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Thursday, August 31, 2023



BRINGING HOME THE HARDWARE



YSU holds sole-possession of the McCafferty Trophy for the 2022-23 seasons.

Photo by Dylan Lux / The Jambar

YSU awarded with Horizon League's McCafferty Trophy

By Dylan Lux
The Jambar

Youngstown State University's Athletic Department put together successful performances in the Horizon League during the 2022-23 academic year, which led the university to be awarded the James J. McCafferty Trophy.

This is the first time YSU holds sole possession of the trophy since joining the Horizon League in 2002-2002. YSU shared the trophy with Oakland University in 2021.

The trophy is named after the first commissioner of the Horizon League, James J. McCafferty. He was the head basketball coach of Loyola University New Orleans from 1954-57 and Xavier University from

1957-63.

McCafferty became commissioner of the Midwestern City Conference in 1979, which became the Horizon League in 1985.

John Gorby, head coach of men's and women's cross country team, said that the conference is very competitive and helps the team maintain peak form throughout competition.

YSU won the trophy based on point standings for sports that compete in the Horizon League. Men's soccer and women's soccer, volleyball, men's and women's basketball, softball and baseball points are awarded based on combined regular-season and championship finishes.

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Key points from the board of trustees summer meetings

By Shianna Gibbons and Dylan Lux
The Jambar

Youngstown State University's board of trustees and other committees met June 21 and 22 to discuss budget plans, investments and audits, enrollment and the university's future.

On the first day of meetings, trustees unanimously approved action items from different committees, such as increased tuition, a new Master of Science in Data Science and Statistics Program, a new resolution for university logo use and changing the qualifications for emeritus status for faculty and administrators.

The following day, Board Secretary Anita Hackstedde gave the oath of office to Trustee Richard Fryda. The YSU Athletic Department was recognized for receiving the Horizon League McCafferty Trophy, Student Government Association members were recognized for their excellence and Heritage Awards were presented to Joseph Mosca and the late Syretha Cooper.

The Intercollegiate Athletics Committee presented six discussion items and one action item.

The executive director of Human Resources, Dana Lantz, presented a resolution requiring student organizations to have approval to use university logos like the 'Y' and Pete the Penguin in accordance with the state legislature.

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McCafferty

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For all other sports, points are based on performance in the Horizon League championships.

In women's sports, Youngstown State earned 7 points from track & field and tennis, 3 from cross country and soccer and 2 from both basketball and softball.

On the men's side, the Penguins finished with 7 points each from track & field, cross country and basketball, 5 points from tennis and 1 point from baseball.

Youngstown State conquered the Horizon League with 51 total points and a 4.5 point differential over second place Oakland.

Director of Athletics Ron Strollo spoke about the benefits of winning the McCaf-

ferty Trophy has brought to the university.

"It's a measurement of the job we're doing with the student-athletes," Strollo said. "It adds to the experience for our student-athletes, kids have a lot better experience when they're winning."

Strollo also said the trophy brings pride to YSU and its alumni.

"Our kids go out every day whether it's on or off the field representing YSU, and to have that kind of success hopefully brings a lot of pride back to the university and to our [alumni] across the country," Strollo said.

Winning the McCafferty Trophy has brought more recognition to YSU. Senior goalie Brooklynn Kirkpatrick said the university deserves the acknowledgement and is proud to be a part of Youngstown State.

"Not enough people know about YSU, and ... winning such a prestigious award puts our school on the map, and all the great things that come from this university and all the opportunities they give their athletes," Kirkpatrick said. "[The trophy] will give us more respect and more recognition that we've deserved for a really long time, and I'm very proud to represent that."

The McCafferty Trophy represents the overall athletic success, but YSU athletics has also earned the highest grade point averages in several programs in the Horizon League and on a national-level.

"On top of our graduation rates and grade point averages, I think it just adds to the prestige of being here and the fact that this is a successful place, whether this is academics or athletics," Strollo said.



Track & field, women's soccer and men's basketball all contributed points to the McCafferty Trophy.

Photos courtesy of Robert Hayes

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7-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

Thu. Fri. Sat. Sun. Mon. Tue. Wed.

High: 76°F	High: 80°F	High: 85°F	High: 88°F	High: 93°F	High: 94°F	High: 88°F
Low: 50°F	Low: 55°F	Low: 64°F	Low: 65°F	Low: 65°F	Low: 68°F	Low: 61°F
Chance of precip: 0%	Chance of precip: 5%	Chance of precip: 4%	Chance of precip: 4%	Chance of precip: 12%	Chance of precip: 18%	Chance of precip: 25%



Fair



Fair



Partly Cloudy



Fair



Fair



Fair



Partly Cloudy

Information courtesy of accuweather.com

Rising costs: For you and YSU



Despite the tuition raise, this year is the lowest increase the university has seen.

Photo by Elizabeth Coss / The Jambar

By Tala Alsharif and Elizabeth Coss
The Jambar

Students at Youngstown State University are guaranteed a price-locked tuition plan known as the Penguin Promise, but incoming freshmen will be paying more than their predecessors.

Each year since 2019, the cost of tuition at the university adjusts based on a variety of factors, according to Neal McNally, the chief finance officer at YSU.

McNally said tuition was raised by 3% — or to \$5,361.36 a semester — compared to the 2022-23 academic years' rate of \$5,205.24 because of inflation.

"[YSU] increased or adjusted the Penguin Promise cohort rate by 3%. It's really not an increase because the students who are paying that rate are new students, so they've never paid anything," McNally said.

The state of Ohio proposes an increase for public universities to raise the cost of higher education each year. This year, the increase was the lowest percent increase YSU has seen in five years.

"The first year was 4.1%, the second year was 3.8%. The third year — which was last year — was 4.6%. That's the highest year," McNally said. "Any adjustments in our tuition rates going forward would be nominal to 3%."

Undergraduate students, including international and part-time students returning for their second, third or fourth year won't see an increase in tuition.

However, students who surpass the four-year threshold of their Penguin Promise tuition guarantee are automatically placed into the following year's cohort rate.

The following year's cohort rate is dependent on when a student enrolled in the university — and the rate would apply to the student until it expires or until the student is no longer enrolled — meaning students on a five-year track or longer will see an increase in tuition.

While students may be feeling the effects of higher costs, McNally said the university is as well.

"Costs this year are expected to go up by over \$500,000," McNally said.

Furthering IT Services and cybersecurity are some

reasons why McNally expects costs to increase. However, McNally explained he also expects an increase in state funding to ease cost pressures such as inflation.

"The operating budget depends mostly on what's called the State Share of Instruction funding, which is the core subsidiary that we get," McNally said. "Our state funding ... It's about \$48 million a year. Believe it or not, the state is still finalizing its calculations. We think we're going to get an increase."

McNally also explained the university feels pressure to keep costs low, including tuition rates.

"It turns out that tuition polls very well and I think voters have let the legislature know that they're very unhappy with the price increases they've seen," McNally said. "It makes it tough on us because expenses are going up faster and faster. That's where it gets difficult and challenging financially to get everything to a balance."

For students interested in understanding tuition costs and what financial aid may be available, visit the University Bursar website.

BoT
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“Student organizations will apply using a standard form and athletics will approve, deny or listen to the appeals process so no student organization feels they’re being targeted based on the nature of the organization. It [also] requires training annually for student organizations,” Lantz said.

Ron Strollo, director of athletics, presented four separations, six new appointments, nine increased salary adjustments and two position reclassifications with increased salaries.

The committee also introduced Barbara Flinn, lecturer in English and World Languages as the new Faculty Athletic Representative.

The Investment Committee discussed the quarterly report for asset allocation and performance. It approved two action items: amending YSU’s non-endowment asset allocation guidelines and modifying the investment policy for YSU’s non-endowment and endowment funds.

The Audit Subcommittee discussed updates and reports and the most recent Ohio Auditor of State Census Data Examination. The board approved the resolution for the Annual Internal Audit Plan.

The board also approved four consent items presented by the Finance & Facilities Committee to clarify language or update policy dates for budget transfers,

acceptable use of university technology resources, electronic data storage and university vehicle use.

The trustees approved action items for a tuition increase, the annual operating budget and inter-fund transfers. The committee also discussed the annual budget, planning and construction updates, and IT security.

Next, the Governance Committee discussed demographic shifts affecting higher education institutions and enrollment in the next few years.

Given declining birth rates and lower secondary school enrollment, YSU and other institutions will continue to experience an enrollment decline.

The Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee approved four action items: modifying the process of hiring and selecting full-time and part-time faculty, congratulating SGA efforts during the 2022-23 academic year, authorizing recommended honorary degree candidates and the new master’s program in Data Science.

The committee then discussed career placement rates for YSU students post-graduation, new certificates for general education courses and adjusting majors to generalized majors with specific focus.

Trustees approved resolutions modifying the naming of university facilities, colleges and programs by giving trustees the power to change donor names if the donor “compromises university integrity or reputation.”

The board also moved the Larry E. Esterly Room from

Kilcawley Center to the Political Science Faculty Suites lobby in DeBartolo Hall.

The Workforce Innovation and Education Committee discussed updates, goals, accomplishments and budgets with the trustees.

The University Affairs Committee presented a consent item modifying policy regarding vacation leave for faculty. That was approved along with action items changing qualifications for emeritus status for faculty and administration and a resolution ratifying personnel actions.

From Jan. 16 to April 15, there was one faculty separation. Professional administrators had eight separations, 11 reclassifications, six promotions, nine salary adjustments and 16 appointments — one a new position.

The next board of trustees meeting is Sept. 20. For more details about approved resolutions, action items and meeting minutes, go to the YSU board of trustees’ website.

The next board of trustees meeting is Sept. 20 in Tod Hall.

A paved paradise

By Christopher Gillett
The Jambar

The former site of the M60 parking garage reopened last week as a parking lot. The new M60 parking lot holds 171 parking spots, 31 of which are handicap-accessible and six of those spots are van-accessible.

Built in 1972, the original parking garage was demolished mid-2022 after it had worn down. Even before its demolition, many levels in the garage were closed down. Over the spring and summer, construction crews remade it into a parking lot.

Located by DeBartolo and Cushwa halls, the lot is for faculty and students who have a parking pass and is open 6 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Danny O’Connell, director of Support

Services, said the lot was planned based on university enrollment and park statistics.

“Based on enrollment right now and parking use right now, we tried to figure out what we needed [for] campus core [parking]. And by going [with] two bays of parking it gives us 171 parking spaces,” O’Connell said.

The beginnings of semesters usually have the least parking space available because students are learning the campus layout, buying books, meeting with advisors and seeing long-time friends. The fullest times for parking trend around 10 a.m. and noon, peaking at 11 a.m.

O’Connell said students should plan out their parking and not wait until last minute.

“Get here early, especially the first week. Find out where you want to park.

If you’re running late, don’t try and park close,” O’Connell said.

The new lot was elevated to give students better sidewalk access to where the parking lot is higher than the former garage’s lower levels. The university hired GPD Group to engineer it and Marucci & Gaffney Excavating Company to do construction.

The whole project cost \$827,000. According to O’Connell, because it was on the former parking garage and fencing was not needed for the site, the project cost under \$5,000 per parking space — less than the average of over \$7,000.

The project had an “aggressive” completion date so they could order hard-to-get supplies sooner. O’Connell said one of the hardest supplies to obtain were light poles.

“[Getting] the light poles are always

challenging. In the old days you never had to worry about that,” O’Connell said. “They don’t have the same production levels as they used to — and for whatever the reason that’s been a very common problem around the country.”

Much of the former parking garage was also made into a field just below the parking lot. O’Connell said the field allows for cheaper future developments and proper drainage while providing green space.

“In keeping this green space it makes it a much nicer space, but it also gives us space for future development without having to tear up what we just put in,” O’Connell said. “As this grass gets thicker it’ll really make that field handle any rain it takes.”

For all parking lots, see a map of the university on its website. Parking passes can be ordered through Penguin Portal.

Student Resource Directory

ASC - Accessibility Services - Kilcawley Center 2082, 330-941-1372, cspds5@ysu.edu

Campus Recreation - Andrews Recreation & Wellness Center, 330-941-3488, campusrec@ysu.edu

Dean of Students - Cushwa Hall 3325, 330-941-3533, dos@ysu.edu

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion - Jones Hall 1003, 330-941-3370, clbennett04@ysu.edu

First Year Student Services - Jones Hall 3001, 330-941-2131, firstyear@ysu.edu

Human Resources - Tod Hall 359, 330-941-1508

- Equal Opportunity,
- Policy Development
- Title IX

International Programs Office - Jones Hall 1042, 330-941-2336, ipo@ysu.edu

Information Technology Service Desk - Maag Library 406C, 330-941-1595, servicedesk@ysu.edu

The Jambar - Inside Dunkin Donuts in Kilcawley center, 330-941-3094, jambarnewspaper@gmail.com

Maag Library - 330-941-3675, adminmaag@ysu.edu

Parking Services - 275 Fifth Ave, 330-941-3546, parking@ysu.edu

Penguin Service Center - Meshel Hall 232, 330-941-2190, onestop@ysu.edu

- Enrollment
- Financial Aid
- University Bursar

Police Department - Clingan-Waddell Hall, 330-941-3527, police@ysu.edu

Resch Academic Success Center - Kilcawley West, 330-941-3538, rasc@ysu.edu

Student Activities - Kilcawley Center 2088, 330-941-3575

Student Counseling Services - Kilcawley Center 2110, 330-941-3737, studentcounseling@ysu.edu

Student Success - Jones Hall 3001, 330-941-4703,
- Student Employment
- Testing Center

Writing Center - Maag Library 171, 330-941-3055

YSU Foundation - 330-941-3211, foundation@ysufoundation.org

Being pres[id]ent for YSU

By Shianna Gibbons
The Jambar

Eight months into Helen Lafferty's interim presidency is also the start of the 2023-24 academic year at Youngstown State University, and this year serves as a transitional period for changes to come.

Lafferty's goals for this academic year are short-term because the national search for a new president is underway. One of those goals is to be present for YSU's current needs.

"I need to be — for all of you here — what you need me to be. The better I know about you and the more I listen to you, the more I come to an understanding of what it is that makes you connected to YSU, the better I [can] do to ... keep those connections in place," Lafferty said.

Lafferty's ability to keep those connections in place is rooted in her own connection to the city of Youngstown and YSU. She was born and raised in Youngstown and received her bachelor's and master's degrees at YSU.

"I'm homegrown. Evergreen Avenue, Ursuline High School and a proud alumna of YSU," Lafferty said.

Before the start of classes, YSU and the faculty union came to a three-year contract agreement. Lafferty said this was a significant accomplishment between the university and its faculty.

"We had an 89% affirmation from our faculty. I think the primary thing has been the quality of people on the negotiating teams from both sides. They realize we're doing this for the betterment of our students," Lafferty said. "When we come to understand, not agree, but understand — and care for people — great things can happen."

The search for the new president is ongoing, according to Lafferty. She has no role in hiring a new president but said there will be a two-tier process.

WittKiefer, located in Pittsburgh, is the firm YSU is using to find presidential candidates. Once candidates are selected, the first tier starts.

First, candidates will be vetted by a committee of three board of trustee members and one alternative. Once the board approves, the second tier will be a committee of university constituents representing every part of the university.

Lafferty said a timeline for choosing a new president is always uncertain because of the different factors to consider. Still, she's confident in the board's ability to pick the best candidate for YSU.

Another challenge YSU and other higher education institutions are facing is the decline in enrollment. There aren't any definitive numbers for YSU's enrollment until 14 days after the beginning of the semester,

but Lafferty said she believes YSU is doing better.

"I want those statistics when they are given to be accurate so that people can place their hope in them. I will say things are looking better and that's a good place [to be]," Lafferty said.

Lafferty's advice for students, especially incoming students, is to get involved on campus. Graduation is Lafferty's goal for every student, but it's also essential to be a part of the community.

"We have a tremendous university, we have a great mission, and we have great faculty," Lafferty said. "When you're just a student — which is good and purposeful — there isn't anything to connect you with other students and the community."

Lafferty said saying her goodbyes to the YSU community and the city of Youngstown will be hard because of its human spirit and grit.

"We're in a city that doesn't have a lot of bells and whistles ... But we have other things that I see in our students, faculty and staff. We have a lot of resilience," Lafferty said. "It's something that I think we can celebrate that a lot of universities might want ... but they do not have that resilience and human spirit that just says 'You got this. You can do this.'"

News Brief

Board of trustees passes faculty contract, renames One University Plaza

The Youngstown State University board of trustees and the university's faculty union ratified a new three-year contract. The union and board ended negotiations for a new contract late July, as the previous contract was set to expire August 27.

The union ratified the contract early August, and the board of trustees unanimously passed the contract during their meeting August 18. The new contract raises the minimum pay for assistant and senior lecturers and assistant professors by 4%.

The new contract also stipulates a 2% pay raise each of its first two years, followed by a 2.5% pay raise the third year, along with increasing the contributions to health insurance premiums by 1% the second and third years.

Also during the meeting, the board of trustees unanimously voted to rename One University Plaza to One Tressel Way in honor of former University President Jim Tressel.

YSU receives land donation from Williamson family

By Dylan Lux
The Jambar

Youngstown State University held an event May 20 to celebrate the life and impact of Warren “Bud” Williamson III and unveil the new Williamson Innovation Park.

Williamson III, who passed away at the age of 92 in October of 2022, worked in radio and television in many capacities. He served as chairman for local news station WKBN, which his father, Warren P. Williamson II, founded in 1953.

One of Williamson III’s dreams was to create a space where students could learn outdoors and better their problem-solving abilities, and with the newly unveiled park, his dream came to fruition.

The Williamson Innovation Park resides on 165 acres, which was part of Williamson III’s donation to the YSU Foundation last year. The park will be located at 8399 Tippecanoe Road in Canfield with the intent for an educational area

for students in STEM-related fields.

The donation from the Williamson family also featured a \$3 million endowment in order to maintain the property.

Hazel Marie, the director of the Williamson Innovation Park and longest-tenured professor in YSU’s engineering program, spoke on what it means to fulfill Williamson III’s dream.

“It is a dream come true. It is an incredibly generous gift that the family will find will go on for generations,” Marie said. “I want my grandchildren, great-grandchildren, to come here and explore science and STEM.”

Multiple YSU engineering competition teams have already utilized the Williamson Innovation Park to gather data and test their inventions. The Baja Racing team was present at the event, and they already have a race track at the park.

“Our off-road vehicle Baja Team has a 1.25-mile track that they have used to get data and helped to propel them to second

place internationally and first place team in the U.S. in engineering and design,” Marie said.

Also present at the event was Brookfield High School’s “The Fuel” drone racing team, who placed fifth at the national championships in Denver, Colorado. Marie said she hopes K-12 students can utilize the park and learn from college students, including Brookfield’s drone team.

Other teams also visited the park, such as the Concrete Canoe and Robotics teams. The YSU RC Design-Fly-Build teams utilized the same runways Williamson III flew his own remote control planes on.

Williamson III often referred to his dream as a “Geek Park,” as he envisioned kids of all ages testing their knowledge with no walls or lectures.

Jim Tressel, former president of YSU, said this park aids in establishing a place for both students and people in the region.

“This is what kids need. This is something that we need to do,” Tressel said. “Our mission at Youngstown State University is obviously to serve our students and their experiences ... but we need to serve the people of the region. So, we have to do this.”

YSU Foundation President Paul McFadden spoke on the foundation’s plans with the newly unveiled park.

“We’re turning over the property over to the university ... and it will be the Williamson Innovation Park for STEM activities,” McFadden said.

According to McFadden, minimal work has been done on the property, but the university plans on erecting an outdoor classroom for not only college students but K-12 students.

“To know that we’re fulfilling his dream, and it’s a great responsibility for us to fulfill ... because now we have to deliver, but we look forward to doing so,” McFadden said.

Rock the Lot kicks off pre-season

By Natalie Lasky
The Jambar

The Rock the Lot fundraising event marked the commencement of Youngstown State University’s pre-season, Aug. 19.

The university’s football team operations fund was boosted by the event organized by Special Assistant Athletic Director Rocco Nolfi. The event combined live music and tailgating for the highest turnout possible.

“It’s a preseason tailgate party ... It lets people see the atmosphere of tailgating and then mix in some music,” Nolfi said.

Tailgating is a pre-event gathering in parking lots with food and drinks. Nolfi projected the event would draw a diverse crowd of all ages and aimed to create memories for the fans and community.

“It’s just a great opportunity for friends and family and fans to get together to cheer their team on while also having a good time,” Nolfi said.

Some tents offered cornhole and food, while others offered merchandise for sale to promote local businesses.

“We wanted to capture the essence of a game-day

experience, even without an actual game that evening. This event laid the foundation for potential future game-day live entertainment opportunities,” Nolfi said.

Rock the Lot showcased a music lineup featuring Craig Martini, followed by Fifth & Aurora, culminating with the headlining act, The Vindys.

YSU’s football head coach, Doug Phillips, said the football team is walking out to songs by The Vindys before home games.

“Our coming out music this year [is] to The Vindys,” Phillips said.

According to Nolfi, The Vindys have been receiving significant national recognition recently.

“[The Vindys] are a popular band that started local and they’ve started to get some national attention,” Nolfi said.

Jackie Popovec, the lead singer for The Vindys, said she was excited to share the moment with YSU fans.

“Participating in Rock the Lot is a fantastic opportunity. It’s not just about the music — it’s about bringing people together, supporting our team and creating cherished memories,” Popovec said.

The event’s success was from the support of its sponsors, including ServPro, McHenry Industries, HBK CPAs & Consultants, Cut & Toast Premium Cigars, Penn Ohio, Lindy Co., Compec, SOBE Thermal Energy Systems and Durica Allstate Insurance Agency.

According to Nolfi, the sponsors’ contributions were pivotal in ensuring the event’s execution and positive impact on the university’s football team.

Mike Crnarich from Youngstown Sportscards was

an attendee tailgating and selling “The YO vs. The O” t-shirts at the event. Crnarich said what his top three must-haves are when tailgating.

“You [got to] have beer, you [got to] have food and you [got to] have a good time,” Crnarich said.

Several food vendors were present at the event, providing a variety of choices that included BBQ, pizza and steak sandwiches. Additionally, attendees could purchase refreshments from a lemonade stand or a beer tent.

The football team intends to host an annual Rock the Lot fundraiser.

Tickets for the 2023 football season and tailgating passes can be purchased online and at the YSU box office.

For more information on Youngstown State’s football team, visit its website.



Rock the Lot happened Aug. 29. Photo by Natalie Lasky / The Jambar

Your SGA representatives

By Molly Burke and Matthew Sotlar
The Jambar

The Student Government Association is preparing for the 2023-24 school year with plans for student life improvements, campus events and new elections.

SGA is comprised of the office of the President, Executive Cabinet, the Academic Senate, and a Representative Body.

Alexander Papa, SGA president and business administration graduate student, said SGA's purpose is to advocate for students at Youngstown State University.

"Our little motto is 'to unite, to represent and to serve.' So, basically we're here to advocate for students on campus whatever their needs [and] whatever their concerns are," Papa said.

Papa said some of SGA's goals this year are to build on progress from last year and create new initiatives to improve life on campus.

"We are sort of focused on — first and foremost — expanding our Aunt Flow initiative ... to [Williamson College of Business Administration], [Cushwa Hall] and [Beeghly Hall]," Papa said. "We're going to focus on food insecurity. We do our big Swipe Out Hunger Week in the fall."

Junior philosophy and anthropology student, Jordan Pintar, is the vice president of SGA. She said SGA is also going to expand Penguin Shuttle services and create a student-run garden in the Sandy Simon Greenhouse in Ward Beecher Hall.

"It's a certain type of [GPS] technology that would be in coherence with the Y-app, so essentially you would be able to go on and see the Penguin Shuttle at any time," Pintar said. "We have gotten [a] chamber of the greenhouse over in Ward Beecher that we can use to grow food for the Penguin Pantry."

Pintar said SGA also planned Welcome Week events and fun activities to engage students on campus.

"We will eventually be having food trucks on campus. We will be doing like handouts of food vouchers as well," Pintar said. "Our first event that I'm super excited about is the campus cleanup that will be happening ... in September, October and November. Our first one is Sept. 27 ... it's just an opportunity for us ... to kind of group off and clean up campus — go around and pick up trash."

SGA will hold elections for those interested in being representatives or senators. Pintar said students can apply this fall.

"We [sent] out applications for representative posi-

tions and senator positions on [Aug 21] ... if you want to be more involved, the representative position is definitely the way to go. We have meetings from 4-5 every Monday," Pintar said. "The student senator position is more guided to the once a month on Wednesday's Academic Senate meetings."

Sofia Myers, junior political science and communications major is the SGA vice president of student activities. She said students can also get involved with SGA by reaching out for help.

"Through the [SGA Instagram], send us a DM," Myers said. "All of our emails are available on that website that's in the bio as well. If you didn't want to go directly through the website or the Instagram, you could see all of our emails of the executive team on the [SGA website] as well."

Myers said the SGA is centered around the student body.

"We get students involved," Myers said. "We make sure there's a safe place that students can come to ... really getting out there and making sure that the YSU students are feeling happy, they're feeling engaged and they feel that YSU is the place to be."

For more information on the SGA, head to its website.



SGA is located across from The Cove in Kilcawley Center. INSET: SGA President Alexander Papa (left) and SGA Vice President Jordan Pintar (right).

Photos by Molly Burke / The Jambar

Meet the Black Student Union

By **Shianna Gibbons**
The Jambar

Black Student Union is expanding this year with more opportunities for its members and community-based involvement.

BSU is a student organization at Youngstown State University for students of all races and ethnicities to find a safe place to discuss and learn about Black culture and history, according to Vice President of BSU, Della Toliver.

“What we try to do is have a collective community of Black or non-Black students to learn about Black history and culture and then to recognize our experience as young African American individuals in higher education,” Toliver said.

Toliver is a junior nursing major, and joined BSU to find a community with a similar interest in Black culture.

“I came from a predominantly white high school and [neighborhood] so I learned about the other cultures I was around and wanted to learn about Black culture. I wanted to be able to gather with other African American individuals at YSU to talk about our history and culture

and then share [that] with the Youngstown State community,” Toliver said.

Julian Johnson, the president of BSU, said the organization also hosts many fun events for students and members to build a family dynamic.

“My favorite thing about BSU is the new culture we built. We have a tight family, locker room type of atmosphere,” Julian said. “I had the luxury of my whole [executive board] coming in together. So, we became close ... and built it even better than what it was before. So, we’re just trying to keep it rolling.”

BSU hosted various events throughout Welcome Week to promote the organization. Tuesday BSU tabled the Student Activities Fair, Wednesday was its weekly meeting, Thursday the organization will be at the football game and Friday will conclude with a cookout at Harrison Field.

Throughout the week, BSU collected “Back to School” items to donate to Youngstown City Schools and give back to the Youngstown community.

There is a new membership process for BSU, according to Sabrina Johnson. Sabrina is in charge of the new membership process and is also the parliamentarian for BSU.

There is a new membership fee of \$5 and a 2.0 GPA requirement. This provides internship opportunities, BSU apparel, leadership and community engagement opportunities for members.

Sabrina said she joined BSU to find a community on campus.

“It was hard for me my first year just finding a place to fit in, and I ended up joining the [executive board] for an opportunity to grow my leadership,” Sabrina said. “I would recommend coming to a meeting, feel us out and see how you like it.”

Toliver said she encourages everyone to consider getting involved with BSU so they can find a community that embraces different identities and backgrounds.

“It’s important for people to know that the experience of African American students in higher education differs. We all have our own identities, whether it’s race, religion, identity or gender identity — everyone’s experience [will] be different, especially at a predominately white institution. Not saying that’s a bad thing, just that it’s different,” Toliver said.

Students can learn more about BSU through its Instagram @ysu.bsu or can attend its weekly Wednesday meetings at 6 p.m. in the Lariccia Room in Jones Hall.



Members of BSU celebrating the end of the 2022-23 school year with a cookout.

Photos courtesy of Black Student Union

Get Rec'd at the Rec

By Sydney Fairbanks and Shianna Gibbons
The Jambar

The Andrew's Recreation and Wellness Center has various services to offer Youngstown State University students and the start of the fall semester is an opportunity to get active.

Ryan McNicholas, director of Campus Recreation, said the Rec Center has a gym, adventure recreation, various exercise classes, personal training and hosts a variety of student events.

"Campus Rec has a ton to offer students and what's great is most of them are free or reduced costs," McNicholas said. "Anything from wellness to fitness ... we have club sports which you can enjoy [and] everything from softball to soccer [and] intramural sports."

YSU has around 20 different club sports such as baseball, tennis and archery. Information to join club sports will be out by the first week of school.

Club sports travel and compete against other universities and are more competitive than intramural sports.

For intramural sports, YSU offers three leagues each semester. This semester features flag football, volleyball and 7v7 soccer. It is a one-time fee of \$5 for one league or \$12 for all leagues.

For those less interested in competitive sports, the Adventure Recreation program includes a rock wall in the Rec Center as well as kayaking, canoeing and skiing

trips. Some student events include Puppy Palooza and yoga classes for student wellness.

McNicholas said the Rec Center is a great avenue to relieve stress.

"Not only is it physical recreation, but it's a help for stress management and relaxation [which could include] doing yoga, climbing the wall, jumping on a treadmill or playing basketball. It's different for everyone," McNicholas said.

Michael Sattler, a sophomore nursing major, uses the Rec Center almost daily to manage stress.

"[The Rec] helps me a lot. I always lifted or played sports to cope with stress. Everyone needs a 'getaway' and for me, it's lifting. It really helps counteract the stress of school," Sattler said.

The Rec Center also has spaces and equipment that groups or student organizations can rent for free or at a reduced cost.

Cornhole boards, volleyballs, giant Jenga or a 10-person tent are available for rental. Students can also rent out a basketball court or an aerobics studio at no cost.

For those interested in group fitness, the Rec Center has Group X classes. Classes are spread throughout the week and day with different instructors. There are spin classes, yoga classes and high intensity interval training classes, which are free for YSU students.

Haley Tarr, a junior exercise science major and Group X instructor, teaches yoga and full-body fitness classes.

Tarr said group fitness can be a great way to meet new people.

"[If] you're afraid to try something new, this is the perfect opportunity to do it. You're going to make new friends and you're going to want to come back every week [to] compete and get yourself out there," Tarr said.

Full-body fitness classes are on Tuesday from 12:15 to 12:45 p.m. and yoga is on Thursday from 7 to 7:45 a.m.

The Rec Center is also an opportunity for students to work on campus, according to McNicholas.

"We employ over about 100 students per year. That includes any of our instructors, any of our trainers, any of our officials, our students working our front desk and providing customer service, our marketing students, to our health educators that we've had in the past to help other students along their journeys of fitness and wellness," McNicholas said.

The Rec Center's first all-student event, 'The Grill & Chill Tailgate,' is from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Aug. 31 outside the Rec Center.

Students can use the Rec Center anytime during the fall semester hours with a valid YSU ID.

Fall semester hours:

Monday through Thursday from 6:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.

Friday from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. and

Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Lost and found: Puppy pandemonium

By Elizabeth Coss
The Jambar

Puppy Palooza, an event meant to create a sense of peace on campus through bonding with animals, turned into a search after a puppy was allegedly stolen Aug. 29.

Lego, the two-month old brown and white labrador mix, was presumed taken during the event hosted by New Lease on Life Rescue.

According to Maria Guyan, the founder of the shelter, they were notified around 6:45 p.m. that the dog had been safely turned in to the Youngstown State University Police Department.

"We're very glad that he has been found," Guyan said. "It was all thanks to the tips and information we had been provided with."

Lego was brought in as a newborn with his mother and siblings from a high-kill shelter in West Virginia. Guyan said the incident was surprising to first hear about.

"We're very shocked that this happened. We've been doing the Puppy Palooza event for years, and we've never had an issue," Guyan said.

The shelter agreed to drop charges if the individual gave up the puppy willingly to either the animal rescue organization or police, despite a report having been filed. Guyan confirmed a volunteer would retrieve the puppy from the station.

Guyan also said she expects Puppy Yoga scheduled for Sept. 6 to go on as planned as the event is pre-contained, but some security changes may come to Puppy Palooza in the future.



Photo courtesy of New Lease on Life Rescue.

Lego was reported missing but has since been returned.

Twirling champions on the field

By Eilizabeth Coss and Jillian McIntosh
The Jambar

This August, two feature twirlers competed with Team USA in Liverpool, England in the first International Baton Twirling Federation Championships.

From Aug. 4 to 13, Brooklyn Bunish, a senior social work major, and Madeline Huff, a freshman forensic science major, both performed and placed in the Level A Nations Cup.

Bunish, who earned three gold medals throughout the competition in Twirling Core, Show Core and Artistic Twirl, said meeting people from around the world was exciting, despite her nerves.

“It was very nerve-wracking, especially right before you go on you have to stand in a waiting cell and you can’t really be next to your coach at all,” Bunish said. “It was a really good experience because I could talk to people I’ve never met and from different countries and I got to make a lot of friendships.”

This is Bunish’s last year of performing. She said she aspires to become a judge and coach after graduating.

“I’m going to switch over to get my judges’ license to give back to the sport that’s given me a lot,” Bunish said. “I understand what they’re go-

ing through, so if they don’t have a perfect routine, I still know what needs to be in there, what I can help with and what comments I need to give back.”

Straight out of high school, Huff traveled with Bunish to the IBTF Championships and Nations Cup and placed 8th in the X-Strut competition.

“It’s like a dance routine but with a baton — but you don’t toss the baton at all, which is really different than other routines,” Huff said. “Knowing that I was able to place 8th, I know that I can push myself harder and come out on top next time.”

During the individual events, the pair each competed against around 50 other twirlers. Huff has been twirling competitively since she was 6 years old and twirled in high school before coming to Youngstown State University.

Huff said she’s excited to experience twirling on the collegiate level and the change of pace.

“I’m very excited because I’ve never experienced the college experience ... I’ve only twirled on the high school field, so it’s a lot different than college,” Huff said.

Bunish and Huff will perform at every home football game this season alongside The Marching Pride and will also be traveling to The Ohio State University on Sept. 9.



Photo courtesy of Brooklyn Bunish
Brooklyn Bunish captured three gold medals overseas.

Finishing out Welcome Week

Thursday

Build a Penguin Lottery

10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Follow @ysu_activities on Instagram to find the location.

Food Truck Adventure with SGA

11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Lincoln Avenue in front of Silvestri Hall

Fraternity & Sorority Info Fair

11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Carl Nunziato Veterans Resource Center

Grill & Chill Tailgate

4 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Grassy area outside of Rec Center

YSU Football vs Valparaiso

7:30 p.m.
Stambaugh Stadium

Friday

YSU Day Celebration

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
If Rain: Chestnut Room, Kilcawley Center

Scavenger Hunt

3 p.m. to 5 p.m.
The Cove, Kilcawley West

First Fridays

5 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Phelps Street, downtown Youngstown

Catholic Penguins Social Night

7 p.m.
St. John Henry Newman Center

The Jambar Column

Justice for Pluto

A significant part of my childhood was my father, who had a sort of fascination with all things space-related. Therefore, young me was also intrigued and wanted to learn everything I could in order to impress him. I even had my own posters of space, courtesy of my dad; my most treasured poster was a signed copy of the first men on the moon.

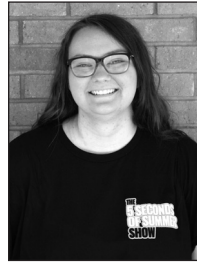
One day in elementary school learning about the Solar System, we were told that — what I had known prior to that lesson — was suddenly incorrect.

I can vividly remember Pluto still being considered a planet in the textbooks that were nearly ten years old. The teacher said Pluto was not a planet, but the textbook said it was. From that point forward, I vowed to hate science class because of how confusing it was.

On Aug. 24, 2006 — or 17 years ago — Pluto was officially renamed as a dwarf planet by the International Astronomical Union. Specifically, the IAU had redefined the term “planet” in such a way that Pluto would no longer be considered.

This definition describes a planet as something that is in orbit around the Sun, be nearly or even perfectly round, and has a clear path in its orbit. This would mean that the Solar System would hereby be made of Mercury, Venus, Earth, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune. Pluto moved into the dwarf planet category among what could be hundreds—even thousands of others—that we may not even know about yet.

Pluto has only met two of the three requirements to be considered a planet with the only thing that stands in its way is it not having a clear orbit. This



Alison Butz

basically means Pluto’s orbit is still quite messy and would be theoretically hitting things that are pulled into its gravity.

A fun fact about Pluto is that it was named on May 1, 1930. It was named after who the Romans considered as the God of Death, because it was the furthest away from the Sun, therefore making it the coldest.

One new thing I learned while reading more about Pluto is that it was spotted at the Lowell Observatory in Arizona in 1930. In this era, planet hunting was a big craze, and every scientist wanted to discover a new planet to add to the collection of planets.

However, this discovery was not the first occurrence, with at least 16 other Pluto-spottings before it was named and registered.

For the remainder of that school year, I sat in my assigned seat just staring at the poster of the Solar System that still had Pluto on it. It wasn’t until maybe two years later that the poster was removed and replaced.

To this day I try to keep myself in the loop about space in a way to keep my childish curiosity alive. I’ve even tried learning all about horoscopes but I haven’t had much luck keeping up with it.

You could, in a way, blame this on the disinterest I had in all things science after my childhood declaration of hating science class.

Quote of the Week

“Nothing puzzles me more than time and space; and yet nothing troubles me less, as I never think about them.”

— Charles Lamb,
English poet and essayist

The Jambar Editorial

The Valley’s animal hoarding problem

Almost every week there’s a local story in the news about an animal hoarding situation. The stories are led with anywhere between 20 to 100 animals taken into custody by local animal shelters — beyond their space and labor capacity.

At the end of July, the Animal Welfare League in Trumbull County took in over 90 animals from a house in Greene Township. Just a little over a week earlier, dozens of dogs, cats and over 40 snakes were taken from a man living in a Youngstown home. If you go back week by week, you’ll find a new story with dozens of suffering animals.

The problem is so prevalent Animal Charity officials started calling them “zoo houses.”

These animals experience some of the most extreme neglect. They have little to no access to clean food or water, they’re covered in fleas and ticks, sleeping in their feces and sharing small or limited spaces with dozens of other animals.

Animals in the Greene Township situation were trapped with the remains of other animals who died from the harsh conditions — several animals had to eat the remains for survival.

The conditions of the houses these animals are rescued from are too hazardous for animals or people to live in.

Once animal charities and shelters rescue the animals, it’s a long journey for physical recovery if the animals are not too far gone. The recovery is expensive and time-consuming and straining already limited resources for shelters. Not to mention if the animals will ever mentally recover from their trauma.

In June there was a call for city and county officials to do something to address animal cruelty, abuse, neglect and hoarding in the area. WKBN reported the meeting, and officials say that in the month of June, they’ve taken over 100 animals of 19 different species and spent over \$100,000 caring for these neglected animals.

That number is closer to 500 animals rescued in the area just this year — meaning 500 animals have suffered through

the most egregious type of animal cruelty.

There are some laws on the city and county level to catch the problem, such as having animal registration, vaccinations and tether laws, but more is needed. People who hoard animals are not taking their pets to the vet or registering them with the county. Animal advocates say there is a severe lack of enforcement for these rules.

According to officials, there used to be a call every once in a while but now they get multiple calls a day about animal hoarding.

The suffering of these pets is real and overwhelming, and many people ask themselves, ‘How can someone do this to animals?’ The answer is that these individuals who hoard animals are also suffering. Hoarding animals is often a sign of mental illness.

According to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, animal hoarding is a complex issue that encompasses mental illness, animal welfare and public safety concerns. ASPCA said these individuals start out with the best intentions for taking care of animals but cannot even provide the minimal amount of care for animals.

Even though there have been steps to bring mental illness to the center stage of discussion, there doesn’t seem to be enough resources or a proactive way to bring available resources to people who need it. Animal hoarding also seems to carry more shame around it because of the direct harm it causes animals, making hoarders less likely to seek help for their animals and themselves.

Instead, animal welfare and charities rely on others to report the problem, which is often beyond what is considered manageable.

To address the suffering of the animals and individuals, stay vigilant for any cases of neglect or hoarding. Report them and think about donating your time, money or resources to animal welfare agencies while they try to provide the best care for all animals.

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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, sports 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.

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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.

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KICKING INTO SUCCESS



Eva Sunjevaric does a throw-in.

Photo courtesy of YSU Sports Information

Soccer season starts strong

By Madeline Hippeard
The Jambar

With a strong start to its season, the Youngstown State University women's soccer team defeated Saint Francis University, University of Akron and Duquesne University, but had its three-game win streak cut short by Canisius University.

The Penguins started out their season on the road against Saint Francis on Aug. 17. Junior Elis Klein Spindola scored the first goal of the game, which gave the Penguins the lead.

The Red Flash managed to tie the game as the second half began. However, senior Abby Knight scored 10 minutes later, breaking the tie and putting the Penguins back in the lead for the remainder of the match.

Sophomore Chloe Weiland also scored her first career goal for YSU late in the second half of the game. The Penguins defeated the Red Flash with a score of 3-1.

With the offense scoring more efficiently, graduate student Mikalya Mustard credits the offseason to the Penguin's first home opener win since 2019.

"In the offseason, we get a workout packet which is a

bunch of different sprint variations, conditioning stuff, lifting — along with ball stuff everyone does in the summer that carries off of our spring season," Mustard said.

The Penguins prepared to face the Akron Zips on Aug. 20. The Zips won the last five of 11 meetings between the two teams.

After transferring to Youngstown State from the University of Pittsburgh, junior Maddie Keister scored her first career goal for the Penguins early in the first period.

In the midst of a defensively heavy game, senior goalkeeper Brooklynn Kirkpatrick kept the Zips from scoring with four saves, earning her first shutout of the season and leading the Penguins to a 1-0 victory.

After defeating Akron, the Penguins traveled to Pittsburgh to play the Duquesne Dukes. With only 37 seconds left in the game, Weiland scored, breaking a 1-1 tie that had lasted the second half of the game. Weiland's goal brought the Penguins to a 2-1 victory over the Dukes. Sophomore Taylor Berry also scored late in the first half.

With the victory against Duquesne, Kirkpatrick tied for YSU's 13-win record.

For the first time since 2021, the Penguins began their

season with a 3-0 record.

Head coach Brian Shrum said the Penguins are prepared well for their games because of some of the most important players on the team.

"If we did not have training sessions of a good caliber, we wouldn't be able to prepare for the team we're going to play," Shrum said.

Finally, the Penguins returned home to Farmers National Bank Field to host Canisius on Aug. 27. Despite starting strong, the Penguins ultimately failed to keep the Golden Griffins from scoring with eight minutes left in the second half.

The Penguins had three shots on goal, however none made it past the Griffin's goalkeeper. Unable to score themselves, the Penguins lost their first game of the season 0-1, cutting the historic run short on the fourth game of the year.

The Penguins will play again Aug. 31 at 3 p.m. when they travel to Washington, D.C. to take on George Washington University.

To find more information on the game and to watch it live, visit [YSUsports.com](https://www.ysusports.com) and [ESPN+](https://www.espn.com).

Volleyball hosts season-opening invitational

By **Marissa Masano**
The Jambar

The Youngstown State University women's volleyball team opened its 2023 campaign by hosting Canisius University, Saint Francis University and Belmont University on Aug. 25 and 26 inside Beeghly Center.

Entering the season, the Penguins have nine returning players, including graduate student Josi Borum who was a Second Team All-Horizon League selection. Another returnee for the Penguins is sophomore Abbie Householder who was named on last season's Horizon League All-Freshman Team.

Along with the returning players, the Penguins added four freshmen and a transfer student for the 2023 season. For Borum, the incoming players make an impactful role to the team's play style.

"It's always fun to have a lot of newcomers that bring some different roles to the team," Borum said. "It will be good for them to learn our system and give us some new areas of playing."

The lady 'Guins opened the day by defeating Canisius 3-2. Senior Elise Moeller led the team with 21 kills while also tallying a double-double. Borum, Householder and senior Isabel Schaeffbauer also recorded double-doubles.

To finish off opening day, the Penguins were defeat-

ed by Belmont. The Penguins started strong, taking the opening set 25-16, but fell to the Bruins in over three sets.

Although Belmont led the game in kills, aces and assists, the Bruins accumulated more errors than the Penguins.

The defensive side of the ball for Youngstown State was strong as the team recorded nine blocks against Belmont's seven. Leading the team with four blocks a piece was sophomore Julia Sell and senior Dayan Malave.

To close out the invitational, the Penguins faced the Red Flash on Aug. 26. Saint Francis took the first, third and fourth set to come away with a victory over the Penguins. The final score was 3-1, despite the Penguins fighting through 38 ties and 15 lead changes.

For the Penguins, Borum and junior Jazmin Vergara both recorded double-doubles. Vergara also led the team with sixteen kills.

Following the invitational, the Penguins lead the Horizon League in digs and moved into the top three in kills and assists. Youngstown State is building off one of the best offenses in recent seasons and are currently ranked fourth in the conference in hitting percentage with .209.

Individual Penguin performances are also standing out. Tentatively, graduate student Isidora Susic leads the

Horizon League in digs averaging 5.23 per set. Vergara was Youngstown State's representative on the All-Tournament team at the invitational. She averaged 3.57 kills per set as well as an attacking percentage of .340.

The Penguin's performances also stood out in the "game highs" leaderboard for the Horizon League. Susic's 27 digs in the game against Canisius currently leads the league. Also against Canisius, senior Elise Moeller tentatively leads the league in total attempts with 60.

The lady 'Guins will now set their sights on the Toledo Invitational on Aug. 31. The first game in a three-game slate will be played against the host team, the University of Toledo.

Head coach Aline Scott is returning for her sixth season with the Penguins. For Scott, the three-game stretch of Toledo, University of Memphis and Virginia Tech will be a challenge but will help the team move forward.

"It was built that way so we can be really challenged this week and learn to continue those behaviors under stress," Scott said.

The Penguins haven't faced off against the Rockets since 2021. During the meeting, the Rockets defeated the Penguins, 3-0. Both teams are entering the matchup with records of 1-2.

To watch the game check out ESPN+ and for stats, highlights and more visit ysusports.com.



YSU Women's Volleyball Team's performance stood out in the games high leaderboard.

Photo courtesy of YSU Sports Information

Defrosting the Ice Castle

By Cameron Niemi
The Jambar

Since the start of training camp, the Youngstown State University football team has been busy at Stambaugh Stadium preparing for the upcoming 2023 season. The team played in several scrimmages throughout the summer against each other.

The 'Guins have been putting in months of preparation. The team will finally showcase all of their hard work in front of the Penguin faithful as they kick off the season at home, Aug. 31, against Valparaiso University.

Valparaiso is located in Indiana and it's in the Pioneer Football League. YSU is 3-0 in the all-time series against Valpo. The Penguins last opened the season at home on a Thursday night back in 2021, defeating Incarnate Word.

Head coach Doug Phillips will enter his fourth season at Youngstown State. The team has high hopes to improve from last season after going 7-4 and barely missing the playoffs. The team's returning players and coaches want to "leave no doubt" this season.

Phillips spoke on the importance of these early games and especially the home games.

"You constantly have to learn and in this league you better win your home games. No matter who you are playing," Phillips said. "If you want a chance you gotta win your home games."

It all starts with the leaders of the team. Four senior players were named captains for the season. Bryce Oliver, wide receiver, Quincy Lenton defensive back, quarterback Mitch Davidson and defensive end Dylan Wudke.

Davidson will lead the offense after starting the last seven games in 2022. Davidson proved himself last year, as he

threw for 12 touchdowns, ran in four and threw one interception.

Davidson will have the majority of his offensive weapons back to start the season. Oliver is coming off a 10-touchdown and 821-yard season. Sophomore Max Tomczak and junior Latrell Fordham will also be important pieces to the offense this season. Senior tailback Dra Rushton is also returning in the backfield.

Returning senior tight-end Jake Benio spoke about the opener and playing at home and the importance of defending Youngstown.

"This is our home, we practice here everyday and this is where we are at, all the time. This is where just about all of us spend the majority of our time throughout the school year and even the offseason," Benio said. "This is where we wanna be, this is our home away from home."

The defensive line has several players returning. Wudke led the team in sacks last season and junior tackle Chris Fitzgerald will lead the charge up front. Leading tackler at the linebacker position senior Greg Benton Jr. returns, alongside juniors Alex Howard and Devin Johnson.

Last year's leading tacklers will return on the back end, including Lenton and junior Jordan Trowers. Junior D'Marco Augustin and senior Marcus Hooker will help lead the defensive backs.

Over the summer, the All-Missouri Valley Football Conference announced its pre-season honors. The team had three players named to the first-team — Oliver, Wudke and junior offensive tackle Jaison Williams.

Tickets for the game against Valparaiso can be bought online or YSU students can get their free tickets at the stadium with a valid YSU ID. Kick off is set for 7:30 p.m at the Ice Castle.

The game can be watched on ESPN+ or listened to on 570 WKBN or iHeartRadio.



Photos courtesy of YSU Sports Information

The football team prepared for the 2023 season at its schrimage Aug. 19. INSET: Quincy Lenton, Dylan Wudke, Bryce Oliver and Mitch Davidson (from top to bottom).