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WRITING HISTORY AT YSU



Photo by Sydney A. Stalnecker/TheJambar

Lisa Garofali (left) and Cassie Nespor collect campus reports on the pandemic for the COVID-19 YSU Experience Repository.

Library collects coronavirus stories

By **SYDNEY A. STALNECKER**
Jambar contributor

William F. Maag Jr. Library's Archives and Special Collections began the COVID-19 Youngstown State University Experience Repository in April 2020. The repository allows for students and

employees to contribute written accounts of their personal experience with the pandemic.

Cassie Nespor, curator of the Maag Library Archives, is conducting the collection for the repository. The materials submitted and collected are kept digitally and will be made available for future

researchers to get a well-rounded understanding of the pandemic's impact on campus.

"A repository is a safe place where you keep things," Nespor said. "In our work it is a synonym for the archives."

History, Page 2

COVID-19 update

14 new cases are reported at YSU

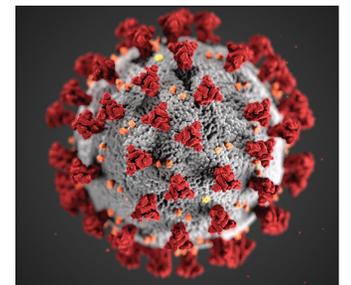


Photo courtesy of Pexels.com

By **ABIGAIL CLOUTIER**
The Jambar

Youngstown State University reported 14 new COVID-19 cases on its dashboard this Monday. The count included 12 students living off campus and two students living on campus. The university tested 98 people in its voluntary surveillance testing program. Four of those people tested positive.

Last week, over the two university wellness days, YSU reported seven cases, including one student living on campus and six living off campus. The university has not reported any staff or faculty cases. The university tested 53 people in its voluntary surveillance program, and none tested positive.

On March 16, Ohio Gov. DeWine announced all Ohioans over the age of 16 would be eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine beginning March 29. The Office of Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety sent out a survey to the student body March 11, asking if students would use an on-campus vaccination clinic.

For further updates, check YSU's COVID-19 dashboard.

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History

Page 1

She divided the repository into two sections: the university's response to keep the public informed and the personal experiences of students and employees.

Lisa Garofali, an assistant archivist at Maag, has helped Nespors collect materials since the beginning.

"It started in the spring when everyone was sent home," Garofali said. "At the time, we all knew this was something unusual, and it was an event that was significantly affecting people and their lives."

In April 2020, they began collecting YSU's response to the pandemic through websites, emails, documents and posts from social media.

"I save the dashboard every week in a PDF. I save the COVID website that we have. I saved information from the Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety Department," Nespors said.

YSU President Jim Tressel makes an appearance in the repository as well. Nespors saved the videos he posted on social media platforms and videos of him at town hall meetings.

The only physical materials Nespors collected are the care packages given out by the university upon the students' return to campus. These included face masks and hand sanitizer.

Nespors realized collecting the weekly campus reports, Tressel's social media posts and the care packages was not capturing the entirety of the pandemic's effect on campus. It left out the personal experience of students and employees.

"As the summer wore on, I thought it would really be nice to be able to collect how people are responding to that," Nespors said. "How they feel, how they shifted classes, what kinds of problems that created for teachers and for the stu-

"As the summer wore on, I thought it would really be nice to be able to collect how people are responding to that. How they feel, how they shifted classes, what kinds of problems that created for teachers and for the students."

— **Cassie Nespors**, curator of the Maag Library Archives

dents."

She began asking students, faculty and staff to write personalized, first-person accounts related to their COVID-19 experience and submit them using the form located on the homepage of Maag's website. This is an ongoing collection and Nespors is still looking for submissions.

"There should be a web link for a form that you fill out, and you type your COVID story," Garofali said. "If you have any other type of media you would like to send us, whether it be music or a video, you could email the archives."

The document on the website provides suggestions for possible story ideas. Students can write about the shift to remote learning in the spring or studying and working from home. Any student who worked at an off-campus job — particularly in the service industry — is welcome to share their experience. The repository is also interested in collecting how students stayed in touch with friends and family during this time.

A photo or video is not required, and there's no word limit for the stories submitted directly to the library archives.

Nespors reached out to Shelley Blundell, who is an assistant professor of journalism and communications and the adviser for YO Magazine, a bi-annual publication. Together, they had the idea to publicize the collection and create another outlet for student submissions.

As the magazine adviser, Blundell proposed the idea to Zach Mosca, the edi-

tor-in-chief of the magazine. He agreed to dedicate the spring 2021 edition of YO Magazine to "COVID Voices."

"Every story in the magazine is going to be about somebody's experience with COVID-19 or how COVID-19 has affected campus, has affected the local Youngstown area, etc.," Mosca said.

Mosca suggests writing about someone who had COVID-19, the university's response to COVID-19 or interviewing a frontline healthcare worker in Youngstown about their experience.

Stories for the magazine must be between 750-1,000 words and include at least one photo and video. Stories that include an interview or are about a specific person should include a headshot of the person featured. Any story submitted to the magazine should be written in third person.

The special edition of the magazine will highlight the COVID-19 YSU Experience Repository, but it will not be included in the repository. The archives already have a different collection for all editions of YO Magazine.

Students, faculty and staff can submit their stories to the COVID-19 YSU Experience Repository through the form available at maag.yzu.edu.

For students interested in writing a story for the YO Magazine, contact editor-in-chief Zach Mosca at zmosca@student.yzu.edu or Jake Brandenstein, assistant editor, at jbrandenstein@student.yzu.edu



Check out JTV

JambarTV

One year after the pandemic hit campus

Q&A with President Tressel

One year ago, Youngstown State University students went on spring break and didn't return to campus following the explosion of the COVID-19 pandemic. I sat down with YSU President Tressel to discuss the past and what he's looking forward to a year from now.

Q. In the last year, what's the most important thing you've learned?

A. The most important thing would be that you better be ready for everything. Then the second thing, maybe, that's been a neat outcome, is we've had a lot of people working together in unusual circumstances on different things and I think we've become closer. We've been working on things with other parts of campus, we've been working more intimately with the Academic Continuity Team, the Institute for Teaching and Learning, the Environmental, Occupational Health and Safety Department. I think in my first six years here, I had zero interaction with the [EOHS] group. For the last year, it's been daily. It's been a rewarding thing. Our students have been amazing. Our faculty has got the hard job of trying to figure out, 'How do I bring my passion, my knowledge,

"This will be one that we'll all remember, no matter how old we get, we'll know where we were in 2020."

— Jim Tressel, Youngstown State University president



Youngstown State University President Jim Tressel sits down in the studio.

Photo courtesy of Jambar TV

experiences, interaction in this environment?' They've been working like crazy. This will be one that we'll all remember, no matter how old we get, we'll know where we were in 2020.

Q. What's an accomplishment of the university or student body in the past year you're proud of?

A. I think the patience that I've seen displayed, because we've all been tense, we've all been disappointed, we've all been disrupted. But ultimately, we've all grown in our patience — we're going to get through this. We can't wait till it's more back to normal, which — knock on wood — I think will be the fall.

Q. What do you hope next March looks like?

A. I hope a year from now, we're still able to reach back and take from these lessons we've learned, but also be counting our blessings that we're back a lot more how we would like it to be, and that we never forget how fortunate we've been to have the lifestyle and the interaction and fun together. When you can't be together, you're really losing a lot of the fun — we're human, we want interactions. That's the most fun of anything, and so I hope a year from now that we're enjoying that, we're having fun, but we're also counting our blessings that we learned a lot of good lessons and if there's ever another pandemic 100 years from now, we'll be ready.

Be aware of scams in your inbox

By C. Aileen Blaine
The Jambar

Rise in fraudulent emails since pandemic began

Scrolling through the endless messages in the inbox of a Youngstown State University email account is sometimes overwhelming. When a message promising a high wage for short weekly hours appears, it can be all too tempting to accept the offer. But at what cost?

In an email, director of IT Infrastructure Services Ryan Geilhard said it's important for the YSU community to be aware of potential scams.

"[It's good to] help students become aware of risks and dangers, as well as what to do if one is notified as affected," Geilhard said.

Robert Ferguson, data security analyst, said YSU has a layered email protection system that monitors inbound and outbound messages for threats such as known scams or viruses. Of the monthly 9 million monthly messages the servers see, approximately 4.4 million are discarded because they originate from known threat sources, contain viruses or are tagged as spam.

Some common scams that may reach a student, faculty or staff member's inbox include:

- False employment opportunity scams (i.e. dog

walker or personal assistant positions with few hours for a high wage)

- False business opportunity scams (i.e. "get rich quick" schemes through investments in a false company or product)
- Extortion scams (i.e. a false witness claiming to need payment in order to remain silent)

When it comes to checking the validity of an email and its source, Ferguson suggests users should ensure the email address and the sender's signature align with the organization's information. However, there are rare occasions in which sender addresses can be faked or hacked from reputable establishments. In these instances, recipients should be on the lookout for misspelled words or plain and unprofessional formatting. Other indicators include outdated company logos, names or colors. Ferguson also said scammers may use a sense of urgency, such as password change requests or fees due, with the risk of an ultimatum to scare recipients into responding with potentially personal information.

"Most legitimate businesses will notify users well in advance of any deadline to update account information or make changes to a service," Ferguson said.

If a YSU community member suspects a scam email in their inbox, they can forward it to security@ysu.edu or report it to the IT Service Desk via phone or email.

Ferguson acknowledged since the start of the pandemic, there has been a significant rise in the number of scams circulating, as scammers attempt to take advantage of those who may be unemployed and desperate. At YSU, employment opportunity scams have more than doubled since 2019.

"IT Services has noticed a considerable uptick in attempts by 'bad actors' to take advantage of people, using various unemployment scams," an email sent by James Yukech, chief information officer, said. "Some are very sophisticated and make it into your email inbox."

"Use caution when responding to job offers or messages that have a financial element to them," Ferguson said. "If it is too good to be true, it probably is."

Back to the basics of recycling at YSU

By Jessica Stamp
The Jambar

Over the years, Youngstown State University's recycling program accumulated numerous achievements. But since there's less money to be made in recycling, the program is changing in recent years.

It originally started in 1999 and receives annual grant funding from the Mahoning County Solid Waste District Green Team. One of its earliest achievements was collecting items from the residence halls during move-out days to donate to charities.

Dan Kuzma, manager of the Recycling Program, said early on, the program was different in the way it obtained funding and organized its operation.

"We're kind of a unique program because we got funding directly from the Solid Waste District and that's not necessarily something you see anywhere else,

especially in Ohio," Kuzma said. "With our aggressive campaign that we had been doing things a little bit different that set us apart."

Other universities, hospitals and prisons have used YSU's recycling program as a model for their own recycling programs.

"We were the go-to because we were the first to do it, and in such a large scale, even though it was just an experiment at the time," Kuzma said.

A couple of years ago, the recycling program started going back to an "old-school recycling program." Some material is not recyclable due to the money generated. Kuzma said everything has the potential to be recycled but "there's not enough availability in recycling programs due to the volume that's needed to recycle those materials."

Lately, one way YSU's recycling program receives funding is through tipping fees — when people drop off their material waste in landfills.

"Mahoning County is unique because we get a tipping fee from the landfills and that's what basically pays for the program," Kuzma said. "The amount of money that funds the programs ... that's all going to dictate what can and can't be recycled."

David Ewing, associate director of both the grounds department and the motor portal department, oversees almost everything outdoors on campus. He helps the recycling program by disposing of the cardboard on campus, which used to be recycled at no cost for the university.

"There's no money in cardboard anymore. We used to have it done for free. Now, we got to pay to have the cardboard taken away," Ewing said.

One of the downsides of recycling is the possibility of contamination in the recycling bins. With many of the bins being located next to a trash bin, some of the trash ends up in the wrong bin.

"Sometimes, we do have to throw away

stuff because of contamination," Kuzma said.

Across campus, there are 400-500 recycling bins. The bins are in select locations with heavy foot traffic from students, staff and faculty. Kuzma observes the locations and if needed, adjusts the bins.

Tim Styranec, associate director environmental occupational health and safety, collaborated with Kuzma to get grant funding.

Styranec oversees the chemical management center and handles hazardous waste, harmful material and universal waste. He patrols campus and collects fluorescent light bulbs, batteries, used oil and old electronics to ensure it is being recycled or disposed of properly.

"We just make sure we're doing everything that's environmentally sound and make sure we're not putting things into the landfill that shouldn't be there," Styranec said.

Bright lights and determination

YSU student suffers stroke at 19

By **MISTY KING**
Jambar contributor

Young and seemingly healthy, 19-year-old sophomore Mikayla Smith is studying at Youngstown State University in the BaccMed program with aspirations to become a doctor.

Smith suffered a stroke while enjoying what she thought was a normal day. She described how her day turned from normal to life-changing.

She went from hanging out with friends and being herself to facing a life-altering event.

“On June 10, I came home and I had this really bad headache, and I told my friends on FaceTime that it felt like I had a brain bleed,” Smith said.

Her word choice to describe her excruciating headache turned out to be an accurate description of what was actually happening.

Once she began slurring her words, her mother took her to the hospital, where she began convulsing, and was rushed into emergency surgery to stop her brain from bleeding out.

Smith’s stroke took place during the height of the coronavirus pandemic, and a problem many patients faced was not being able to have their loved ones with them through their suffering, an issue Smith fortunately was able to avoid.

“I did have a very good support system. My parents were allowed to stay in

“On June 10, I came home and I had this really bad headache, and I told my friends on FaceTime that it felt like I had a brain bleed.”

— **Mikayla Smith**, 19, Youngstown State University BaccMed sophomore

the hospital with me,” she said, calling herself lucky.

As the doctors scrambled to save her life, they faced one problem after another.

A head injury, especially a brain bleed, is a ticking bomb, a race against time. The doctors realized her brain was still swelling at a greater rate than normal during surgery.

They took a large portion of her skull out on the side of her head, which helped. Throughout the course of this surgery, Smith’s brain bled out 500 milliliters, or half a liter.

“I was in a coma for 10 days. I had five brain surgeries. I was in the hospital for 98 consecutive days,” Smith said.

After keeping Smith on close observation, the doctors realized the first surgery was not enough, and they had to perform another while she was still in a coma.

“I was in a coma for 10 days. I had five brain surgeries. I was in the hospital for 98 consecutive days ... I lost my ability to speak, see, use the left side of my body. And they shaved my head, but that’s the least of my problems.”

— **Mikayla Smith**, 19, Youngstown State University BaccMed sophomore



Photo courtesy of Smith family

Mikayla Smith after her first surgery, still in her coma. Last month, as of Feb. 24, she said she no longer uses her leg brace to walk, and the paralysis of her left arm is gone.

In this procedure, the doctors inserted a tube into her head to drain blood and ventricular fluids, and to help her brain regulate the spinal fluid that was leaking into her head.

Due to her brain not working properly at this time, it also was not regulating her body temperature properly. She had a fever of 104 degrees, one of the simpler complications.

“I lost my ability to speak, see, use the left side of my body. And they shaved my head, but that’s the least of my problems,” she said.

Unfortunately, the rupture of her AVM was not caught in time, as Smith

faced one issue after another, along with lasting physical deficits.

Smith stated she was enrolled in intensive therapy for five days a week for three months in the hopes of regaining the strength and ability to use her left arm and leg.

Eventually, her hard work and determination finally paid off. As of Feb. 24, Smith said she no longer uses her leg brace to walk and the paralysis of her left arm is gone.

Though still not fully recovered, she is able to use the left side of her body once again. Smith is hopeful about her future as well.

'Now You See Us'

YSU's dance department to host its first virtual recital

By Zach Mosca
The Jambar

After a long absence due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Youngstown State University's Department of Theatre and Dance is hosting its very first virtual recital titled "Now You See Us."

"Now You See Us" will consist of multiple different pieces, each choreographed and shot by one of three choreographers. Senior dance management major and dance ensemble president Erica Hays is involved in two pieces: one modern and one tap.

"[Each choreographer] did a few numbers. Primarily modern, but we also have a few tap and jazz pieces which is very, very interesting. They all have their own concepts and different dancers and different styled things they touch on," Hays said.

One piece choreographed by adjunct faculty member Abbey Alter is a reconstruction of a piece from dancer Isadora Duncan titled "Mother." This piece focuses on the theme of loss.

"[Duncan] choreographed this solo in 1921 and she choreographed it after the death of her two children," Alter said.

Alter was originally not going to include this piece in the recital. However, after seeing how well her students performed the piece when she taught it in her choreography class, she decided to include it.

"For me, it proves what becomes artistic. If it is a worthy artistic piece, it can relate and speak to people over the years. What you have in this piece is a piece that is over 100 years old that a group of



The "Now You See Us" recital will consist of multiple different pieces, each choreographed and shot by one of three choreographers.

Photo courtesy of Cliffe College of Creative Arts

modern students can relate to with such intensity that they did this beautiful piece of work," Alter said.

According to dance professor and recital director Amy Wright, the department was able to try many new techniques with this event due to it being pre-recorded and edited rather than performed live in front of an audience.

"In many of the dances, we took advantage of the opportunity to show the choreography in ways that you can't do in a live concert, and in a couple of the dances, we actually took the cast out to interesting sites around campus and the Youngstown area," Wright said.

When it comes to shooting pieces on

video versus performing live in front of an audience, Hays said the two methods are very different from one another.

"When we perform for an audience, if we do it over three nights, you do all of the pieces that you're in once and that's just it," Hays said. "But as you go into the filming process, they're like, 'Hey, we saw you mess up on this part. Let's refilm it and do it from a different angle.'"

In addition, the lack of an audience eliminates immediate feedback for the performers. Hays said that without the presence of that feedback, a sense of energy in the room is lost.

"You have to put on more of a performance when it's on film because you

don't feel that energy, that push-and-pull between everyone in the room," Hays said.

However, Wright explained how the dancers were able to rekindle the energy in an empty room.

"It turns into a bit of a trade-off because while the experience of performing is different, we got to turn it into an opportunity to try things in a lot of different ways and discover together as choreographers, dancers, videographers and editors the best version of the work," Wright said.

The recital will be shown at 7:30 p.m. from Thursday, March 25 to Saturday, March 27. Tickets are free for YSU students.

WEEK OF EVENTS



Photo by Miles Garrett/The Jambar 2018

Youngstown State University students can carry on the homecoming tradition once again.

YSU adapts homecoming celebration

By **SAMANTHA SMITH**
The Jambar

Youngstown State University's homecoming game is Saturday, and to celebrate, the university planned events for students leading up to the day of the game. The events include a drive-in movie, "Not Your Granny's Bingo" and a Build-a-Penguin Lottery.

The drive-in will be featuring the movie "Monsters University" at 7 p.m. in the M82 parking lot Thursday. Students must reserve a spot online beforehand through Student Activities' website to attend. Face masks are required and vehicles are limited to four passengers.

The Build-a-Penguin Lottery will begin Friday at 10 a.m. and end at 3:30 p.m. A limited number of students who entered to participate in the event were chosen to build a stuffed penguin.

"Not Your Granny's" virtual bingo night will be hosted via Zoom from 8-10:30 p.m. Friday. To participate in bingo, students must register before the event through Student Activities' website. Prizes for the winners include a Chefman Instant Coffee Maker, Nutra Ninja, 50" TCL Android TV and more.

Saturday, the homecoming football game will be at the Stambaugh Stadium starting at 12 p.m. To pick up a ticket, students can go to the stadium's ticket office from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Tickets will not be distributed Friday or Saturday. They will also be providing free YSU T-shirts to the first 100 students attending the game.

Along with these events, there was a window painting contest for the student organizations in place of the traditional parade that goes on. Carolyn Jesko, assistant director of programming, explained the contest.

"We had student organizations paint windows in Kilcawley Center, so that's kind of been a replacement for the homecoming parade," she said. "We wanted to still offer a way for student organizations to get involved. They were able to sign up to paint a window."

The judging on the student organizations' window paintings was Wednesday. There are first, second and third place prizes for the winners, along with three honorable mentions.

Jesko explained why these events may be important for students at YSU, especially during the pandemic.

"Some students value that in-person connection, and it helps them create a better sense of belonging on campus," Jesko said. "We've also offered virtual programs too, for a way students can get involved if they don't feel comfortable coming to anything in person."

For more information on all Homecoming events, go to Student Activities' website.



Small But Mighty

Bliss Hall hosts a new exhibition

By Douglas M. Campbell
The Jambar

In Bliss Hall, behind the glass walls of the Judith Rae Solomon Gallery, 16 paintings with vibrant colors and pieces of the artists' perspectives greet visitors who enter the premises.

Dragana Crnjak, an art professor, organized the exhibition. Since March 1, the artwork of 10 students currently enrolled in either intermediate and advanced painting classes has been on display.

"It is based on the idea of recognizing and giving credit toward featuring and sharing works that usually are not shared. These are works in the exhibition featuring preparatory paintings and these are small studies by students who are first testing the materials, surfaces and ideas that might work and might not work," Crnjak said.

The work in the exhibition reflects the students' explorations of color, surface, composition and the synthesis between the formal and conceptual aspects of painting.

According to Crnjak, the term "small but mighty" refers to an invisible and unassuming work that is an essential foundation of future works. The students' works will be painted on a larger scale later in the semester.

Crnjak met with every student involved in the exhibition to discuss their progress in creating their works.

"Every student is different — they have different sensibilities so there is more of a mentoring. I would say most of my colleagues in art are mentorists. Really working with a student centered approach where you have to understand and listen and there is a lot of give and take in the progress," Crnjak said.

Patrick Savage, a senior fine arts major, is 70 years old and attended YSU for the past 10 years part-time. He describes his work in the exhibition as eclectic, following no particular style.

"The concept that I began the semes-

ter with was the idea of two separate realities being able to exist at the same time in the same place," Savage said.

The goal of his work this semester is to cause people to view different interpretations of his painting.

"In my lifetime, there are a lot of circumstances where people can actually be looking at the same exact image or information and somehow or another come up with a completely opposite interpretation, Savage said, so I'm trying to exaggerate that tendency with the paintings I'm doing this semester."

Rachel Hritz, a junior fine arts major, has two paintings on display at the exhibition. She normally works on larger paintings and had to adjust to painting on a smaller scale. Her work focuses on the loss of innocence using a misfit toy from "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" and Eeyore from "Winnie the Pooh."

"My pieces that are up there tend to deal with intimacy with the two that are being shown, with just the composition of one of them are cropped in and zoomed in. You are extremely close to the subject. The other one is not as close, but is painted on the smaller surface that allows the intimacy between the viewer and the piece itself," Hritz said.

Hritz said the intimacy between the viewer and painting occurs because the size of the painting forces the viewer to get close to the painting, interact with it and form a bond.

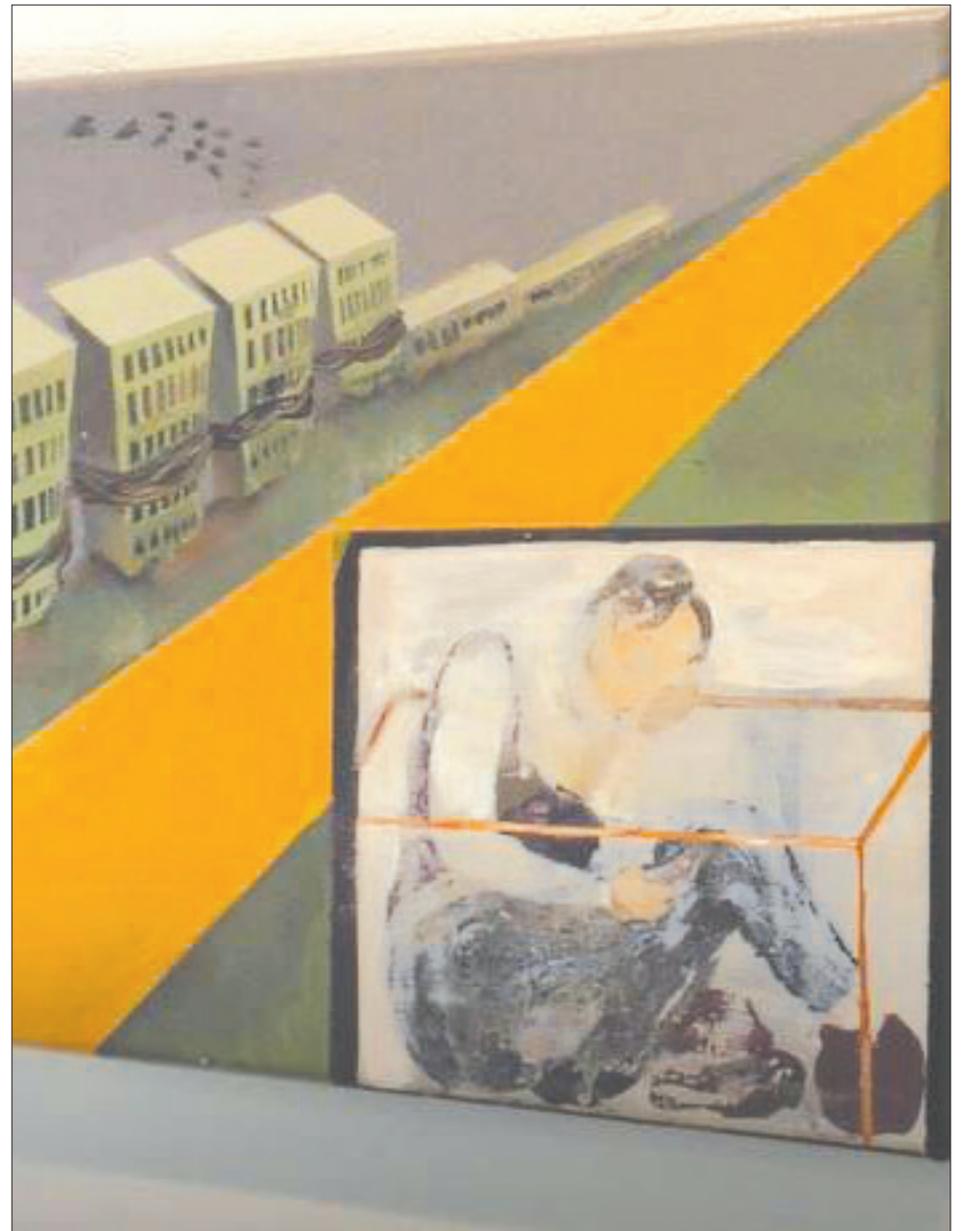
Crnjak reflects on the students' work on display in the Judith Rae Solomon Gallery.

"I really never know what to expect with the work until it's up on the wall. I really enjoyed seeing it all together on the wall. The relationships and this work really reflects students' sensibilities, Crnjak said, how they like to paint and, I don't want to say concerns, but things that matter to them."

The Small But Mighty exhibition will be on display in Bliss Hall until March 26.

Photos by Douglas M. Campbell/The Jambar

The Small But Mighty exhibition will be on display in Bliss Hall until March 26.



Photos by Douglas M. Campbell/The Jambar

The work in the exhibition reflects the students' explorations of color, surface, composition and the synthesis between the formal and conceptual aspects of painting.

What it's like to be a YSU cheerleader

By Kelcey Norris
The Jambar

Meet senior Brittany Revlock: one of the smiling faces you'll see at the Homecoming game this weekend at Stambaugh Stadium.

Revlock became a Youngstown State University cheerleader four years ago. She's majoring in early childhood education with a focus in math and science.

Since she became an athlete at a young age, cheer has been her passion. When she was a freshman, she decided the sport was something she wanted to continue while pursuing her degree.

"I grew up doing cheerleading my whole life, and I wanted to be a part of something at college, so I decided to try out," Revlock said. "When I made the team, I instantly absolutely loved it. Football games are my favorite."

She described how different her senior cheer season has been due to the coronavirus pandemic and postponement of the regular fall football season.

"It's a little different this year, but it's still fun and really exciting to go to the games, see everyone excited and hype everyone up. I love the excitement of it," she said. "One of my favorite parts was the tailgating."

From the stands, but not the field, at Stambaugh Stadium, the cheerleaders at football games are able to hype up the Penguin Nation, notably without masks.

The smiles of the YSU cheer squad are a welcoming sight for sore eyes for Stambaugh visitors, who have all weathered a year of the pandemic.

"For basketball season, we had to [wear masks], but for football, since it's outside and we're so far apart, we don't have to," Revlock said.

The cheer team had to adjust to COVID-19 safety protocols and social distancing, Revlock said, by postponing their stunting. They weren't able to practice any routines, performances or stunts that involved close contact.

"Practices this summer, we couldn't do anything like stunting. Basically, we couldn't touch each other, be around each other. That was a huge adjustment," she said. "When we were able to finally start stunting again, there were many injuries ... because some of us had not done anything in so long during the quarantine and probably weren't in the best shape."

But they're building off each other and learning during the months of preparation for spring football.

"The first game was a huge adjustment because we just had to stay in the bleachers. But we did our best, tried to keep up and tried to be pretty loud," Revlock said. "We practice all summer together, twice a week ... constantly preparing for our season."

She said the relationship between the cheerleaders "feels like a little family." The Spirit Squad is coached by Michelle Markota and Jenna Schneider.

"We're always there for each other," Revlock said. "We try to stay close and our coaches care so much about us. If anyone ever has an injury, or is sick or anything, they make sure to check up on us."

Catch Revlock and the cheerleaders at YSU's Homecoming game this weekend! Kickoff is 12:00 p.m. Saturday at Stambaugh Stadium.



@RobertHayesPix/©RobertHayes

Photo courtesy of Brittany Revlock

Brittany Revlock, a senior middle childhood education major, is also a YSU cheerleader.

Harmonies during hard times

By Kaitlyn Kelley
The Jambar

COVID-19 forced businesses and schools to shut their doors, separated people from their friends and turned the world upside down. But amid all these events, some Youngstown State University students made the best of the newfound free time.

While some people find solace in listening to music, several students find themselves occupied by making it.

Lari Spahr, a junior creative writing and film double major, took the negative aspects of the pandemic and turned them into a positive experience for herself.

“I write and record my own tracks and vocals,” she said. “Sometimes, I buy the rights to beats already made by a producer because I’m only mediocre on instruments, and sometimes I cover other artists’ songs.”

With the help of more free time and the increased usage of social media, Spahr used this as an opportunity to work harder and share her voice more.

“I tend to write and produce more now than I did before the pandemic,” she said. “Also, social media has become a big part of sharing music. For example, TikTok is providing people with a huge platform that I think might be smaller if COVID didn’t hit.”

TikTok and other social media platforms are now a major part of how student musicians like Spahr share their art with others. Despite the fact in-person gigs are not a possibility right now, they still have the ability to make their projects known.

Jake Clark, a senior marketing management major, started pursuing music in 2017 as a hobby but started taking it seriously in 2019. The events of the pandemic only propelled his passion for music.

“I do all instrumentals and engineering stuff,” he said. “Genre-wise, it’s mostly hip-hop and alternative or an indie-pop vibe.”

Clark, like Spahr, networks and connects with new people through social media.

“So, I sell and lease beats to artists via Instagram DMs or YouTube and get paid in royalties,” he said. “I think without COVID-19, I could’ve DJed more and focused on that. But the positive of it is connecting with people who were going through the same stuff as me ... everyone was just trying to work on their craft, and that really connected us.”

Of course, not all students made strides in their work. Musicians who pursued their passion through musicals at YSU, were not as lucky.

Bella Yaniello, a junior integrated language arts education major, uses musicals as her artistic outlet. When the pandemic shut everything down last March, it took “Shrek the Musical” — and Yaniello’s part in the production — with it.

“Finding out the musical was canceled really sucked,”



Photo courtesy of Gabby Yaniello.

Bella Yaniello, a junior integrated arts education major, uses musicals as her artistic outlet.

she said. “I had put a lot of my time and effort into it, and I was really excited! So, when COVID shut it down, even though I wasn’t surprised, I felt like I had something great just ripped away from me.”

Despite the personal satisfaction Spahr’s musical expression gives her, she also experienced some setbacks due to the shutdowns

“I had auditioned for ‘The Voice’ virtually during this

pandemic, which was a strange experience compared to any in-person auditions I’ve done in the past.” she said. “I think if it were in person, it might have turned out different.”

Where there may be a lack of ability to get gigs, there is a bigger possibility of getting seen on social media. But students still move forward and share their art with others.

The Jambar Editorial

A glimmer of hope for graduation

On Feb. 25, Gov. Mike DeWine announced Ohio will soon lift COVID-19 restrictions on large public gatherings, including banquet halls, wedding receptions, school dances and graduations. We can thank the lift on restrictions in part to the vaccine distribution, especially as all Ohioans over 16 become eligible March 29.

As it stands, Youngstown State University plans to hold an in-person commencement ceremony for spring 2021 graduates May 8 at Stambaugh Stadium. This aligns with what some other Ohio schools plan for, such as University of Akron and Ohio University.

Other universities, such as Kent State University, have yet to make a decision.

Fall commencement 2020 was a bit of a letdown for many graduates. Held virtually, it robbed hardworking students of the chance to walk across the stage and collect their diploma from the hands of administrators. It robbed them of the chance to say one last goodbye to the school they've dedicated years of their lives to. Our graduates will find themselves out in a world ravaged by economic distress, social tensions and disease, but we have reason to believe they'll be all the stronger for it.

So many once-in-a-lifetime events have happened over the course of the last year, making it difficult to remember how things used to be — how we could once think nothing of walking across the stage to collect our diplomas, how we could not spend a second moment considering the size of our graduation party's guest list.

As May 8 approaches, we may find ourselves dawning a new era in our lives — an era where the coronavirus is but a worry only in the backgrounds of our minds, no longer the present-center nimbus cloud fogging our views of the future.

Sports make a comeback after the pandemic

By Ben Luli
The Jambar

The COVID-19 pandemic swept across the nation just over a year ago and canceled many endeavours across all forms of entertainment. The first major sports championships canceled were the men's and women's NCAA basketball tournaments. Admittedly, "March Madness," as it is often referenced to, is my favorite event during the sports calendar and I was very sad when it was called off last year. However, this year the madness resumes with the men's and women's brackets revealed on Sunday and Monday, respectively. Neither Youngstown State University squad made its respective tournaments this year, but during the 1990s the women's team went on a historic run never seen before or since.

According to the YSU women's basketball record book, Hall of Fame head coach Ed DiGregorio led the women's team to three NCAA tournaments in a five-year span. For a program of YSU's size, this was quite a feat. The Penguins' first trip to "The Dance" came in 1996 after winning the Mid-Con Conference

regular season and tournament titles. It was the team's second consecutive conference regular season title, and the first outright title in program history. The Penguins cruised through the Mid-Con tournament by defeating Western Illinois, Troy, and Buffalo, all by double figures, to earn its first trip to the NCAA tournament.

YSU was selected as a 15-seed and were matched up with 2-seed Penn State University in the first round. The team held its own against the Nittany Lions for 25 minutes, trailing by only one point. However, YSU's hopes of pulling the upset faded away after a 19-0 run by Penn State, eventually falling 94-71. YSU ended the season 20-9 overall including a 14-4 mark in the Mid-Con Conference. Junior Liz Hauger was named first-team all-conference and led the Penguins in scoring with 16.4 points per game.

After missing the tournament in 1998, YSU was hungry for a return trip to "The Dance." The Penguins won its fourth consecutive Mid-Con Conference regular season title and stormed through the conference tournament defeating Chicago State, Southern Utah and Valparaiso,

to earn its second automatic bid into the NCAA tournament. After an impressive 27-2 campaign, YSU earned a 12-seed and drew 5-seed Memphis in the first round. The Penguins pulled off the upset, 91-80, for the program's first NCAA tournament victory. YSU did not fare as well against 4-seed North Carolina State in the second round losing 88-61.

The Penguins finished the season with a program-record 28 wins, with a 15-1 mark in the conference and a 16-game winning streak. Four of YSU's five starters earned all-conference accolades, as Mid-Con Player of the Year Shannon Beach and Ann Marie Martin were named to the first team. Martin led the team with 16.3 points per game while Beach averaged 13.8 points and shot better than 40 percent from behind the arc. Beach graduated from the same high school I did, so it's only right I unapologetically plug Waterloo High School in Atwater, Ohio.

The last trip to the NCAA tournament came in 2000, capping off an impressive run by the women's program. YSU's streak of five consecutive Mid-Con regular season championships ended but

they battled back in the conference tournament. YSU defeated Southern Utah and Western Illinois before meeting Valparaiso in the final, winning 73-57 and punching their ticket to the NCAA tournament. Just like in 1996 YSU was selected as a 15-seed and faced Penn State in the first round. The Nittany Lions defeated the Penguins 83-63, but YSU did etch themselves into the record books by draining a record 12 3-pointers in the loss. YSU finished 22-9 for the season, earning its fifth straight 20-win season. Brianne Kenneally was named the Mid-Con Player of the Year and tournament MVP, leading the Penguins with 18.7 points per game. Three-point specialist Leslie Majewski earned second team all-conference honors after sinking 70 triples.

The 1990s were a golden age of women's basketball for the university. During the decade, YSU won 196 games, including six 20-win seasons, five of which came in the second half of the decade. They made three NCAA tournaments and won the Mid-Con Conference regular season title five straight times from 1996 to 2000.

The Jambar Column

Hesitation when it comes to vaccination

Once people with certain disabilities became eligible in Ohio to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, I immediately began trying to book my appointment. While there is some fear and speculation regarding the shot, I had no doubt or hesitation this was right for me. My mother had been part of the first group to be eligible in the state for the vaccine, so I had already seen what she had gone through.

I was excited to be eligible; however, it seemed like no matter where I checked for the first two weeks, no-one had an opening. Not CVS, not Giant Eagle, no one could fit in scheduling both shots. So, I kept checking. On March 2, I called Walgreens and was surprised to hear they had an opening. Then I heard the date: March 3.

Of course it was great I could get it done as soon as possible, but oh dear do I hate needles. Especially ever since I had to undergo treatment my sophomore year for trigger finger, just thinking of needles makes me sweat. Usually I prefer to have more time to mentally prepare myself, but I knew how difficult getting the opening was, so I accepted.

The next day, I arrived at the Walgreens with my father. Ankle length black cardigan and a shirt with a dinosaur saying "Wash your hands," I hoped



Mac Pomeroy

to look the part of a tough person who could totally do this. In reality, I probably looked like a lost 12-year-old who borrowed their mom's Coach fanny pack. I did my best to calm the shaking in my hands as I walked to the pharmacy in the back, taking deep breaths.

When I reached the vaccine check in counter, the woman gave me a glance as if she thought I walked to the wrong desk. Seeing the more mature customer who went before me for his shot, I understood why. She asked for my ID, and seemed surprised I am 21, or maybe because I was old enough to have a legal ID at all. We went through a few quick questions, and she had me sit down and wait.

The sitting was the hard part. I knew the needle was coming any minute now, and while I had my dad to make sure I didn't run, I felt more like I was going to be stabbed with a 6-inch blade. However, I would be damned if I let the older gentleman beside me act as though the injection he just received was nothing

and I was out here being a coward.

When they called my name, I walked up and accepted my fate. The woman who was administering the vaccine was a very lovely person and had an extremely welcoming aura. She immediately laughed with us and joked about the shot before moving to my non-dominant side to give the shot.

As she rolled up my right sleeve and I buried my head into my dad's shoulder, I asked her not to tell me when she did it. And then she rolled my sleeve back down. I glanced up.

"Was ... that it?" I asked.

My dad laughed and said he saw her do it. Fifteen minutes later, we left.

I went back to The Jambar office for the first time in over a year. I missed the team a lot, and I wanted to say hi as a bit of a reward for having done it. There was about 15 more minutes between me getting my vaccination and me arriving at the office. On the way there, I felt absolutely fine. Once I arrived and began talking to our dear Mary Dota, I yawned.

By the time I left, I felt quite tired. I nearly fell asleep in the car, but thankfully my sister was behind the wheel. When I got home, I took a nap.

And ... that was it. I was just tired the next few days. Honestly, I have an en-

ergy problem normally, so I question how much of the fatigue was really the vaccine. But otherwise, I felt absolutely fine.

As of the time I am writing this, 12:43 a.m. on March 15, I don't really have anything else to say. Sadly, unlike the memes I have seen circulating online, I didn't grow any extra limbs or develop some cool super power. I just felt a bit tired the next few days, and it caused me to take some extra naps.

Basically, this is a very long way of saying something I feel like many people need to hear. Please, if you do not have any medical conditions causing you to be unable, consider getting the vaccine. My mother and I both got the Pfizer vaccination, but a few days later my grandfather in Florida received the Moderna one, and he is also well.

I understand how for many, this is a scary thing. It is a new vaccine, and for those in doubt, it was important to see what happened. I am not even saying you absolutely have to go schedule right now, but consider it. For me, while the build up was scary and intense, the aftermath was nothing. Once I got past the first step, it was fine.

Hopefully it takes us toward a better and safer tomorrow.

THE JAMBAR POLICY

Since being founded by Burke Lyden in 1931, The Jambar has won nine Associated Press Collegiate Press honors. The Jambar is published weekly in the spring and fall semesters. The Jambar is free for YSU students and faculty.

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The editorial board consists of the editor-in-chief, managing editor, news editor, arts and entertainment editor and head copy editor. These opinion pieces are written separately from news articles and do not reflect the opinions of any individual staff member. The Jambar's business manager, multimedia journal-

ists and non-writing staff do not contribute to editorials, and the adviser does not have final approval.

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Women's lacrosse makes history

By Rickie Juliano
Jambar contributor

The Youngstown State University's women's lacrosse team debuted their first season in 2021. The lacrosse team played the program's first game March 5 against the University of Akron. The Penguins lost by just one point, falling 12-11.

In lacrosse, players use sticks with loose netting at the heads to catch and throw a rubber ball. Each team has 12 players on the field with a goaltender, five attackers, and six defenders. The goal of the game is to shoot the ball in the opponent's net, and the team with the most points at the end of two 30-minute halves wins the game.

The Penguins joined the Mid-American Conference for lacrosse, making the lacrosse team the only YSU team to be involved with the MAC. The Penguins are scheduled to play 10 games in the program's first season.

Theresa Walton leads the team as the head coach. Walton comes from Virginia Commonwealth University, where she specialized in lacrosse recruiting and the defensive unit. This is Walton's debut in head coaching, but she's not new to programs just starting up.

"I've worked with starter programs since I have started coaching," Walton said. "No one has seen a lacrosse

"I've worked with starter programs since I have started coaching. No one has seen a lacrosse player on this campus, so it is great that our girls get that type of exposure."

— Theresa Walton, head coach

player on this campus, so it is great that our girls get that type of exposure."

The team has a full roster in its first year with 24 total players. The players hail from 12 different states and Ontario, Canada.

"Everybody is working hard for playing time and a starting spot," Walton said. "We're just excited with all 24 players extremely committed to this season."

The team captain for the Penguins is the only senior on the team. Elicia Wells controls the net for the Penguins defense as the goalie. Wells is a two-time transfer from St. Mary's College of Maryland and Randolph-Macon in Ashland, Virginia.

"We have some great coaches. They have so much knowledge and great energy," Wells said. "The coaches

make us excited to be here — excited about YSU and being a Penguin."

The Penguins' first two games of the season were canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I don't feel like we got too set back. I think the biggest thing was missing being with each other," Wells said.

"Any setback is a challenge we will accept," Walton said. "Any loss of game time is really unfortunate, but the team knows we have a game around the corner where their focus is forward."

Penguin fans can watch all five home contests on ESPN3 or ESPN+ all season long. YSU sports broadcasting student Anthony Romo will have the play-by-play commentary for all of the home games.

"I'm blessed to be the first voice of the YSU women's lacrosse team, and I hope this is the beginning of a great journey," Romo said.

YSU's women's lacrosse team is not put at the top of the leaderboards entering the 2021 season. The Penguins were picked to finish last in the MAC preseason coaches poll.

The lacrosse team played against Detroit Mercy on March 13, winning with a final score of 12-7. The team will make its home debut this Friday, March 19, when it hosts Central Michigan University.

To find weekly updates on the women's lacrosse team, visit YSU Sports' website.



Photo courtesy of YSU Sports

The lacrosse team played the program's first game against Akron in early March at the University of Akron.

YSU DEFEATED 19-17



Photo by Yousof Hamza/The Jambar

The Youngstown State University football team was defeated in a nail-biter 19-17 by South Dakota State University.

Penguins fall to South Dakota State

By **JORDAN BOITNOTT**
The Jambar

Last week, the Youngstown State University Penguins traveled up north to face No. 8 South Dakota State. They lost in a nail-biter 19-17. The game came down to the last possession as South Dakota State kicked a game-winning field goal with 31 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter.

The game was a low-scoring affair that saw YSU get down 10-0 early. The Penguins gained some life from a 42-yard touchdown run by junior running back Jaleel McLaughlin. The game was pretty slow from there, with the defenses dominating the game until the third quarter.

South Dakota scored a touchdown in the third quarter off a quarterback sneak from the one-yard line by Mark Gronkowski. They missed the extra point leaving the score at 16-7 in favor of South Dakota.

YSU made a strong comeback in the fourth quarter, scoring 10 straight points to take the lead. Senior defensive back Zaire Jones intercepted Gronkowski and returned the interception to the 20-yard line. This led to another McLaughlin touchdown, making it 17-16.

Doug Phillips, YSU head coach, said he liked the fight

“Just to battle back into the game and take the lead in the fourth quarter. That second half, I really felt it was the first time I saw our team really come together, really stay together. The enthusiasm and the belief that we’re gonna win this football game. From those standpoints, you know, effort I thought was tremendous.”

— **Doug Phillips**, Youngstown State University head coach

his team showed last week in his press conference this week.

“Just to battle back into the game and take the lead in the fourth quarter. That second half, I really felt it was the first time I saw our team really come together, really stay together,” he said. “The enthusiasm and the belief that we’re gonna win this football game. From

those standpoints, you know, effort I thought was tremendous.”

The Penguins had its chance to seal the game, forcing a South Dakota three and out. They weren’t able to capitalize and punted the ball back. South Dakota then drove the field and kicked a 29-yard field goal to take the 19-17 lead. On the final possession, YSU redshirt freshman quarterback Mark Waid fumbled on the final possession to end the game.

Grant Dixon, senior linebacker, said the key to getting their first win just comes down to just a few important plays a game.

“Coach Shaffer says it, coach Phillips says it: each game comes down to four or five critical plays. This past weekend, if you look at a couple different drives there were critical plays, where we almost make the play,” he said. “The ball bounced the wrong way. Coach Phillips says the football is not round so sometimes it goes right, sometimes it doesn’t, but the objective is to be in the right spot at the right time.”

This week, YSU will play their homecoming game against South Dakota. This is the team’s first game all year against a team not ranked inside the country’s top 10. Kickoff will be 12 p.m. Saturday with special festivities at halftime.