

Y Alumni Magazine

Winter 2021

Welcome to the Winter 2021 edition of your YSU Magazine!

In this edition, read about all of the great successes at your alma mater over the past few months, great alumni throughout the world, great faculty scholarly work in a variety of disciplines and much, much more. Enjoy!

(Editor's Note: The printed version of the magazine remains on hiatus. For the most up-to-date stories and news about YSU, visit the [YSU \(/ysu.edu/news\) News Center \(/ysu.edu/news\)](https://ysu.edu/news), the [Excellence at Work \(/ysu.edu/office-marketing-and-communications/communications/faculty-success/excellence-work-archive\)](https://ysu.edu/office-marketing-and-communications/communications/faculty-success/excellence-work-archive) archives or the [YSU Merit \(https://ysu.meritpages.com/\) page.](https://ysu.meritpages.com/)

Our **CAMPUS**



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OUR CAMPUS (/MAGAZINE/WINTER-2021/OUR-CAMPUS)

Y's are wild, A thousand-plus grads, Beating the market, Creating a legacy, Virtual YSU, and much more. [Read more \(/magazine/winter-2021/our-campus\)](#)



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OUR DONORS (/MAGAZINE/WINTER-2021/OUR-DONORS)

Centofantis, Zoldans give \$1M to “We See Tomorrow” campaign. The Centofanti and Zoldan families are the latest major donors to YSU’s historic \$125 million “We See Tomorrow” fundraising campaign. [Read more \(/magazine/winter-2021/our-donors\)](#)



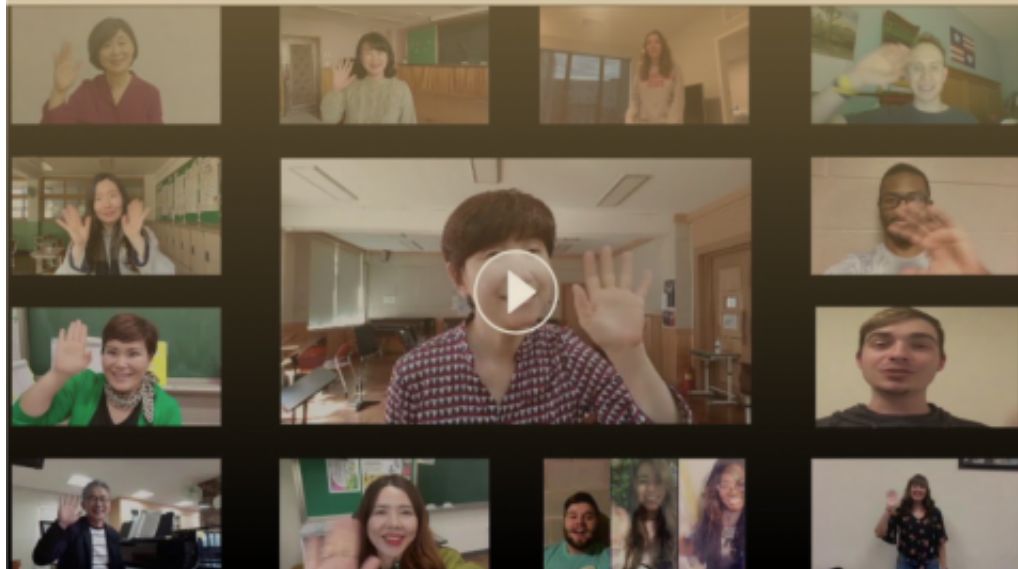
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OUR ALUMNI (/MAGAZINE/WINTER-2021/OUR-ALUMNI)

A dozen YSU alumni from every decade over the past 60 years shared their expertise in the virtual 2020 Alumni Lecture Series, covering topics ranging from entrepreneurship and fashion to performing on the flute and hosting a talk show. And the lectures are continuing this year. [Read more \(/magazine/winter-2021/our-alumni\)](#).

Our FACULTY



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OUR FACULTY (/MAGAZINE/WINTER-2021/OUR-FACULTY)

Excellence at Work...Scholarly achievements and activities of YSU faculty and staff. [Read more \(/magazine/winter-2021/our-faculty\)](#)

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Macte **Y** Virtute

BE INCREASED IN MERIT

Happy 2021 and belated holiday wishes to all.

The past several months have been filled with incredible challenges for our nation, including the continued tragic surge of the coronavirus as well as this past week's events at the U.S. Capitol. The impact is certain to be felt widely and to linger long as we move into the third decade of the 21st century.

Improved treatments, stepped up safety protocols and, especially, the distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine gives hope, providing us all a glimpse of the light at the end of this dark time. We can hope and pray that 2021 will be a year remembered for battling back this terrible disease and restoring a sense of normalcy.

Of course, there was nothing normal here at your alma mater in 2020. We moved nearly all classes to off-campus, remote delivery when the pandemic hit in March, and continued that mode into this past Fall semester. Only about one-third of our classes were offered on campus, and that continues into the Spring semester.



The transition has not been easy, particularly for students who have lost out on so much by not being here on campus. Students are to be commended for their perseverance. In December, more than 1,000 students earned diplomas at Fall Commencement. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the ceremony was held in a virtual format. (<https://ysu.edu/virtual-commencement>) Nonetheless, it was a time to recognize the hard work and extra focus necessary to achieve in these difficult times. Our students are an inspiration.

As we move through 2021 and hopefully a healthier future, we cannot help but be changed, as individuals and as a university. It's now time to reflect, learn from these past few months and put into place fresh approaches that will make us a stronger, more sustainable institution.

Meanwhile, we hope you enjoy this streamlined version of the Winter 2021 digital edition of the *YSU Magazine*. You'll find stories about successful alumni, accomplished faculty and generous donors, as well as the latest campus news and updates.

Here's to a 2021 filled with health, happiness and good fortune for all. Be well. Stay safe and, as always...

Go Penguins,



James P. Tressel, President

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Our **CAMPUS**

Y'S ARE WILD!

The YSU “Y” is popping up all around campus. From Fifth Avenue and the Eastbound Service Road to Beeghly Hall and Kilcawley House, nine large steel block-Y logos have been installed across the university. The seven-foot-tall Y’s were manufactured and donated by Boardman Steel, owned by Dave Deibel, former chair of the YSU Board of Trustees, and his wife, Holly. They’ve quickly become popular photo spots on campus!





(<https://ysu.edu/virtual-commencement>)

A THOUSAND-PLUS GRADS

Youngstown Mayor Jamael “Tito” Brown gave the commencement address and 1,020 graduates received degrees as YSU celebrated virtual Fall Commencement on Dec. 13. The ceremony was moved to a virtual format due to the COVID-19 pandemic. YSU President Jim Tressel leads the ceremony, with additional remarks from Provost Brien Smith, deans from each of the university’s colleges and student speaker Kristen Thompson. Watch. (<https://ysu.edu/virtual-commencement>)

BEATING THE MARKET

An investment fund managed by YSU students continues to significantly outperform stock market benchmarks as its value has grown to more than \$2 million, making it one of the largest student-managed funds in the nation. The YSU Student Investment Fund, started in 2008 with a gift of \$250,000 from the YSU Foundation, has outperformed the S&P 500 Index in eight out of the last nine years.

CREATING A LEGACY

Faculty, students and others planted 600 trees on a one-acre plot of land less than a mile east of campus to launch the YSU Legacy Forests Program. "Our intent is simple - plant trees to create a better environment and help solve the climate crisis," said Colleen McLean, YSU associate professor in Physics, Astronomy, Geology and Environmental Sciences. "We are thrilled to get this program literally in the ground." The group's goal is to plant micro forests to slow climate warming. The plan is to plant one tree for each incoming YSU freshman.



NSF RECORD

Cory Brozina, assistant professor and director of first-year engineering in the Rayen School of Engineering at YSU, has received a \$1 million award from the National Science Foundation, the largest YSU has ever received from the NSF.

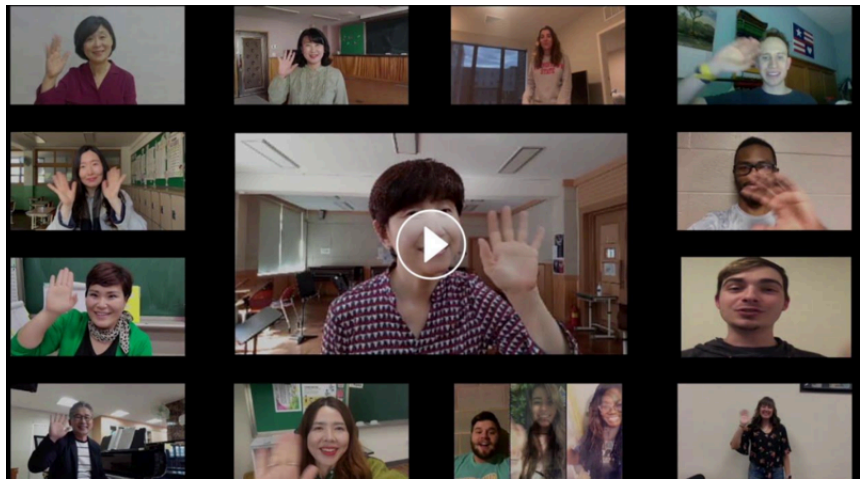
The project aims to increase the enrollment and graduation of high-achieving undergraduate engineering commuter students with demonstrated financial need at YSU. "This award has the opportunity to change the national landscape of how universities support commuter students studying engineering," he said.

PARTNERING WITH THE AF

YSU is part of a new \$30 million workforce initiative aimed at increasing the security and reliability of microelectronics systems used by the military. Led by the Air Force, the program provides YSU \$2.2 million to increase the number of digital design engineers with expertise in microelectronics, a need the Air Force says current academic programs across the nation are not meeting.

WORKFORCE INNOVATION

And speaking of workforce development, YSU has launched the Center for Workforce Education and Innovation, a newly-formed entity that focuses on new approaches to close the skills and opportunity gaps in the community. Jennifer Oddo, who has led workforce development efforts at IBM for the past five years, is the new executive director of Center. "Traditional workforce development and hiring practices are not yielding consistent results and leading to unfilled positions, higher attrition, poor job satisfaction and increased costs for employers," Oddo said.



([HTTPS://YSU.EDU/NEWS/SONG-HOPE-AND-COMFORT](https://ysu.edu/news/song-hope-and-comfort))HOPE AND COMFORT

YSU's Dana Chorale joined forces with the Busan Teacher's Choir for a moving virtual performance of "You Do Not Walk Alone" at the Busan Choral Festival in South Korea. A dozen choirs from nine countries participated. Hae Jong-Lee, associate professor in YSU's Dana School of Music, directed the combined performance. "I hope the song we sang brings hope and comfort to all who are suffering from these uncertain times," he said. Watch. (<https://ysu.edu/news/song-hope-and-comfort>)



MR. SECRETARY

The numbers are pretty incredible: 30 years as secretary of the YSU Board of Trustees; only the third board secretary in the university's 112-year history; secretary for 60 percent of the board's meetings since YSU became a public university;

worked with six university presidents; and gave the oath of office to 47 trustees and 31 student trustees. That's the record book for Franklin S. Bennett Jr., who left his position in June. In addition, Bennett attended more than 1,000 board committee meetings and 80 commencements, and his signature appears on tens of thousands of university diplomas. "It seems impossible that 30 years have passed since I walked into that Manchester Room, first as a sub for my father and then as secretary," he said, adding, "If that room could talk, a very, very interesting story it could tell."

LUCKY 13

YSU faculty members Ou Hu, Daniel Van Dussen, Martha I. Pallante and Amy Laurel Fluker have been named to new endowed faculty positions. Hu, with a long list of scholarly accomplishments during a 16-year career as a member of the Economics faculty at YSU, is the first Paul J. Thomas Chair in Economics. Van Dussen, professor of Gerontology and an active advocate and leader for the region's aging population, is the first YSU DePizzo Endowed Chair in Gerontology. Pallante, professor of Early American History, author and a leading expert on local history, is the first Charles Darling Endowed Faculty Chair in American Social History. And Fluker, assistant professor of History who specializes in the study of Civil War memory, is the first Robert W. Reeder I Memorial Endowed Professor of History. YSU now has 13 endowed faculty positions.



PATENTLY HISTORIC

A new material patented by a YSU professor and student could lead to a process to help remove the increasingly dangerous amounts of pharmaceuticals in the tap water coming into our homes. Doug Genna, associate professor of Chemistry, and Mariah DeFuria, a 2017

YSU graduate with a bachelor's degree in Chemistry, received the patent for designing a material that can bind and remove pharmaceuticals from water. DeFuria, an undergraduate Chemistry student when the research was conducted, is believed to be the first student co-inventor on an issued patent in YSU history. She is now a student in YSU's Doctor of Physical Therapy program.

TOP HONORS

This year's freshman class in YSU's Honors College is the largest in university history. The college's 337 freshmen enrolled this Fall semester tops the previous high of 328 freshmen in Fall 2017. There is currently a total of 1,277 students in the Honors College.



VIRTUAL YSU

Tired of those boring office and bookshelf backgrounds on all of those pandemic-induced Webex and Zoom meetings? Consider, instead, holding that meeting right here on the YSU campus - on the rolling mounds of the campus core, in front



of a roaring crowd of Penguins fans at Stambaugh Stadium, or even right on the front lawn of President Tressel's house! Do all of that and more with one of the 44 YSU virtual backgrounds now available on the [YSU website](https://ysu.edu/university-relations/ysu-virtual-backgrounds) (<https://ysu.edu/university-relations/ysu-virtual-backgrounds>). There's even instructions on how to set the backdrops in Zoom, Webex and MS Teams. Have fun and...Go Penguins!

FIVE AND COUNTING

For the fifth consecutive year, the YSU chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha, the National Political Science Honor Society, received the national Best Chapter Award, given to only 16 of the society's 700 chapters nationwide. "It is a strong recognition of how great our students are that we stand out in this way," said Adam Fuller, associate professor of Political Science.

NEW TRUSTEES

The YSU Board of Trustees has three new members. Joseph J. Kerola of Hubbard, president and chief executive of PI&I Motor Express Inc., was appointed to the board by Gov. Mike DeWine. The governor also appointed



Galena Lopuchovsky of Poland, a YSU sophomore majoring in Biology, as a student trustee. In addition, the Board of Trustees appointed Helen K. (Lamb) Lafferty, a two-time YSU alum and veteran administrator and faculty member at Villanova University, to the position of national/global trustee.



COVID PREP

Nursing students participated in a Mock COVID Testing Drive-Thru Nursing Experience in a parking lot on the west side of campus in late October. Dozens of

students drove through as simulated patients to be screened for COVID by fellow students. Nurse practitioner students were also on site for simulated diagnosing and treating. No actual testing was conducted. "I tell students that we're practicing it now, but the opportunity may come in the near future where we partner with community agencies to provide a vaccination or testing to members of our community," said Amy Weaver, associate professor of Nursing told [WKBN TV \(https://www.wkbn.com/news/local-news/ysu-nursing-students-prepare-for-work-in-pandemic-with-mock-covid-19-testing/\)](https://www.wkbn.com/news/local-news/ysu-nursing-students-prepare-for-work-in-pandemic-with-mock-covid-19-testing/).

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Our DONORS

Centofanti, Zoldans give \$1M to “We See Tomorrow” campaign

The Centofanti and Zoldan families are the latest major donors to YSU’s historic \$125 million “We See Tomorrow” fundraising campaign.

CENTOFANTI
School of Nursing

The Centofanti Charitable Foundation pledged \$1 million to support YSU’s Nursing program, and in turn the university named the James and Coralie Centofanti School of Nursing.

 YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

“This naming is particularly noteworthy at this moment as we

have all come to realize and better appreciate the vital importance and the tremendous dedication of frontline healthcare workers,” President Jim Tressel said at a news conference announcing the gift.

James Centofanti of Canfield was a long-time member of the board of Farmers National Bank, a generous supporter of numerous educational and community-based activities, and the recipient of numerous awards for his humanitarian efforts. He died in 2010. His wife, Coralie, died in 1999.

It is the Centofanti Foundation's second \$1 million gift to YSU. In 2012, the Foundation pledged \$1 million to establish the James and Coralie Centofanti Center of Health and Welfare for Vulnerable Populations in YSU's Bitonte College of Health and Human Services. And in 2017, the Foundation pledged \$500,000 to help support the successful Centofanti Symposium.

The YSU School of Nursing, started in 1967, enrolls more than 350 undergraduate students and 80 graduate students and boasts more than 4,300 alumni.

The \$1 million gift from the Zoldan Family of Youngstown, founders of Phantom Fireworks, will be used for student scholarships and to establish a new mentorship program. The gift is being made in honor of their parents, Sam and Sylvia Zoldan, and their uncle, Abe Yampolsky.



Pictured at the announcement at Phantom headquarters in Youngstown are, from left, YSU Foundation President Paul McFadden, Alex Zoldan, YSU President Jim Tressel, Bruce Zoldan and Alan Zoldan.

"YSU has been the shining star of our community, and all of our family members have benefited from the university's presence here," said Bruce J. Zoldan, president and CEO of Phantom Fireworks. "It is our privilege to be able do our small part in supporting this wonderful institution."

The gift establishes the Zoldan-Yampolsky Family Executive Fellows Program in the YSU Williamson College of Business Administration's Center for Non-Profit Leadership. YSU juniors chosen to participate will work with senior leadership on campus or at non-profit organizations to gain practical work experience. The gift also increases the Sam and Sylvia Zoldan Memorial Scholarship endowment, established by the Zoldans in 2006.

The “We See Tomorrow” capital campaign is the largest fundraising effort in YSU history and has already exceeded \$100 million.

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Our ALUMNI

A dozen YSU alumni from every decade over the past 60 years shared their expertise in the virtual 2020 Alumni Lecture Series this year, covering topics ranging from entrepreneurship and fashion to performing on the flute and hosting a talk show. And the lectures continue this year.

YSU Alumni Engagement and Events started the online interactive lectures early last spring when the COVID-19 pandemic caused widespread shutdowns and prevented people from gathering to attend such events in person. The talks are streamed live and can be watched at any time on [Alumni Engagement's Facebook page \(https://m.facebook.com/ysualumni\)](https://m.facebook.com/ysualumni).

"It's been a wonderful experience getting to know these fascinating alumni," said Heather Belgin, associate director of Alumni Engagement. "We encourage everyone to check out their inspiring success stories on our Facebook page."

Participating alumni include the health commissioner for the city of Youngstown, the person in charge of ticketing for the Cleveland Browns, a retired Lieutenant Colonel, the former head of the American Red Cross of the Mahoning Valley, and many more.

For information on upcoming lectures, visit the [Alumni Engagement Facebook page \(https://m.facebook.com/ysualumni\)](https://m.facebook.com/ysualumni).

Alumni lectures on YouTube include:

- Angel Rivera, 2003 BSAS in Fashion Merchandising, bridal gown designer and owner of Angel Rivera Couture. ["A Dream and the](#)

Perseverance to Make it into a Reality.”

(<https://youtu.be/Rvv0Tm1GYgc>)

- Tammy Sos, 2005 BSAS in Human Performance and Exercise Science, Employee Wellness Coach at Ohio Living Breckenridge Village. “How to Feel Whole in Challenging Times: An Exploration of the Six Dimensions of Wellness.” (<https://youtu.be/bg-JQrSI2Yk>)



Angel Rivera

- Karen Conklin, 1970 BSBA in Advertising, CEO of Conklin Consulting LLC; former CEO of Lake to River Girl Scout Council and former executive director of American Red Cross of the Mahoning Valley. “Dos and Don’ts of Nonprofit Leadership.” (https://youtu.be/h_OCjQ2TD00)

- Jason Moncrief, 2002 BM in Tuba and Flute Performance, an associate for both the New World Symphony and the Chicago Civic Orchestra on tuba, principal flute for the Center Stage Opera in Thousand Oaks, Cal., principal flute and associate conductor of NYC Renaissance Chamber Collaborative. “Carving a New Performance Path: The Modern-Day Performer.” (<https://youtu.be/cqC6hZjmAEI>)



Jason Moncrief

- Phillip M. Randall, 1968 BS in Education, managing partner of the Thorndyke Group, a human capital consultancy, specializing in individual and organization effectiveness. “Whole Person Planning.” (<https://youtu.be/FOgmP58bczU>)

- Ken Kagy, 1979 BE in Civil Engineering, City Engineer in Milton, Ga. “An Archimedean Estimation to Hydrology Time Calculations.” (<https://youtu.be/NBogOJujnOs>)

- Bob Sivik, 2002 BSBA in Marketing Management, vice president of

Ticket Sales and Service for Haslam Sports Group, overseeing ticketing teams for the Cleveland Browns and Columbus Crew. [“An Inside Look at Sports Management.”](#)

(<https://youtu.be/N2MVYpzswTo>)

- Jessica Williams, 2015 bachelor’s of Social Work, 2019 master’s of Social Work, supervisor of Intake/Assessment Services at Trumbull County Children Services Board. [“Resiliency and Child Welfare.”](#) (<https://youtu.be/ozFHueVLAZs>)

- Carmella Williams, 2005 BSBA in Marketing Management, director of Diversity & Inclusion at Youngstown Business Incubator. [“Empowerment through Entrepreneurship.”](#) (<https://youtu.be/nGFsZMSAqmY>)

- Joseph P. Alessi, 1990 BS in Education, 1999 master’s in History, retired Lieutenant Colonel and current faculty member of the Department of History at YSU and the Senior Army Instructor of the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps at Youngstown East High School. [“The First Rule of Leadership.”](#) (<https://youtu.be/UkyTDWlow1U>)

- Chris Gunther, 2017 BA in Telecommunication Studies, host of the YouTube talk show “The Chris Gunther Show”. [“What Keeps Chris Gunther Going: The Perseverance of a Talk Show Host.”](#) (<https://youtu.be/gi4t0fUpihw>)

- Erin Bishop, 2001 BSAS in Community Health, 2007 master’s of Public Health, health commissioner and local registrar of the Youngstown City Health District. [“My Path to Public Health, Through a Global Pandemic, and What the Future Holds.”](#)

(<https://youtu.be/i0FnDXt8oBs>)



Bob Sivik



Erin Bishop

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CLASS *Notes*

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'50S

In celebration of the 70th anniversary of the class of 1950, YSU Magazine is publishing this letter we received from Willie F. Sibley of Los Angeles, who earned a bachelor's degree in 1950:

I am writing to pay tribute to the class of 1950 with an open letter to the YSU Magazine in response to a statement written by a letter-writer in the Fall 2017 issue, "...But also saw that there was nothing worth noting about the alumni from the '50 or before..."

To the Class of 1950,

Congratulations as you celebrate your 70th Anniversary Year, as graduates of Youngstown College;
and congratulations to the Track & Field Team as it also celebrates its 70th Anniversary.



William F. Sibley

The Class of 1950 included many outstanding and exceptional graduates. A class size of 717, many of these graduates were born before and during the Great Depression and in time when many sacrifices had to be made. Members of the Class of 1950 are among what many call “America’s Greatest Generation.”

The Class of 1950 lived through World War II; it was the largest class size, had the most military veterans, and the most diverse student body up to that time. This class played a part in the integration and diversification of its athletic program.

The class also participated in restarting the college’s intercollegiate football program in 1946 after being shut down during the World War II years; and it took part in the development of the college’s first Track & Field team.

Congratulations and Best Wishes for many more years.

With Gratitude and Thanks,

Willie F. Sibley, BA, 1950

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'60S

The Youngstown Veterans Affairs Clinic is being renamed after **Carl Nunziato**, who graduated from Youngstown College’s ROTC program in 1961. Nunziato, who served two tours of combat in Vietnam, where he was severely injured and lost both of his legs, played a crucial role in bringing a VA outpatient clinic to Youngstown. He was also instrumental in helping establish the Veterans Resource Center at YSU, also named in his honor. Nunziato has been honored with the Bronze Star, Air Medal, Purple Heart, Vietnam Campaign Medal with three Battle Stars and other awards. He also is a member of the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame.



Carl Nunziato

June Summers of Youngstown, bachelor's in Education, 1962 summa cum laude, has published her fourth novel, *Whatever It Takes*. The book is a suspense thriller involving characters dealing with moral dilemmas. Summer's other novels are *Let Freedom Ring*, *Before We Fade Away*, and *A Conflict of Time*, all available on amazon.com.



Lee and Carolyn Stoneburner pose with Rick Williams, associate director of the Carl A. Nunziato Veterans Resource Center at YSU, with three pictures they donated to the Center in honor of Carolyn's late husband, Jerry L. Stoneburner, a 1963 YSU

alum and Army veteran who died in 2019. The pictures of the Lincoln Memorial, the White House and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall are on display at the Center on Wick Avenue on campus. Stoneburner, who formerly owned Stony's Trucking Co. and Better Management Corp. of Ohio, served in the Army in Okinawa, Japan.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5bixxgmYiAo>) An interview (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5bixxgmYiAo>) with **Ronald R. Thomas**, bachelor's degree, 1963, is featured in the Atlanta History Center's Veterans History Project. Thomas, a native of Youngstown now living in Atlanta, was a captain in the Air Force from 1964 to 1967 as an electronics officer at Cape Canaveral, Fla. He later worked as a telecommunications engineer for C&P Telephone Co. in Washington, D.C., Litton Industries in Beverly Hills, Calif.; AM International in Chicago, C&S National Bank in Atlanta, and the



State of Georgia, retiring in 2007. He has written more than 100 articles and two books on telecommunications. Watch. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5bixxgmYiAo>)

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'70S

Alumni **Suellen and Michael Weir** donated \$1 million to YSU to establish a half-tuition scholarship for full-time YSU undergraduate engineering or sciences majors. Suellen, bachelor's in Education, 1973, and Michael, bachelor's in Mechanical Engineering, 1971, and master's in Business Administration, 1977, met at YSU, where Suellen was named homecoming queen in 1970. After graduation, Mike went on to work for Youngstown Sheet & Tube, Babcock and Wilcox, and Ingersoll-Rand. In 1982, he founded Total Equipment Company, a supplier of pumps and air compressors for Pennsylvania and West Virginia, including sales and service.

Sharon Hrina of Canfield, bachelor of Nursing, 1973, retired as vice president of Akron Children's Hospital Mahoning Valley. She was with the hospital since 2005, when she joined as the administrative director. She became vice president in 2009. A native of Youngstown, Hrina also holds a master's degree in Nursing Administration from University of Pittsburgh. In 2010, she was named YSU Alumnus of the Year.

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'80S

An article based on a webinar by **Paul Shiller**, master's in Chemistry, 1987, and bachelor's of Chemical Engineering, 1980, appeared in the journal *Plant Engineering* (<https://www.plantengineering.com/articles/grease-chemistry-is-governed-by-thickener-structure/>) in October. The article is titled "Grease chemistry is governed by thickener structure: Know the kinds of grease and laws that govern their use." Shiller received a doctorate in Physical Chemistry from



Paul Shiller

Case Western Reserve University and also holds a master's in Chemical Engineering from CWRU. He joined The Timken Co. as a product development specialist for lubricants and lubrication in 2004 and then became a tribological specialist with the Tribology Fundamentals Group at the Timken. In 2011, he moved to the University of Akron and is currently a research scientist in the Civil Engineering-Timken Engineered Surface Laboratory.

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'90S

Michael Prelee of Hubbard, bachelor's in History and Political Science, 1995, has published his fourth novel, *Lost Little Sister*. It is the second book in his Tim Abernathy mystery series, set in the small Northeast Ohio town of Hogan.



Michael Prelee

Eric Ruyle of Katy, Texas, master's of Music Performance, 1995, authored the article "The Basics of Jazz" in *Band Directors Talk Shop* newsletter. Ruyle, who also holds a bachelor's degree in Jazz Studies from McNeese State University, is an adjunct faculty member at Lone Star College. He has performed in Mexico, Canada, Europe and throughout the United States and with a wide variety of internationally known artists. His articles have been in such national journals as *Instrumentalist* and *Flute Talk*.

James Willock of Salem, Ohio, master's degree in Criminal Justice, 2004, and bachelor's in Applied Science, 1997, has been named manager of the Public Safety and Police Academy (<https://www.kent.edu/trumbull/news/james-willock-will-lead-kent-state-trumbulls-police-academy>) program at Kent State University-Trumbull. Willock is former police chief of the Mill Creek MetroParks Police Department. He also serves as chair of the Education Committee in the Ohio

Association of Chiefs of Police, previously served as curriculum chair of the Certified Law Enforcement Executive Advisory Board and as the president of the Mahoning Valley Chiefs of Police Association.

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Alton Merrell, a two-time alum of YSU's Dana School of Music, helps bring authenticity to Netflix's newest hit movie, "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom."

Merrell, who holds a bachelor's degree in Music Education in 2000 and a master's in Jazz Studies in 2002 from YSU, coached Emmy-winning actor Glynn Turman on how to be believable as a piano player in the movie. The movie stars Viola Davis and features Chadwick Boseman in his final film role. It is based on a play by Pittsburgh native August Wilson and was shot in the city



in 2019. Merrell, who also holds a doctorate in Jazz Studies from the University of Pittsburgh, taught Turman the importance of the left hand in that stride-piano style and helped him learn the movement of the right hand by having Turman sing the melody and move his right hand up and down the keys to match his voice.

Jamie Marich of Warren, bachelor's in History and American Studies, 2000, has published *Trauma and the 12 Steps, Revised and Expanded: An Inclusive Guide to Enhancing Recovery*. Marich travels internationally speaking on EMDR therapy,



Jamie Marich

trauma, addiction, expressive arts and mindfulness while maintaining a private practice in Warren. She is the developer of the Dancing Mindfulness practice and co-creator of the Yoga Unchained approach to trauma-informed yoga. It is her seventh book.

Amy Dennis of Nathrop, Colo., bachelor's degree in Anthropology, 2001, has been promoted to assistant dean of Student Affairs at Colorado Mountain College

(<https://arkvalleyvoice.com/cmc-salida-hires-new-assistant-dean-of-students/>) in Salida, Colo. Dennis worked in Student Affairs in higher education for 13 years in a variety of roles in Ohio, Colorado and West Virginia. She also taught Anthropology and Sociology at West Virginia University at Parkersburg.



*Adrienne L.
Donaldson-
Steverson*

Adrienne L. Donaldson-Steverson of Little Elm, Texas, executive master's in Business, 2003, is listed in Marquis Who's Who (<https://www.24-7pressrelease.com/press-release/475996/adrienne-l-donaldson-steverson-phd-celebrated-for-dedication-to-the-field-of-nursing>).

Donaldson-Steverson also holds a bachelor's degree in Nursing from Ohio State University and is currently a professor of Nursing at Dallas College. She previously worked in nursing at a variety of locations, including locally at Forum Trumbull Memorial Hospital, Saint Elizabeth Humility of Mary Health Center, North Side Medical Center, Todd Children's Hospital and Beeghly Medical Park. She has earned several honors, including the Outstanding Young

Women in America Award, Black Student Leadership Award for Outstanding Personal Achievement, the University of Michigan Grant from the Center for the Education of Women and the UM Professional Nurse Traineeship Award.

Rebecca Page of Bessemer, Pa., bachelor's in Business Administration/Human Resource Management, 2005, is the new executive director of the Community Food Warehouse of Mercer County in Pennsylvania (<https://www.sharonherald.com/news/new-director-takes-over-at-community->

[food-warehouse-of-mercercounty/article_b5c6b8ee-ffa9-11ea-9434-5f9665e2fd3a.html](https://www.ysu.edu/magazine/winter-2021/class-notes/food-warehouse-of-mercercounty/article_b5c6b8ee-ffa9-11ea-9434-5f9665e2fd3a.html)). She is responsible for fund-raising, overseeing food drives and volunteers, along with food buying. She previously worked at Second Harvest Food Bank of the Mahoning Valley.



Rebecca Page

Credit: The Sharon Herald



Aliyah Sabree

Aliyah Sabree

of Detroit, bachelor's in Biology, 2006, and now a judge in the 36th District Court in Michigan, has been named a 40 Under 40 honoree by the *Michigan Chronicle*. The list celebrates professionals under the age of 40 who have inspired others through vision and leadership, exceptional achievements and community service. Sabree, who earned a law degree from Michigan State University, previously was associate general counsel for the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department and also worked for the Detroit Board of Police Commissioners and the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office.

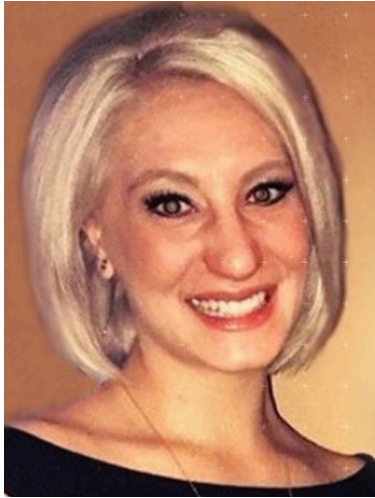
Jennifer Phillips of Niles, bachelor's in Computer Science, 2007, was named the 2020 Ohio Society Daughters of the American Revolution Outstanding Junior. She is currently the Regent of the Mahoning Chapter in Canfield.

Komar Anchor Plumbing, founded by **Thaddeus Smith**, master's of Business Administration, 2009, was named to Inc. Magazine's Annual 5,000 list, which showcases the 5,000 fastest growing private companies in the United States. Komar Anchor placed 239th on the list.

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Jessica L. Valsi of Columbus, Ohio, bachelor's in Political Science, 2012, has received a master's degree in Public Policy and Management from the John Glenn College of Public Affairs at Ohio State University. She is the academic program coordinator in the Department of Political Science at Ohio State and serves as the vice president of the Columbus-area Chapter of the YSU Alumni Association.



Victoria Price

A scholarship fund in memory of **Victoria Price**, bachelor's in Nursing, 2017, has been established at Penn State University. Price, who also held a bachelor's degree from Penn State, died unexpectedly in June. Her parents, Robert and Terri Price, will fund the scholarship in the amount of \$2,500 per year for five years. She was a nurse at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, where she served on both the neurosurgery and critical care units. She suffered from Von Willebrand disease, a bleeding disorder, complications from which was related to her sudden passing.

Whitney Burd, bachelor's in Fine Arts, 2017, and **Adrienne Sabo**, bachelor's in Journalism, 2008, and former student **Tony Marr** are the founders of a new agency called Clever. "When founding Clever, we were keen to create something that valued creativity," said Sabo, creative director. "And we believe that creativity isn't limited to just the creatives on our team; creativity can be found in everything we do from how we approach strategic marketing plans and communications to the individual advertising tactics."



Ryan Peplowski of Hubbard, Ohio, bachelor's in General Studies with a minor in Marketing, 2019, has been promoted to digital marketing manager at 898 Marketing in Canfield, Ohio. Peplowski joined the firm in 2019 as an intern and was hired full-time as digital information specialist after graduating from YSU.

Grace Christopher of Poland, Ohio, bachelor's in History and Political Science, 2019, wrote "The 2016 Presidential Election Compared to 2020" in *The Burr*, a student produced magazine at Kent State University. Christopher is a second-year graduate student pursuing a master's degree in Journalism and Mass Communication at Kent.

Anthony Angelilli of Poland, Ohio, bachelor's in Fine Arts, 2019, was selected as one of only four recipients of the 2020 Civita Institute's Astra Zarina Early Career Fellowship to travel and work as an artist fellow in Civita di Bagnoregio, Italy. Originally scheduled for this past summer, the one-month fellowship was deferred to summer 2021 and includes a cash stipend, travel and living accommodations. Angelilli has received numerous awards for his art work, one of which is included in the permanent collection of printmaking at the Glasgow Print Studio in Glasgow, Scotland. He works at the Akron Art Museum as an exhibition technician. "We are very proud of Anthony's achievement, earning such a prestigious international fellowship," said Dragana Crnjak, YSU professor of Art. "The application process was very competitive and shows the scope of his outstanding work."



Anthony Angelilli

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Renderings by **Brandon L. DeJean**, bachelor's in Mechanical Engineering, 2020, were featured in *GM Authority*, a blog for General Motors enthusiasts. DeJean provided the blog with renderings of what a new next-generation full-size Buick SUV might look like. DeJean calls the renderings the "Buick Estate." *GM Authority* emphasizes that there is currently no indication General Motors will actually produce a new full-size Buick SUV. "Nevertheless, it's a cool idea, and these renderings prove that such a model could look quite nice as well," it says.



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Rendering of the "Buick Estate"

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