

# Macte Virtute

BE INCREASED IN MERIT

## *YSU – Defined by Our Success*

By now, most of you have probably heard that I will be stepping aside as president of YSU starting Feb. 1, 2023. In my announcement to campus and the news media, I thanked our students, faculty, staff, Board of Trustees, the YSU Foundation and, of course, alumni for their kindness and support during my more than 25 years on the YSU campus.



*President Jim Tressel*

One of the items we also emphasized in the announcement was that there's still much important work to be done, and that we will continue to work as hard as ever, seven days a week, to ensure the ongoing success of this institution that Ellen and I hold so dear. So, the farewells will have to wait. There will be plenty of time for handshakes, hugs and memories. For now, as I told reporters after my announcement – work awaits.

It's from work, on many levels across all of the campus, that comes our greatest successes. This online Summer-Fall 2022 edition of *YSU Magazine* celebrates many of those successes. We invite you to take the time to click through, catch up and learn about the great people and the great things happening here at

your alma mater.

In our “[Class Notes](https://ysu.edu/magazine/summerfall-2022/class-notes)” (<https://ysu.edu/magazine/summerfall-2022/class-notes>) and “[Class Notes Extras](https://ysu.edu/magazine/summerfall-2022/class-notes-extras)” (<https://ysu.edu/magazine/summerfall-2022/class-notes-extras>) sections, for instance, read about alums excelling in their chosen careers, like Joel Ristvey, a Criminal Justice graduate now an officer with the Hermitage, Pa., Police Department who recently graduated from the FBI National Academy in Virginia. Or Dr. Christopher J. Dussel, who holds both bachelor’s and master’s degrees from YSU and was recently named chief medical officer at University Hospitals Parma Medical Center. And Michelle L. Patrick, also a double-degree recipient, who recently was named president of Robert Morris University outside Pittsburgh. Good luck to all.

Also in this edition, we celebrate “[Our Students](https://ysu.edu/magazine/summerfall-2022/our-students),” (<https://ysu.edu/magazine/summerfall-2022/our-students>) like Mechanical Engineering major Tumi Adeeko, named 2022 National Intern of the Year by the Cooperative Education and Internship Association, and junior Julie Centofanti, among only two students across Ohio to receive the 2022 Student Service Legacy Award for outstanding leadership and contributions to community service. In the “[Our Donors](https://ysu.edu/magazine/summerfall-2022/our-donors)” (<https://ysu.edu/magazine/summerfall-2022/our-donors>) section, we recognize the unceasing generosity of thousands of benefactors who gave \$24.1 million to YSU in the 2021-22 fiscal year alone. It’s the largest one-year total in the YSU’s 114-year history. And the “[Our Campus](https://ysu.edu/magazine/summerfall-2022/our-campus)” (<https://ysu.edu/magazine/summerfall-2022/our-campus>) section provides a good overview of accomplishments and initiatives over the past several months, including new academic programs in Nursing and Education, three new members of the YSU Board of Trustees and YSU’s tops-in-the-state ranking for recycling.

It is the responsibility of everyone here on campus to ensure that these lists of achievements continue, year in and year out. The successes define us, and always will. It’s been a privilege to be a small part of that over the past many decades.

Go Penguins,



James P. Tressel, President

## 2022 STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY

State of The University 2022



### *In Every Issue*

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# *Archive*

TELL US YOUR STORY ([HTTPS://WWW.YSU.EDU  
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# CLASS *Notes*

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## '70s



**Henri Hall**, 1971, bachelor of Marketing/Advertising, was named Volunteer of the Year at the KitchenAid Senior PGA Championship in May in Benton Harbor, Mich. Henri, a resident of Lincoln Township, Mich., has served as volunteer services chair of the tournament since 2018 and has volunteered for five championships. Hall was featured in a [front-page story](#) ([https://www.heraldpalladium.com/news/henri-hall-takes-a-swing-as-senior-pga-volunteer-of-the-year/article\\_be3d323f-9219-5cbb-a16d-19efebd85c22.html](https://www.heraldpalladium.com/news/henri-hall-takes-a-swing-as-senior-pga-volunteer-of-the-year/article_be3d323f-9219-5cbb-a16d-19efebd85c22.html)) of

the Herald-Palladium newspaper in St. Joseph, Mich.

At the age of 94, **Mary Alice Baluck**, bachelor of Education, 1972, published her third book, *Darby Island: On Heaven's Threshold*. The book is a sequel to her first book published in 2020, titled *Heaven's Doorway*. All three of Baluck's books are available on Amazon in both Kindle and paperback versions. A self-described "lover of words," Mary Alice has lived at The Blackburn Home in Poland since 2018, where she said the staff has always been supportive of her writing, "always checking on my progress and fixing my goof-ups!"

**Henrietta Williams**, bachelor of Education, 1974, and master of Educational Administration, 1997, was selected for a leadership award from the Ohio Network of High Schools That Work. Williams has worked as a teacher, coach and principal during more than 40 years with the Youngstown city schools. She currently is assistant principal at East High School. In an interview with the *Youngstown Business Journal*, Williams said her teaching philosophy centers on a proverb she heard many years ago: "Each one, teach one." The saying, she said, originated in the United States during slavery when Africans were denied education. "When someone learns how to read and write, it becomes their responsibility to teach someone else," she said. "The idea is to spread knowledge for the betterment of your community."



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## '80s



**Joan Lawson**, bachelor of History, 1982, has been named chancellor and archivist for the Catholic Diocese of Youngstown. Lawson also holds a master in History and certificate in Historical Agency Administration from Northeastern University in Boston and a master of Religious Education from Loyola University of New Orleans. She holds a second certificate in Historical Agency Administration from the Seminar for Historical Administration in Williamsburg, Va.

**John Genovesi,**  
bachelor of  
Electrical  
Engineering, 1986,  
has joined UL  
Solutions as  
executive vice  
president and  
president of the  
company's



Enterprise and Advisory business. Genovesi joins UL Solutions from Adapdix, a start-up focused on developing edge computing, AI and machine learning for autonomous manufacturing, where he was chief operating officer. Genovesi previously spent 26 years at Rockwell Automation, most recently as senior vice president, Enterprise Accounts and Software. He also holds a master of Business Administration from Case Western Reserve University and an Executive Education Certificate in mergers and acquisitions from Harvard Business School.

**Darryl White,**  
bachelor of  
Music, 1987, is  
the leader of  
the Darryl  
White Quintet.  
Associate  
professor of  
trumpet at the  
Glenn Korff  
School of



Music at the University of Nebraska, White has performed as guest soloist with the Omaha Symphony, Lincoln Symphony Orchestra, Mesa Chamber Orchestra, Grand Junction Symphony, Lake Forest Chamber Orchestra, Roaring Fork Jazz Festival, University of Nebraska Faculty Brass Quintet, the University Faculty Jazz Quartet and many other solo appearances and guest clinicians with college jazz bands and orchestras across the country. He previously taught at Mesa

State College in Grand Junction, Col. He also holds a master of Music from Northwestern University and a doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Colorado.

**Roselyn Torella**, bachelor of Economics, 1988, and master of Business Administration (Management), 1990, discussed her book, *Lowellville, Ohio: Murders, Mayhem & More*, as part of the William Holmes McGuffey Historical Society Memories of a Lifetime lecture. The book by Torella, who considers herself Lowellville's "self-appointed unofficial town historian," is a collection of newspaper articles reporting on incidents that occurred between the 1850s and 1920s.

**Patty Durkin**, associate of Business Management, 1986, and bachelor of Applied Science, 1991, was named chief human resources officer at Aim Transportation Solutions. Durkin joined Aim in 2006 as human resources manager and four years later was named vice president of human resources. The company has more than 1,000 employees.

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## '90s



**Amy Acton**, (<https://www.dispatch.com/videos/news/2022/03/13/dr-amy-acton-reflects-her-place-history-pandemic-continues-women-year/9412202002/>)

bachelor of Chemistry, 1990, who served as the director of the Ohio Department of Health when COVID-19 started, is one of *USA Today's* Women of the Year, which honors women from across the country who have made a significant impact.

Acton was the first woman to serve as director of ODH. She previously taught at Ohio State University and worked with nonprofits in the Columbus area. Dr. Acton, who holds a medical doctorate from the Northeast Ohio



Medical University, was instrumental in measures put in place to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

**Jonathan Tobias**, master in Counseling, 1992, was recently published in Princeton Theological Seminary's *Theology Today* journal ([https://www.dailyadvance.com/chowan/news/local/religious-professors-article-published-in-theology-today/article\\_9843a5f6-374a-54df-b179-2c526caad8db.html](https://www.dailyadvance.com/chowan/news/local/religious-professors-article-published-in-theology-today/article_9843a5f6-374a-54df-b179-2c526caad8db.html)). In the article, Tobias explains why democracy is preferred for the Orthodox Church and how some Christians in America are drifting towards authoritarianism instead. Tobias teaches pastoral theology at Christ the Saviour Seminary in Johnston, Pa., and has written and lectured for more than 20 years on the Orthodox Church and American society.

**Leah Merritt**, bachelor of Physical Education, 1992, and master of Health and Human Services, 2010, now president and chief executive of the YWCA Mahoning Valley, was recognized as WYTV's *Hometown Hero* (<https://www.wytv.com/community/hometown-heroes/hometown-hero-fights-to-empower-women-eliminate-racism/>) earlier this year. Merritt, who has held her position since 2012, was also honored as the Woman of the Year by Youngstown Business and Professional Women's Club in 2021.

**Jim Cyphert**, bachelor of Advertising and Public Relations, 1994, director of Public Relations at Innis Maggiore, is leading business development of the agency's new presence in Raleigh, N.C. Cyphert, who became accredited by the Public Relations Society of America in 2014, has more than 25 years of public relations experience, including nearly 20 years at Innis Maggiore. Innis Maggiore is among the nation's leading positioning ad agencies, with more than 30 associates and 2021 capitalized billings of more than \$25 million.

**Babur B. Lateef**, bachelor of Combined Science, 1994, a board-certified ophthalmologist in Northern Virginia, has been appointed chair of the Health System Board of the University of Virginia Board of Visitors. Lateef has served as a member of the Board of Visitors and the Health System Board since 2016, as



well as a member of the UVA Physicians Group Board of Directors since 2018. Before his appointment as chair of the Health System Board, he served as the committee's vice chair and as chair of the Audit, Compliance and Risk Committee. Lateef has owned Woodbridge, Va.-based Advanced Ophthalmology since 2002. He earned a medical degree from Northeast Ohio Medical University and completed an ophthalmology residency at the

University of Rochester. He has served as chairman-at-large of the Prince William County School Board since 2018.

**Joel Ristvey**, bachelor of Criminal Justice, 1995, an officer with the Hermitage, Pa., Police Department, graduated from the FBI National



Academy in Quantico, Va. Ristvey's career in law enforcement started in 1995 with the Sharon Police Department. He joined the Hermitage department as a patrolman in 1996 and was later promoted to criminal investigator (detective) in 2007 and deputy chief of investigations in 2016.

**Jim Melia**, bachelor of Business Administration, 1995, is the new administrator of the Fair Haven Shelby County Home. Melia started working in nursing home care when he was 16 years old. After earning his degree from YSU, Melia started his healthcare career by managing a medical billing office. He also holds a dual Master of Health Administration/Business Administration degree from Cleveland State University.

**Pam Pesta**, bachelor of Finance, 1996, has been promoted to corporate officer at Erie Insurance. Pesta joined the company as the internal audit leader in 2018. She previously held leadership positions at Nationwide Insurance and finance and accounting consulting services with Navigant Consulting and Arthur Andersen.



**Bob Begley**, bachelor of Mechanical Engineering, 1998, is the director of Product Management at JLG Industries Inc., a global manufacturer of mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs) and telehandlers. Begley previously held product management roles with Blaw-Knox Construction Equipment Corp., Volvo Construction Equipment and Ingersoll-Rand. He also served in the Navy. He holds an ASAST in Nuclear Engineering Technology from Thomas Edison State University and a master of Business Administration from Indiana University–Kelley School of Business.

**Andre W. Cook Jr.**, bachelor of Psychology, 1999, is the new athletic director and head football coach at Airport High School in West Columbia, S.C. Cook, a seasoned coach with nearly two decades of experience in varsity high school sports in South Carolina and North Carolina, also holds a master of Athletic Administration from Wingate University.



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'00s

**Brandon**

**Schneider**, bachelor of History and Russian, 2000, was ordained a priest in the Catholic Diocese of Burlington, Vt. Father Schneider previously was assistant dean of Admissions at Georgetown University School of Medicine before entering the Order of Preachers (Dominicans). After leaving the Dominicans, he worked at Northwestern University before entering formation for the Diocese of Burlington in 2020. Father Schneider will serve as parochial vicar in three Catholic parishes. He also holds a master's degree from Georgetown University in Russian History.



*YSU alum Father Brandon Schneider, left, with Christopher Coyne, bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Burlington, Vt., in the sanctuary of St. Joseph Cathedral in Burlington. (Photo Credit: Cori Fugere Urban/Vermont Catholic)*

**Sgt. Daniel Galich**, bachelor of Criminal Justice, 2000, was named 2021 Command Officer of the Year in the Troy Police Department. Galich is the department's training section supervisor and also supervises the department's emergency management, overseeing COVID response, PPE preparedness and grant submissions to FEMA. He also recently graduated from Northwestern University's School of Police Staff and Command. He was hired by the Troy Police Department in 2004 and promoted to sergeant in 2019. He previously worked for the police department in Canfield, Ohio. He also holds a master's degree in Management from Walsh College.

**Gerald "Jerry" Nunziato**, bachelor of Civil Engineering, 2000, was promoted to the rank of Colonel in the Army at an event at the Carl Nunziato Veterans Resource Center at YSU. More than

60 people attended, including Jerry's uncle and the Center's namesake, Carl A. Nunziato. Col. Nunziato was commissioned as an armor officer in 2000 through the Army ROTC program at YSU. He subsequently completed a master's degree in Management from University of Maryland Global Campus. Over his 20-year career, he has served in many military roles and received extensive military education.

**May Samad**, bachelor of Social Work, 2001, has joined Coldwell Banker EvenBay Real Estate. "Real estate, for many, will be the largest transaction a person will make in their life," Samad said. "My goal is to guide people and to be an integral part of the community where needs are met, people connect and memories are made." Samad also holds a master's in Public Administration from Cleveland State University.



**Thomas Atwood**,

([http://news.utoledo.edu/index.php/06\\_16\\_2022/interim-leader-named-permanent-dean-of-utoledo-libraries](http://news.utoledo.edu/index.php/06_16_2022/interim-leader-named-permanent-dean-of-utoledo-libraries))

bachelor of English, 2002, has been named dean of University Libraries at the University of Toledo. Atwood had served as associate dean of University Libraries since 2018 and began his UToledo career in 2004 as an information literacy librarian and later as coordinator of

information literacy and library instruction. Atwood also holds a master's degree in Library and Information Science from Kent State University.

**Christopher Ellis**, master of Economics, 2003, has been named director of State Legislative Affairs for New York City Mayor Eric Adams. Ellis previously served as associate vice chancellor for workforce development initiatives at the State University of New

York. Before that, he was special assistant to the New York State chief information officer and director of the Office for Technology. Ellis began his career in public service as a senior legislative fiscal analyst for the New York State Assembly Ways and Means Committee and also was a research assistant at YSU's Center for Urban Studies. He began his career as a corrections and behavior coach for the Lincoln Place Center for Youth in Youngstown. Ellis also holds a bachelor degree in Economics and Africana Studies from Dartmouth College.

**Robert Seebacher**, bachelor of Music, 2003, has been promoted to associate professor at Centre College in Danville, Ky. Seebacher, in addition to conductor of Centre's orchestra, is the music director and conductor of the Johnson City Symphony in Tennessee and assistant conductor of the National Chorale in New York City. He has appeared with the Lexington Philharmonic, Youngstown Symphony,



Warren Philharmonic and Mobile Symphony orchestras and led all-state and honors orchestras in Kentucky, West Virginia and Alabama. Seebacher also holds a master of Orchestral Conducting from Bowling Green State University and a doctor of Music in Orchestral Conducting from the University of Kentucky.

**Melissa Kmetz**, bachelor of Early Childhood Education, 2003, and master of Education, 2007, was selected as a candidate for 2023 Ohio Teacher of the Year. The award identifies exceptional teachers and celebrates effective work inside and outside the classroom. Kmetz is going into her 17th year teaching third grade at Lakeview Elementary and her 19th year of teaching overall. "It is my goal to teach all students how to learn, not just what to learn," Kmetz said. "The most important lessons learned in our classroom won't always be academic ones. It is incredibly important to me that students embrace kindness and compassion and strive to make the world a better place."



**Christopher J. Dussel,**

([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tTiGmHPE\\_I8&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tTiGmHPE_I8&t=1s)) bachelor of Chemistry, 2004, and master of Business Administration, 2021, has been named chief medical officer at University Hospitals Parma Medical Center. Dussel previously was associate chief medical officer in Parma and, since 2019, has served as medical director of Emergency Medical Services, overseeing operations of Parma's Emergency Department and EMS in the eight cities under the hospital's medical control. Prior to joining UH, Dussel held various leadership roles in the Summa Health System, including vice chair of Emergency Medicine. He earned his medical degree from Northeast Ohio Universities College of Medicine and is a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives. Watch.

([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tTiGmHPE\\_I8&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tTiGmHPE_I8&t=1s))

**Sheila Calko**, 2005, bachelor's in Secondary Education, was named assistant principal at West Carrollton City Schools' Intermediate School. Calko previously was a high school assistant principal for the Dayton Public Schools and assistant principal at Cardinal Mooney High School in Youngstown. Calko taught social studies at Ursuline High School, Valley Christian Schools and the New York City Department of Education. She also holds a master's in Teaching of Social Studies from Columbia University in New York and is currently pursuing an Ed.D. in Leadership for Organizations at the University of Dayton.



**Karen Schubert**, bachelor in Professional Writing and Editing, 2005, and master of English, 2007, the co-founding director of Lit Youngstown, was recently featured in

the [RustBeltGirl blog](https://rustbeltgirlblog.wordpress.com/2022/01/18/important-stories-needed-to-be-told-robert-miltner-interviews-karen-schubert-director-of-lit-youngstown/). (<https://rustbeltgirlblog.wordpress.com/2022/01/18/important-stories-needed-to-be-told-robert-miltner-interviews-karen-schubert-director-of-lit-youngstown/>)

Schubert's poems, fiction, creative nonfiction, essays, reviews and interviews have appeared in numerous publications, including *National Poetry Review*, *Diode Poetry Journal*, *Water~Stone Review*, *AGNI Online*, *Aeolian Harp*, *Best American Poetry* blog and *American Literary Review*. Her awards include the William Dickey Memorial Broadside Award, an Ohio Arts Council Individual Excellence Award in poetry, and residencies at Headlands Center for the Arts and the Vermont Studio Center. She holds an MFA from the Northeast Ohio Master of Fine Arts.

**Michael C. Ranttila**, bachelor of Business Administration, 2007, has been promoted to vice president of Finance at Middlefield Banc Corp. He continues to serve as executive vice president/chief financial officer of the bank, a position he has held since November 2019. A certified public accountant, Ranttila joined the bank as controller in March 2011.

**Angela Duskey**, bachelor of Accounting, 2008, was appointed to the Board of Trustees of the Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County. Duskey is the chief financial officer for The Muransky Companies in Boardman. "Our library is truly a community hub that adapts to meet the needs of its patrons, and I'm excited to be a part of this incredible organization





making an impact," she said.

**Terrence Louk**, bachelor of Finance, 2008, has been named chief executive officer of the Coastal Area District Development Authority Inc. Louk previously worked for a decade in economic development and commercial lending. He also holds National Development Council's Economic Development Financial Profession Certification and completed the Council

of Development Finance Agencies' Development Finance Certified Professional Program. CADDA provides economic development lending programs to small businesses and industries expanding or locating in Georgia, north Florida, and the low country of South Carolina.

**Dr. Victoria DiGennaro**, bachelor of Psychology (minor in Chemistry), 2008, recently participated in podcasts (<https://ehealthradio.podbean.com/e/two-founders-of-women-s-physician-leadership-council-address-gender-parity-in-health-care/>) on eHealth Radio.

A family medicine physician at Pioneer Physicians Network in the Akron area, DiGennaro is a founding member of the Women's Physician Leadership Council, an organization of female physicians nationwide helping to break the glass ceiling for female doctors. DiGennaro holds a doctor of Osteopathic Medicine from Ohio University's Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine.



**Danny Mizicko**, bachelor of Telecommunications, 2008, has joined the video department at iSynergy. He previously worked for Nike, Red Bull, Fiat, Garmin and Rockstar, and his work has been featured on Time.com, NBC Sports, ESPN and Yahoo Sports. Mizicko's most recent role was as an NBA video editor, creating content for digital platforms and NBA Finals



commercials that aired on ESPN. He also has operated his own action sports brand, Stuck In Ohio Productions, for more than 20 years.

**Devon Cleland**, bachelor of Accounting, 2009, has been named finance director at the Community Foundation of the Mahoning Valley.

She also holds a master of Professional Accountancy from West Virginia University. She previously worked as an auditor for Ernst & Young and performed assistant controller- and controller-level work in the private sector.



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## '10s

**Michele Dowell**, doctor of Educational Leadership, 2012, has been named assistant superintendent of elementary education at the North Allegheny School District. Dowell joined North Allegheny as director of student services for the 2021-22 school year and began serving as substitute assistant superintendent of elementary education in November 2021. Dowell also holds a bachelor's in Elementary Education from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and a master's in Special Education from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Va. She began her career as a special education teacher in the Charlottesville City School District in Virginia, accepted a principal position with the Southwood School before transitioning to the director of special education at Career Connections Charter High School, both in Pittsburgh. She served as elementary principal and then

superintendent of schools for the Belle Vernon Area School District, and also was an assistant high school principal at the Elizabeth Forward School District.

**Sean T. Posey**, master of History, 2012, has published the third book in his trilogy focusing on Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley. The book, *Hidden History of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley*, takes readers through the history behind familiar local landmarks of the past and forgotten chapters of the Valley's torrid early 20th century history, including the bloody and nationally significant steel strikes of 1916 and 1919 and the building of one of the earliest examples of precast concrete homes for workers. Posey, who also holds a bachelor's degree in Photojournalism from the Academy of Art University in San Francisco, is also the author of *Lost Youngstown* and *Historic Theaters of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley*.



**Nick Walters**, bachelor of Business Administration, 2012, was the video coach for the 2022 U.S. Olympic Women's Ice Hockey Team. Walters, who played on YSU's club hockey team, previously served in the same capacity during the 2021 IIHF Women's World Championship. He also spent five seasons on the staff of the University of Alaska Anchorage men's hockey coaching staff as both an assistant coach and director of operations.

**Kayla Boye**, bachelor of Professional Writing and Editing, 2013, has been named a member of the Sarah Siddons Society, dedicated to funding scholarships for promising theater arts students at top Chicago area universities. Boye is a Chicago-based artist and administrator and most recently served as executive director of the Youngstown Playhouse.

**Kendrick Perry**, bachelor of Criminal Justice (minor in Sociology), 2014, a standout basketball star during his time at YSU, has added another trinket to his trophy case. Perry, who plays for



Buducnost, a professional basketball club in Montenegro, scored a team-high 27 points in its title game against Mornar. Over the last nine years, Perry has played professionally overseas for 11 different teams, from Greece to Australia. He was named Most Valuable Player in the Slovenian League Finals last season and has helped win the Greek Super Cup (2021), Slovenian Supercup (2020), Macedonian Cup (2017), and Hungarian Cup (2016). Perry was a three-time First Team All-Horizon League player at YSU and ranks third all-time with 1,991 career points.

**Melissa Wasser**, bachelor of Philosophy and Political Science, 2014, was recently featured in the *Lamp of Delta Zeta*, the national magazine for the sorority. Wasser, a student member of the YSU Board of Trustees when she was on campus, earned a law degree from Ohio State University in 2017 and is a member of the OSU Alumni Association Board of Directors. She serves as the public counsel for the ACLU-DC. She says in the magazine article that a quote by Theodore Roosevelt sums up her motivation: "Far and away the best price that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing."

**Amanda Durig**, (<https://www.amandajdurig.com/>) bachelor



of Fine Arts, 2015, recently exhibited a new collection of artwork (<https://www.luxcenter.org/exhibitions/what-i-have-felt-and-seen>) at the Lux Center for the Arts in Lincoln, Neb. A native of Hubbard who also holds a master of Fine Arts from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, is an artist -in-residence at the Lux, where she teaches printmaking, painting and drawing classes. She is also an adjunct instructor of art at the University of

Nebraska-Omaha, where she teaches Printmaking and Foundations 2D Design. The exhibit is titled "What I Have Felt and Seen."

**Ann Phillips**, bachelor in Accounting, 2015, master in Accounting, 2017, is the new chief executive of Youngstown Area Goodwill Industries. Phillips started at Youngstown Area Goodwill in 2018 in an entry-level position. After a six-month break, she returned in 2019 in a grants and data management role. She was eventually promoted to assistant controller, and then to director of retail. From there she transitioned into her current roles as CEO and chief financial officer.

**Lona H. Sayej**, bachelor of Criminal Justice, 2016, has been added to the Workers' Compensation group in the Chicago law offices of Goldberg Segalla. Sayej, who was previously with Strom Yen in Chicago, also has a law degree from the Western Michigan Cooley Law School. Goldberg Segalla is a national civil litigation firm with more than 20 offices in 10 states.



**Chelsea Lengyel**, doctor of Physical Therapy, 2016, is the director of the Drayer Physical Therapy Institute outpatient clinic on Mahoning Avenue in Warren. Her clinical interests include pediatrics and vestibular rehabilitation.

She has completed extensive coursework in the Mulligan Concept of manual therapy.

**William Clark**, bachelor in Journalism, 2017, was featured in a story on WKBN TV (<https://www.wkbn.com/news/local-news/local-man-inspires-those-with-disabilities/>) in recognition of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. Clark, 28, who has cerebral palsy, works as a community outreach advocate at the Mahoning County Board of Developmental Disabilities. He's also a published author. "The fact that locally, people are reading my book and come up to me in this position and this facility and say, 'Hey, I want to write a book,' 'Hey, I want to learn more about politics,' or 'Hey, I want to be an artist,' or, 'I want to run my own business one day,' that means the world to me," Clark said in the WKBN story.



**Nathan Nitzczynski**, master of Science in Education-Counseling, 2018, recently started a new job as an academic advisor in Student Success and Career Development at Otterbein University in Westerville, Ohio. He previously worked at Mercyhurst University.

**Elena Labra**, bachelor of Psychology, 2019, served as an Artist in Residence at SMARTS, Students Motivated by the Arts. Her passion for crafting handmade pottery grew into the creation of her business, Staircase Ceramics. Labra's work can be found at Common Goods Studio at 2000 Canfield Rd.



**Morgan Buckley**, bachelor of Business Administration (Accounting), 2019, is a financial analyst at The NRP Group in Cleveland, one of the nation's top multifamily real estate developers, general contractors and property management firms. She previously was a senior audit and assurance officer for Deloitte in Cleveland.

**Noah Cole**, bachelor of Business Administration (Accounting), 2019, has been promoted to senior accountant in the front office of the Boston Celtics. (<https://www.nba.com/celtics/team/front-office>) At YSU, Cole was a member of Beta Gamma Sigma and Phi Kappa Phi, graduating Summa Cum Laude. He joined the Celtics in 2020.

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## '20s



*Perdita*, a play written by **Nathan Wagner**, bachelor of Theatre, 2020, will be performed Dec. 1 and 2 at the New Hazlett Theater's Community Supported Arts series (<https://newhazletttheater.org/>) in Pittsburgh. The play is about high school, love and Shakespeare. Wagner, according to the theater's website, writes "weird stuff that is funny or important, or both" with the end goal of fostering empathy, promoting change and challenging people to think outside the box.

**Kayla Gilmore**, bachelor of Flute Performance, 2022, earned several honors during her time as a YSU student, including the winner of the 2021-22 Dana School of Music Young Artist Competition and the Collegiate Division Award at the Central Ohio Flute Association's Flute Competition. Gilmore was principal flute in the YSU Wind Ensemble and Symphony Orchestra, and played in flute ensemble, pep band, marching band and several chamber groups. Other honors: the Tuesday

Musical Club Scholarship, the Carol E. Austin Performing Arts Award, the Fitzjohn Memorial Scholarship, the Masterworks Festival Honors Recital Competition, and the American Protégé Woodwinds and Brass Competition, which resulted in a performance at Carnegie Hall. In 2021, Gilmore was the youngest in her group accepted to the Eastern Music Festival, a nationally recognized classical music festival and summer educational program. Gilmore also was president of the YSU Flute Society, president and founder of Penguins for Life, and the praise team leader for YSU's Coalition for Christian Outreach.

**Mya Blanco,** bachelor of Biology, 2022, was awarded an \$8,500 Phi Kappa Phi Fellowship to pursue a doctor of Dental Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine. Blanco was among only 62 fellowship recipients



nationwide. At YSU, Blanco held leadership positions in the Pre-Dental Society and MALAINA, a YSU Honors College organization that stands for Middle Eastern, African American, Latino, Asian, international, Native American and Alaskan. She also received the 2021-22 YSU Pin Award for outstanding student leadership. Phi Kappa Phi is the nation's oldest and most selective collegiate honor society for all academic disciplines.

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## Class Notes - Extras

*Responding to the war in Ukraine, leading a jazz orchestra, starting a unique clothing business and climbing to the top of the world, these alums go above and beyond to make us "Y and Proud."*

### "AWARENESS IS KEY" IN UKRAINE, ALUMNI VOLUNTEERS SAY

While



Ryan Beil and Josh Prest

planning a trip to Germany earlier this past Spring for the wedding of a mutual friend, YSU alumni **Ryan Beil** and **Josh Prest** decided to use some of their free time to assist with Ukrainian aid efforts. Through Operation White Stork, the two packed suitcases with first aid kits, baby formula and blankets, and flew from Frankfurt, Germany, into Krakow, Poland, in May. They delivered the kits and later met with representatives from the Slavic Mission in Europe, attended a meeting of the Rotary Club of Krakow and stopped by the museum at the factory of Oskar Schindler, who saved hundreds of Jews during the Holocaust. They also witnessed a pro-Ukrainian demonstration in the square of Old Krakow that included a little girl singing the Ukrainian national anthem. "Operation White Stork asked us to spread the word and make people aware that the war is very real and is still going on," Prest and Beil said. "One of the biggest concerns is that the war is out of sight out of mind as the world is distracted with other events. Awareness is key." Prest earned a bachelor's degree in Political Science from YSU in 2013 and is currently the Northeast Field Representative for U.S. Sen. Rob Portman. He served as president of the Rotary Club of Youngstown for the 2021-22 year. Beil earned a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from YSU in 2012 and a master's degree in Cybersecurity from Tiffin University in 2021. He currently is a senior cybersecurity examiner for the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. He is active in the Rotary Club of Dallas and other organizations in the DFW area.

### ALUM TAKES THE "SEVEN SUMMIT CHALLENGE"

**Mark Smith**, bachelor of Mechanical Engineering, 1984, was featured in [an article in the Tribune Chronicle](#)



(<https://www.tribtoday.com/news/local-news/2022>)

[/02/pymatuning-valley-grad-scales-worlds-tallest-peaks/](#)) in Warren for his continued pursuit of the “Seven Summit Challenge” — climbing the highest peak in each of the seven continents. When the article was published in February, Smith had just returned from a climb up the 16,050-foot Mount Vinson in Antarctica. Next up on the list was Denali (Mount McKinley) in Alaska, Mount Elbrus in Russia and Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. Then it'll be another attempt at the 29,032-foot Mount Everest on the China-Nepal border, a climb cut short in April 2021 when his whole group was hit with COVID-19.

## GRAD LEADS ROBERT MORRIS UNIVERSITY



**Michelle L. Patrick**, bachelor of Marketing, 1989, master of Business Administration, 1991, is the new president of Robert Morris University in Pittsburgh. Patrick previously was dean of the RMU School of Business for six years. She also was dean of the College of Business and Public Management at West Chester University of Pennsylvania. She also

holds a Ph.D. in marketing from Kent State University. RMU is a private university founded in 1921 with nearly 5,000 students and offering nearly 100 bachelor's, master's and doctoral programs.

## ALUM "SMASH"ES WAY TO THE TOP



The **Stephen Philip Harvey Jazz Orchestra**



(<http://www.stephenpharvey.com/>), led by and named after a 2016 master of Music graduate and featuring several other alumni from the YSU Dana School of Music, recently released a new album titled “Smash.” (<http://www.stephenpharvey.com/smash>) The album includes nine comic book-inspired pieces by Harvey, who's also an adjunct professor of Music at YSU. The Orchestra celebrated the album release with a concert at Youngstown's Westside Bowl that also featured guest artist **Sean Jones**, a YSU alum and internationally renowned jazz trumpeter. Other YSU alumni in the orchestra are **Chris Coles** and **Chris Rudzinskas** (saxophone); **Kyle O'Donnell** (trumpet); **Sam Blakeslee**, **Lauren Rudzinskas**, **Jim Weltman** and **Eric Dregnee** (trombone); and **Alex Ayers**, **Vinny Vivacqua** and **Dustin May** (rhythm). The album is available on Spotify, Apple Music and YouTube.

“WITHOUT ART, WE CEASE TO EXIST”



That's the lead quote from **Seoun Som**, bachelor of Fine Arts, 2009, in a news release announcing his appointment as the new gallery manager of Arts of the Albemarle in Elizabeth City, N.C.

The quote is even more profound knowing Som's history.

Som's family is from Cambodia, but he was born in a refugee camp in nearby Thailand when his family fled the totalitarian regime of the Khmer Rouge and Communist leader Pol Pot. His family was in Thailand for six years, and Som was raised in Australia, before coming to the United States.

Som, who also holds a master of Fine Arts in Studio Arts, has taught college-level photography and digital illustration and has worked as a visiting lecturer at several universities, including California College of the Arts, Parsons New School, Ohio University and the University of North Carolina. His photography has been exhibited at galleries in North Carolina, New Jersey and Ohio.

## DECORATED AIR FORCE SURGEON RECOGNIZED

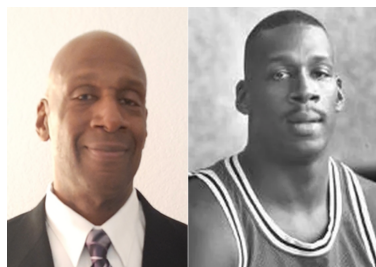
**Terri (Bump) Nutt**, BS/MD, 1999, a decorated Air Force doctor whose career has taken her from Ohio, Texas and California to Kenya, Korea and Kuwait, is the recipient of the 2022 Triad Distinguished Alumni Award from Triad High School in North Lewisburg, Ohio.



Nutt attended medical school with the benefit of the U.S. Air Force Health Professions Scholarship Program and interned at Andrews AFB in Maryland. She then became an Air Force Flight Surgeon, serving at the Air Force Special Operations Command at Hurlburt Field AFB, Fla., and supporting medical missions in Kenya, Korea, Jordan, Sri Lanka, Kuwait, Bolivia, Uruguay, Poland and Ukraine. She also was a member of an Air Force/Army Medical Civil Assistance Program to Jordan in 1999.

In 2001, Nutt was accepted into the Air Force Dermatology residency program, then served as chief of Dermatology at Travis AFB, Calif. until 2007, when she left the Air Force and became a civilian dermatologist in San Antonio, Texas. She is the recipient of the Air Force Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, National Defense Medal, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for Valor and the Global War on Terrorism Medal.

## "ADDRESSING CHALLENGES, MAKING THE MOST OF OPPORTUNITIES."



*Tim Jackson now, and in his YSU playing days*

"The greatest life lessons I learned came to me while playing basketball at Youngstown State University," says **Tim Jackson**, bachelor of Elementary Education, 1993.

Jackson shares those lessons in a new book to assist high school athletes on their journeys to college athletics. The book is titled *Understanding College Athletics Through the Eyes of College Athletes*. (<https://urldefense.com/v3/https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09TMWKBVZ>

Jackson played basketball for YSU from 1987 to 1991 and was inducted into the YSU Athletics Hall of Fame in 2006.

In an article in the *Canton Repository* about the new book, Jackson says his head football coach at Canton McKinley High School and Jim Tressel, YSU's head coach while Jackson was enrolled, both encouraged him to switch from the basketball to football. "Every day, Coach Tressel reminded me that I was a tight end," Jackson says.

## "SCRIBBLE SESSION" REIGNITES PAINTING PASSION

**Kate Battle**, bachelor of Fine Arts, 2005, a painter working in Milwaukee, Wis., was featured in the *Daily PaintWorks* newsletter

(<https://dpwnews.blogspot.com/2022/01/dpw-spotlight-interview-kate-battle.html>). Battle says in the article that she worked as a graphic designer for 11 years after graduating from YSU before stepping back to focus on raising her daughter.



"Filling the Pool" by Kate Battle

During a crayon "scribble session" with her toddler, Battle realized that she had always wanted to be a painter and picked up her paint brush again. "To me, being a successful artist means

two things: If I am creating art regularly, I am taking care of my creative self, since the act of creation is an essential part of my wellbeing. Secondly, when other people find happiness in my art, I feel successful."

## GRAD EARNS NATIONAL AWARD OF EXCELLENCE



**Chelsey Zoldan-Calhoun**, masters of Clinical Mental Health Counseling, 2014, received the Dissertation Excellence Award from *The Professional Counselor*, the journal of the National Board for Certified Counselors. She received the award for her work entitled "The Contribution of Spiritual Well-Being to the Self-Efficacy, Resilience, and

Burnout of Substance Use Disorder Counselors." Zoldan-Calhoun, who also holds a PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision from the University of Akron, is also an adjunct faculty member at YSU and Akron. She is a member of the Editorial Review Board of *The Professional Counselor* and has

served on boards for the American Counseling Association, Ohio Counseling Association and Association for Humanistic Counseling. She is a previous recipient of the OCA's Graduate Student Award and the AHC's Emerging Leader Award.



### KEEPING WOMEN WORKERS SAFE AND LOOKING GOOD

Parents know that their kids can sometimes lead them down all kinds of unexpected paths – just ask **Kelly Franko**. Franko of Cortland, Ohio, bachelor of Social Work, 1991, owned a bra boutique for 10 years but sold it in 2018 to help her son pursue a career in...drag racing.



Later that year, while mother and son attended a drag racing trade show, the discussion turned to the few options available to female drivers for flame resistant clothing. A light bulb went off in Franko's head. "I spent most of 2019 researching and developing the designs and fit to get them perfected so that women had true options and not just fabric thrown together and labeled as 'for women,'" Franko says on her webpage.

Today, Franko is the founder and president of Seraphina Safety Apparel & Mfg., (<https://seraphinasafety.com/>) serving the needs of women in motorsports and in industrial fields like petrochemicals, electrical and utility, mining, steel, fire safety, military and ballistics.

The company recently received national exposure in two fashion shows at the American Society of Safety Professionals' Safety 2022 Conference and Expo in Chicago. "Seeing women wear our products on the stage was awesome," Franko said. "It is truly inspiring to see what women are accomplishing in their careers and to know we have a part in keeping them safe on the job."

### TAKING COMMENCEMENT TO NEW JERSEY

A reservist with the 910th Airlift Wing stationed at Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Senior



Airman **Brandon Mitchell** was deployed on Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst in New Jersey in December 2021 and was unable to attend YSU Fall Commencement to receive his degree.

So, the base held its own private ceremony with leaders and workers of Task Force Liberty.

"Managing school life on deployment wasn't easy, yet doable with commitment and dedication," he said. "I worked 12-hour night shifts, five days a week. Some days I was able to hold off schoolwork until my days off, other days I had to sacrifice some sleep to meet deadlines. My professors were aware of my deployment and were able to accommodate me as much as possible."

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# Our ALUMNI

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT VIDEOS

The Office of Alumni Engagement's Alumni Spotlight videos showcase a wide variety of graduates engaged in noteworthy work around the world. Here's a sampling. Stay tuned for more on Alumni Engagement's website (<https://alumni.ysu.edu/>) or on AE's Facebook page ([https://m.facebook.com/login.php?next=https%3A%2F%2Fm.facebook.com%2Fysualumni&refsrc=deprecated&\\_rdr](https://m.facebook.com/login.php?next=https%3A%2F%2Fm.facebook.com%2Fysualumni&refsrc=deprecated&_rdr)).

Dr. Christopher Dussel '04,...



**Christopher J. Dussel '04, '21**, chief medical officer, University Hospitals Parma Medical Center, two-time YSU graduate, bachelor's in Chemistry in 2004 and MBA in Management in 2021.

Patty Flauto '76





**Patty Flauto '76**, BFA in Studio Art, abstract painter with a wide-ranging career, including an exhibition at YSU's McDonough Museum of Art this summer.

Alumni Spotlight, Ryan Por...



**Ryan Portela '18**, bachelor's in Political Science and Geography, served in the Army as a human resource specialist and is currently in New York as program director for Worldwide Business Research.

James Suggs '03, Jazz Art...



**James Suggs '03**, adjunct professor of jazz trumpet and ensembles, University of South Florida, active performer whose debut album reached #16 on the national jazz chart.

Alumni Spotlight, Dr. Mara ...



**Mara Banfield '20**, doctorate in Educational Leadership, director of the Mahoning County Career and Technical Center

and superintendent of the Valley STEM Academy.



## HALF CENTURY CLUB CELEBRATION

Calling all members of the Class of 1972 and earlier graduating classes! Celebrate your milestone 50th anniversary at the Half Century Club Celebration Thursday, Oct. 13 in Stambaugh Auditorium in Youngstown. Class of 1972 member Dr. Cynthia Anderson, YSU president emeritus, is the featured speaker. Earlier graduating class members are also encouraged to attend the reunion.

You'll also enjoy reserved seating at the Thomas Colloquium lecture featuring John Hope Bryant. Bryant is an American entrepreneur, author, philanthropist, and prominent thought leader on financial inclusion, economic empowerment, and financial dignity.

Reception at 4:30 p.m., followed by dinner and the lecture at 7 p.m. [Make your reservation!](https://epay.ysu.edu/C21820_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=893&SINGLESTORE=true) ([https://epay.ysu.edu/C21820\\_ustores/web/product\\_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=893&SINGLESTORE=true](https://epay.ysu.edu/C21820_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=893&SINGLESTORE=true)) Email [habelgin@ysu.edu](mailto:habelgin@ysu.edu) (<mailto:habelgin@ysu.edu>) or call 330-941-1591 if you've had a recent change of mailing or email address to be sure you receive an invitation.

## HOME COMING 2022

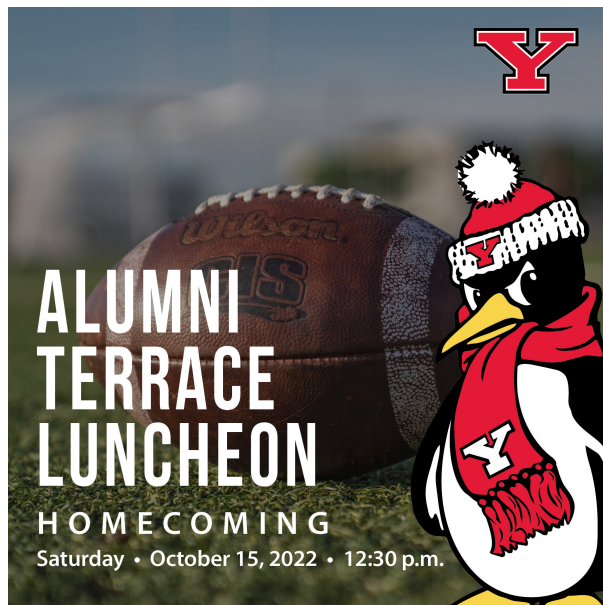
Come back to campus for Homecoming on Saturday, Oct. 15:

**Noon.** Catch the festive floats, marching bands, classic cars and more when the Homecoming parade travels Fifth Avenue.

**12:30 p.m.** Celebrate with a family-friendly “indoor tailgate,” featuring a Taste of the South buffet. The price of \$20 for adults and \$15 for kids 12 and younger includes lunch, a reserved seat in the home-side stands and a YSU-themed giveaway. Other activities include the Kids’ High Five Tunnel and participation by Maag Library’s Archives and Special Collections. Reservations [here](https://epay.ysu.edu/C21820_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=898&SINGLESTORE=true). ([https://epay.ysu.edu/C21820\\_ustores/web/product\\_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=898&SINGLESTORE=true](https://epay.ysu.edu/C21820_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=898&SINGLESTORE=true))

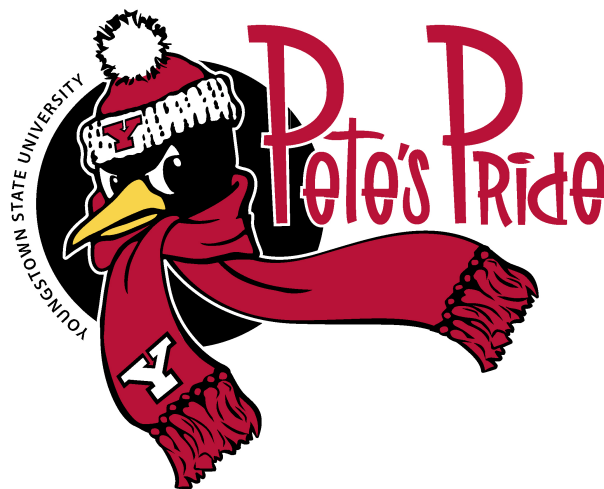
**2 p.m.** The Penguins takes on Indiana State.

Email [habelgin@ysu.edu](mailto:habelgin@ysu.edu) (<mailto:habelgin@ysu.edu>) or call 330-941-1591



## PETE'S PRIDE

Interested in giving back to your alma mater by volunteering alongside fellow Penguins? Upcoming volunteer opportunities with Pete’s Pride include serving our community and sharing your Penguin Pride with potential students.



- Pete's Pride will participate in the United Way of Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley's monthly Saturday of Caring on Saturday, Sept. 17. Volunteers unload, pack, and deliver food to more than 400 seniors, shut-ins and families in need. Volunteer shifts between 8 a.m. and noon at Southwoods Executive Center, 100 DeBartolo Place, Boardman, Ohio. [Register here.](#) (<https://signup.com/go/eDvoqbB>)
- You can help recruit new students from anywhere by participating in the Pete's Pride postcard writing campaign. Share your love for YSU and encourage admitted students to join the Penguin family! The postcard writing campaign will resume in October. [Sign-up for postcard writing.](#) ([https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSebML5qNHcZUDau7WAm0N2pUXEzmpuWPAS0I5GN\\_E-R0y37Iw/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSebML5qNHcZUDau7WAm0N2pUXEzmpuWPAS0I5GN_E-R0y37Iw/viewform))
- Not on the Pete's Pride email list? Email [petespride@ysu.edu](mailto:petespride@ysu.edu) (<mailto:petespride@ysu.edu>) with your current contact information and interest in getting involved.

## ALUMNI CHAPTERS

Alumni in the Tar Heel State reconnected and celebrated their YSU ties during two recent events.



Every decade from the 1950's to the 2010's was represented when the Charlotte Alumni Chapter got

together on May 12. President Emeritus and former First Lady David and Pat Sweet were special guests.



There also was a lot of YSU Pride on display as Penguins and future Penguins enjoyed a picnic and Durham Bulls

game on May 13.

Follow the [Charlotte](https://www.facebook.com/YSU.Alumni.Charlotte) (<https://www.facebook.com/YSU.Alumni.Charlotte>) and [Triangle](https://www.facebook.com/YSUTriangleChapter) (<https://www.facebook.com/YSUTriangleChapter>) Alumni Chapters on Facebook.

Update your contact information [here](https://ysu.edu/alumni-events/ysu-alumni-update-form) (<https://ysu.edu/alumni-events/ysu-alumni-update-form>) if you're new to the area.

## LEAVING A PENGUIN LEGACY

Five students who are the children of YSU graduates have been awarded \$1,000 Alumni Society Legacy Scholarships:

- Sarah DeLucia, New Middletown, Ohio, Psychology major, whose father, Joseph, graduated from YSU with bachelor's and master's degrees in Economics.
- Daniella Mendel, Struthers, Ohio, Biology major/Pre-Med,



*Sarah DeLucia and father Joseph*

daughter of Josefina Mendel, 2004 and 2011, bachelor's and master's degrees in Education.

- Alexandra Mijavec, Warren, Ohio, Business Administration–Finance major, daughter of Denise (Matsouris) Mijavec, 1995 and 2000, and Mark Mijavec, 1991 and 2000.



*Leah and Tara (Wilson) Sydney*

- Leah Sydney, Boardman Ohio, Studio Arts major, daughter of Tara (Wilson) Sydney, 2005 and 2010, bachelor's in Applied Science and a master's in Counseling from YSU.

- Sarah Welsh, Youngstown, Integrated Language

Arts Education major, daughter of Marie (Zerbonia) Welsh, 1990, bachelor's in Business Administration

[Read more. \(https://ysu.edu/news/legacy-scholarships-awarded-five-ysu-students\)](https://ysu.edu/news/legacy-scholarships-awarded-five-ysu-students)

## “IT ALL GOES BACK TO THE PENGUIN”

On June 12, 2022, Tom Davis (Accounting '76) married Sue Abernethy (Elementary Ed & SPED '77) at a winery near Charlotte, N.C. But, as they like to say, “It all goes back to the Penguin.”

Tom and Sue first met on June 28, 2012, at the second annual YSU Alumni National Networking Day in Charlotte. Tom and Sue quickly realized that they likely crossed paths all of those years ago since Sue had gone to the SAE fraternity house where Tom

was president and Tom had visited the pub in the student center where Sue worked drawing beers. Still, they had no recollection of ever



*Tom and Sue Davis at their wedding with Matt Cerimele '04 (center).*

meeting at YSU or even at the Charlotte high school from where all five of their children had graduated. They exchanged business cards, got in contact by email and eventually met for dinner.

At the time, Sue had recently completed her doctorate degree and was a professor in the College of Education at UNC-Charlotte. Tom was a CPA and the director of Internal Financial Reporting for an international textile manufacturer headquartered across the state line in South Carolina. Being empty-nesters, they began to date and find shared interests such as winery visits (they've now visited over 100 in North Carolina alone).

They made a lot of trips to Ohio over the past decade, but some of their favorite ones were when they could get back to Youngstown for Homecoming and meetings with fraternity brothers. For a number of years, they'd take a photo kissing on the front steps of Buechner Hall, where Sue lived her first two years. During one of the trips, they purchased two blown-glass penguins from Oglebay Resort; one for each of their homes. The penguins became the toppers for their wedding cake.

Their love of YSU continues to shine. In January 2017, Tom organized a watch party at a local sports bar when YSU played in the FCS championship game. Shortly after, he was contacted

by Heather Belgin with the Alumni Office to see if he'd be interested in helping establish a Charlotte alumni chapter. Tom and Sue have led the chapter ever since and had over 40 people attend their first event in June 2017. They've planned and hosted many other alumni activities, including a football watch party this past Fall at the same winery where they got married.

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# Our STUDENTS

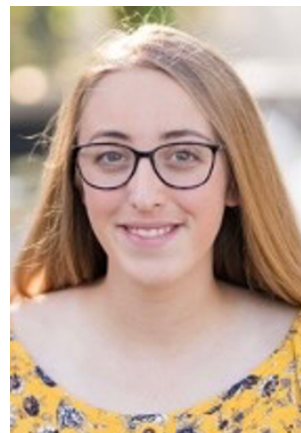
WHETHER IT'S BUILDING A CANOE OUT OF CONCRETE OR TRANSCRIBING MORE THAN 16,000 HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS FOR THE SMITHSONIAN, YSU STUDENTS CONTINUE TO SHOW THEIR PENGUIN SMARTS AND AGILITY ACROSS THE REGION AND NATION. AMONG THE HIGHLIGHTS:

## STUDENT HONORED FOR LEADERSHIP, COMMUNITY SERVICE

Julie Centofanti, a junior in the Sokolov Honors College, was among only two students across Ohio to receive the 2022 Charles J. Ping Student Service Legacy Award for outstanding leadership and contributions to community service.

Centofanti, a Biology major, was honored for creating and leading the YSU Transcribing Club, which has transcribed more than 16,000 historical documents through the Smithsonian and the Library of Congress. A graduate of South Range High School, Centofanti is a member of YSU's BaccMed program that leads students to medical school and careers in medicine. She also was recently appointed a student member of the YSU Board of Trustees.

[Read more.](https://ysu.edu/news/ysu-honors-student-earns-legacy-award) (<https://ysu.edu/news/ysu-honors-student-earns-legacy-award>)



Julie Centofanti

## YSU STUDENT INTERN OF THE YEAR FOR THIRD STRAIGHT TIME



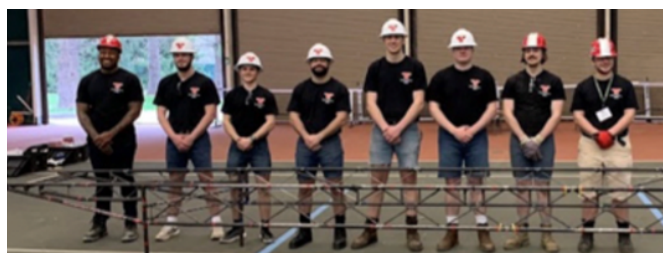
*Tumi Adeeko*

The Cooperative Education and Internship Association named YSU student Tumi Adeeko as the 2022 Intern of the Year. It is the third consecutive year that a YSU student intern has been recognized by CEIA. "This demonstrates clearly that the STEM college internship and co-op program, under the leadership of Sherri Hrusovski, is top-notch and that our Rayen School of Engineering is among the best in the nation," said Wim Steelant, dean of the YSU College of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. A Mechanical Engineering major and a member of the YSU Sokolov Honors College, Adeeko was honored for a 10-week internship at the Cleveland VA Medical Research and Education Foundation. [Read more. \(https://ysu.edu/news/third-time-ysu-student-honored-national-intern-year\)](https://ysu.edu/news/third-time-ysu-student-honored-national-intern-year)

## CANOE, BRIDGE TEAMS TOP REGIONALS – AGAIN



For the second consecutive year, YSU's Concrete Canoe and Steel Bridge teams placed first at regional competitions,



besting teams from 17 other universities. The Steel Bridge squad has now placed first in four of the last five regional contests, while the Concrete Canoe team has won three of the last four. In national tourneys, the Canoe team placed fourth, while the Bridge team finished seventh. [Read more.](https://ysu.edu/news/concrete-canoe-steel-bridge-squads-advance-nationals-again)  
(<https://ysu.edu/news/concrete-canoe-steel-bridge-squads-advance-nationals-again>)

## ETHICS BOWL SQUAD EARNS SIXTH REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

The YSU Ethics Bowl team kept rolling in 2022 by again winning the regional competition and placing among the top eight programs in the national competition. In the seven years that YSU has had an Ethics Bowl program, the team has won six regional championships and placed in the top eight at nationals six times. The YSU team regularly out-talks Ivy League schools, while several alumni of the program have gone on to study at Ivy League law and graduate schools.

## PENGUINS SWEEP NINE CONFERENCE TITLES



Crowns all around for Penguin student athletic teams in 2021-22, as the women's basketball team, men's



indoor and outdoor track and field teams, women's indoor and outdoor track and field squads, men's and women's tennis squads (pictured) all captured Horizon League championships. In addition, the women's lacrosse team, in just its second season, finished tied atop the Mid-American Conference standings thanks to a five-game winning streak in April. It was the sixth consecutive league title for women's indoor track and field, and the eighth straight for the outdoor team. The men's tennis squad, which last won a conference title 22 years ago, this year captured both the regular season and conference tournament championships. Overall, 14 of YSU's 21 NCAA Division I teams placed in the top three of their conferences. More at [www.ysusports.com](http://www.ysusports.com) (<http://www.ysusports.com>).

## NURSING STUDENT RESEARCH RECOGNIZED

Two Choose Ohio First research groups from YSU were awarded "Top Poster" commendations at the Northeast Ohio Regional Choose Ohio First Scholarship Program Poster Symposium. In all, nearly 90 YSU students participated along with students from six other universities and colleges. More than 170 abstracts were submitted.

## BUSINESS STUDENTS FINALISTS IN INTERNATIONAL CONTEST

Four YSU students were finalists in the 2022 NASBITE International Student Case Competition, under the guidance of Omer Genc, assistant professor of International Business in the Williamson College of Business Administration. The WCBA team presented a case analysis and international expansion plan virtually to the NASBITE judges and company executives. [Read more. \(https://ysu.edu/news/ysu-students-place-international-competition\)](https://ysu.edu/news/ysu-students-place-international-competition)

## GEOGRAPHY STUDENTS STUDY REVITALIZING WELLSVILLE

Three students in YSU's capstone course in Geography met with Bob Boley, mayor of Wellsville, Ohio, to present the findings of their study on ways to revitalize the small village in Columbiana County. The students - Katharine Donnachie, Heather Davis and David Thompson - conducted the study under the direction of Dawna Cerney, professor of Geography. The project culminated as a complete community resiliency plan for Wellsville, which sits along the Ohio River across from West Virginia. "I am proud of the work and product these students have executed," Cerney said. "They are great examples of the intellect and skills of

professional geographers.” [Read more. \(https://ysu.edu/news/be-well-wellsville-students-present-findings-revitalize-village\)](https://ysu.edu/news/be-well-wellsville-students-present-findings-revitalize-village)



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PAST ISSUES ([HTTPS://ISSUU.COM/YOUNGSTOWNSTATE/DOCS](https://issuu.com/youngstownstate/docs))



# Our **CAMPUS**

*It's been a busy few months across campus – from changes to the Board of Trustees and new programs in Nursing, Education and more, to statewide recognition for YSU's efforts to serve military veterans, comply with state transparency laws and provide top-notch law enforcement training for the region. Oh, and did you hear? President Jim Tressel is stepping down! Read all about it:*

## “A BLESSING AND A LABOR OF LOVE”

Just in case you missed the coast-to-coast media coverage earlier this summer, YSU President Jim Tressel announced that he will leave his position effective Feb. 1, 2023. “It has been truly a blessing and labor of love to serve Youngstown State University,” Tressel, president since 2014 after earlier serving 15 years as Penguins head football coach, said in [an email to the campus \(https://t.e2ma.net/message/thjeoi/h48r55\)](https://t.e2ma.net/message/thjeoi/h48r55) in June. “I cannot thank my family enough for allowing my schedule, and the needs of our university, to take priority and center stage,” he added. “It is now only fair to have Ellen, our wonderful children and grandchildren, extended family, friends and former students, set the schedule.” Board Chair John Jakubek said, “The YSU Board of Trustees extends our deepest gratitude and appreciation to President Tressel and First Lady Ellen for their decades of service to YSU, the Mahoning Valley region and the





entire state of Ohio. The Tressels' contributions of time and treasure are immeasurable and will be felt across the region for years and years to come. We wish them well." The board met in July to begin discussions on finding Tressel's successor. Jakubek said details on the search will be released when they become available. [Read more. \(https://ysu.edu/news/president-tressel-announces-departure-ysu-effective-feb-1-2023\)](https://ysu.edu/news/president-tressel-announces-departure-ysu-effective-feb-1-2023)

## THREE NAMED TO YSU BOARD OF TRUSTEES



*Dr. Sergul A. Erzurum, Laura Lyden and Julie Centofanti*

Gov. Mike DeWine recently named two new members and one new student member to the YSU Board of Trustees:

**Dr. Sergul A. Erzurum**, (<https://ysu.edu/news/gov-names-local-ophthalmologist-ysu-bot>) a well-known local ophthalmologist and vice president of Eye Care Associates in Poland, Ohio, will serve a term that runs through April 30, 2031. She replaces Atty. James E. "Ted" Roberts, whose term expired.

**Laura Lyden**, (<https://ysu.edu/news/laura-lyden-named-ysu-board-trustees>) sales and operations manager and corporate secretary of Lyden Oil Co., was appointed to a term that runs through April 30, 2026. Lyden, who holds a bachelor's degree from YSU and pursued graduate studies in Chemistry, fills the unexpired term of Capri Cafaro, who resigned from the board

earlier this year.

**Julie Lynn Centofanti**, (<https://ysu.edu/news/governor-appoints-student-trustee>) a junior Biology major, was appointed a student member of the board through April 2024. A graduate of South Range High School, Centofanti is a member of the YSU Sokolov Honors College and a member of YSU's BaccMed program.

## “CONTINUED NATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN ADVANCED MANUFACTURING”

YSU received a \$2.3 million research and development award from the Air Force Research Laboratory to create a hub-and-spoke consortium on hybrid manufacturing. The consortium includes the National Center for Defense Manufacturing and Machining and Oak Ridge National Laboratory, among others, and will focus on further advancing work to fabricate, inspect and repair metallic machine parts, molds and dies, as well as defense components. “This award is yet another reflection of YSU’s continued national leadership in advanced manufacturing,” said Pedro Cortes, associate professor of Chemical Engineering. [Read more. \(https://ysu.edu/news/ysu-gets-23m-hybrid-manufacturing-initiative\)](https://ysu.edu/news/ysu-gets-23m-hybrid-manufacturing-initiative)

## WE’RE NO. 1 – AGAIN!

It’s now 10 consecutive years and running that YSU has ranked #1 in the state of Ohio for recycling. The campus earned the top spot in the annual nationwide Campus Race to Zero Waste competition earlier this year, collecting 173,108 pounds (nearly 87 tons!) of paper, publications, bottles and cans for recycling from every



building across campus, a diversion rate of nearly 60 percent. YSU placed 11th nationally, out of more than 400 schools. [Read more. \(https://ysu.edu/news/ysu-retains-top-spot-recycling-competition\)](https://ysu.edu/news/ysu-retains-top-spot-recycling-competition)

## DECK FLATTENED AFTER NEARLY HALF CENTURY



The rumblin' and thunderin' of crumblin' and crashin' concrete and steel reverberated across campus this summer as big orange and white machines knocked down the M60 parking deck. The demolition on the corner of Lincoln and Fifth avenues makes way for a new 163-space surface parking lot that should be completed by the end of October. The parking structure was built in the 1970s and approaching the end of its useful life after nearly 50 years. Nearly all materials will be recycled.

## CALLING ALL NURSES AND TEACHERS!

YSU has launched new programs to help address shortages in two critical professions – nursing and teaching. The YSU Centofanti School of Nursing starts a new two-year associate degree in Nursing program this Fall Semester. “We are pleased to help alleviate the nursing shortage and workforce issues in our community,” said Nancy Wagner, director. Meanwhile, the Beeghly College of Liberal Arts, Social Sciences and Education

received a \$200,000 state grant to boost the number of people entering the teaching profession, especially special education. The College reports that, as of this past Spring, school districts in the Youngstown area alone had 26 unfilled special education positions. “These funds will spur innovative and collaborative approaches to addressing the educator shortage in Ohio,” said Chancellor Randy Gardner of the Ohio Department of Higher Education.



## “THIS IS WHAT IT’S ALL ABOUT”

Nearly 1,600 students walked across the stage and received their hard-earned diplomas at 2022 Spring Commencement in May at Stambaugh Stadium. Bill Kennedy Jr., president of Redex Industries, the manufacturer of Udderly Smooth creams and moisturizers, was the featured speaker, while Kathryn Kimes, a native of Pittsburgh who graduated with a bachelor’s in Music Education, was the student speaker. Mary Yacovone, a YSU graduate and now chair of the YSU Department of Health Professions, was the macebearer for the ceremony. Video

highlights  
here.



(<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=529161455319183>) Full ceremony here ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GODjiU7\\_2ns](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GODjiU7_2ns)).

## YSU PARTNERS IN JOB CREATION INITIATIVE



As industrial-sized robots whirled in the background, YSU's Excellence Training Center at

*YSU President Jim Tressel, framed by a robot arm holding a red plastic lightsaber, speaks at a news conference launching a new tech initiative. The event was in the YSU Excellence Training Center at Kohli Hall.*

Kohli Hall hosted the launch of a \$10 million national

tech initiative to create jobs and bolster the manufacturing supply chain. The meeting included representatives from YSU, the National Center for Defense Manufacturing and Machining and the Department of Defense's Defense Logistics Agency. The University of Northern Iowa is also a partner. [Read more.](https://ysu.edu/news/national-initiative-grow-jobs-bolster-supply-chain-kicks-ysu) (<https://ysu.edu/news/national-initiative-grow-jobs-bolster-supply-chain-kicks-ysu>)

## DPT TOPS IN STATE

For the second consecutive year, the Ohio Physical Therapy Association named YSU's Doctor of Physical Therapy as Program of the Year, besting the state's 10 other PT programs. The DPT at YSU, a 2.5-year full-time doctoral program, has graduated 376 students since its start in 2008, including 35 at Spring Commencement in May. The OPTA honor recognizes community service activities conducted by YSU DPT students. [Read more.](https://ysu.edu/news/ysu-dpt-deemed-program-year) (<https://ysu.edu/news/ysu-dpt-deemed-program-year>)

## UNIVERSITY THEATRE ANNOUNCES 2022-23 SEASON



There's a little bit of something for everyone in University Theatre's 2022-23 season. "Our 2022-23 season includes productions that challenge our students to grow and develop within their craft while offering our patrons unique theatre experiences of the highest quality," said Stephanie Smith, chair, Visual and Dramatic Arts. Season subscriptions for adults are \$50 and are available at [ysu.edu/theatertickets](https://epay.ysu.edu/C21820_ustores/web/store_main.jsp?STOREID=58&clearPreview=true&SINGLESTORE=true) ([https://epay.ysu.edu/C21820\\_ustores/web/store\\_main.jsp?STOREID=58&clearPreview=true&SINGLESTORE=true](https://epay.ysu.edu/C21820_ustores/web/store_main.jsp?STOREID=58&clearPreview=true&SINGLESTORE=true)). The season includes four mainstage productions: *The Revolutionists*, Sept. 30 to Oct. 2, Oct. 7 - 9; *Godspell*, Nov. 11-13 and 18-20; *The Last Five Years*, Feb. 16- 19, 2023; and *Antigone*, March 31-April 2 and April 7-9, 2023. More information at 330-727-7514. [Read more. \(https://ysu.edu/news/university-theatre-announces-2022-23-season\)](https://ysu.edu/news/university-theatre-announces-2022-23-season)

## “TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE AND LOVE OF LEARNING”

YSU Phi Kappa Phi hit the half-century mark this year. "For 50 years, Chapter 143 has kept the tradition of excellence and the love of learning alive at YSU," said Emilie Brown, chapter president. PKP is the nation's oldest, largest and most selective multi-disciplinary academic honor society. At YSU, PKP started in 1972, with the induction of 22 students, faculty and staff. Since then, more than 4,800 students, staff, faculty and community leaders have been added to their ranks. The YSU chapter has consistently earned national recognition, including Love of Learning Awards, study abroad scholarships, fellowships and literacy grants. [Read more. \(https://ysu.edu/news/ysu-phi-kappa-phi-marks-50th-anniversary\)](https://ysu.edu/news/ysu-phi-kappa-phi-marks-50th-anniversary)



## THREE INITIATIVES EARN STARS FOR

## STATEWIDE EXCELLENCE

The stars were shining across the YSU campus this Spring as the university received the Collegiate Purple Star, a STAR training center recognition and a four-star rating for initiatives involving the state Sunshine Law:

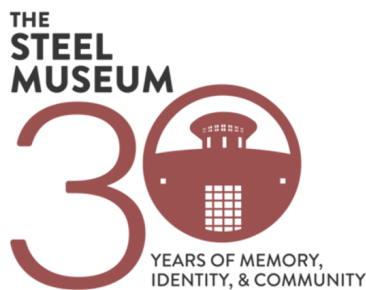
- The Ohio Department of Higher Education designated YSU a Collegiate Purple Star (<https://www.ohiohighered.org/purple-star>) campus for supporting students with military backgrounds. “YSU’s dedication to military-connected students is a prime example of what a Collegiate Purple Star school should be,” said Randy Gardner, ODHE chancellor, who joined Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine in making the designation. YSU opened the YSU Office of Veterans Affairs (<https://ysu.edu/veterans-affairs>) in 2009, located in the Carl A. Nunziato Veterans Resource Center on Wick Avenue. The office provides a variety of services for more than 300 military-connected students at YSU.
- Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost designated the YSU Police Academy a STAR Training Center, a distinction recognizing excellence in state law enforcement programs. Yost’s office created the STAR Academy program last year in partnership with the Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission. Since opening in 2000, the YSU Academy has graduated nearly 1,200 cadets and implemented several innovative initiatives.
- Finally, YSU received the top rating – four stars – in the Ohio Auditor of State’s Star Rating System for open and transparent government. “We





take seriously our role in ensuring that YSU is a transparent, open institution,” said Holly Jacobs, YSU general counsel. The rating system measures the success of public institutions across Ohio in fulfilling public records requests under the state’s Sunshine Law, including the Ohio Public Records Act and the Ohio Open Meetings Act. It’s the second consecutive year YSU has scored four stars.

## MUSEUM “STEEL” GOING AT 30



The Youngstown Historical Center of Industry and Labor, aka the Steel Museum, celebrates its 30th anniversary this year. Among the events is a free lecture series featuring local historians and community leaders. Remaining

lectures include Thursday, Sept. 22, 6 p.m., “Labor experiences in the Spanish-speaking community of Youngstown,” with members of Organización Cívica y Cultural Hispana Americana, and Thursday, Nov. 10, 6 p.m., “Reflecting on the Steel Museum’s Creation and Growth,” Donna DeBlasio, former YHCIL director.

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# Our DONORS

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YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY  
FOUNDATION



YOUNGSTOWN  
STATE  
UNIVERSITY

Annual Philanthropic Revenue  
Fiscal Years 2012-2022



\*Total as of July 1, 2022.

Donors to YSU continue to raise the bar, as the bar graph shows. YSU and the YSU Foundation received a record \$24.1 million in gifts in the 2021-22 fiscal year, the largest one-year total in the university’s 114-year history. “Our donors are among the most generous and supportive anywhere in the nation,” YSU President Jim Tressel said. The record year is the latest in a

string of fundraising successes. In fiscal year 2014, the year before Tressel was named president, YSU raised \$6.1 million. The next year, the total more than doubled to \$13.3 million, and then jumped to \$22.3 million in fiscal year 2016. In all, since Tressel's arrival, YSU has received \$150.3 million in gifts. "The combined efforts of President and First Lady Tressel, our donors, the campus community, and our talented and hard-working Foundation staff have helped raise tens of millions of dollars to make sure we provide the best possible opportunities to our students and the entire Mahoning Valley community," said Paul McFadden, YSU Foundation president. [Read more \(https://ysu.edu/news/ysu-hits-record-241-million-fundraising-mark\)](https://ysu.edu/news/ysu-hits-record-241-million-fundraising-mark).

## RENOVATED GREENHOUSE NAMED FOR SANDY SIMON



*At the dedication of the Sandy Simon Greenhouse are, from left, Kim Simon, Jeff Simon, Wendy Weiss, Charlie Masters and YSU President Jim Tressel.*

The glass enclosure along Lincoln Avenue attached to the south

side of Ward Beecher Science Hall has a new name – the Sandy Simon Greenhouse. The renovated facility was named in recognition of a \$450,000 gift from the estate of Sandy Simon, a native of Youngstown who grew up in Liberty Township and who eventually bought a house and a horse farm in Vienna, Ohio, named the Double S Ranch. She died in 2016. The greenhouse renovation included heating, ventilation and air conditioning upgrades and reopening the third bay of the greenhouse, which had been unusable for several years. [Read more. \(https://ysu.edu/news/ward-beecher-science-hall-greenhouse-renamed-memory-sandy-simon\)](https://ysu.edu/news/ward-beecher-science-hall-greenhouse-renamed-memory-sandy-simon)

## MUSEUM BALCONY RECOGNIZES HANDEL'S PRESIDENT

The main gallery balcony of the McDonough Museum of Art was named the Leonard J. Fisher Family Balcony in recognition of a \$100,000 gift from Leonard Fisher, president and chairman of the board of Handel's Ice Cream. "We are so appreciative of this terrific gift to the McDonough, which has become the unofficial hub for the Cliffe College of Creative Arts," Phyllis Paul, college dean. "The museum collaborates broadly with students and faculty from across campus as well as with numerous community groups, and this generous donation will benefit all of those constituencies." [Read more. \(https://ysu.edu/news/handels-presidentchair-donates-100k-ysu-s-mcdonough-museum\)](https://ysu.edu/news/handels-presidentchair-donates-100k-ysu-s-mcdonough-museum)

## ALUM SCHOLARSHIP HELPS AFRICAN AMERICAN MEN IN BUSINESS, STEM

Ketuan Baldwin, who earned associate's, bachelor's and master's degrees from YSU, has established the Ketuan Baldwin Legacy Scholarship to help young African American men further

their education in Business or STEM. "It means



*Ketuan Baldwin (Photo credit: WKBN-TV)*

everything; giving back is an amazing opportunity," Baldwin said in [a story about the scholarship on WKBN-TV \(https://www.wkbn.com/news/local-news/youngstown-native-creates-ysu-scholarship-in-his-name/\)](https://www.wkbn.com/news/local-news/youngstown-native-creates-ysu-scholarship-in-his-name/)'s website. "I've been extremely blessed throughout my life and career. So, having the opportunity to help someone else is such an amazing thing for me and my family." Baldwin committed \$25,000 to the scholarship, and his former employer, Google, is matching him, making it \$50,000. Then, the YSU Foundation agreed to match that, making the total \$100,000. More details on the scholarship [here. \(https://cfweb.cc.ysu.edu/finaid/scholar/sch\\_data.cfm?scholar\\_id=3426\)](https://cfweb.cc.ysu.edu/finaid/scholar/sch_data.cfm?scholar_id=3426)

## DONORS ENDOW NEARLY 20 FACULTY CHAIRS, PROFESSORS

Amy Weaver, an associate professor in the Centofanti School of Nursing, was designated the inaugural Patricia McGovern Sweeney Professor in Nursing. The professorship was established with a \$500,000 gift from Douglas Sweeney and his daughters - Carolyn Sweeney Berry, Andrea Sweeney Wagner and Alexa Sweeney Blackann - in honor of his wife and their mother Patricia's lifelong career



*Amy Weaver*

in Nursing. The professorship is the latest of a long Sweeney family tradition of philanthropic support of YSU, amounting to more than \$1 million. It is also among nearly 20 endowed faculty chair and professorship positions now in place at YSU.

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# Excellence at Work

An e-newsletter for faculty and staff scholarly achievements

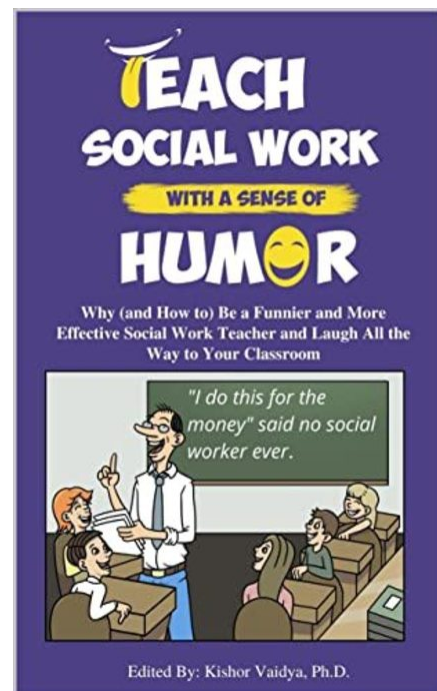
April 27, 2022

A department chair who sees the value of classroom humor, a faculty member who started a new children's literacy festival, a member of the Nursing faculty named a "Rising Star of Research" and a professor's award-winning novel that's caught the eye of a book-banner. Read these stories and more in this edition of Excellence @ Work.

## FEATURED

*"On the first day of class, I describe myself as a crazy cat lady."*

Thus begins Dana Davis' chapter in the new book, *Teach Social Work with a Sense of Humor*. Davis, chair and associate professor of Social Work, wrote the chapter titled "Fluff'em and Stuff'em" and covers topics like her Yinzer accent, "social working 'em" and not having sex with clients. Meanwhile, Davis also recently published "More than a Means to an End: Alignment of Social Service Organizations' Missions with Representative Payee Program Goals" in the *Community Mental Health Journal* with colleagues from the University of Pittsburgh.



Kudos to faculty and staff receiving **Distinguished Professor Awards** and **Distinguished Service Awards** at the Faculty and Staff Showcase. Well done!

## HONORS

## FEATURED

**Vamsi Borra**, assistant professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering, was recently named a senior member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics



Engineers, the world's largest technical professional society. Fewer than 10 percent of the more than 400,000 IEEE members hold senior status. Borra, who came to YSU in August 2021, is also the co-author of "Tin Whisker Growth Suppression Using NiO Sublayers Fabricated by Dip Coating" in the journal *Condensed Matter*, and "Modification of Tin (Sn) metal surfaces by surface plasmon polariton excitation" in the journal *Scripta Materialia*. Borra previously was assistant professor and coordinator of the Computer Engineering Technology program at California University of Pennsylvania.

**Laura Calcagni**, assistant professor, Centofanti School of



Nursing, was selected as a Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing "Rising Star of Research and Scholarship" by the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing at Case Western Reserve University. With the honor, Calcagni will present her doctoral research, "Promoting Clinical Judgment Development in Clinical Nursing Education," at Sigma's 33rd International



**DR. STACY GRABER**  
FESTIVAL CREA

**Stacy Graber**, associate professor and coordinator of English Education, was the creator and leader behind the **first-ever Literary Arts Festival** for students grades K-3 at Martin Luther King and Volney Rogers elementary schools in Youngstown in March. "Each event highlighted connections that build upon and extend literacy study, in all its modes of expression, and in a festive atmosphere," Graber said. The festival at Volney Rogers included a performance by the Voices of YSU, directed by **Daniel Keown**, associate professor in the Dana School of Music. The festival was supported by the Beeghly School Partnership Fund.

## PRESENTATIONS

**Rebecca Curnalia**, Distinguished Professor of Communication, presented "Do Fake News Beliefs Affect Support for Freedom of the Press? Fake News Beliefs, Literacy, and Support for Media Censorship" at the Eastern Communication Association Annual Conference in Philadelphia.

Nursing Research Congress in August. Calcagni plans to continue her research during the Fall 2022 semester with the support of a YSU Research Professorship.

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**Michael Butler**, director of Bands in the Dana School of Music, was recently elected to Marquis Who's Who in America. Butler's recent accomplishments include commissioning Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Julia Wolfe to write a new piece for wind ensemble and presenting at multiple music conferences. Outside of YSU, Butler serves as an adjudicator for the American Prize and clinics bands and orchestras nationwide.

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**Victoria Kress**, professor and director of Clinical Mental Health and Addictions Counseling Programs, has received the 2022 Thomas Sweeney Award for Visionary Leadership and Advocacy from the American Counseling Association. The award is presented to a professional counselor or counselor educator in recognition of career contributions to the profession.



**Janet L. Gbur**, adjunct faculty, Mechanical Engineering, is serving a three-year term on the

American Society for Testing and Materials International Board of

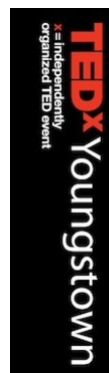
**Ana Torres**, co-director, Maag Library, was the guest speaker as the YWCA of the Mahoning Valley celebrated



International Women's Day. Torres' address focused on the theme, "Break the Bias."

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**Gregg Sturuss**, professor and chair of Physics, Astronomy, Geological and Environmental Sciences, was among the speakers at the TedX conference at YSU. Sturuss' topic was Lasers and Alzheimer's.



**Cicilia Yudha**, associate professor, Dana School of Music, was guest speaker for the Cleveland Orchestra's Pre-Concert Lecture Series and the Music In Depth Webinar for the orchestra's subscription concert series. Her presentation on Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 22 and the Prague Symphony was titled "The Genius of the Mozart."

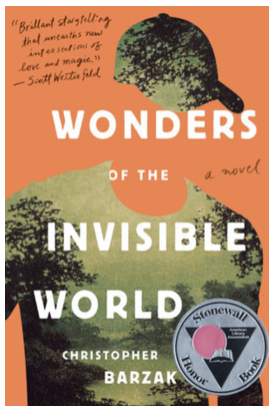
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**Katherine Garlick**, associate professor, Visual & Dramatic Arts, was invited to the National Conference of the U.S. Institute for Theatre Technology in

Directors. Gbur, who earned bachelor's and master's degrees in Mechanical Engineering from YSU, is a senior research associate of Materials Science and Engineering and a member of the Advanced Manufacturing and Mechanical Reliability Center at Case Western Reserve University.

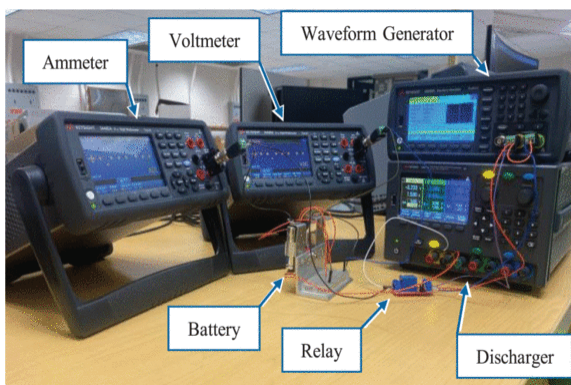
Baltimore. Garlick was selected to present her "Fostering Inclusivity in Academic Costume Spaces" as part of the conference's juried poster session. She was also on a panel on theatrical rendering techniques and media.

## FEATURED



A novel by **Christopher Barzak**, professor of English and World Languages, recently won another award, and also was made a target of a book-banning campaign. *Wonders of the Invisible World* was selected for the **Human Rights Campaign Foundation's LGBTQ+ affirming booklist for young adults**. Meanwhile, the 2015 novel, which won a Stonewall Book Award from the American Library Association, is also on a list of 850 books that a Texas state legislator is trying to get banned. Barzak said the fact that both he and the book's central characters are gay is the reason the book was put on the Texas list. In an article in *The Vindicator*, Barzak questioned if the legislator even read the book. "I don't think they read a whole lot in general," he said.

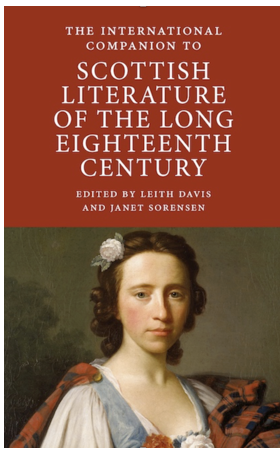
## PUBLICATIONS



Five faculty and one student in the Rayen School of Engineering are co-authors of "**A Novel Modal Representation of Battery Dynamics**" in *IEEE Access*. Co-authors include faculty **Kyosung Choo, Alexander H. Pesch, Vamsi Borra, Frank X. Li and Pedro Cortes**, as well as lead author **Khaled I. Alsharif**, a master's degree student.

*Pictured, experimental test rig/instrumentation.*

**Xiangjia Min**, professor of Chemical and Biological Sciences, and **Feng Yu**, associate professor of Computer Science and Information Systems, published "Identification and analysis of alternative splicing in soybean plants" in the proceedings of the 14th International Conference on Bioinformatics and Computational Biology. Co-authors included YSU students **Theoni Kasamias, Mykaela Wagner and Atinuke Ogunbayi**.



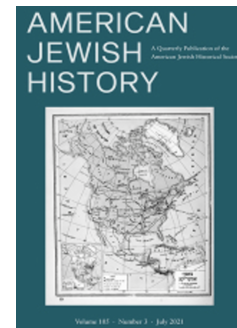
**Corey E. Andrews**, professor of English, authored the chapter, "Poems in the Scottish Register, 1650-1800" in *The International Companion to Scottish Literature of the Long Eighteenth Century*. The chapter presents a detailed account of all poetry written in Scots, a language dialect. Andrews joined YSU's English department in 2005.

A painting by **Dragana Crnjak**, professor of Art, is included in the **WOMEN PAINT** catalog, produced by Page Bond Gallery in Richmond, Va. The online catalogue is a survey of 24 artists. A portion of sales go to the UNICEF Children in Crossfire of Ukrainian Crisis fund.

Pictured, 'Shh...' by Dragana Crnjak, acrylic on canvas, 50x45 inches, 2021.



"In unserem Kreise: Czech-Jewish Activism and Diaspora in the USA, 1933-1994", by **Jacob Ari Labendz**, Clayman assistant professor of Judaic and Holocaust studies and director of the YSU Center for Judaic and Holocaust Studies, has been published in *American Jewish History* journal.



**Michael Butcher**, professor of Biological Sciences, is co-author of "Does a suspensory lifestyle result in increased tensile strength? Organ level material properties of sloth limb bones" in the *Journal of Experimental Biology*. Co-authors include Angela Mossor of YSU and NEOMED.

Pictured, a sloth femur in a 3-point jig during a bending test.



## APPOINTED

Halberd Corp. has named **Chet Cooper**, professor of Biological Sciences, to its technical team. Halberd has been working at YSU on E. coli testing and analysis over the past several months.



**Stan Sweeney**, director of Kilcawley Center, has been elected to a three-year term on the Board of Directors of the National Association of Campus Activities.

***Excellence at Work**, published by the YSU Office of Marketing and Communications, recognizes and celebrates the scholarly work and honors of the faculty and staff of Youngstown State University. To submit items for inclusion, complete the **online form**.*

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