

Yikkity Yak Does Talk Back THE FUTURE OF YIK YAK'S UNIQUE BRAND

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After an editorial published earlier in the spring semester, Cam Mullen, the lead community developer at Yik Yak, reached out to The Jambar for an interview about the platform.

"One of our employees recently peeked into Youngstown State University and showed us the awesome feed on your campus. People are posting nearly every 60 seconds and you are

already one of the most active regions in the area," Mullen said.

Yik Yak, a location-based app created by Brooks Buffington and Tyler Droll, functions by placing users in a forum within a ten-mile radius of their location. Though they can use a handle to post from, they can also choose to post entirely anonymously. Yik Yak is currently ranked as the 21st most downloaded free social media app on the Apple app store nearly a year and a half after release.

Adam Earnhardt, chair of

the communications department, attributed the company's success to the anonymity factor.

"One that it is anonymous and the second is that it is location based. What it did was for the people who were on Twitter who wanted to rant and leave opinions, they often had their Twitter address tied to their names and their real identities. With Yik Yak and other location-based anonymous social posting sites, ... it gives them that protection," he said. "For right or wrong, however you want to look

at it, that is the main motivation for using those sites and that is what made it popular."

Though Mullen is aware of the app's reputation, he said the app can benefit any community.

"Yik Yak does have a layer of anonymity and sometimes that does not breed the best behavior in people but, in general, no matter what app or social network, there are going to be people that misuse the app — that is on Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and Yik Yak," Mullen said "We want to provide a voice to every-

one. It is a really new social media concept where no matter if you are Justin Bieber or if you are Cam Mullen, your post is treated the same. It gives an equal voice to everyone on campus; it lets you have conversations that let you transcend friend groups."

Evolving Yik Yak

Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) announced his campaign for presidency on Monday at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia during the university's triweekly convocation — an event that is mandatory for students.

Even as media outlets directly covered the event, many also looked toward Yik Yak, the location-based anonymous social media app, for live updates on students' reaction.

In response to Cruz's continued use of the word "imagine" in his speech, one Yaker posted, "Imagine no mandatory convos." Another quipped, "Imagine better Wi-Fi at Liberty University."

Cam Mullen said this is the group's vision for the future — a powerful hyper local news source that people can tap into for unique insight regardless of location.

"We have this feature which we somewhat recently released that lets you drop a pin anywhere in the world and see what people are Yaking about in that area. When there is ever anything dramatic going on on campus and anything people are talking

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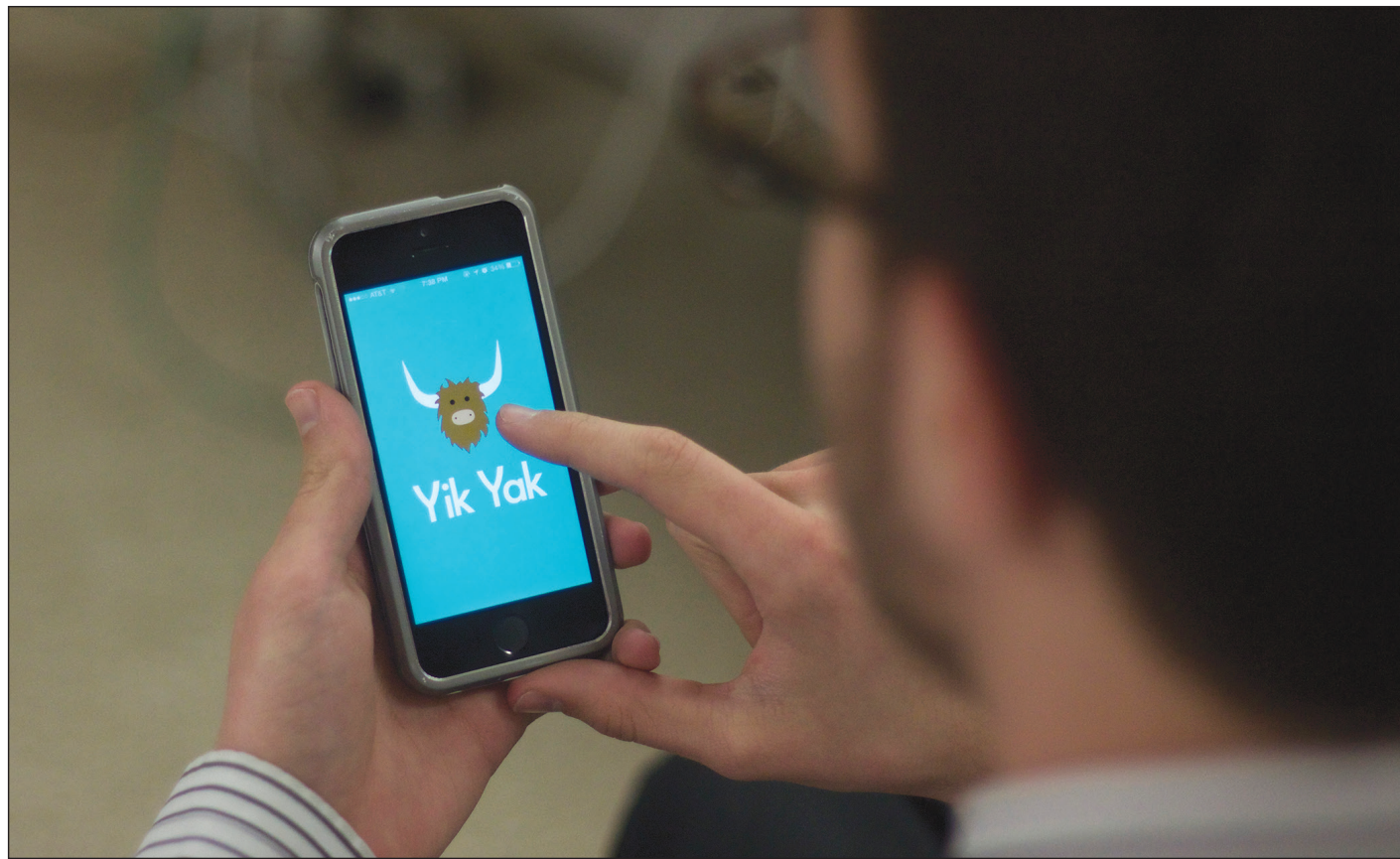


PHOTO BY GRAIG GRAZIOSI/JAMBAR.

Susan Jacoby: The Culture of Distraction

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On Tuesday, in Kilcawley Center's Chestnut Room, students and faculty listened to author and secularist Susan Jacoby's lecture on the rise of anti-intellectualism in America — a topic covered in her book "The Age of American Unreason."

The talk was sponsored by the Thomas Shipka Lecture Series — the second largest lecture series at the university.

Jacoby has written for The Washington Post, The Detroit Free Press and has contributed to The New York Times Magazine. She authors a column called "The Spirited Atheist," which appears in The Washington Post.

Jacoby focused on a chapter from "The Age of American Unreason" entitled "The Culture of Distraction: Why the Young Need to Fight It," appealing to

her college-aged audience.

"Fifty years ago, I was you. I was sitting in some lecture hall at Michigan State, usually half asleep, and resenting the fact that I not only had to listen to those professors, but I had to work and make enough money to pay to listen to them just so my real life could begin," Jacoby said.

Jacoby said that she believes social media is having an adverse effect on the rationale of those in the United States.

"I believe that as a nation, we are in serious intellectual trouble because of our preoccupation, sometimes bordering on obsession, with all of the junk thoughts spewed out 24/7 by the media. We are in trouble because 100 times more Americans clicked on that dumb dress controversy than tuned in to the important tribute to the huge turning point in our very recent history," Jacoby said.

Jacoby added that her book is a representation of why the American population needs to change this trend.

"It's not only courage in part of the young or old that is needed to change, but knowledge of the past that is needed to change the future. That's why I wrote "The Age of American Unreason,"" Jacoby said. "It was published during the presidential campaign of 2008. I really think that a poisonous mixture of anti-intellectualism, anti-rationalism and just sheer ignorance is harming our culture as a whole."



PHOTO BY ALYSSA PAWLUK/JAMBAR.
Susan Jacoby

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VAN GOGH PAINTING ON DISPLAY AT THE BUTLER



PHOTO COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

"In The Dunes," 1883. Now on display at the Butler Institute of American Art.

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Youngstown fans of Vincent van Gogh no longer need to travel to the Museum of Modern Art to see a piece of the artist's collection — a quick trip to the Butler Institute of American Art will do the job.

Last week, the Butler received an original Van Gogh painting thanks to a donation from a private collector. The painting "In the Dunes" was created in 1883, early in Van Gogh's painting career.

The work is currently on display in the Butler's room dedicated to American Impressionism.

Wayne Gruber, a preparator for the Butler, helped prepare the museum for the arrival and exhibition of the painting.

"Acquiring the piece was something that had been in the works for awhile. Essentially, the private collector who loaned us the piece felt it would be better served as a piece here with us," Gruber said. "In preparing to receive the piece, two of our major concerns were security, for obvious reasons, and how we would present the piece, as we are an American art museum and Van Gogh was a Dutch painter."

While Van Gogh was not an American artist, the Butler has showcased his work in a room dedicated to American Impressionism. The display, which is a large three-finned wall, in-

cludes the work, a letter Van Gogh penned around the time he painted the piece and a display detailing Van Gogh's relation to American art and artists.

The painting — which displays a scene of a field and forested area outside The Hague, Netherlands — shows early evidence of the artist's style, though those expecting to see the vibrant colors and swirls associated with his more famous works, like "The Starry Night," will instead see a different side to Van Gogh's work.

"This piece was from Van Gogh's early life, when he was studying and replicating the styles of other artists. This work is Van Gogh developing

VAN GOGH
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YSU: A STEM Jobs Approved College

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STEM Jobs magazine named Youngstown State University's college of STEM a 2015 STEM Jobs approved college in its winter 2015 issue.

The list is comprised of 184 colleges that "understand the importance of aligning their programs to high-demand, high-paying STEM jobs and helping their students achieve those career aspirations."

The schools listed are adjusting their programs to meet job market demands, preparing students for success after graduation, working to

improve diversity and dedicating specific resources to supporting student achievement.

They looked at program alignment to STEM jobs, STEM job placement after graduation and STEM diversity. YSU earned best practice in aligning their program to high-growth and high-pay jobs, placing students in jobs after graduation and having a diverse graduate program. YSU did not receive marks for having a STEM career center onsite or having a diverse program.

The ratings are based on publicly available data and survey responses.

Jim Cossler, CEO of the Youngstown Business Incubator, said it's a great announcement for com-

panies in the region as well as the university.

"The better the university becomes across the board, the better for YBI and our portfolio companies, but certainly to see that kind of recognition for its STEM programs and therefore its STEM graduates ... is a tremendous opportunity for us," Cossler said.

YSU has been successful in placing several graduates in jobs at the Youngstown Business Incubator.

"YBI itself in terms of our professional staff and our portfolio companies hire a tremendous number of YSU graduates. Our two specialties are software development and additive manufacturing

hardware, so, certainly the engineering courses from mechanical to electrical to chemical engineering are very important to us. The computer science elements of STEM. The information technology elements of STEM. All of those are very important to us. We're also hiring quite a few YSU graduates from outside of STEM. Particularly from the college of business, communications majors and design majors," Cossler said.

Mike Hripko, deputy director of America Makes, said the recognition is a validation of YSU's curriculum and a signal to students that a STEM degree from YSU can be turned into a high-paying job.

"We hire interns from YSU, and we hire interns from several top universities nationally. The interns from YSU are very capable and do very well for us," Hripko said.

In Cleveland last week, President Obama touted private/public partnerships like America Makes and announced future initiatives modeled on the success of efforts in Youngstown.

"I have announced \$500 million in new public and private investment for American manufacturing. That includes a new manufacturing hub that will make America a leader in producing high-tech fabrics for uniforms our soldiers wear in battle," Obama said.

California to Insurers: Don't Use Workers' Comp Law to Deny Approved Care

Concern over possible misuse of a 2012 workers' comp law has led to warnings from state labor officials. A state senate committee will hold a hearing on the law Wednesday.

Michael Grabell
ProPublica

California labor officials have issued a warning to insurance companies that a new workers' compensation law shouldn't be used to reopen old cases and deny previously approved home health care to injured workers.

The notice follows a ProPublica and NPR investigation earlier this month that featured a worker paralyzed in an on-the-job accident whose home health aide was abruptly taken away by his company's insurer, leaving him to sit in his own waste for hours at a time.

In addition, the state's Senate Labor and Industrial Relations Committee has called a hearing Wednesday to discuss "the progress and remaining questions" surrounding the 2012 legislation.

The investigation by ProPublica and NPR found

widespread cutbacks nationwide in benefits for injured workers. Since 2003, more than 30 states have slashed compensation for workers hurt on the job, created barriers to getting medical care, or made it more difficult for injured workers to qualify. The changes, often driven by business and insurers, are often labeled as "reforms" to existing workers' comp systems.

As part of its 2012 reforms, California instituted a new medical review process while restoring some benefits that had been severely cut years earlier. Under the new process, the final arbiters of disputes over medical treatment changed from judges to anonymous outside doctors who never see the injured workers and can only be overruled in limited circumstances.

The law also applied retroactively, which means that all requests for medical treatment—including those involving older injuries—are now subject to reviews by insurance com-

pany doctors and more rigid medical treatment guidelines.

Insurers and state regulators say this has provided a check on inappropriate medical care, such as the over-prescription of addictive painkillers. But injured workers and their lawyers say insurance companies have used this provision to seize on minor treatment requests as an excuse to revise agreed-upon treatment plans.

In the case profiled by ProPublica and NPR, warehouse manager Joel Ramirez was paralyzed when a 900-pound crate fell on him in 2009. Travelers Insurance provided 24-hour home health care for several years. But it withdrew the aide last summer, and, according to a judge, asserted that the law allowed it to revisit the treatment and require the new medical review process.

The decision left Ramirez, 48, and his family to fend for themselves. He fell several times trying to transfer to and from his wheelchair

and had to wait for hours for a relative to get home to help him clean himself because he was unable to control his bowels. His wife was forced to quit her job to look after him, and his daughter left college to help make up the lost income. After four months, Travelers reinstated the aide under orders from the state Workers' Compensation Appeals Board.

In the notice issued Thursday, the Department of Industrial Relations and its Division of Workers' Compensation said "agreed-upon medical treatment must be honored."

"Under the 2012 reforms," the notice said, such care can't be modified "unless a treating physician provides medical evidence of a change in the injured workers' condition."

Rupali Das, the division's medical director, previously said in an interview that the state is planning to update the home health guideline after determining that it was too narrow

and "does not meet what we want to have in California."

Wednesday's oversight hearing will review whether the law is living up to its goals of reducing costs while still ensuring that injured workers receive the medical care they need quickly.

"Many of the reforms have drawn praise from stakeholders, but others have raised concerns," the committee wrote in its news release.

Lawmakers will hear from state administrators as well as insurance, labor, business and medical industry representatives.

State Sen. Tony Mendoza, a Democrat from Los Angeles County who heads the labor committee, said the hearing will explore whether the 2012 law "lives up to its commitment of increasing injured worker benefits, speeding up the provision of medical help for injured workers and decreasing workers' compensation costs for California's employers."

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NEWS BRIEFS

Student Art and Design Exhibition in McDonough

On Friday, March 27, the 79th Annual Juried Youngstown State University Art and Design Exhibition will open in McDonough Museum of Art. The reception is 6 to 8 p.m. with the awards being presented at 7 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

Global Business Seminar Hosted by WCBA

The International Trade Assistance Center is offering a seminar on Friday March 27 from 9 to 11:45. It will showcase the Cleveland, Europe Express Linear Service, Foreign Trade Zones and the Global Trade Group. Registration is \$25 and includes continental breakfast. To make a reservation, contact Mousa Kassis at 330-941-2145 or mhkassis@ysu.edu.

EveryBODY Fashion Show Raises Awareness About Eating Disorders

Youngstown State University's fashion program is presenting "The EveryBODY Fashion Show," featuring clothing for all body types. The show will be Thursday April 9 at 6 p.m. in the Chestnut room of Kilcawley Center. Admission is free and doors open at 5 p.m.

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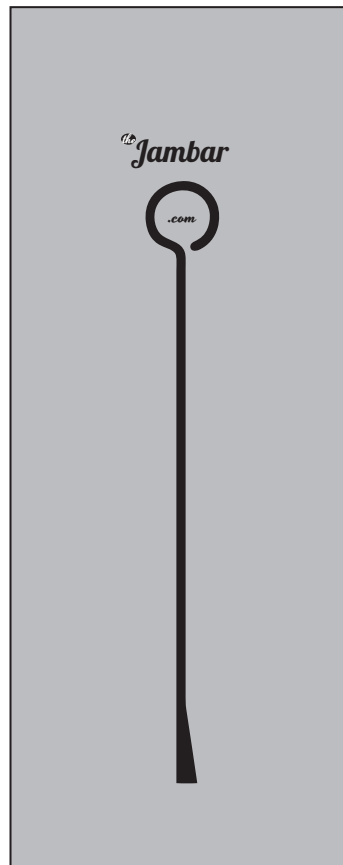
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what would become his style, and replicating the styles of other artists before breaking off and defining your own style is not uncommon to see in art," Gruber said.

"In the Dunes" will premiere at the Butler on March 26, but word of mouth has brought a large number of art enthusiasts to the museum since the arrival of the painting last week.

"It's been up for about a week, but people have been showing up once they hear it's here. We expect a large uptick in traffic

next week as more media outlets have been reporting on the piece. Last week there was a spike in traffic as soon as we received the piece," Gruber said.

Van Gogh, who committed suicide at 37 after only a 10-year painting career, produced a substantial amount of work despite his short life. As a result of his posthumous popularity and the breadth of his work, Van Gogh pieces can be found on display on every continent except Antarctica.

LECTURE
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Jacoby said that the ignorance of Americans has consequences that will carry over to the next generation.

"This dumbing down has practical consequences in every area of our lives and isn't something that only matters to writers or professors or others who are sneeringly called the elites. If you allow yourself to remain ignorant about science because it's boring, you get your opinions from the Internet; you and the kids most of you will have someday will suffer the consequences," Jacoby said.

Jacoby discussed "infotainment," a concept she defines as a popular culture of video images and digital interruptions that require no logical thought, and said that these distractions are hurting the intelligence of Americans.

"Ladies and gentlemen, this kind of ignorance is the undoing of progress. It is not only how diseases spread, it is how schools graduate kids who can't read. It's how civilizations collapse," Jacoby said. "While there are a lot of things that seem beyond the power of us to change, our complicity in this dumbing down, distracting obsession is something each of us does have the power to change."

She said that studies have shown that people are 25-50 percent less likely to remember anything read online just 24 hours later and more likely to remember the information if read in a book.

"One of the most maddening things so-called 'cultural observers' go around saying is that computers are making us smarter. This is utter non-

sense. It's exactly the same thing as if saying that forks, which were invented in the sixteenth century, made human beings better eaters," Jacoby said. "Forks, like computers, are tools, and the most urgent thing for you who hold the future of this country in your hands to understand is that tools must be your servants, not your masters. What I'm urging you to do today is think in perhaps some ways that you haven't before about how you can become the masters and mistresses of this tool rather than allowing it to master you."

She referenced a scientific study showing that people ages 18 to 77 found it unpleasant or painful to be isolated without a smart phone for just 15 minutes, and a smaller study where a group of people were hooked up to a machine that would deliver a shock if he or she chose to entertain themselves with a phone rather than sitting quietly by themselves.

"It tells us something about our addiction to infotainment, when a significant number of people would rather administer themselves a shock then be alone with their thinking. What can we as individuals do if we perceive this as a problem in our lives?," Jacoby said.

Jacoby suggested a few solutions to these distractions, of which included: unplugging or isolating phones and computers when working on a project, and never trusting the relevance of a source from a website such as Wikipedia.

"I promise you that if you can try unplugging, even if you can only stand it for an hour, you'll be amazed at how

much more you can get done and how much better you are able to focus. If it makes you uncomfortable, you know you are a little bit hooked," Jacoby said. "The Internet is especially problematic because much of it comes in anonymous form. I have nothing but contempt for anonymous comments, whether it is on social media or a response to articles of online editions of traditional newspapers or magazines. Anonymous free speech is not free speech because it risks nothing."

Audience members were receptive to the talk and gave their opinions as well as questions to Jacoby. Raymond Beiersdorfer, a professor in the department of geological and environmental sciences at YSU, expressed his frustration for those who are oblivious to local issues.

"One of the things that I find most frustrating is that people in positions of responsibility are being woefully ignorant about some of the issues of the day," Beiersdorfer said. "In particular, I'm mostly concerned about our energy consumption, global warming and the Shale gas development, locally. Yet, they are being anti-intellectual about it and just being totally ignorant about this, yet there seems to be no blowback. Is there any solution to that?"

Jacoby expressed her own insight on the issue, and left the audience to think about how the issue can be changed.

"The blow hards often get the stage. Often people don't have the energy to change it, but you might change the mind of someone who listens," Jacoby said.

Smartphone Domination
Pretty Close to Complete

PATRICIA SABATINI

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

(TNS)

In case you haven't raised your head long enough to notice the throngs of people gazing hypnotically at their smartphones, the nation has passed a milestone.

Smartphones now make up 75 percent of the mobile phone market, up from 65 percent a year ago and just 2 percent a decade ago, according to the Internet analytics firm comScore.

Put another way, three-quarters of Americans age 13 and older now have smartphones. Most other people have some other type of cell phone, such as a flip phone or TracFone, used mostly for old-fashioned talking.

The percentage of people who don't own any kind of mobile phone is low it's not worth mentioning,

said Andrew Lipsman, vice president of marketing and insights at comScore, based in Reston, Va.

"If you take a look at the big picture, it's how mobile has taken over and become the dominant platform through which people engage in digital media," he said.

Desktop computer usage has flattened out, but people are spending more time in front of a digital screen — whether it be on the way to work, throughout the day, sitting in front of the TV or in bed at night — because of the availability of smartphones and tablets, he said.

On the plus side, as a nation of smartphone users connected to the Internet 24/7, people are better informed and may be learning more quickly, Lipsman said.

Still, there are negative implications to consider, as well.

"Obviously, the drawback is what that (greater reliance on smartphones)

means for how people engage with each other," he said.

Research released last month by the digital technology firm Apigee in San Jose, Calif., along with Stanford University's Mobile Innovation Group, found a deepening dependence on smartphones for social interaction.

Dependency was strongest among the one-quarter of smartphone users who reported using their devices the most.

Among these top users, the majority said they used their phones "nearly all the time," including while at dinner with others.

Twenty-one percent of top users said they could not maintain a relationship with a significant other without the apps on their phones, while 19 percent said they couldn't find new friends without their smartphones.

Among all smartphone owners surveyed, 11 percent said they would be unable to be happy without their

electronic companions.

It's probably no surprise that younger Americans tend to use smartphones the most. Among every age group between 13 and 44, at least 85 percent have smartphones, according to the comScore survey.

Then the numbers drop off. Among people age 45-54, it's 76 percent; ages 55-64, 63 percent; and for those 65 and older, it's 48 percent.

Apple devices are the most popular, making up 41 percent of the market, followed by Samsung at 29 percent, LG at 8 percent, Motorola with 5 percent and HTC with 4 percent, comScore said.

As for the most popular smartphone apps, Facebook reigned supreme, reaching 70 percent of the app audience; followed by YouTube at 55 percent; and Google Play at 52 percent. Google search, also at 52 percent, and Facebook messenger, 47 percent, rounded out the top five.

about, you can drop a pin and get real-time accounts and posts from that area, which is way different than a hashtag that can be coming from all over the world," he said.

Mullen said Yik Yak can be useful to both administrators and local companies and news sources — citing his recent experience at the College Media Association 2014.

"We met with a bunch of college newspaper reporters and writers. Many of them have been using Yik Yak to source stories," Mullen said. "Florida State University had a school shooting this past November. As it was going on, there was no news articles published yet and there was nothing posted online, if you peeked in, and many many people did, on Yik Yak you could get an account of what was going on. There were students in the library, where the shooter was, Yiking and giving details about what happened, if anyone was hurt and that information wasn't accessible anywhere else, as far as I know, except on Yik Yak."

Earnhardt agreed that this future was certainly possible for Yik Yak, but changes needed to come to the platform first.

"You know, I think that is what Yik Yak's founders wanted it to be. I think they wanted it to be something that was a new platform for somebody to share information, and I don't think they had any idea that it would turn into something negative where it would be used as a tool for bullying and so on," he said. "It all depends on how they retool, re-brand Yik Yak in the coming years. I think it does have that staying power but at the same time, I think there is a real opportunity for the Yik Yak users to turn it into that and to make it a real meaningful site for sharing, updates, news and information — rather

than just trying to use it for hook-ups and complaints," Earnhardt said.

Battling Yik Yak's Darker Side

As Earnhardt said, Yik Yak, since its launch, has been a magnet for controversies both on and off college campuses.

In February of 2014, Yik Yak caused three high school campuses to shut down in Mobile, Alabama after a post warning about a shooting circulated among the campus body. A University of North Carolina student was arrested in December after being connected to a bomb threat post on Yik Yak.

Yik Yak has also been used for cyber-bullying, prompting a petition on Change.org by Elizabeth Long, a victim of bullying on Yik Yak, to "shut down" the app. The petition currently has 78,287 signatures.

Mullen said that Yik Yak has continuously worked toward preventing threats, bullying and hate speech through efforts like blocking Yik Yak from over 100,000 high school campuses around the nation, internal moderators and community moderation — content is deleted from the feed after five downvotes and users can flag posts.

"We have filters running looking for hot words and names like you said. And we have a team of moderators that are going through these posts and removing ones that should be removed and putting back on ones that are fine. We also have the ability to suspend users, block users if we see that they are misusing the app. There is no one answer, but we have a number of different kinds of tools," he said.

Though Mullen understood groups fears, he said banning the app from campuses would be nearly impossible — since many

students would be able to use their cellular data to circumvent blocks on the Wi-Fi — and instead commenting on the benefits administrators have found in embracing the app.

"Yik Yak is a really powerful tool and administrators have noticed that. On one side, their response is, 'we should block it and not let students use it.' On the other side, administration is learning to embrace it, and we are seeing more and more a shift toward schools actually learning to embrace it. We have actually been reached out by a number of schools who want more information about Yik Yak on their campus to learn more about student life instead of having access to just the most recent 100 posts," he said. "There are hundreds and thousands to millions more of these cases that bring communities together."

He pointed toward a specific example of faculty and administration utilizing Yik Yak.

"At Colgate University, a bunch of professors got on Yik Yak, the first day of finals last semester. I think 50 professors ended up writing, motivating and encouraging posts, signing their names as the handle, and the students loved it. You know, we had philosophy teachers quoting Plato," he said. "Yik Yak is basically a campus bulletin board and the community gets to decide what stays up. When the administration and the teachers and the professors get involved, they do so in creative ways that students would like."

Earlier that semester at Colgate University, students were prompted to protest the lack of diversity at the campus after a series of racist posts on Yik Yak. The professor's posts were in response to this controversy in attempt to influence greater positivity on

Yik Yak.

Earnhardt was skeptical of heavily limiting speech on the app, instead supporting this type of community involvement as a necessary step to truly change the culture of the comments.

"I think one of their hallmark features is this idea that you are open to say anything for good or bad. I think that is what the problem is. They really haven't kind of taught anyone what is responsible speech. Maybe there is an opportunity there for other Yakers, and there is by voting things down, to when they see something negative — like racist and sexist — to get on there and vote this down as a way to monitor the community."

Though Earnhardt was also strongly against banning the app, he said Yik Yak does need to do more.

"You know what I think their responsibility is and probably where they have dropped the ball a little bit: providing a forum for people to share best practices, best uses for Yik Yak," he said. "The part that scares me is there is this immediate reaction to say, 'oh, let's shut it down. It is bad; it's evil.' without even realizing its virtues. There could be some real possibilities with keeping it open. You just need to find ways to teach people the best uses and the best practices are. These people who are trying to shut it down — that is ludicrous."

Mullen emphasized that the app is constantly improving bringing in new features in addition to monitoring techniques.

"When people misuse our app, it doesn't leave very good impressions on the community, which is why we are improving," Mullen said. "We are definitely still in the early stage."

Yik Yak Makes Cash?

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making sure the app is the best it can be; that people are on the app, using it everyday," Mullen said.

Yik Yak does have investors. The Wall Street Journal recently reported that Sequoia Capital, a venture capital firm, led a \$62 million funding round, in addition to reporting that Yik Yak has an estimated value of between \$300 to \$400 million. Mullen commented on the attraction of Yik Yak to investors.

"I think one reason is that we have a very strong foothold in the college market. College students are all over Yik Yak. We are at over

1600 to 1700 colleges in the U.S.A. The conversations on Yik Yak are really unique and different than on other social media platforms," Mullen said.

Mullen said though it is too early to say, the platform is open to introducing ads into the system, under certain conditions.

"Currently we aren't working on that at all, but, if one day we wanted to put in local ads, it has to be really relevant," he said.

Adam Earnhardt, chair of the communications department, said the Yik Yak community has been

skeptical of advertisements.

"I have had stuff on there where I will post something like, 'If you are looking for a course to take, check out something in the communications department yadda yadda yadda,' and it gets voted down. It is almost like the Yakers want to keep that forum free of intrusive advertisements, like propaganda," he said. "It would have to be one of those things where Yik Yak sells that space to potential advertisers and there would be no mechanism of voting it up or down."

Earnhardt added that the plat-

form could potentially create revenue by selling information as many social media apps do.

According to the Yik Yak terms of agreement, the platform does collect data. The Yik Yak privacy policy also states that they may share data collected from users, without identifying users, to such groups as third-party business partners, advertisers and service providers.

"By using our Services, you agree that we may use and disclose the information we collect about you as stated in the Privacy Policy," the agreement reads.

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Graduate Student Uses Logic, Reason and his Thesis to Create Music

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Jay Newman, a current graduate student, has created a band called Black Kangaroo from his collection of songs compiled in his creative writing thesis.

Black Kangaroo consists of several musicians, including Newman on guitar and vocals, Tom Goldthwait on percussion, Molly Shattuck on keyboard and a few others that help with the band.

Newman expressed that his band is a synthesis of many genres and has been inspired by other bands such as Nine Inch Nails and Depeche Mode.

“There’s a lot of influence in it [the music]. It’s multilayer. We’re creating something familiar yet very much new,” Newman said. “I basically started writing songs for class assignments because our professors gave us [students] quite a bit of leeway with what we could do [musically].”

Northeast Ohio Master of Fine Arts, or NEO-MFA, is the program that Newman will be completing soon. It is a unique association of four universities including the University of Akron, Cleveland State, Kent State and Youngstown State. NEOMFA is the only multi-university Creative Writing MFA program in the country.

With Newman’s thesis coming to completion, he asked Catherine

Wing and Steven Reese to be on his reading committee and he asked Mary Biddinger to be his thesis advisor. All three professors are from different Northeastern Ohio universities.

Steven Reese, a current professor at YSU who has worked with the NEOMFA program for 12 years, explained the role of the committee.

“The chair of that committee, Dr. Biddinger, at Akron, works most closely with Jay in helping him produce his manuscript. The rest of us read it to evaluate it, suggest changes, make corrections where needed,” Reese said.

Catherine Wing, a poetry professor at Kent State University’s English Department, has taught Newman since his first class with

her in 2012 within a Poetry Writing Workshop.

“I’d say it’s a real pleasure to get to work with developing writers who are in the process of finding their voices and figuring out what kind of writers they want to be. Also it’s a real honor to be in the company of such strong and diverse writers that make up the NEOMFA faculty,” Wing said.

This is not the first time he had created music. He also has another band, An Intimate Curse, that was established before Black Kangaroo and is still creating music, using the Internet as its main platform.

“If you’re not on the Internet and advertising on there, your [band] won’t make it around here,” Newman said.

Women’s History Month at YSU Continues



Women march in New York City in 1917 in support of women’s suffrage. Public Domain Photo

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Women’s and gender studies is presenting its last few events in celebration of Women’s History Month, attempting to answer the ever-present question, is it sexy or is it sexist?

Diana Palardy, women’s and gender studies director, and other faculty plan on finishing the month of March with programs that help women understand the societal pressures being placed on them in the past and understanding them in the present.

“Sexy or Sexist?” this year’s theme for events, ex-

plains different issues and rarely talked about “blurred lines” that modern day women are facing in the workplace and in their daily lives.

Some of the previous events featured paneled discussions that shed light on the representation of race and gender on current television shows such as “Scandal” and “The Big Bang Theory.”

“I am very excited about this year’s line-up of events and I feel that the ones this year are more closely aligned with our central theme, which is sexuality,” Palardy said.

Palardy and her team came up with the theme “Sexy or Sexist?” to show students that their words matter and can have a lasting effect on others.

“We wanted to talk about sexuality in general, and the theme of ‘Sexy or Sexist’ occurred to us because what may seem sexy and inoffensive to one person may seem sexist to another,” Palardy said. “We posed it as a question because we wanted people to think about what it is that makes something that could be just sexy become something that is actually sexist.”

Each event is meant to initiate discussion among students about what they viewed controversial, and the controversy surrounding it.

“When someone objectifies or dehumanizes someone to such an extent that they no longer empathize with that person, then what could potentially seem sexy

actually is sexist. Often there is some kind of power imbalance involved too,” Palardy said.

Ashley Orr, Student Government Association’s vice-president of financial affairs, attended the events “Through the Eyes of Different Religions” and “Throwing Stones at Glass Ceilings.” She expressed her excitement for the month’s events and the guest speakers that have, and will, speak on various issues that women face in the media as well as in the city of Youngstown.

“Discussions of and at these events made me realize how much women have done for the betterment of Youngstown. It’s motivating me as a woman-student to pursue similar goals,” Orr

said. “I learned a lot about the different religions practiced, and the audience and I could tell which religions were more supporting for an LGBTQIA member.”

As the month of March comes to a close, Women’s and Gender Studies presents its last three events.

“I would say that students who have attended these events have a better understanding of current issues in Women’s and Gender Studies and how these events will later be viewed from a historical perspective,” Palardy said.

For those who want to learn more about the other Women’s History Month events, students and faculty can contact Diana Palardy by email at dqpalardy@ysu.edu.

Brianna Wu Speaks at YSU about Sexism in Tech Industry

Brianna Wu will speak at YSU on Thursday at 7 p.m. in Beeghly Hall’s McKay Auditorium about sexism in the technology industry. Wu is the head of video game development studio Giant Spacekat, one of the largest professional game-development teams of women.

After commenting about misogyny in the video game industry and criticizing the

recent Gamergate movement controversy — in which groups threatened and insulted several female video game developers and their supporters — Wu received 45 death and rape threats over five months. She will speak about these experiences, in addition to more broadly speaking about women in this industry.

WOW... THAT'S EMBARRASSING

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It's that embarrassing moment that happened three years ago you can't let go. Of course you're afraid everyone remembers — how could they forget? Do they really remember though? Or is it just you beating yourself up over one stupid mistake? It's probably the latter...

In "Oh No You Didn't: Embarrassment Acts as a Social Glue that can Strengthen our Relationships, but it also has a Dark side, Research Finds," published on the American Psychological Association's website in November 2012, Kirsten Weir discusses the science of being embarrassed and why it is essential to feel it from time to time.

We often think back to the time described above, be it a year ago, three years ago or even one hour ago. Why do we continue to relive it if it makes us feel so... awkward?

"Powerful, but also puzzling. Why are we so quick to feel an emotion that makes us so uncomfortable? What does a tendency toward mortification mean?" Weir said. "Psychologists' research reveals this complex sentiment comes with both pros and cons."

Weir said it's actually good to get that "red-faced" expression we hate so much. It can be comforting to those around us — making us appear more human and more comfortable to be around.

Why do we hate turning red when something makes us feel awkward though?

It's because we fear judgment. But Weir said that shouldn't hold us back. She cites a study done by Duke University that found that the act of buying condoms can cause a high level of embarrassment — because of fear of judgment.

If that stopped the group who was studied from buying condoms, it has the potential to breed sexually transmitted diseases or unwanted pregnancies.

Fear of judgment shouldn't be the cause of irrationality. Buying condoms isn't that big of a deal, especially when you think of the consequences of not doing so. My advice? Suck it up.

There are other, and probably better, ways to deal with being embarrassed though.

Therese Borcard stressed in "10 Real Ways to Overcome Embarrassment," published on pbs.org, that laughing at your own mistakes and laughing with others is the best way to overcome your embarrassment.

"When you're in 'sensitivity land' laughing is a tad challenging, which is why you need a good friend to help you with it," Borcard said.

Looking at others' mistakes can make us feel less uncomfortable about our own, or even normal. We are humanizing ourselves whilst putting others on our same level. No one really wants to be out there all alone on the island of misfit toys.

"So, the next time you trip on the sidewalk, forget an acquaintance's name or realize your fly has been down all day, take a deep breath and try to shake it off," Weir said. "Your ruby-red cheeks and nervous smile may be broad-casting your best traits."

And these traits are being shown to others who want to be around someone who makes just as many silly mistakes as they do.

It's hard to overcome something as devastating as handing the cop who pulled you over your registration with a condom from your glove box inside, but if you can laugh about it, you can overcome it.

JAMBAR POLICY

Since being founded by Burke Lyden in 1931, The Jambar has won nine Associated Collegiate Press honors. The Jambar is published twice weekly during the fall and spring semesters and weekly during the first summer session. Mail subscriptions are \$25 per academic year. The first copy of The Jambar is free. Additional copies of The Jambar are \$1 each.

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EDITORIAL

You Probably Shouldn't Sign the New Petition For Legalized Pot

We'll wait for your collective gasps to quiet down.

There we go.

Young people want weed legalized. That's no secret. It's not just because people want to get high — though that obviously factors in — but because a lot of young people have friends or relatives who are currently serving or have previously served criminal sentences for marijuana possession.

In a recent interview with President Obama conducted by Vice News, the interviewer asked the president about legalization. Shane Smith, the interviewer, asked not simply because the topic is relevant, but because Vice's readers voted it their top priority question in an online poll prior to the interview.

The president brushed it off as a juvenile question and suggested that young people worry about something more important, such as climate change and the economy.

While we could go through all the reasons why President Obama is off base for dismissing young people's concerns over legalization, other news outlets have done a fine job of summing those points. We want to bring the discussion a little closer to home and argue an unlikely position — you shouldn't support the current plan to legalize weed in Ohio.

President Obama was right in saying young people need to worry about things like climate change and the economy. In fact, it's economic worries in particular that have brought us to the decision to officially oppose the pot legalization group ResponsibleOhio's — not to be confused with the Responsible Ohioans for Cannabis — current plan to bring weed legalization to the ballot.

Ohio's Ballot Board on Friday voted to allow ResponsibleOhio to begin collecting signatures for a petition that would see their initiative added to the ballots in November.

When discussing legalization, Colorado is the go-to example for why the practice can and does work. And they should be, because they've done a fine job of implementing the system, save for a few hiccups where state business intersects with

federal business.

ResponsibleOhio's plan isn't the same as the Colorado plan. Colorado's legalization plan allows individuals to have up to 6 personal plants and allows individuals to start grow operations and dispensaries as easily as opening up a new shoe store. ResponsibleOhio's plan would set up 10 state-wide grow operations and allow individuals to keep up to 4 personal plants for cultivation so long as they have a license. The cost or difficulty associated with getting a license is something we're interested to see.

So what's wrong with having 10 grow operations around the state? Well, it effectively establishes a state weed cartel and stymies free market competition.

ResponsibleOhio responded to these claims by changing their initial proposal to include personally owned plants, and told one of our reporters that their justification for proposing such strict regulation was to ensure the pot's "safety from seed to sale."

Safety from what? People having been buying unregulated weed from God-knows-where since before the drug was even scheduled. There are no official deaths attributed specifically to "bad pot," and all of the anecdotes arguing those claims have a veracity that is debatable at best.

Let's be honest about what's going on here — those 10 individuals, or landowners, or companies, or whoever it is that gets to own those grow operations are bound to make a lot of money off ResponsibleOhio's plan, just like Penn National Gaming did when Ohio effectively created a gambling cartel in the state.

Limiting who can start a retail marijuana business ensures that people who want to buy weed will be paying absurd prices. Some consumers will have to drive long distances to get to their nearest dispensary, and the lack of free market competition nagging business owners to always get better means we'll likely never see truly impressive products and strains of marijuana in the state because there will be no

driving force to bring it about.

Not only does this plan hurt the consumer, but it also hurts local economies.

Colorado's plan allows for visitors to buy and use recreational marijuana in state, so long as they're of age and don't take it out of state. If Ohio had a similar plan, we would certainly make money on out-of-state weed tourists, and local business owners could benefit and turn that money around for reinvestment in the local economy.

For an example of this, we need to look no further than Vintage Estate in Boardman. Vintage Estate is a craft beer bottle shop that lets you mix and match beers that you may not be able to find anywhere else. VE makes a large amount of money off of their Pennsylvania customers, who take the short drive over the Ohio border to buy individual bottles of expensive beer that they would have otherwise been forced to buy by the case in Pennsylvania.

For the past five years, VE has then used their profits to throw the Big Tap In, a beer festival that brought thousands of people to Boardman. Hotels, restaurants and other local businesses all were able to benefit from one business making use of its geographic advantage.

We could see the same success with pot in Ohio if we push away ResponsibleOhio's plan and wait for a real legalization plan to come along that supports local businesses and individual growers.

We won't have to wait long. The Responsible Ohioans for Cannabis are currently working on an initiative that is much closer to what Colorado uses. As such, there would be far stronger opposition to the initiative, but it's better not to cut corners when it comes to laws. It's better to fail three times passing a good bill and triumph on the fourth then pass a bad bill quickly that doesn't really serve the public.

Don't reinforce the stereotype that people who smoke pot are idiots. Be smart, wait for a real solution to Ohio's legalization issue.

Reining in the Coal Industry's Assault on Public Health

Lisa Garcia
Los Angeles Times
(TNS)

1 in 5 premature deaths are attributable to air pollution. Can EPA rules help?

On Wednesday the U.S. Supreme Court will hear arguments in a crucial case about regulating mercury and other toxic air pollution coming from coal-fired power plants. At stake is a very dangerous precedent that industry profits are more important than thousands of lives.

In late 2011, the Environmental Protection Agency issued its first-ever Mercury and Air Toxics Standards, or MATS, to reduce the pollution emitted by power plants. Simply by requiring the worst-polluting plants to match the performance and technology of their more responsible competitors, these standards will prevent between 4,200 and 11,000 premature deaths per year.

These public health protections already were years overdue because the coal industry and its allies tried to derail them from the beginning. In the current court case, the petitioners — two industry trade groups and 21 states — claim that the EPA can't set limits on toxic air pollution without first considering the financial impact that will have on the industry. Last year, the D.C. Circuit Court rejected this argument. Industry — in a last-ditch attempt to overturn these protections — appealed, and the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear this case.

Air pollution is lethal. The EPA calculated that 1 in 20 deaths in the U.S. each year is related to air pollution, mostly excess instances of heart attack, stroke, lung cancer and cardiopul-

monary disease.

Coal-fired power plants are by far the largest industrial source of toxic air pollution, responsible for 50 percent of all U.S. emissions of mercury, a potent neurotoxin particularly dangerous to children. Scientific studies have found that nearly 7 percent of all U.S. women of child-bearing age are exposed to mercury at levels that can be harmful for fetal brain development.

Many of those whose health is at risk are low-income and people of color. "Coal Blooded: Putting Profits Before People," a report by the NAACP, found that the 6 million people living near power plants in America have a per capita income 15 percent lower than the U.S. average income, and 39 percent are people of color.

The EPA's emissions standard for power plants represented a huge step forward in protecting all of us from this assault on public health.

With this lawsuit, the coal industry is trying to revive an old, dysfunctional approach to environmental protection that Congress scrapped more than 20 years ago. Before the Clean Air Act was amended in 1990, the EPA was paralyzed for decades by wrangling over which toxins should be regulated and whether controlling them was worth the expense. That system worked well for industry, but failed the American public.

In 1990, Congress decided that the EPA could consider the costs when determining how stringent its standards should be. But such estimates should not prevent the agency from controlling hazardous air pollutants at all. Nonetheless, coal industry lawyers are now claiming that before the EPA can require power plants to cut their toxic pollution, the agency must weigh the costs of compliance against the benefits.

Chris Herren to Speak About Drug-Free Life

DAN HINER

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Youngstown State University will host Chris Herren, a drug and alcohol sobriety advocate on March 30 at the Beeghly Center.

Herren played in the National Basketball Association between 1999-2001. Herren began his career with the Boston Celtics before ending his NBA career with the Denver Nuggets. After his career in the NBA, Herren played six seasons in Europe, Iran, Turkey and China.

In 2008 Herren suffered a heroin overdose. That year reports surfaced of Herren's drug and alcohol abuse — which eventually led to the end of his professional basketball career.

Herren turned to his family and friends for help and support during his treatment. He still attends meetings and groups to discuss his addiction in an attempt to stay drug free.

The Herren Project website indicates "friends stepped in and, with modest financial support and a strong hand, helped Chris through an extended treatment program and a return to sober living. Drug-free and alcohol-free since Aug. 1, 2008, Chris has refocused his life to put his sobriety and family above all else. He attends meetings to support his substance-free lifestyle and often speaks before groups trying to overcome addiction to share his experiences and road to sobriety."

After word of Herren's substance abuse and eventual sobriety became public, ESPN filmed a documentary on his story. The film "Unguarded" is considered one of the most impactful stories ESPN has run. Herren experienced first-hand the effect the film had on the nation, having received thousands of letters and calls from people reaching out for help.

In 2009, Herren began the

Hoop Dream program, a program that specializes in training young basketball players 16 and older. During their training, Herren teaches them basketball fundamentals and shares with them his story about the road to recovery.

After "Unguarded" aired in 2011, Herren realized the support system he needed to overcome his demons, was more-or-less, lacking for the millions of people seeking sobriety.

Herren's biggest contribution would come in 2011 with the creation of the Herren Project — a non-profit organization that provides education, mentoring and treatment navigation for those who seek help for substance abuse.

This organization seeks "to provide assistance in taking the first steps toward recovery and a life of sobriety, educational programs and resources to increase awareness on the signs of addiction and bring hope for a better tomorrow."

The Health and Wellness Center has collaborated with multiple departments at YSU and the Youngstown community to help bring Herren back to speak; Herren spoke at YSU once before in 2013. RJ Markowitz, an intern at the Health and Wellness Center, said the expenses to bring Herren to the event were lessened after a donation from the Mahoning Valley Hospital Foundation.

"We had a nice donation from the Mahoning Valley Hospital Foundation and they were big proponents of getting him back in," Markowitz said. "They said 'here we're going to give you the money to have Chris in here. Could you make it work?' That was initially how it started the partnership between athletics, student activities, campus rec and the hospital foundation all partnered together to get Chris in here."

The Health and Wellness Center has made attempts to make the community aware of Herren's arrival on campus. Anna Pompeo, a graduate as-

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PHOTO COURTESY OF YSU HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTER.

Chris Herren, former professional basketball player, is a recovering drug addict. Since becoming sober, Herren has created organizations such as Hoop Dreams, The Herren Project and Project Purple to give back to the community and raise awareness about drug abuse.

sistant at the Health and Wellness Center, said the speech Herren gave last time he came to YSU was insightful, but most of the audience was composed of athletes and members of the athletic department.

"He came to YSU to speak and athletes were required to attend," Pompeo said. "It was a Sunday night. It was two years ago in January and it was phenomenal, but it was secluded to YSU. It was open to the public, but I don't think people knew about it. This time we're trying to reach out to as many different areas as we can. From

principals, athletic directors and local high schools, too."

Markowitz explained the setup of the event.

"He has a little video that he'll start off with — it kind of introduces him and tells his story. So the audience can expect to see the video, which is a part of the Herren Project. The audience will see the video first then he'll go into his story followed by a brief Q and A afterwards," Markowitz said.

It's common for members of the audience to approach Herren and discuss their own personal battles with sub-

stance abuse. Markowitz said YSU is prepared to help anyone who is willing to seek help after listening to Herren.

"We actually had to give Chris our contact to Anne Lally, who's our counselor on campus," Markowitz said. "So we gave him her information and the information to the YSU police department. If somebody were so moved by this they reach out to Chris after the event or in the Q and A session, we're going to have support right here on campus and Chris has contact information to give those people support on campus."

Penguin Bats Stagnant Against Pitt



Anthony Konders came in relief in the sixth inning. The combination of Konders, Joe King and Josh Fitch held Pittsburgh to two hits during the final four innings of the Penguins' 8-4 loss.

JEFF BROWN

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It wasn't an ideal Wednesday afternoon at Eastwood Field for the Youngstown State University baseball team in their game against the University of Pittsburgh. The Penguins fell behind early and were never able to fully recuperate, falling to Pittsburgh 8-4. YSU drops to 5-13 on the season.

Junior pitcher D.J. Carr made his fourth start of the

season for the Penguins, but struggled early allowing six runs in the first two innings. Carr's record dropped to 0-3 on the year.

"It made it a big hole to overcome and dig ourselves out of. It's tough to crawl back into when you're down by that much," head coach Steve Gillispie said. "Credit to our guys. For the three years I've been here they've played hard day in and day out."

Carr was pulled at the start of the third inning in favor of the lefty Austin Lujano. He

came in to stop the bleeding, only allowing two runs on two hits, before being pulled for relief pitcher Anthony Konders at the start of the fifth inning.

From here a pitching combination of Konders, Joe King and Josh Fitch held the Panthers scoreless for the final five innings of play.

"It was a good job by our bullpen to start throwing up some zeros and hold them where they were and give our bats a chance to chip away," Gillispie said.

Unfortunately for the Penguins, they struggled to get much going offensively. YSU remained hitless until the fourth inning when designated hitter Jake Fryman hit a two-run home run to bring the Penguins within six runs (8-2). Fryman added a double in the sixth inning, and was brought in by third baseman Josh Fitch to diminish the Panthers lead to 8-4. Fryman finished the day 2-3 with two RBI's.

"I knew he was gonna try and throw a lot of strikes after

going up 6-0. I was just trying to sit on. I knew a good pitch was coming," Fryman said.

Coach Gillispie said he is really impressed with the way Fryman has matured since one season ago.

"[Fryman] can be streaky at times, and he's on one of those streaks, but he really has matured as a hitter," Gillispie said. "He took what they gave him and shot a double down the line and that's what we hope out of him — that there's some maturity and can be an example for some of these young guys."

The Penguins as a whole only managed seven hits on the afternoon and were ineffective for the first part of the game, failing to register a hit until the fourth inning.

"As the game went on, we saw more pitches and they kind of weren't scoring as much. We put better bats together as a team," Fryman said.

Next up for the Penguins is a home series against Horizon League Conference foe, the University of Illinois at Chicago. Games are scheduled for Friday at 5:30, Saturday at 2:30 and Sunday at noon.

Fryman said the game against Pittsburgh, although it was a loss, will help the Penguins prepare for the Horizon League play.

"They're a good ACC [Atlantic Coast Conference] team. I think it gives us a lot of confidence going into the league," Fryman said.