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WELCOME BACK, 'GUINS



Photo by Kaitlyn McCarthy / The Jambar

Students move in to Cafaro House after being tested for COVID-19.

Students unsure this fall

Single rooms sold out this year at the dorms

By Kaitlyn McCarthy
The Jambar

Starting off a new school year can create new experiences for students. After a long absence, Youngstown State University once again hosted Welcome Week activities for incoming students.

These events began Sunday, Aug. 29 and will conclude with a foam party and lawn games Friday, Sept. 3.

Welcome Week offered events tailored to fit everybody's interests. Each day of the week, there was a new event students can join.

"I am really excited for the outdoor movie and the tailgate. I love being outside, so I'll probably check out a lot [of it]," freshman exploratory major Alexis Bella said.

Welcome Week events help students connect with one another to ensure a smooth transition from home to campus life.

Allie Adler, graduate assistant for the Office of Housing and Residence life, helped create the week's events

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Masked once more

From a summer of freedom to protests and mandates

By Abigail Cloutier
The Jambar

After a hopeful promise at the end of the spring 2021 semester from Youngstown State University President Jim Tressel to end masks and social distancing on campus, COVID-19 guidelines were reinstated less than two weeks before the semester started.

As numerous schools including the University of Akron, Kent State University and Ohio State University moved to mandate masks, YSU remained undecided.

Members of YSU's faculty union gathered to protest YSU's lack of a mask mandate Friday, Aug. 13, outside Tod Hall.

YSU-OEA spokesperson Mark Vopat said their goal was just to get the university to follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines.


"The recommendations of the CDC at this point are things like requiring masks indoors — we can't actually, with the way the university is set up, social distance," Vopat said.


Despite masks being required, there were no social distancing requirements outlined in YSU's updated policy.


"But right now, it seems that the university is leaving this completely up to individual choice, and when it comes to health and safety of the students — a number of students who have children — we have plenty of faculty that are immunocompromised and students as


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and expressed her excitement for the upcoming events. Adler also mentioned even though you should have fun, academics are important.

“Have fun, enjoy [college]. You know, go to class. But, also, embrace the college campus events, the experience,” she said.

Welcome Week is just one of many events helping students feel more comfortable about moving in. Many university employees’ top priority was move-in day.

Olivia Cupp, director of Housing and Residence Life, explained how her job helps students transition to their new life in Youngstown.

“We, right from the get-go, are a really welcoming group of people. ... We have move-in tents set up at each of our three main residence halls,” Cupp said. “I feel like we have been very intentional about making it [a] very calm process and very organized for our residence.”

Although precautions were still in place to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, students still voiced concerns about the virus and the impact it will make on the school year.

“What made me most nervous about going to YSU this year was how unpredictable this year might be,” Caleb Ellison, a sophomore telecommunication studies major said. “With the new Delta COVID-19 variant starting to

pick up, there is an uncertainty of what might happen this year, which makes me nervous.”

Student and Housing and Residence Life employee Elie Louisa explained the COVID-19 move-in policy.

“Most people have already done their COVID test and their check in is way ahead of time,” he said.

On YSU’s housing website, a move-in guide was posted to show students what to do before coming to campus. Returning and new students signed up and scheduled their time prior to coming to campus.

Students not yet tested for COVID-19 were handed a rapid test before the student left their car and tested them-

selves through the guidance of an app. This eliminated any exposure of the virus to other students and faculty members.

Still, students’ concerns seemed to persevere — though double or even triple rooms are standard, single rooms sold out this year.

“We sold out of all of our singles. That tells me that ... those are in high demand because of COVID,” Cupp said.

Around 600 students are moving to YSU campus for the fall.

Between the events at Welcome Week and support on move-in days, YSU hopes both freshmen and returning students will feel comfortable about starting the fall 2021 semester.

Masked

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well, it just doesn’t seem to be a prudent policy and seems to go against what the CDC is recommending,” Vopat said before the new policy was implemented.

On Aug. 18, YSU announced masks would be required for indoor settings.

As of Sept. 1, vaccinations are still not required on campus, despite mandates in place by KSU, OSU and Akron.

“Cleveland State, for example, won’t allow students to move back into the dorms unless they’ve been vaccinated. We’re an outlier,” Vopat said.

Students also showed up in support of faculty. Eva Lamberson, a senior philosophy and English double major, wanted to use the protest to express her disappointment at the university’s previous lack of action.

“It’s really disappointing that the administration continuously sort of does things to make campus less safe for students and faculty. We’ve seen this not just with the COVID response but also last year with contract negotiations, and I just think it’s time that students come out and support faculty for our own safety on campus,” Lamberson said.

Lamberson said she would consider taking the year off if cases were to worsen, despite her senior status and previous struggles with online learning.

“If we continue to see increases in the various cases around here and we don’t see a mask mandate or a vaccine mandate or any sort of leadership, it’s definitely not going to be very safe on campus, and I would consider going back online or taking the year off,” Lamberson said.

Currently, over 80% of YSU’s classes are fully in-person and no modalities are offered. Regular pre-pandemic asynchronous online classes are still offered.

“I just don’t think we were adequately prepared to move online either last year or probably this year,” Lamberson said.

Contact tracing, COVID-19 testing and vaccination clinics will still continue on campus.

Vaccine clinics are scheduled on campus for Sept. 8 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Sept. 9, 1 to 5 p.m. Appointments are required and as of Sept 1., are not fully booked.

We reached out to the Office of Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety for comments on the possibility of a vaccine mandate. They have not responded.

In addition to upgraded ventilation systems in student housing and N-95 masks for faculty, sewage testing will continue as part of YSU’s pandemic protocol.

Biological sciences professor Chet Cooper will continue to head off the program and said last year, the testing helped the university predict and understand viral

spikes in residential housing.

“In general, I can tell you we did see some spikes in concentration of the virus in the wastewater reported that and some of the data I got back seemed to suggest that did correlate with some of the testing data of the incidence of COVID-19 on campus in certain locations,” Cooper said.

They will continue to test the same locations on campus as last year and are waiting on funding to be able to get the technology to test samples in-house instead of sending them out to an external lab.

“You have to ship it on ice, there’s variables in there — one time the shipment didn’t arrive on time and got there two days late and they couldn’t use that data — so if we are able to train ourselves how to do testing here, we’ll have a quicker turnaround and be able to get data out to the relevant location sooner,” Cooper said.

Sewage testing helps the university track spikes in the levels of the virus in various buildings before people may know they are sick.

The data could also give the university insight into students’ behaviors.

“Part of the issues we’re having right now with the rapid increase in this variant is that folks relaxed and some places, they didn’t even buy into the first wave of infections. Now we’re harvesting the complacency, and I think we need to address that,” Cooper said.

Construction creates roadblocks a year later

By Sydney Stalnecker
The Jambar

Campus construction creates roadblocks a year later
Sydney Stalnecker

Youngstown State University's campus buzzed with construction over the summer months. Upon students' arrival back to campus, they can observe a paved and painted Fifth Avenue, sparkling bathrooms in Kilcawley Center and new additions to the Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County, located on Wick Avenue.

Charles Shasho, deputy director of Public Works for the City of Youngstown, has been overseeing the construction project, which cost the city \$6.5 million, on Fifth Avenue for about a year.

"Fifth Avenue started a little over a year ago. Basically, this project was a safety upgrade for pedestrian access," Shasho said. "We added a little bit of sewer separation, some green infrastructure, drainage improvements, as well as wider sidewalks and better lighting to make it more pedestrian friendly."

With these changes focusing on pedestrian safety, the road itself now has fewer lanes and a new median. The single lanes are classified as sharing lanes, allowing bikers access to the road as well.

"It's down to one lane in each direction. The traffic volumes have not shown that that's going to be an issue," Shasho said.

However, the construction did not come to a close during YSU's summer break. The construction on the roadway is nearly finished, but the nationwide shortage of traffic signal poles has delayed Fifth Avenue construction, Shasho said.

"Once the poles are in, we will be able to remove the old poles and then finish all the miscellaneous concrete work and brick paver work that's there because we can't do that until the old poles are removed," Shasho said.

The planting of traffic poles is expected to occur in September, officially completing the construction on Fifth Avenue.

However, construction on Youngstown roads won't be going away anytime soon. The construction on Fifth Avenue is only phase one of three in the SMART2 Network plan. Phase two involves redoing Front Street, Commerce Street, Federal Street, Rayen Avenue, Phelps Street and another section of Fifth and Park avenues leading up to Mercy Health.

"They're working on Phelps Street right now. I expect that to be completed by the end of the year," Shasho said. "Then, they'll go right into Front Street and Commerce Street."

The third phase involves autonomous shuttles traveling from the Western Reserve Transit Authority's main station up Fifth Avenue to Mercy Health. The WRTA plans to test these shuttles in spring 2022.

"WRTA has received a grant for two autonomous shut-



Photo by Sydney Stalnecker / The Jambar

Fifth Avenue construction continues into the fall semester.

gles, the build grant itself is actually going to be supplying two additional ones, so there could potentially be four autonomous shuttles running for that at some point."

On the opposite side of campus, the public library has seen its share of construction over the summer as well. The library celebrated the end of phase one renovations with a ribbon cutting ceremony Aug. 16 as they opened the Family Engagement Center.

Aimee Fifarek, director and CEO of the Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County, has been involved in the entire process.

"Technically, we just finished with the first phase when we opened the Family Engagement Center last week, so we had a great grand opening of the space which is for the entire family," Fifarek said. "We also have an all-ages DIY maker-space and the storytime area, as well as a hands-on STEM area for the littler ones."

Throughout the fall semester, the public library will continue to see renovations as it progresses further into phase two. This only involves the second floor of the library and is expected to be finished by the beginning of 2022.

The entire renovation is projected to be finished in summer 2022. With the third phase of renovations, the library seeks to restore the historical qualities of the building.

"The original historic building, which is the west building along Wick Avenue, was built in 1910, and that building had actually two skylights and glass block floors and ceilings so that natural light filtered all the way down through the building and into the reading rooms," Fifarek said. "As part of this renovation and some of the historical reconstructions that we're doing, we're actually replacing one of those skylights and recreating the light-well, so once again we will have natural light into the building."

Safety is another concern and influence on the renova-

tions.

"There was definitely some work that needed to be done on the historic building. We couldn't use the original entrance on Wick Avenue, it was only an emergency exit because of some of the disrepair, and it was time for everything to have a facelift," she said.

The final product will include new additions such as a new entryway facing the parking lot, culinary literacy center, 125-seat meeting space, patio and event lawn.

Campus buildings were not exempt from summer construction. The routine construction was administered on the Wick Parking Deck, and some new concrete was placed throughout campus to make walking from class to class easier.

The fourth floor of the Wick parking deck will remain under construction during the semester. A coating that protects the concrete from salt migration is failing and needs to be replaced.

Most bathrooms in Cushwa Hall and Kilcawley Center were finished prior to students returning to campus as well. Richard White, director of planning and construction at YSU, said the bathroom construction has been in the works for a long time.

"They were in pretty rough shape and we were going to do them a long time ago, and there was a project there to actually renovate and update Kilcawley Center and that was in 2010," White said. "They've needed it for a long time and we thought this year would be a perfect year to start doing it."

White mentioned two projects currently out for bid.

"We are going to fix up a little bit of the greenhouse that's on the south end of Ward Beecher, and then, also, we have a classroom over in Stambaugh Stadium and Beeghly Center [where] we're getting a physical therapy room," White said.

YSU HAS STUDENT COUNSELING SERVICES



Photo by Jessica Stamp / The Jambar

Student Counseling Services is holding an art contest to help reduce the stigma and raise awareness of mental health.

Promoting mental health through art

By Jessica Stamp
The Jambar

At Youngstown State University, Student Counseling Services offers group sessions for students with varying academic needs. With more students returning to campus for classes, getting back to a more normal environment can be hard to adjust to.

Anne Lally, assistant director at Student Counseling Services, encourages students to get involved in any group session potentially helpful to them.

“Depending on the students’ needs, there is, of course, individual counseling for students who want to see a counselor and talk about their individual needs,” Lally said. “The other thing that is available is we have a lot of groups that we’re offering students in the fall.”

There are seven groups offered, ranging from managing social anxiety and transitioning into the college workload and life, to staying organized and managing time.

According to the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement, “Recent data show a drop in student optimism; the percentage of those who were ‘very

optimistic’ dropped from 60% in May to just 42% in August.”

Student Counseling Services provides a gratitude group session for students trying to move forward and find positivity and appreciation.

Lally said one group focused on gratitude and optimism which may be of interest to some students during such a stressful time.

Incoming freshmen had diverse learning environments their senior year of high school. Some students did their schooling completely online while others did both online and in-person classes. Freshmen students face many difficulties, uncertainties and lack of physical and social interactions.

“The majority of entering students suffered increased levels of depression, hopelessness and loneliness due to COVID,” the report by BCSSE stated.

Lally wants to motivate students to try and seek those social connections in the best way they can, in whichever way they feel comfortable and safe for them to reach out and be involved.

“Go to the Student Activities website and read all the clubs and the organizations that are available for students and if there is something you’re interested

in, then get involved because if you’re interested in that then you’re going to find like minded people and you can start to build your social group,” Lally said.

One way Student Counseling Services is bringing awareness to mental health is by hosting its first art contest with plans to make it an annual event.

“I want that student input, what the students are thinking, to hear what the students feel about it, and so by doing this contest, they’re able to put their creativity out there, whatever venue they decide for art,” Lally said.

The contest is associated with art to show the creative side of students while talking about reducing the stigma of mental health, promoting positivity and seeking treatment.

The winner will get to display their artwork in the Student Counseling Services office and across campus, hold an open house to showcase it and have their picture taken alongside their artwork.

The contest starts Sept. 7 and ends Oct. 8.

To turn in artwork or for more information, contact Anne Lally at alally@ysu.edu.

COVID-19 update

Students test positive ahead of semester

By Abigail Cloutier
The Jambar

On Monday, Youngstown State University reported three new cases of COVID-19 for the week of Aug. 15-21, the week before classes officially began.

All three were students who live off-campus. Per university policy, students who live in campus apartments such as the University Courtyards, the Lofts, the Edge, the Enclave and the Flats at Wick, as well as Buechner Hall, are considered off-campus.

YSU reported 13 COVID-19 cases between June 6 and Aug. 21. Of those, three were faculty, staff or administration while the rest were students living off-campus.

YSU’s COVID-19 dashboard is updated every Monday. Students who have tested positive should report their case through the online form.

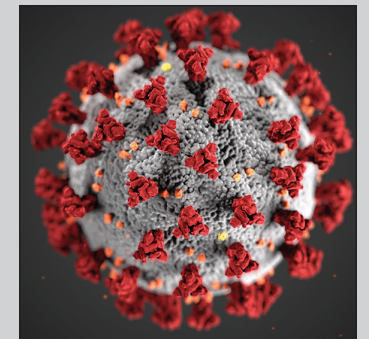


Photo courtesy of Pexels.com

Excellence Training Center opens on campus

By Mia Albaugh
The Jambar

To bring jobs to the Mahoning Valley, education and industry leaders in the area formed a partnership to create the Excellence Training Center, which opened July 26 for learners of all ages.

According to its page on Youngstown State University's website, the Excellence Training Center is a "workforce-education, innovation and research center."

Education in machining and robotics is the focus of the training center.

More specifically, this includes advanced manufacturing, manufacturing research and design, automotive and robotics training, CC machining classes, metrology and CT scanning, industrial maintenance training and a "Foundry of the Future."

The plan for the "Foundry of the Future" is to integrate automation robotics into the traditional practice of metal casting. This comes from the call to put more technology into foundry work that has been done the same way for a hundred years.

After the steel mills shut down and Lordstown General Motors closed, the goal of the ETC is to advance training of the workers and future workers in these technical fields and ultimately meet the needs of new jobs that can be brought to the area.

The creation of the ETC was accomplished by a \$20 million investment and a partnership between YSU; Eastern Gateway Community College; Mahoning, Columbiana and Trum-



Photo by Mia Albaugh / The Jambar

The Excellence Training Center opened July 26 to act as a workforce education, innovation and research centre.

bull County Career and Technical Centers; the Youngstown Business Incubator and NCDMM/America Makes.

The ETC will be leasing space with industry partners to create internship opportunities and co-ops so learners can have a jumpstart into their future and careers.

The ETC offers classes for anyone interested in advancing their knowledge in manufacturing, robotics and more.

"It's here for everyone. Not just YSU students, not for Eastern Gateway students. It's for adult learners, K-12 students, people just looking to explore other pathways for career opportunities," David Sipusic, director of the Excellence Training Center, said. "We want them to know they can come here to the Excellence

Training Center and there's usually something we can find for them, a new certificate program, a new training program, they can find a home here at the ETC."

The two-story building is home to \$10 million worth of advanced manufacturing equipment.

Some of these machines can be seen at work as 3D printers, spending hours creating ETC logos, Pete the Penguin keychains and fidget spinners.

Everyone is encouraged to take a tour of the new facility and take advantage of the new technical training opportunities available in downtown Youngstown.

For anyone interested in taking a tour, contact the Excellence Training Center at ETC@ysu.edu.

Students weigh in on mask mandates

By **Samantha Smith**
The Jambar

Youngstown State University announced at the start of the fall semester that there is a mask mandate for all indoor settings on campus, regardless of vaccination status.

As stated on YSU's Coronavirus Information page, four out of the five counties in the Mahoning Valley are labeled as high transmission areas. Once these levels of transmission go down within the region, reconsideration of the mask mandate may occur.

Students on campus expressed their

thoughts on the mandate announcement.

Rachel Austin, a freshman majoring in marketing management, said while it is not great to wear masks again, anything that will help others stay healthy and on campus is the best thing to do.

Gunnar Carwild, a sophomore majoring in BFA theatre, explained why he thinks the mask mandate is a good idea.

"I know a lot of campuses around are going through the mask mandates. I think it's the safest scenario right now," he said.

Michael Williamkiraly, a freshman majoring in mechanical engineering,

said although he does not like wearing the masks, it is important to protect others.

Sydney Morre, a senior finance major, said it is the only thing we can do right now for the safety of everyone on campus.

Abbygael Wargo, a junior majoring in biology, expressed similar sentiments.

"It's a great way to keep everyone safe, especially in the classroom where we might not have enough space to be that six feet apart," she said.

Wargo went on to say what more can be done as well as wearing masks.

"Wash your hands. I suggest even af-

ter every class if you have time to stop at the restroom, go wash your hands," she said. "Do it for 60 seconds and follow all of the rules and guidelines that we have out right now. Just to make sure everyone stays safe and we can stay on campus."

YSU will offer free vaccine clinics on campus Sept. 8 from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and Sept. 9 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. YSU will also have free COVID-19 testing for all students, faculty and staff.

For more information about YSU's testing options, vaccinations and protocols, go to ysu.edu/coronavirus-information.

FACULTY PROTEST IN FAVOR OF CDC GUIDELINES



Photo by Abigail Cloutier / The Jambar

Members of YSU's faculty union gathered to protest YSU's lack of a mask mandate Friday, Aug. 13, outside Tod Hall. YSU-OEA spokesperson Mark Vopat said their goal was just to get the university to follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines.

Endowed professorship bestowed as part of million-dollar donation

By Abigail Cloutier
The Jambar

Laura Beadling, an associate professor of English and film studies at Youngstown State University, was named as the inaugural Grace Ruth Memorial Endowed Professor of English on Tuesday.

The professorship was created through YSU's "We See Tomorrow" \$1 million donation from Robert Reeder III. It was created in memory of his grandmother, a tutor and Sunday School teacher whose dreams of law school never came to fruition.

"Our family could not be more pleased with Professor Beadling being awarded the inaugural Grace Ruth professorship in English. Her scholarship and vision for the award are both exceptional; we look forward to her accomplishments over the next three years," Reeder said.

Beadling is one of 17 endowed professors and chairs on campus. All the positions are funded through private donations.

"Endowed professors have a lasting impact on the university and our students, increasing the institution's academic excellence and providing educational and scholarly opportunities across the campus," YSU President Jim Tressel said.

She plans to use the three-year position to work on a book-length project focused on director and screenwriter Alexander Payne.

"He's never studied as one of [the] major American independent filmmakers, like Spike Lee, or the Coen brothers or Quentin Tarantino, they're all much better known. But he's got a similar track record in terms of commercial success," Beadling said.

Despite two Academy Awards and seven Oscar nominations, Beadling said Payne and his



Photo courtesy of Maria Elliott / Jambar Contributor

An associate professor in the English department, located in DeBartolo Hall, was named as the inaugural Grace Ruth Memorial Endowed Professor of English on Tuesday.

work has often been overlooked in academia.

"Partly why he's not as studied as the others is that he's really interesting in terms of genre. If you watch a Quentin Tarantino movie, you're going to get something that's sort of bloody and violence, lots of references to the '70s. Same with the Coen Brothers. But Alexander Payne mixes drama and comedy, he has movies that I think have a lot of interesting, thoughtful things to say, that have moments that are really, really funny, and yet are also very dramatic. Because he's hard to categorize, that maybe he's been a little bit less studied," she said.

Beadling has been a YSU faculty member since 2013 and earned her doctorate in American studies from Purdue University.

She plans on using the endowment not just for her research, but to also bring new programs to her English and film students.

"I also had some ideas for what I would want to do with the funding and how those interests that I have would impact the students. I want to bring some filmmakers to campus to speak to our students. I want to learn how to edit, film and [do this all] myself. That would be something that I can bring into my introduction to film class, and have that be an option for an assignment rather than just writing a paper about film," she said.

She expressed her gratitude for the endowment and said she's honored to be the first endowed professor in the English department.

"I'm very, very grateful. I'm very excited to get into my various projects here, and so thankful to the Reeder family for making it possible. It would be very cool anytime, but it's particularly cool to be the first endowed professor for the English department," Beadling said.

SIX FEET UNDER



Photos by C. Aileen Blaine / The Jambar

ABOVE: Though small, the Wickyards' stage is full of musical expression and passion. BELOW: Guests can look at posters for shows dating back to 2011.

Dig the underground scene

It's a graveyard smash at former funeral home at the Wickyards

By C. Aileen Blaine
The Jambar

From harsh noise shows to mellow groove sessions, the Wickyards on Wick Avenue offers a laid-back look into the underground music scene.

When passing by, 711 Wick Avenue doesn't look like much more than any other old mansion, but the Tudor-style architecture bearing a beaten sign for the McVean, Hughes and McClurkin funeral home houses a secret: it's home to an underground music venue.

When entering the French doors,

guests can merely glance to the left at a wall detailing a long history. Posters line the wall from performances dating back to the original Boardman location, which first opened in November 2011. The posters are often designed by performing bands and friends of owner and operator Eric Engartner, and they serve as a snapshot to the diversity of performances.

"This isn't really your typical venue in any way, shape or form," Engartner said. "For anyone looking to come, expect the unexpected."

Over its nearly 10-year history, the





The Wickyards is full of musical expression and passion.

Wickyards has provided a variety of artists from all genres a chance to perform for a small crowd without fear of “getting robbed or rained out,” which are risks when performing home, garage or outdoor shows.

Jake Brandenstein, the bassist for the band We, the Creature, has played at the Wickyards several times.

“The best way we could describe the Wickyards is ‘dank’ and ‘cursed,’ but there’s a mystique to it,” he said. “There’s something that truly pulls you in.”

The venue got its start in 2011, when 16-year-old Engartner and his father began cleaning up and repairing an old warehouse in Boardman.

“My friends and I in high school really had nowhere to play — we couldn’t get into bars, we couldn’t do anything like that,” Engartner said.

The business has never sold alcohol, allowing musicians of all ages a space to express themselves.

“We have some of the most chill vibes you can possibly imagine,” Engartner said.

Singer, songwriter and guitarist Steven Wittkugle, who goes by Drifting Thing when performing, has been playing through Engartner’s business since the days of the

“The best way we could describe the Wickyards is ‘dank’ and ‘cursed,’ but there’s a mystique to it. There’s something that truly pulls you in.”

— Jake Brandenstein, bassist for We, the Creature

Backyards and Billiards.

“I’m more than happy to play at Eric’s venues,” he said. “He’s outstanding and always takes care of the place. The shows never get crazy or out of hand.”

When Backyards and Billiards closed in January 2014, the venue moved from place to place before finally settling at its current Wick Avenue spot in 2016. Since then, the focus has been on providing an open environment for musical performances and experimentation.

The mansion, which was built in the early 1900s, remains almost entirely in its original state, when it was owned by the area’s notable Tod family. After shows, Engartner offers tours of the three-story building, detailing the structure’s many uses and its owners over the years.

“Going on the tour, going to the embalming room, going through the upstairs — it’s fantastic,” Brandenstein said.

“I’m a carpenter by day,” Wittkugle said. “When I look at the detail of the trim and the woodwork, it blows me away. The place is immaculate.”

As for the future of the Wickyards, Engartner has a few things in mind, including an anniversary celebration in November that is “going to be big.”

“We hope in October of 2022 we’re going to be able to open a haunted house here,” he said. “Until then, we’ve significantly increased our show output and how much we’ve been doing.”

For more information about upcoming shows or previous performances, check out the Wickyards on Instagram or Facebook.

Elm Street grows again

By Emily McCarthy
The Jambar

After a year that saw businesses shut down and buildings stand vacant, the north side's Elm Street is full of spots exhibiting a variety of art and food choices. This year, a few new businesses are growing among them, just a block off campus.

Heather Seno and Steph Blair opened Art House on Elm Street in April. Every month, they hold free events accepting donations for the artists selling their items in the gift shop. They are currently working on their fifth show of the year, with bookings all the way through February 2022.

"Art House is working with a different business model than traditional galleries [because] we rent our wall space for artists throughout the month," Seno said. "This allows the artists to understand their initial buy-in and create pieces at multiple price points in order to sell more art work. ... We also hold many group shows that allow artists to participate in shows at a discounted rate than traditional group shows."



Photo by Emily McCarthy

The North Side's Elm Street is full of new art spaces and food choices.

They encourage artists to create smaller pieces for the gift shop at a lower price point. Openings are held the first Friday of every month from 6-9 p.m.

Gino West, is founder and business owner of Prepped Wellness for nearly five years. But he opened his physical cafe space in June after making complete renovations to the building. West graduated from Youngstown State University with a degree in dietetics and decided he wanted to use his degree for a more integrative purpose rather than in a clinical setting. Starting from his own home, he wanted to show others how easy it is to

maintain a "sustainable, healthy, living."

"[The cafe] put a face to the business ... we have a build-your-own platform where you can pretty much pick anything you want," West said. "My whole drive is to show the area that it doesn't have to be boring to be healthy ... all of our sauces are made in-house. I make everything from scratch. It's super fresh ingredients."

Prepped Wellness is now partnered with YSU athletics and is on the Pete's Points program. West also added a smoothie bar to the business.

"I created my platform, Prepped

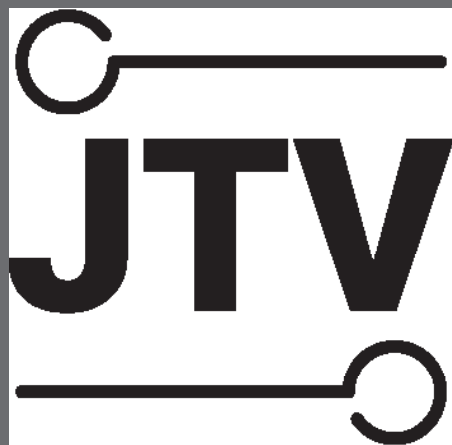
Wellness, to take the whole mindset out of how to start, maintain ... Just live a healthy lifestyle, like just let me do it for the person," West said. "I started out in 2017 just basically doing all personal, in-house cooking ... I kept driving my passion and my vision."

After opening the commercial kitchen, he said he was able to expand and include delivery services covering five counties.

Other businesses on Elm Street include a food truck called Dalia's Caribbean Kitchen, Culture House Coffee, Her Primitive Ways Red Road Apothecary, and Once Upon a Time Art Line.

"[The cafe] put a face to the business ... we have a build-your-own platform where you can pretty much pick anything you want."

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The Jambar Editorial

Vaccine mandates across Ohio

As other universities across Ohio mandate the COVID-19 vaccine, including our neighbors Kent State University and the University of Akron, we see a growing pressure to mandate vaccines here at Youngstown State University.

At the same time, cases continue to fluctuate in Mahoning County as well as surrounding counties, according to the Ohio Department. When compared, the state of Ohio and Mahoning County are less than 50% fully vaccinated.

Some universities are forcing students to provide proof of vaccination by the end of fall semester. But public distrust of the vaccine seems rampant in a time of

heightened government distrust and misinformation.

While people should have a choice to get vaccinated, an organization should also have the choice to ensure the safety of its members. People who wish to be a part of an organization should adhere to its policy as long as the community is taken into account and wellbeing is considered.

Given it's reluctance to mandate masks without a protest, it doesn't seem they are on-par with other universities' COVID-19 protocol, so it can be difficult to look to other schools' policies on this matter.

It does not seem fair for YSU to require students to get vaccinat-

ed in order to be on campus while the school still does not provide the option of virtual learning for all classes. YSU is offering most classes face-to-face without the option of a purely virtual education, should a student desire to remain off campus. It would not be right to mandate a vaccine without giving those hesitant to receive one equal access to education, albeit a virtual one, without an additional \$100 remote learning fee.

We can't know for certain what the future may bring. The only thing we can be sure of is that we must all do our best to protect ourselves, as well as others, and look down the road and hope for a better 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.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Jambar encourages letters to the editor. Submissions are welcome

at thejambar@gmail.com. Letters should concern a campus issue, must be typed and must not exceed 400 words. Submissions must include the writer's name and telephone number for verification, along with the writer's city of residence for publication. The Jambar does not withhold the names of guest commentators. Letters are subject to editing for spelling, grammar and clarity. Letters will not be rejected based on the views expressed in them. The editorial board reserves the right to reject commentaries and letters if they are not relevant to our readers, seek free publicity, fail to defend opinion with facts from reliable sources or if the editorial staff has decided that the subject has been sufficiently aired. The editorial board will request a rewrite from the submitted writer based on these requirements. The Jambar will not print letters that are libelous, threatening, obscene or indecent. The views and opinions expressed in letters and commentaries on the opinion page do not necessarily reflect those of The Jambar staff. Editorials do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the faculty, staff or administration of YSU.

The Jambar Column

Back in the saddle again

On March 7, 2020, the students of Youngstown State University left for spring break. Originally thought to be a few days off to refresh from the hustle of daily life, things quickly changed.

Within days, news regarding the rapidly spreading COVID-19 got worse. It was soon announced the university would extend spring break. This turned into the entire semester going fully online, and extended throughout the next school year.

After all this time, finally students are back on campus. For many, including myself, this is our first time back in person since the pandemic began. I would be lying if I said that this alone didn't have me extremely nervous.



Mac Pomeroy

The idea of going around campus, following an in-person schedule, being surrounded by people — all of that feels overwhelming to consider. I may have been in college for years, but I feel like a freshman again.

Talking to friends and other students, I found this feeling of concern and fear to be common. With online classes, it was easy to become used to not being near others and doing your own thing.

I have mentioned in prior articles

that my last two years of high school were done online, so this wasn't my first time coming back to in-person school, but it still felt far more intimidating than prior.

When asked about what worried them the most, a common answer among friends was public manners. Not in a way that they felt they would seem rude, but more that they weren't sure how to do things in public anymore.

They had become so used to being alone that even simple things like studying in a room full of people seem like a challenge. They are now extra aware of those around them, far more than before the pandemic. Full class-

es and crowded halls seem much more daunting than before.

If you find yourself feeling overwhelmed about being thrown back into an in-person schedule, take a deep breath. It's okay. While there is no immediate remedy, it's important to remember these feelings are valid.

Even if you felt comfortable in person before going online and now are unsure of how to handle these situations, that's okay. Time is the true medicine.

Even if the first week back seems weird and uncomfortable, just keep trying. Slowly it will feel normal again. You'll be okay.

Welcome back, Penguins. Good luck, you got this.

Check out Jambar TV

Keep up with campus news every week at

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LOOKING TO REBOUND

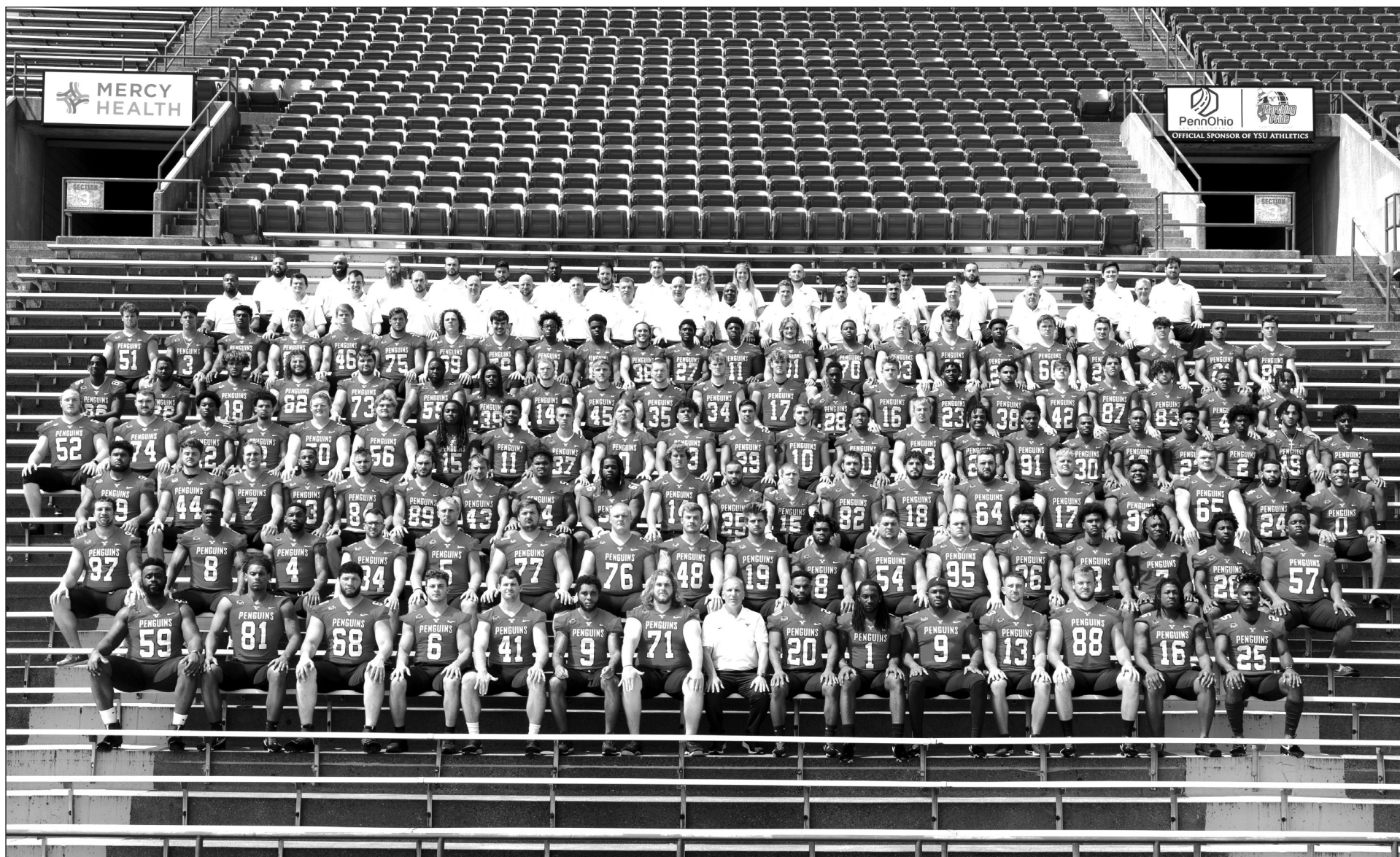


Photo courtesy of YSU Sports Information

The 2021 Youngstown State University football team looks to rebound after disappointing 1-6 campaign during a COVID-19 shortened season.

High expectations for season

By **Yusof Hamza**
The Jambar

After a disappointing 1-6 campaign during a COVID-19 shortened season, the Youngstown State University Penguins football team looks to rebound for the 2021 fall season.

Head coach Doug Phillips said the players have high expectations going into the season and feel they can physically compete with other teams.

“We’ve been taking things one day at a time,” Phillips said. “After the season last year we got to learn how to finish football games— we got to take those games over.”

Defensive back Zaire Jones said going day by day and week by week will help reach the end goal of a national championship. The senior public health major said the mentality going into the season is to finish games and to return to normalcy after last season.

“Finish and persevere through whatever adversity we’ve been through,” Jones said.

Multiple games were lost last year on close plays and the inability to close out a game.

“Coming into this season, we learned a lot of the spring season, we want to learn to finish games. There were games where we were two, three, four plays a game from sealing it,” senior linebacker Grant Dixon said.

Dixon, who wears 41 and is pursuing a masters in business administration, was an integral part of the defense last season and earned First Team All-Conference and All-Newcomer recognitions in the Missouri Valley Football Conference.

Starting center Mike McAllister said the team worked hard over the summer and has high expectations for the season.

Football

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“The history of Youngstown is to win national championships, so that’s our expectation every year,” McAllister said.

He also said team activities outside of football have been great for team morale.

“You’re sitting there after practice and you think you’re going into a day of lifts and meetings and Coach Doug says, ‘Go shower and get on the busses, we’re going swimming,’” McAllister said. “It’s great for the psyches, especially on these hot days in the summer.”

Phillips said team building has been a focus during the offseason and will help on the field.

“I like seeing what our young men are like off the field,” Phillips said.

He wants players to get together outside of the football environment as it helps to bond the team and form lasting memories.

During a team scrimmage session on Aug. 20, Demeatric Crenshaw was taking the first team reps at quarterback. Crenshaw is a redshirt freshman and three-star recruit from Pickerington Central High School in Pickerington, Ohio.

Dixon wasn’t the only player to receive recognition last season. Defensive back Keyon Martin and running back Jaleel

Penguins release the 2021 football schedule following shortened season

By Yousof Hamza
The Jambar

The Youngstown State University Penguins football team opens the 2021 season against the University of the Incarnate Word Cardinals Sept. 2.

The Cardinals went 3-3 and averaged 42 points of offense during their 6 game spring season while also allowing 41.8 points per game against them. YSU allowed an average of 21.8 points while scoring an average of 15.4 points.

The Penguins then head to East Lansing, Michigan, to face off against the Michigan State University Spartans Sept. 11.

After MSU, the Penguins have a bye week before playing

host to the Western Illinois University Leathernecks to start conference play. They then head to Cedar Falls, Iowa, to play the University of Northern Iowa.

The Penguins then play the Missouri State University Bears for homecoming week before heading into their last bye week. They then head to Terre Haute, Indiana, to face off against the Indiana State Sycamores before returning home to play the South Dakota State University Jackrabbits.

They start November traveling to the University of North Dakota to play the Fighting Hawks. They return home to play the North Dakota State University Bison and finish the season on the road in Carbondale, Illinois, against the Southern Illinois University Salukis.

McLaughlin also received all-Newcomer recognitions. McLaughlin, offensive lineman Dan Becker and defensive back Zaire Jones received Second Team All-Conference honors. Martin, defensive lineman James Jackson and return specialist Jake Coates were Honorable Mention All-Conference.

All players honored are returning for this season except for Jake Coates who

graduated. Their season kicks off against the University of the Incarnate Word Cardinals on Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

The Cardinals went 3-3 and averaged 42 points of offense during their 6 game spring season while also allowing 41.8 points per game against them. YSU allowed an average of 21.8 points while scoring an average of 15.4 points.

On Sept.11, the Penguins play at Mich-

igan State University before heading into a bye week. After the bye week, they start conference play against Western Illinois. Then, they play the University of Northern Iowa, Missouri State University, Indiana State University, South Dakota State University, University of North Dakota, North Dakota State University and finish at Southern Illinois University.



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Photo by Kyle Wills / The Jambar

The volleyball team practices in preparation for their next match on Sept. 3 in Michigan.

Volleyball looks for first dig into season

By Kyle Wills
The Jambar

The Youngstown State University volleyball team is looking to return to the court in the fall after playing all of last season in the spring.

YSU returns its top attacker, its top three blockers and two of its setters from a group that posted a 3-11 record this past spring. Positionally, there are seven pin hitters, six defensive specialists, four middle blockers and two setters, with junior Josi Borum included in the pin hitters and the setters. Senior Morgan Cleevely is the lone four-year member of the program.

The defensive specialist from Canfield, Ohio, has played in 95 sets over 41 matches in her career, and she averaged a career-high 1.97 digs per set in the

spring. She enjoyed the current atmosphere of this year's team the most and believes the bond they have created is better than in previous seasons.

"On the court, everything is cool and relaxed, and we all have this chemistry where we really work together," Cleevely said. "The atmosphere in our gym at practice, the atmosphere in our gym when we have games — it is night and day compared to the environment that we had in the past."

She admitted there was a lot of volleyball scrambled in a short timespan this summer, but Cleevely said it was necessary.

"This off-season, we started our pre-season two, three weeks before we had our first game and it was really fast right away," she said. "We knew it would be really fast. Two-a-days, lifting, it was

a lot of volleyball at one time, but it was needed."

Cleevely played at both pins, and she was also a setter at times when YSU went with a 6-2 offense. Her 107 assists ranked second on the squad in the spring.

Borum paced the Penguins in 13 of their 14 matches in the spring, and her 122 kills were 47 more than any other teammate. She is one of 14 returners from the spring, and four freshmen have joined the program this fall to bring the roster total to 18. The group of newcomers includes right-side hitter Kiyah Franklin, outside hitter Paula Gürsching, middle blocker Cheyenne Hlady and defensive specialist Caitlyn Jones.

Junior middle blocker Aimee Beaupre has the most experience on the roster,

with 140 career sets and 42 matches. She recorded 155 kills and 77 blocks in her first two seasons as a Penguin.

Out of the 14 players on YSU's roster who participated in the 14-match spring season, only Beaupre, Cleevely, Ellie Cox, Bailey Ramlow and Reilly Seagroves were with the team during the 2019 fall season.

In terms of the coaching staff, all three coaches — Aline Scott, Destiny Clark and Lynn Ritter — returned for this season.

The volleyball team officially started the 2021 season the last weekend in August at the Beeghly Center for the YSU / DoubleTree-Youngstown Volleyball Invitational. The team will face Butler and North Dakota universities Friday, Sept. 3 at the Chippewa Invitational in Michigan.