crew is trying to get the set in place before the first scene. Farther backstage, there are chorus girls trying to go over the dance routine for the millionth time.

They still don't have it.

Others are still trying to get into costume. However, their costume pieces are still in the washer from last night and are still wet.

Eventually, they all assemble and the play begins.

Theater is a team effort. It is art brought together by the efforts of multiple individuals. When each of those individuals works together, it is a beautiful thing. It is not unlike a well-choreographed dance. Each moving part, working in harmony to accomplish a single goal. And when each job is done, the whole is made stronger and the play all the more beautiful.

Most, however, never see the challenges involved in theater. They never know that a show starts months in advance and the hurdles that must be jumped in order to get one together.

And that process starts when the Board of Trustees comes together and pick the season. Then, the directors and designers have to come together to decide how the show will look and sound. After that, there are auditions and callbacks. Then, there are the numberless rehearsals.

Anywhere within that process, there are hundreds of hurdles the cast and crew need to jump over in order to make it to opening night. And with a number of community theaters of its own, Youngstown theater is no exception to the challenges involved.

"Noises Off" was one such complicated show. This production was performed by the Youngstown State University theater department back in 2003, and was directed by Dennis Henneman with the design by John Murphy. It follows the cast and crew of the play "Nothing On" as they try to make it through the final week of rehearsals and opening night.

This show happens to be one that calls up all the challenges involved with theater. There are the endless rehearsals, the director who wants his vision to come to life, the actors who fall in and out of love, and the set that is constantly in need of repair.

Needless to say, a show like this has a number of requirements that present challenges even to the most seasoned of theater veterans. For example, each actor has two characters they need to portray, their initial character and the character that that character portrays in the play within the play. The actors must be able to jump in and out of each character in order for the play to have the full effect. There is also a scene involving one character chasing and attacking another char-



PHOTO BY JOHN DEPINTO

I hate to see a production where the scenery overshadows the acting ” ”

acter with a fire axe, and stage combat in any form is always challenging to any actor.

However, chiefly among the challenges of this show is the set that needs to be nearly a full-fledged house — one with working fixtures, aside from electric and plumbing and two separate floors. Also the fact that the set had to spin 180 degrees in place added a level of difficulty to the show.

This production took place in Ford Theater, a room that has only 36 feet wide by 37 feet long worth of stage space and not much outside of that in the wings.

“It filled the stage,” said Todd Dicken, production manager for the YSU Theater department.

Dicken said he believes the problems started at the top.

“The problem with the show was the difficulty of the director and the designer to communicate,” he said.

As he tells the story the problems began when Murphy and Henneman couldn't agree with how to properly get the show to the audience. What it ended up being was that full house on a turntable, a turntable being a device that allows large set pieces to spin in place. And to get that set to spin were four men, harnessed like horses, pulling it back and forth between acts.

Dicken said that the set took some time to get together. So much time that the actors didn't get to work with the set in its final form until tech week, the week leading up to the premier of the show.

“I hate to see a production where the scenery overshadows the acting,” Dicken added when asked about the scale of the set.

In his mind, the work of the actors should always come first over the set. Dicken believes that “acting is key and the scenery should act as a support for the actors.”

That is not to say that the show was difficult for all involved. Anthony Genovese, one of the actors in the production, said that he had an enjoyable time with the show.

“The hardest part for me was getting the script memorized three different ways, since you do the show three different ways,” said Genovese when asked about the show.

He also went on to say that the hardest part for the technical director was to get the house to spin. Though from his recollection, the house moved smoothly.

Henneman agreed that the show had a number of hurdles that needed to be leaped for it all to go well. He brings up the dual roles for every actor and the stage combat, but “the major difficulty was the set change.” He went on to add that “the theater crew had a challenge before them and they hit it head on.”

Henneman said he believes that, despite the difficulties putting on a show like this, the cast and crew were able to come together and create something that the audience would enjoy.

Theater is a team sport. It is art brought together by individuals completing separate tasks, like a dance. And like a dance, when it all goes smoothly, the art goes to the audience as easily as breathing. But not every dance is a simple one. There are always challenges that the performers need to meet head on if they want to create art. They will stumble and fall in the process. But when it all comes together it can be more beautiful than the stars at night.

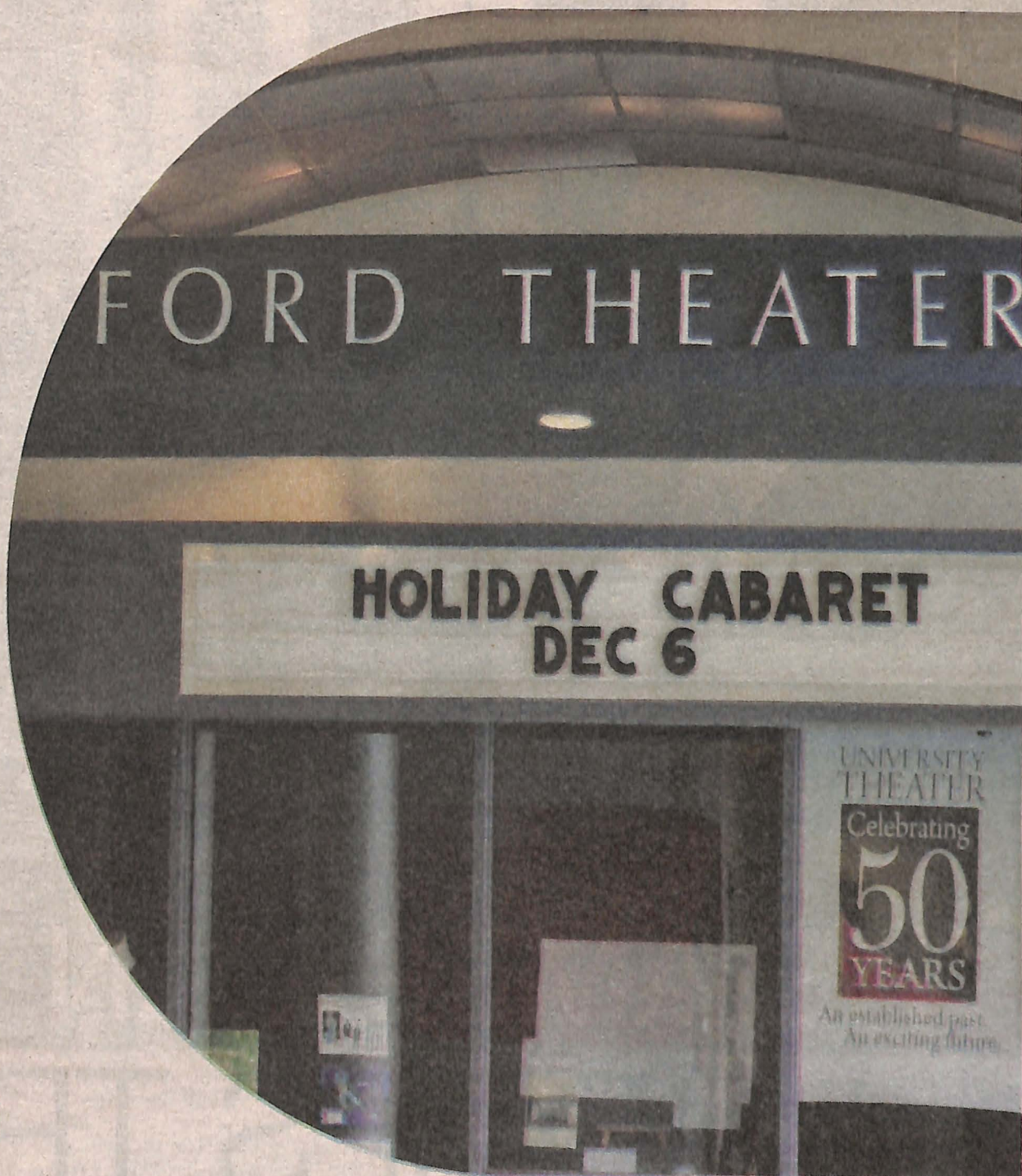
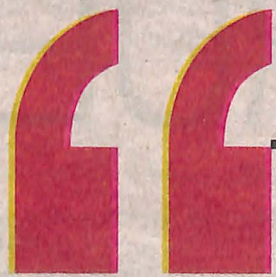


PHOTO BY DUSTIN LIVESAY



The theater crew had a **challenge** before them, and they **hit it head on.**





THE AMERICAN DREAM COMES TRUE

PHOTOS BY SHEE WAI WONG

SHEE WAI WONG

After a 20-hour flight, Hamza Kamal arrived in Youngstown in 2007, but the reality didn't go exactly with what he found from TV — a New York City's metro-lifestyle or California's coastal living.

Born and raised in India, Kamal graduated with his bachelor's degree in finance accounting from the University of Calcutta, India. Instead of working in his home country, he wanted something different — to explore the world, to seek an independent life experience and perhaps a little more.

“My family has a business in India, so a thought in the back of my mind was that in case I don't move out of the city, I might be sucked into the family business. I'd already spent 21 years of my life in

Kolkata. It was time for a change, for new experiences,” Kamal said.

He decided to further pursue his education in America. He said he believes in this land of opportunities, his hard work will lead him to a successful future. After considering institutes with an affordable tuition and an accreditation, Kamal chose Youngstown State University as his destination.

However, it didn't take him long to realize that his first year living in this suburban city could be somewhat challenging to him for being in a different lifestyle and having a culture shock.

“When I first came here, I was bored out of my mind. I didn't have a car. Even if I did, the only thing I could do is to go to Boardman to watch a movie, to go bowling, or to get pizza,” Kamal said.

Kolkata, Kamal's hometown, has a population of 4.5 million people. To him, Youngstown seems very small.

Kamal had spent most of his time in his apartment on

Madison Avenue, trying to “kill time”.
“At that time, I felt like I may have made a mistake coming to Youngstown,” Kamal said.

Kamal also struggled with a transportation problem because he didn't have a car.

“Every time you had to go to a grocery shopping, you had to ask people for favors,” he said.

Kamal walked to most places. Late one night, Kamal took a walk from his apartment to the Taco Bell on Fifth Avenue, risking and trying to order from the drive-thru window. However, the staff refused to serve him.

“Now, I think it was funny,” Kamal was laughing about this incident during the interview, but in his heart he knew that not having a car was really difficult.

When he started his internship at Revere Data, LLC, in downtown Youngstown, he needed to take a bus from Madison Avenue to West Federal Street every morning.

Eventually, Kamal was tired of the everyday bus adventures with what he called “drunk and crazy” pas-

sengers. He decided to reside to Boardman with his colleagues.

"I was scared even [though] I am a guy. You don't know who's drunk, who's not drunk. I was really eager to move away; it's not safe to live here. I could hear gun shots near my apartments," Kamal said.

Kamal didn't get a car until 2010. He learned how to drive from his friend and without giving any financial burden to his family; Kamal took a loan to purchase his first car in America.

Seven years later, Kamal has become a full-time resident. Every morning at 8, the 27-year-old man drives his own car to work on West Federal Street.

He never planned to work in America and never imagined that working in Northeast Ohio today would allow him to be a quality control manager for a San Francisco based-company, Sage Data Service, LLC, after his first company at Revere Data, LLC.

Thanks to those tough semesters with not much of sleep and fun activities, Kamal has grown from a young graduate student to a mature employee of a company.

During the last semester of the two-year master's program, Kamal applied for his internship at Revere Data, LLC, a finance company located downtown, through the Professional Practice Internship Program at Williamson College of Business Administration (WCBA).

Working as an intern, the graduate assistant also spent time doing research and other academic work.

"There were about six to seven months when I did the internship during the day, took classes in the evening and worked for my professors after classes," Kamal said.

Every night, forgetting how tired he was, Kamal stayed up to finish his work before deadlines. Sometimes, the hard-worker would still be working and studying while other local students went home to enjoy their typical American traditions like Thanksgiving dinner or a Super Bowl party.

Although Kamal isn't a Muslim, he always enjoyed a tradition homemade feast from his mother to celebrate the festival of Ramadan, after the Muslims fast for a month.

However, there weren't any Indian restaurants around the area several years ago; Kamal couldn't even go to any nearby restaurant to comfort his homesickness. To the international student who was a thousand miles away from his family, Kamal missed his home food and his hometown.

Kamal and his friend Munaf Nasser both attended graduate school and worked at the same company as interns. Together, they spent time exchanging and discussing academic ideas. Nasser sees Kamal as a pal with motivation.

"My memories of Hamza are positive ones which have helped define parts of my professional and academic life, and I'm glad to know I can count on a colleague, class-

mate and comrade in times of need," said Nasser.

No matter how much work occupied Kamal's schedule, he would still take the time to talk to his professors and make sure he was on a path to achievement.

"Many times Hamza would stop by my office to discuss what he needed to do to make sure he had the best skill set and approach when he embarked on his career," said Patrick Bateman, an assistant professor at WCBA.

Kamal took Bateman's Informative Systems in Management course in 2009.

"What made Hamza such a pleasure to interact with is that I think he has been willing to share insights from his culture, while at the same time looking to understand what it takes to succeed in the local culture here in Youngstown," Bateman added.

Two years after he got off the plane from India, Kamal's hard work paid off. He earned his Master's of Business Administration in Finance Management in the fall of 2010.

Not only did his hard work earn him a master's degree, but also a full-time job as a research analyst. Kamal's working performance was approved and his boss agreed to sponsor his working visa after a year of internship at Reverse Data, LLC, his first company.

Kamal considers himself lucky. Some of his international friends struggle to find a job in other cities; Kamal took advantages of working in a smaller city.

"Youngstown has smaller companies which are willing to sponsor work visas unlike bigger companies," he said.

He served at the company until early this year, when his boss recommended him to apply for another position at its sister company, Sage Data Service, LLC. This became his current job.

Not only did Kamal's life and education level change over the years, but Youngstown changed, too.

"Downtown Youngstown has come a long way from when I first moved here. There didn't use to be much down there. However, you have a wide array of eating places to choose from. I see lot more restaurants, like the V2, the Knox now."

During weekdays, Kamal walks to a downtown restaurant at lunch break, goes for a drink with his colleagues after work, and once in a while, he works at his "temporary office" at the Fellows Riversides Gardens café where he sets up his laptop and enjoys the view of Lake Glacier.

"And not to forget One Hot Cookie! They sell cookies and ice cream till 2:30 a.m. on the weekends," Kamal said.

Youngstown may seem small when compared to Kamal's hometown, but he has found his way to enjoy the city.

In the past decade, "globalization" is the new trendy term in our society. Small businesses in town are going

to a global market.

"It has becoming increasingly important for businesses to be able to succeed on a global marketplace," Bateman said.

Bateman strongly believes international students and potential employees can play an important role in the development of local business.

"There is no greater way to understand different marketplaces, their cultures and other unique factors relevant to business than having the opportunity to work next to and learn personally from someone from another country, marketplace," he said.

The "win-win scenario" to students and the region is what Bateman wants to see.

After all, Kamal is grateful for his experiences in America, and this rust-belt city. He has found a nurturing place for his career and a bright future. Kamal's American dream has finally come true.



DOWNTOWN YOUNGSTOWN
HAS COME A LONG WAY
FROM WHEN I FIRST MOVED HERE.

-Hamza Kamal

09

MY MOST PAINFUL WAKE-UP CALL

ALEXIS BURGER

When I was just 5 years old I was diagnosed with a disease most often associated with senior citizens. I don't remember much, but I remember the day I was sitting in my room, pouting after a fight with my brother, when my mom noticed my knee was swollen.

After this, I endured many tests, a surgery and medications with side effects that made me sick for weeks. While I may not remember all of the details, at the age of 5 I understood my disease was called juvenile rheumatoid arthritis.

After seeing specialists regularly for the next seven years, my arthritis went into remission.

I was a sophomore in college when I experienced the pain once again. Only this time I can recall my suffering quite vividly. I can remember the rehearsal just like it was yesterday.

I had landed a part as a dancer in California University of Pennsylvania's spring production of *Cabaret*. I was so thrilled and honored to have the opportunity to work with so many talented people. There were so many great dancers that I admired. We were learning the dance to "Don't Tell Mama," one of my favorite songs from the show.

As the choreographer Donna instructed us to kneel and then sit on the backs of our feet, I felt the hot tears begin to well up and slowly begin to streak down my face. It took all I had to restrain myself from the sobs I could feel swelling in my chest. My throat tightened and threatened a complete melt down.

Concerned, she asked me what was wrong. Not only was I in searing pain, but I was also ashamed and embarrassed.

I simply could not sit on the backs of my feet. A simple move — one that requires hardly any flexibility — was impossible for me.

I was humiliated.

It took me years to begin to excel as a dancer. I had once been inflexible, clumsy and awkward. I dedicated years of my life into advancing myself. I would work on my flexibility while watching TV, arrive at rehearsals at 7 a.m. every Saturday and stay late after Monday night rehearsals.

I truly loved to dance and tried my hardest at every practice to nail the routines in both technique and memorization. At that moment, I had to suffer silently while I danced, unable to change the condition of my knee and unable to make any improvements.

The flexibility and skills I had worked so hard to achieve were so unfairly snatched from me.

I was devastated.

My friends felt sorry for me and gave understanding looks. The silence after I confessed my inability to sit that way in reality probably only last a few moments, but for me it seemed to never end. While Donna continued to teach new choreography, I just could not shake my deep feelings of bitter anguish.

I hated myself.

It disgusted me that because of my disease, I looked weak. Not only did I look weak, I felt it.

I could imagine the girls snickering after rehearsal about how I was such a baby and couldn't even sit on my feet because my knee hurt. I felt a huge wave of emo-

tions at the moment, but I was mostly angry.

Angry at myself and my body for failing to be normal. Because of my immobility, Donna had to change that particular move. Dancing was my passion. It was something that provided me with joy throughout my life.

That year dancing caused me more pain than happiness.

The same pain I felt that day had kept me awake at night and hindered my ability to walk. Not only was it extremely difficult to dance, but I found it at times to be unbearably hard to simply sit down. My knee would constantly ache and throb at all hours of the day.

My arthritis erupted from its dormant remission and jolted me with throbbing pain and aching inflammation.

Everyday tasks that I had once considered trivial became agonizingly difficult, and I was overwhelmed with frustration.

A common treatment for juvenile rheumatoid arthritis I endured was the cortisol shot, in which the doctor shot a large needle into my knee, drained the fluid out, and injected cortisol to help with the inflammation. This shot was the most miserable feeling. The needle was so large; when I was little I used to hyperventilate upon seeing it.

As the doctor stabbed my knee, the feeling is comparable to jabbing a knife in my ligament or being stung by 20 wasps at the same time and place. I would then nearly vomit as I watched this pus like substance being pulled out of my knee. Despite the utter pain this shot gave me, it also provided me with unbelievable relief. Unfortunately this relief was only temporary. I had gotten this shot five or six times before I ventured on to different forms of treatment.

I can recall my doctor telling me he had to be careful as to what medication he prescribed to me as it could affect my ability to have kids in the future. I remember feeling dumbfounded. Not only does this disease affect me right now, but it affects the lives of my future children.

I was blown away by the moment, and I realized that my disease became a real threat to my entire life and future. For the first time since my diagnosis, I was scared. My mother was even more afraid.

She found me a new doctor in Pittsburgh who specialized in juvenile rheumatoid arthritis. Seeing this doctor assured us both that my knee would return to normal. It finally did several months after I began taking Methotrexate, a powerful drug used for cancer patients of chemotherapy. This medicine is used commonly in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis.

Had I not gotten on medication, I would have risked deteriorating the bones in my knee resulting in the need to face knee replacement surgery before I could reach the age of 30.

When I was 19 years old, I was supposed to be in the best physical shape in my life. Instead, I had to battle with walking to the bathroom and not being able to sleep. Despite being active my whole life, I did not truly appreciate my body and its condition until I once again experienced the tortuous symptoms of my disease.

While I may have felt alone in my pain, juvenile rheumatoid arthritis is not unusual.

According to a 2007 study for the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, one in 250 children under the

age of 18 in the United States have been diagnosed with arthritis. The disease also affects how tall the children grow up to be in about 50 percent of the diagnosed cases. Thirty percent of children diagnosed with the disease experience functional limitations after 10 or more years after diagnosis also, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

In many cases, it isn't until we experience pain or sickness that we realize how truly valuable our health is. We often find ourselves searching for quick and easy solutions to our health problems rather than saving the time and pain and taking proper preventative measures before such symptoms arise.

I took Advil and Aleve trying to numb my persistent pain, and when that wasn't enough, I resorted to shot after shot from the doctor. I was searching for a quick and easy solution rather than looking at my lifestyle habits that may have played an essential role with my disease's return.

What I failed to realize before my condition got out of control was that the food I was putting into my body was slowly poisoning me.

While I might have tried to eat healthy occasionally, I will be the first to admit that I had a terrible diet. I would frequently drink Diet Coke, skip meals and binge on late night delicacies like mac and cheese bites from Sheetz.

I did not have a car, and there were no grocery stores nearby, so fresh fruit and vegetables weren't even an option at the time. I lived off of cereal, Lean Cuisine frozen dinners and grilled cheese. I was also a coffee addict that insisted on the sugary syrup flavorings and cream.

Although I had never been overweight, or at risk for any kind of weight-related disease, I now realize that I was fueling my body with processed and artificial garbage. While arthritis is an autoimmune disease — meaning the body literally attacks itself — there has yet to be discovered a direct cause.

I believe that the foods I had been eating played a large role in the uprising of my inflammation and pain.

Registered dietician Chrystyna Zellers said she believes that the foods we eat have a large impact on our overall health. She described how diseases take years to develop and that they are a result of poor lifestyle choices over a period of time.

"The problem is we are not for the most part surrounded by a preventative approach," Zellers said. "Good nutrition works slowly. People sometimes get impatient and want immediate results."

Food can have terrible impacts on our bodies. While I believe that my diet helped contribute to my arthritis, eating a poor diet full of artificial preservatives and trans fats helps attribute to Type 2 diabetes. Arthritis is a very painful and chronic disease. Diabetes can be deadly.

According to the John Hopkins Health Library, diabetes affects 25.8 million people in the U.S. Of that number, 90-95 percent have Type 2 diabetes.

This preventable disease was not only the fifth leading cause of death from disease in the U.S., but also the leading cause of preventable blindness.

According to the American Diabetes Association, Type 2 diabetes usually begins as resistance to insulin. This is when the body's cells cannot use insulin properly

resulting in frequent infections and slower healing of cuts or bruises to the body.

Diabetes can also lead to other health problems such as heart disease, high blood pressure and stroke. Many of these health complications can be fatal. As if that isn't frightening enough, diabetes has no cure, and the death rate from diabetes since 1987 has increased by a startling 45 percent.

Zellers said she encourages her clients to start building a healthy diet as soon as possible so that they do not get to the point of having to treat symptoms of disease. In her eight years as the registered dietician at the Youngstown State University Andrews Student Wellness and Recreation Center, Zellers has had individuals that were diagnosed as "pre-diabetic". This means that they were on the verge of having to take oral medication for Type 2 diabetes.

By adjusting their diets, she was able to help them avoid being put on medication. Zellers emphasized the importance of losing actual body fat, not just water weight, as being a key to helping individuals lower their chances for being diagnosed with diabetes.

"People who lost body fat were able to get a reduced dosage of their medications," Zellers said. "Excess body fat is what causes problems."

By eating healthy early on in life, we can enact a preventative approach to our health. It is never too late for anyone to change bad eating habits.

It took months of excruciating pain for me to realize that I can't keep living that kind of lifestyle. I knew that eating healthier foods would have an amazing impact on my overall health.

Positive and lasting changes to our diet can help prevent cardiovascular disease, certain types of cancer and the growing epidemic of Type 2 diabetes.

Eating the right foods can be challenging in a society where ease and convenience takes priority over health to fit into our busy lifestyles. I still struggle to eat healthy because it is time consuming.

It doesn't have to be that hard. It takes some extra shopping time, perhaps, and a little planning ahead, but eating healthy can be just as easy as a trip through the drive-thru.

Planning ahead is the key. In order to be successful you must prepare meals ahead of time to resist any temptations. It is also imperative to know what foods to include in your diet.

Andrea Wright, a clinical dietician at UPMC Horizon Hospital at the Greenville Pennsylvania campus offers guidelines for eating an optimal diet.

"Have a variety of colorful vegetables so you're getting vitamins antioxidants, vitamin C, vitamin E," Wright said. "You find those in all different kinds of vegetables, so you just want a variety."

Wright also advises to include whole grains, healthy carbohydrates, fruits and vegetables, and fresh meat in your diet. It is also important to include fish, which is high in omega 3 fatty acids, and is great for your body.

Red meat should be consumed in moderation, as it sometimes tends to be high in saturated fat. It is essential to try to find lean cuts of red meat whenever you do choose to eat it.

Chicken is a great source of protein that should be prepared boneless and skinless, as the skin is high in fat. Chicken can be prepared by broiling, grilling or baking.

A great way to ensure healthy eating for the week

would be to cook in large quantities. Grill chicken breasts to last you throughout the week every Sunday. Cut up broccoli, celery, peppers and carrots and place them into bags for a quick on the go snack. Prepare some rice and pack your lunch or dinner the night before. Always keep a bag of almonds or pistachios in your car or at your desk in case of an "emergency."

Invest in a scale and weigh all of your foods into the appropriate proportions. Nuts should only be consumed one ounce per serving, while the ideal serving of meat is three to four ounces.

Do not just guess the right proportions. Keep track of everything you eat in a food journal. All of these tips allow you to avoid eating those quick, yet detrimentally unhealthy snacks and meals.

Many people also have wrong assumptions about what foods they should stay away from. Carbohydrates are often thought of as an enemy of weight loss thanks to fad diets such as Atkins. However, both Wright and Zellers emphasized the importance of healthy carbs in your diet.

"Your body runs on carbohydrates," Wright said. "It's what your body uses for energy. You're supposed to eat carbs."

Carbohydrates allow your body to produce energy and run most effectively. Carbs can be found in many foods, but look to eat carbohydrates that come from fruit and whole grains. Bananas are a great source of carbohydrates as are brown rice, 100 percent whole wheat bread and whole oats. Pasta can also be found in the whole-wheat variety instead of the white version, which contains refined sugar.

The key to eating is all about balance. It is important to try to balance each meal with some natural carbohydrates, protein and healthy fat.

Zellers also encourages people to include the five food groups every day. Each food group provides us with different essential nutrients our bodies need to run most efficiently and to feel our absolute best.

Zellers advises, "What you eat must be nutrient dense. From the cost of the calories, is it giving you the nutrients you need?"

She suggests eating five to six smaller meals each day rather than just eating three large meals without any snacking in between. By doing this, you are constantly fueling your body and allowing your metabolism to become more efficient, resulting in a faster metabolic rate and fat loss.

One of the best ways to incorporate a successful lifestyle change is simply holding yourself accountable. Keep a daily log of the foods you eat. Have a friend who has similar goals be there for support and confidence. Participate online via social media or a blog, where you can tell people your story and receive the encouragement you need to keep going.

In the beginning of my journey I used an app called My Fitness Pal. You can type in whatever foods you eat, and it does all the calculating for you. It allotted me a certain amount of calories and encouraged me to not only eat healthy but also be active in order to negate some calories.

Whatever motivates you, do it.

I never want to experience the pain and humiliation I did that night at my dance rehearsal, nor do I ever want to feel so powerless and immobile. I made a vow to change my eating habits so that my arthritis could no longer take over my life. Eating well is one of the hardest things I have ever done.

I often fall off the fitness path, but I always try my best to get back on and start clean the next day.

I know how easy it can be to give into my unhealthy cravings, but I also know the precious cost of such habits. Today I am more active than I ever been in my entire life. I have lost approximately 15 pounds since my experience and make it a priority to work out almost every day. It isn't about the weight.

I still struggle with my diet from time to time. I like to eat wings and drink beer just like many others do. I try to limit those kinds of foods to just once a week. I eat to fuel my body now, as opposed to just my taste buds.

I can honestly say that I am so much happier and healthier after taking control of my lifestyle, and my knee has been inflammation and pain free ever since.

While I enjoy my new lifestyle, it can be so easy to slip back into old familiar patterns. Wright offers some

excellent advice for anyone who may be struggling to eat healthy.

"Try not to even look at it as dieting. You just make healthy lifestyle changes and stick with it," Wright said. "You should still indulge once in a while on things that you like, and if you think you've slipped up or do bad one day, don't just give up. Get back on and keep going at it."

IT DISGUSTED ME THAT
BECAUSE OF MY DISEASE,

I LOOKED
WEAK.

NOT ONLY DID I

LOOK WEAK, I FELT IT.

COVELLI CENTRE:

MORE THAN JUST A HOCKEY HOTSPOT

DREW ZUHOSKY

The Covelli Centre opened in the fall of 2005 after years of planning and delay. This venue had a history of setbacks, dating all the way back to its initial planning stages in 1999, when Congressman Jim Traficant first discussed the possibility of having such an arena with Bruce Zoldan of Phantom Fireworks.

According to a 2004 report on the Covelli Centre's groundbreaking from *The Vindicator*, Traficant first made these intentions public in 1999 when he talked about the semi-pro basketball team, the Youngstown Hawks.

"He introduced legislation in Congress seeking \$15 million for an arena for minor league hockey, concerts and conventions," the report stated.

While the Hawks went belly-up within a year, the dream for an arena was still alive.

Traficant eventually won \$26.8 million in funds to foot the project, and in July 2000, The City of Youngstown obtained the nearly \$27 million that Congressman Traficant won for them, using it to fund an arena board. This board didn't last beyond two years and did nothing except hire a consultant. The arena board constantly fought over matters such as who controlled the funds, which doomed the board in 2002.

"Former arena board members say they figured something would get built," according to the story from *The Vindicator*. "They just didn't know what."

Leonard Schiavone served on the arena board, and he mostly had no doubt about the arena's fate, except for one day 10 years ago.

"*Vindicator* management lobbied Ohio's U.S. Senators to widen the federal grant's purpose beyond an arena to include other downtown projects," the paper's report said. As fate would have it, this plea by the venerable Youngstown newspaper would eventually strengthen the likelihood of an arena and bring it to life.

The cost of Covelli: \$41 million. Its basic idea, an arena, remained, but was initially supposed to include an adjacent hotel and conference center.

Ex-Mayor George McKelvey oversaw the development of Covelli in 2002 and the city began hatching ideas in relative secrecy. After submitting requests for development proposals, Youngstown eventually chose Landmark Organization out of Austin.

Had it not been for Landmark merging with Faulkner USA in 2003 and Faulkner not supplying extra funds, Covelli would have been the arena/hotel/conference center it was originally intended to be at a price tag of \$70 million.

Youngstown ultimately settled on Global Entertainment Corp., whose subsidiaries eventually gave the city everything they needed for the arena. One subsidiary, the Central Hockey League, supplied Covelli with its original main tenant, the Youngstown Steelhounds.

On March 24, 2004, the contracts were inked. That summer, construction began, and the next fall, Covelli was born.

The space for the arena has been seen as a means of revitalizing the local economy, and it's certainly delivered on that front, as bars and restaurants are routinely packed after games and events.

The arena's first event was a concert by 3 Doors Down on October 29, 2005. A few weeks later, a pair of concerts by the Trans-Siberian Orchestra would prove to be the venue's first-ever sellout events, while the first sold-out hockey game for the Steelhounds would be played at Covelli a few months later. Despite the arena's early success, some athletic events have still been tough sells.

Eric Ryan, president of Eric Ryan Productions, has overseen every major event that Covelli has brought in. He has spearheaded a most successful business model.

"We have had success in selling tickets," he said. "Success breeds success. Acts want to play places that are sold out. Youngstown is known as a market that sells tickets."

In the past, acts like Shinedown, "Weird Al" Yankovic, Ludacris, Rascal Flatts, Kid Rock, Buck Cherry and Carrie Underwood have all graced the stage at Covelli. Ryan points out three acts that brought in the biggest crowds.

"The biggest music acts that Covelli has had would have to be Elton John, Rascal Flatts and Tim McGraw," he said. Ryan has great ideas for Covelli's future.

"We are hoping to build an outside amphitheater to be able to compete in the summer with 20 to 30 more events a year," he said.

For sports, Ryan easily thinks back to one night in February of 2009 as the biggest event.

"The biggest sporting event we've had at Covelli is the Kelly Pavlik championship fight a few years ago," he said.

Sports have been a Covelli Centre mainstay since the Steelhounds of the late Central Hockey League came to the arena in 2005. The problem with the sports tenants at Covelli has been lack of staying power.

Both the Steelhounds and Mahoning Valley Thunder of Arena Football 2 left Covelli after three years. The CHL's plans for the 2008-2009 season did not include Youngstown, while AF2 basically shut down in September of 2009 when none of its member teams committed to the League for its 2010 season.

"We were probably hurt more by the Steelhounds' departure than the Thunder's departure," Ryan said. "Minor league sports as a whole is difficult everywhere. It has a high failure rate."

Still, with the Arena Football League potentially resurrecting AF2 from the dead, Ryan would be open to having another Arena team play at Covelli.

"We are always willing to consider anything," he said. "A tremendous part of minor league budget is sponsorship, and our market can only handle so much sponsorship. Can the market handle all the minor league teams?"

Ryan points out that the execution of any sports team, especially in indoor football, is vital to its success or failure.

"I think Covelli could field another indoor football team as long as their business model works," he said. "Then

Success BREEDS success.
Acts want to play places that are **SOLD OUT.**
Youngstown is known as a market that sells tickets.
-Eric Ryan

schedule is in a difficult time of year to get people in and we're full during that time."

At the core, Covelli Centre has been a hockey arena first. Ryan points out that the talent crop of the Steelhounds and the Youngstown Phantoms are two different schools of talent.

"They [the fans] come out for hockey," he said. "The kind of hockey we have with the Phantoms is being maximized."

Ryan points out that the Steelhounds were just a different brand of hockey.

"They didn't succeed because they were in the wrong league and didn't have enough corporate sponsors," he said. "Pro hockey comes with more expenses."

Ryan has advice for those coming to Covelli for the first time.

"It's a very fan-friendly arena," he said. "We have easy parking, affordable pricing, and there's been no increase in concessions since opening in 2005."

When asked if Youngstown was a pro town, Ryan responded with a single word: "Absolutely!"

In the past, Covelli has also played host to high school and college basketball, as

well as monster truck rallies and figure skating. Clearly, this is a venue that can host seemingly anything.

Youngstown State University's men's basketball team used Covelli last year for a game against Hiram College, won by the 'Guins 71-44. Head coach Jerry Slocum explained that it took some doing.

"We talked about it for three or four years," he said. "We're working on scheduling games at Covelli Centre for future seasons and the University feels really strongly about it. Hiram was a trial run. We're working on getting a Division I match-up at Covelli."

Slocum took a moment to discuss the difference between the Hiram College game at Covelli and a normal home date at Beeghly.

"There was a real buzz in the air for it to be at Covelli," he said. "It was a positive first step to do something in our future. We'd like to do something special, such as Coaches vs.

Cancer or a game benefiting
t h e

homeless or needy kids in the area at Covelli."

The coach noted that the difference in venues was not lost on the young men hooping it up on the court.

"The Covelli game was fun for our players," he said.

Don't expect for Slocum and his men to split home dates between Covelli and Beeghly Center.

"We are negotiating a game for next year with the men's basketball program at Covelli," he said. "One game a year at Covelli is something we're working on and we are not splitting home games between Beeghly Center and Covelli."

This also means that YSU won't make Covelli their permanent home court.

"It's out of the realm of possibility," Coach said. "Beeghly is a much better basketball facility than Covelli.

It is much more

fan-friendly. Covelli is a converted hockey facility."

For an arena that can seat a maximum of 5,900 spectators at a basketball game, the 1,576 spectators who paid to see YSU play Hiram last December 8 is a poor showing. The arena was only about 27 percent full that night.

Slocum is unsure if Youngstown is a pro town.

"It's yet to be seen," he said. "We need the income and area to support it. Being between Pittsburgh and Cleveland gives Youngstown or the Mahoning Valley area a sense of professional sports."

Still, the future looks quite bright for the Covelli Centre. This is Youngstown's arena, and it's up for the people of Youngstown to support it.



MORE THAN JUST A GAME

CORY BARTEK

For people of the Mahoning Valley, high school football is more than a game. It's more than just something to do on a Friday night; it's a way of life.

Here in the valley, we have some great gridiron rivalries at the high school level including Canfield and Poland, Howland and Niles, and Austintown Fitch and Boardman. However, none may be bigger than the Cardinal Mooney and Ursuline rivalry, which has been taking place since 1958. Year in and year out, this game receives statewide attention and is known to have playoff implications attached.

Sean Durkin, who is in his fourth year as athletic director at Ursuline has played in the rivalry, coached in it in various sports and now sees it from the AD perspective.

"It's intense but very respectful," Durkin said.

PJ Fecko has been the head coach at Cardinal Mooney since the 2000 season, but was connected to the program many years before that.

"I've seen every element of the rivalry that you can see," Fecko said. "I saw it as fan when I was a youngster, as a four-year player, as an assistant coach and now as a head coach."

It's not just about the fans of the present when it comes to the Mooney and Ursuline rivalry. It's also about the alumni that graduated many years ago; something that Fecko believes sets this rivalry apart from others.

"People set up reunions and trips back home around the date of this game," Fecko said.

Andy Billings, who is the Ronald Reagan Chair of Broadcasting at the University of Alabama, said he believes that for a rivalry to happen, there needs to be a long history of the two teams meeting on a regular basis and some sort of give and take competitively.

"Certainly one team can dominate over the other in certain time periods, but there needs to be some sort of similarity in terms of size of school and relative success in a given sport," Billings said.

While Mooney has a larger enrollment being

listed as a Division III school, Ursuline hasn't let their smaller Division V size affect their efforts on the field, winning four out of the last six meetings between the two schools. However, it was Mooney who gained not only the bragging rights but also the Shillelagh trophy this past season, defeating the Irish (29-14) at Stambaugh Stadium, located on the campus of Youngstown State University.

Both school communities have an overwhelming support for their teams and both hold festivities during the week leading up to the game.

"Everyone has a role to play during Ur-

suline week," Fecko said.

Students decorate the school and senior students dress up for different theme days and there is also a big rally the day before the game in which the younger feeder schools are invited to attend.

For the players however, they maintain a "business as usual" mentality. Both teams want to be able to return to their schools and ring the victory bell following the game.

"You set yourself up for failure if you're not as focused and prepared as you need to be," Fecko said.

Just as Mooney does, the Ursuline

coaches keep their players emotions down.

"It's easy to get overly amped up and excited which could lead to mistakes," Durkin said.

The young men on the field don't appear as just football players but like gladiators defending what is rightfully theirs and in a sense, protecting their castle. Every blow to their defender is like a jousting pole right to the chest and they long for the moment when they can finish off the opponent with a dagger to the heart, crushing any life that might be left and collecting the bragging rights for the year.

"Rivalries create moments and those



PHOTO BY DUSTIN LIVESAY



PHOTO BY DUSTIN LIVESAY

moments are the things people will prioritize in their lives. Rivalries matter because the results tend to last much longer than a single day or game," Billings said. "The emotional investment is high, as people may not remember every game result, but they do remember the rivalry game result."

Perhaps one of the biggest followers of the game and of Ursuline is Dan Gallagher. Gallagher was the quarterback for Ursuline in their first ever football game back in the 1940s.

"He still attends booster meetings and comes to every football game while still supporting the other sports," Durkin said.

But rivalries extend beyond game days, whether it's local rivalries like Ursuline and Mooney or big time rivalries like Ohio State and Michigan or Auburn and Alabama.

"Rivalries are for bragging rights and those play out over the course of 365 days," Billings said.

The desire to win runs deep but tradition runs even deeper. Since 1973, various schools from Columbiana, Mahoning and Trumbull have been crowned the best of their respectful divisions, collecting 20 state championships. Cardinal Mooney has accounted for eight of those 20 and was most recently crowned as Division III state

champions in 2011, while Ursuline won four titles in the same span.

Along with state championships, Mooney was also once home to many familiar faces in both the collegiate and professional football scene. Bo Pelini is the head football coach at the University of Nebraska, Bob Stoops is the head football coach at Oklahoma University and Mark Stoops is the head football coach at the University of Kentucky. Upon graduating from Mooney, John Simon played college football at Ohio State University and is now a member of the Baltimore Ravens, while Mooney graduate Denise DeBartolo York is the co-chairman of the San Francisco 49ers.

Athletic rivalries usually result in the opposing communities resenting one another during the week of the game but with this particular game there lies a bigger picture that often goes unnoticed. Having people from Mooney sit across people from Ursuline with nothing but a 160 foot field of grass separating the two speaks volumes of what this game means to the people of the Mahoning Valley. While there is a huge amount of pageantry among the alumni, fans and students, there is a mutual respect between the coaches, players and schools.

"The two administrations get along great. We are a part of the same diocese and the relationship has always

been strong," Durkin said. "This game brings a lot of people together. We both represent the Youngstown diocese in a very positive manner and both sides have alumni that have a great passion and support for their school," Fecko said.

"People live for when sports become about far more than sports, and that's what rivalries tend to provide. As for whether they are something that will always take place, the rivalry game will be something that virtually any team will circle on their schedule, yet no rivalry is truly safe in modern times with realignment and other factors," Billings said.

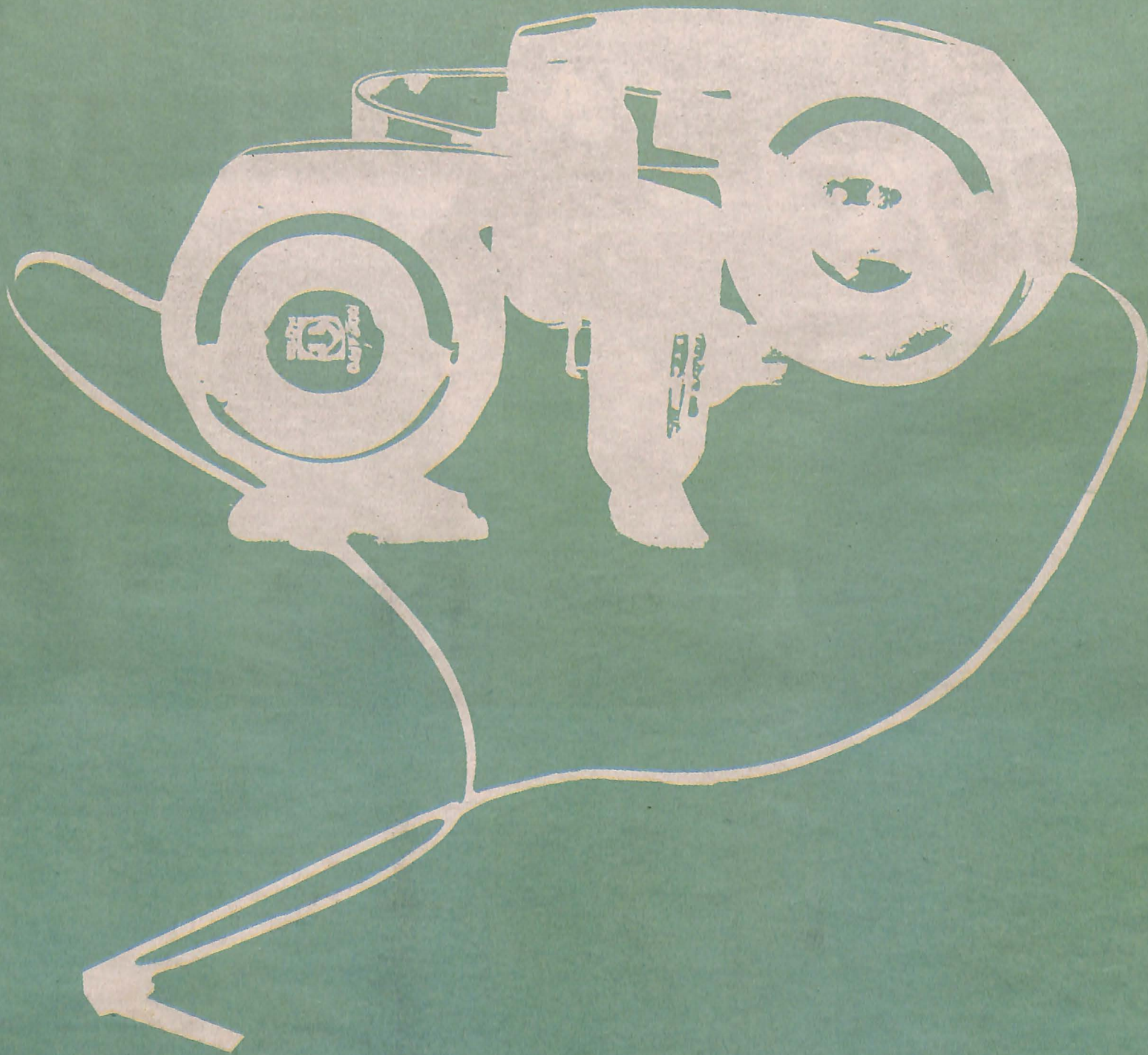
This rivalry pertains to a history that is decades old and a city that once thrived in the steel industry can now look to this game to help restore a sense of strength and give hope to a community that's trying so hard to make a comeback.

"This game highlights what's positive in the city of Youngstown. It's a bonus for the community when you have a rivalry like the one we have," Fecko said.

"Both schools have gone through the same growth and drop with the city of Youngstown," Durkin said. "We've both faced the same adversities and we've both survived and persevered."

“You set yourself up for failure if you're not as focused and prepared as you need to be.”

-PJ FECKO



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