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POSITION SWITCH-UP



SGA President Jordan Pintar and Executive Vice President Sofia Myers.

Photo by Molly Burke / The Jambar

SGA president resigns, roles reassigned

By Molly Burke
The Jambar

Alexander Papa has officially stepped down as Youngstown State University's Student Government Association president after nine months. A new president and executive vice president were appointed during a meeting Feb. 13 in the Rossi Room of Kilcawley Center.

Jordan Pintar, former executive vice president, automatically assumed the role of president with Papa's resignation in accordance with SGA's constitution. Pintar has served as acting president since Jan. 15, when Papa took a medical leave of absence.

Taking on the role of executive vice president is Sofia Myers, the former vice president of student life. Myers was nominated for the position in accordance with SGA's constitution, and representatives unanimously elected her at the meeting.

With a month of serving as acting president under her belt, Pintar said the transition will be smooth.

"It was a very unfortunate circumstance that it came so unknowingly, but I was able to transition a lot of that work, and with Sofie already having experience being one of the VPs that we have of our committees, she was able to transition that work pretty easily," Pintar said.

Pintar said SGA will continue with its initiatives, but her role in carrying them out will change.

"There's a lot of things that we are already working on for this semester ... Now, I have to carry that out, and I get to do it with Sofie," Pintar said. "Our initiatives are the same and what we do to get them done are the same. It's just kind of a matter of where I need to be now on the daily."

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Say hello to Ellucian Experience

By Sydney Fairbanks
The Jambar

Ellucian Experience will officially replace Penguin Portal on March 1, leaving Youngstown State University students, faculty and staff with a customizable and dynamic user experience.

The new portal will keep Penguin Portal's name and features, with a different look and interactive cards that link to other pages.

According to senior project manager Jeff Wormley, Ellucian Experience was available in August 2023. Wormley said the change must be made because the company that owns Penguin Portal decided to 'end of life' the product.

"We had no choice whatsoever. We had to use a new project. Fortunately, they had a new product that we could use, and it was actually cheaper for us," Wormley said.

Rosalyn Donaldson, director of IT Training Services and academic continuity team manager, said the new system is customizable and easy to use.

"The old system is a list of links and the new system is a series of tiles, which you can make visible on your home page or not," Donaldson said. "You don't have to display all the things that you will probably never use."

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For Myers, the new role is a big shift, but she said it's an exciting change.

"It'll be less of event planning and running my committee and more of looking at the administrative side of things — setting agendas for meetings, going to meetings with administrators and things like that, more of the academic side of things," Myers said.

With concerns surrounding YSU President Bill Johnson's appointment and program cuts in the Dana School of Music, SGA has been encouraging students to express their thoughts. Myers said she will use her role as executive vice president to continue listening to community voices.

"Student government acts as the direct liaison between the students and the administration. So, I think just figuring out what our reps want me to bring to the conversation and how I can accurately represent the entire student body through those meetings," Myers said.

Following Myers's election, Rep. Emma O'Connell and Rep. Jenna Billet nominated each other for the position of

student life vice president. Both O'Connell and Billet are on the student life committee, which is led by the student life vice president.

Billet said she and O'Connell planned to nominate each other before the meeting.

"We both are on the [student] life committee obviously, and we're both really enthusiastic with it," Billet said. "We both try to come up with ideas to make it more fun for students on campus, and I feel like we both have pretty good backgrounds to hold that position."

If elected, Billet said she will use the position to showcase the Dana School of Music and facilitate conversations between students and the administration.

"I would want to make it where we can have some sort of campus-life activity to promote the Dana School of Music," Billet said. "Just try to be more of a voice for the students and express their concerns. If I get the leadership position, just make sure that what they're telling me is heard."

O'Connell said if she's elected, she will continue planning activities to improve campus life.

"I really see this as an opportunity to test my strength," O'Connell said. "There's nothing too specific that I'm hoping to accomplish. I love the events we're doing now. I feel like they are very proactive ... I want to just keep promoting all healthy and good things."

Similar to Billet, O'Connell said she would use the leadership position to uplift voices from the Dana School of Music, as many students have recently attended SGA's meetings in support of Dana.

"[There's] a lot of people showing up in the gallery expressing their opinions, and I love to see that. I want to keep seeing that. I just hope to take whatever they want to see actually happening on campus," O'Connell said.

Representatives can still make nominations for student life vice president until the election, which will take place at SGA's next meeting at 4 p.m. on Feb. 24 in the Rossi Room.

Pintar and Myers are running for re-election as president and executive vice president for the 2024-2025 school year. Elections for executive, representative and senate positions will take place in April.



Check out the women's three-game win streak on Page 16!

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7-DAY WEATHER FORECAST

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

High: 49°F	High: 36°F	High: 29°F	High: 41°F	High: 47°F	High: 52°F	High: 48°F
Low: 27°F	Low: 22°F	Low: 23°F	Low: 25°F	Low: 32°F	Low: 34°F	Low: 35°F
Chance of precip: 84%	Chance of precip: 14%	Chance of precip: 25%	Chance of precip: 12%	Chance of precip: 10%	Chance of precip: 55%	Chance of precip: 19%



Precipitation



Overcast



Overcast



A Few Clouds



Mostly Cloudy



Rain



Overcast

Information courtesy of accuweather.com

Track and field, XC teams excel in classroom



By Teziah Howard
Jambar Contributor

Athletes in track and field and cross country have raced toward high GPAs at Youngstown State University.

During the fall semester, both teams demonstrated dedication in academics. According to each team's social media platforms, both men's and women's teams exceeded a 3.0 GPA last semester.

The women's cross country team stood out in the long run, closing the fall semester with a team GPA of 3.63. The runners cruised through the semester with a 3.42 cumulative GPA. The team also finished with five athletes achieving 4.0 GPAs and 11 athletes achieving a GPA of 3.2 or higher.

The women's track and field team continued the stout performance, obtaining a 3.55 GPA with a 3.45 cumulative GPA for the semester. The team had 16 'Guins sprint to a 4.0 finish, while 42 cleared 3.0 GPAs.

In January, long sprinter Havilland Jones contributed to a successful academic semester for the Penguins. Jones is an athletic training major who's simultaneously pursuing her undergraduate and master's degree. She said it takes self-discipline to succeed as a student-athlete.

"It takes you being able to sit down with yourself and say, 'I need to get this done. I need to make this time. I got to go lift. I got to go run. I got to take care of my body. I got to eat right,'" Jones said. "It's a lot on my plate, but at the same time I know I have the self-discipline to be able to do so, and I think I've done a pretty good job."

The men's track and field team added

to a relay of academic prosperity, with a semester final 3.31 GPA. The team tallied 12 student-athletes who dashed through the semester with 4.0 GPAs, and 45 who finished with a 3.0 or higher.

Sophomore Trenton Shutters is a middle-distance runner who's had a positive academic impact on the team. Shutters said the team's success in the classroom shows a strong work ethic.

"This achievement really shows that we put the work in on and off the track, whether it be the classrooms or getting it done on the track," Shutters said.

As defending Horizon League champions, the men's cross country team did not slow down. The men showcased their academic endurance, attaining a 3.49 GPA and a cumulative 3.37 GPA. Fifteen athletes ran past a 3.2 GPA finish, with four adding 4.0 GPAs to their resume.

Track and field head coach Brian Gorby has been at the helm of the program for over 30 years. Gorby said he was excited to see his athletes stand out as students.

"We're excited to see 3.4, 3.5 [GPAs], Academic All-Americans recognized by [USA Track & Field]," Gorby said. "All of that is huge, it's been the standard here for the last 20 years."

Gorby said YSU athletics's academic counseling contributes to teams' success.

"The person I wanna make sure gets credit is Taylor Blandine, our academic counselor. She's a rockstar," Gorby said. "Her and Jaysen Spencer, [director of Athletics Academic Services], got to run our department."

The teams plan to continue their athletic and academic success throughout the spring semester. As the track and field team finishes the indoor season, it inches closer to an outdoor season.



Kaitlyn Eger (left) practices pole vault before competing at a meet. Hunter Christopher (right) prepares to compete at a home meet.

Photos by Dylan Lux / The Jambar

Ellucian

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Donaldson said the new system is also more mobile friendly.

“It’s mobile friendly too — more mobile friendly than the old version. [On] the new portal, you can use your phone to pull up the different tiles that you’ve made favorites on your regular desktop Penguin Portal,” Donaldson said.

Each of the portal’s cards can be taken off or moved around the page, allowing students to choose what to prioritize. New tiles can also be added to the page by searching up keywords.

Wormley said the new system uses real time data and displays live updates.

“If you’re a student and you open up a card that is your class schedule, you’ll see your real time class schedule right there. And if your teachers put grades on Blackboard and you open up your class, it will tell you what your grade is at the time,” Wormley said.

New cards are constantly added to Ellucian Experience. Recently, ‘new freshman’ and ‘new transfer student’ cards were added. Wormley said the constant

updates allow an easier process for implementing changes.

“Every day that I come in and open [Ellucian Experience] up, there’s some new card on it,” Wormley said. “It’s very easy for us to add functions to it where before it was a tedious process.”

Since launching the new system in August, IT Services held focus groups to gain feedback and tweak what needed to be changed.

After meeting with students, Donaldson and her colleagues met with YSU departments such as Housing and Residence Life, the Penguin Service Center, the Office of University Bursar, and Tutoring Services.

Donaldson said the department needed to figure out what students wanted to see for the portal and what they searched for the most.

“We also had to develop a Google search internally for our portal so that when you put in the term that you’d look for like ‘get a job’ — there’s ‘employment,’ there’s ‘job,’ there’s ‘work’ and different terms that students would look for when they’re trying to seek on-campus employment,” Donaldson said.



Photo by Sydney Fairbanks / The Jambar

Jeff Wormley is the senior project manager for Ellucian Experience.

News Brief

Priority enrollment deadline extended

Youngstown State University announced in a press release Feb. 12 the deadline for priority enrollment has been extended through June 1.

The extension was made after the Department of Education announced changes to the Student Aid Index’s formula, which is used to determine financial need for FAFSA. Previous delays followed the passage of the FAFSA Simplification Act.

According to the press release, the university will not receive any FAFSA results for the 2024-2025 school year until early March. The announcement also encouraged students to complete their FAFSA as soon as possible.

Celebrating Black history at YSU

By Sydney Fairbanks
and Christopher Gillett

The Jambar

Several organizations are celebrating Black History Month with various events at Youngstown State University.

Julian Johnson, a junior political science major, is the president of Black Student Union, which meets every Wednesday in the Lariccia Room of Jones Hall.

BSU has planned events for Black History Month, including a brown sugar brunch from 1 to 3 p.m. on Feb. 17 and a Black poetry slam at 6 p.m. on Feb. 21 in the Lariccia Room.

Johnson said Black History Month is significant because of the struggles African Americans have overcome.

"We, as African Americans, came a long way in this country. We started out pretty rough in shackles. We've progressed and made ways for ourselves, just continuing the lineage and the unbreakable will," Johnson said.

Bliss Hall is also presenting the African American History Month Exhibition dedicated to Black history. The exhibition runs until Feb. 22 in the Judith Rae

Solomon Gallery and features artwork by Nasir Watson, a YSU graduate.

Samuel Adu-Poku, professor and coordinator of art education, said he initiated the exhibition 17 years ago.

"They organize a Black History Month [exhibition] every year, so I worked with the director [of the Africana Studies program] and we decided to start this. They give it a funding, and then I look for the artists," Adu-Poku said.

Adu-Poku said he decided to bring art into the celebration of Black History Month because the art community lacks African American creators.

"It really creates an opportunity for the African Americans in particular to be able to get a venue to be able to share their experience and expertise," Adu-Poku said.

Penny Wells, the executive director of Mahoning Valley Sojourn to the Past, has organized a showing of the 2022 movie "Till," which is about the the lynching of 14-year-old Emmet Till in 1955 and Till's mother's pursuit of justice afterward.

"Till" will show at 6 p.m. on Feb. 27 in the auditorium of the Williamson College of Business Administration.

Keith Beauchamp, the researcher, co-writer and co-producer of "Till," will host the movie's showing. Beauchamp will also host a Q&A session after the showing.

Wells said Black History Month is significant because it highlights the underappreciated role of African Americans in American history.

"It is one month out of the year where people seem to focus on Black history. My feeling is Black history is American history, so we should be focusing on it 12 months out of the year, and it's unfortunate that we don't," Wells said.

Wells was involved in the Civil Rights Movement. She participated in the March Against Fear in 1966 and organized voting drives in the South.

"[The Civil Rights Movement]

was just the beginning. I think it was the opening of my eyes to what was going on and has just impacted everything I've done since," Wells said.

YSU will also host Step Afrika! in the Chestnut Room of Kilcawley Center at 7 p.m. on Feb. 20. The live performance will showcase the art form of stepping, a dance style that developed in African American fraternities and sororities. The event is free and open to the public.



Photo by Sydney Fairbanks / The Jambar

Nasir Watson's artwork in the Judith Rae Solomon Gallery.

Concerns continue over Johnson

By Elizabeth Coss and Christopher Gillett

The Jambar

A student-led "Next Steps" meeting was hosted at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Youngstown on Feb. 8 to discuss the future of Youngstown State University.

The meeting's purpose was to determine how to proceed with YSU President Bill Johnson's appointment. Students, alumni, faculty and the public attended.

While the meeting was not open to the media, The Jambar spoke to senior political science major Rose McClurkin, who organized the event. McClurkin said the meeting was meant to continue opposition toward the administration.

"This event is happening tonight to continue the momentum of making sure that we have strategic steps to hold the administration accountable," McClurkin said. "Getting input from community members, alumni and students to make sure we keep the conversation going on how we're going to work with this new administra-

tion."

Around 50 students walked out of classes Jan. 22 to protest Johnson's first day as president. Despite the protest, McClurkin said apathy is prominent on campus.

"Apathy and general disheartedness [at YSU] is pretty common, but it is also a manufactured apathy. Like the administration wants their students to feel like they can't do anything. They want them to feel like anything that they say or any actions that they take aren't going to have meaningful repercussions or actual changes are going to be made," McClurkin said.

Johnson was hired by the board of trustees through a confidential search process in November. McClurkin said the disapproval of Johnson is not political, but the hiring process was.

"Though our disapproval of this process [that brought Johnson to YSU] is not political, the process in of itself was political," McClurkin said. "There is no way for the governor-appointed board of trustees to appoint a Republican politician of the state of Ohio and it not be a

political process."

Multiple protests against Johnson's hiring have occurred on campus and in board meetings since his appointment. McClurkin said she believes the administration didn't expect push back to last this long.

"I don't think the board thought this was going to last this long. I think the board thought that this was gonna blow over and the pushback from this wasn't going to be so sustained — especially economically sustained, like people are pulling money," McClurkin said.

McClurkin said more meetings are being planned and that pressure from the community will continue to affect the administration.

"We're consistently meeting and consistently acting to prove them wrong. That at some point, they are going to have to hear us, and they are facing those tangible repercussions of money being taken out, of gaining national and statewide news coverage. This isn't going away," McClurkin said.

CATCHING UP ON CARDIAC HEALTH

American ‘Heart to Heart’ Month

By Elizabeth Coss
The Jambar

Every February, the American Heart Association celebrates American Heart Month to raise awareness for heart disease, the leading cause of death worldwide.

In 2023, Cleveland Clinic was announced as the No. 1 hospital for cardiology, heart and vascular surgery for the 29th year in a row. Giovanni Bruno was a cardiovascular intensive care unit nurse for Cleveland Clinic for more than two years.

“I love my job,” Bruno said. “A lot of people around here that have heart issues and everything go [to Cleveland Clinic]. They’re No. 1 for a reason. They have all these resources and it’s only an hour away.”

Bruno earned his Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 2021 from Youngstown State University. Now, he’s back pursuing a Doctorate in Nurse Anesthesia.

When he started at Cleveland Clinic, Bruno worked in the ICU alongside patients with COVID-19. The cardiac unit had been redesigned to treat the overwhelming number of patients coming in. Machines commonly used for cardiac patients were used for COVID-19 cases as well.

Bruno said it was a “nightmare” to manage both a patient’s respiratory and cardiac needs during the pandemic.

“[The pandemic] wasn’t just 2020, it was 2021, 2022 and there’s some people still getting diagnosed with COVID now,” Bruno said. “The problem with COVID is your lungs are basically shot ... they would use ECMO and have patients on the ventilator, and ECMO is a cardiac ICU thing. So, that’s why they had to make the [combined] unit because all these cardiac unit devices, that’s something we had to monitor.”

Bruno primarily worked with patients following open-heart surgery, monitoring their condition and ensuring they received the best treatment they could get. He said lifestyle played a big role in common health issues he saw in patients.

“It’s a lifestyle disease,” Bruno said. “Most of the time, majority of the patients I ever took care of that had to get heart surgery had diabetes [and] it was uncontrolled. They had hypertension, they smoked, their cholesterol levels were through the roof.”

American Heart Month also raises awareness for heart failure, stroke and other heart conditions, including defects.

Gavin Esposito, a junior history major at YSU, was born prematurely and weighed just over two pounds. Doctors soon realized Esposito was born with a congenital heart defect — Tetralogy of Fallot with pulmonary atresia — and he underwent open-heart surgery at one month old.

In total, Esposito has undergone three open-heart surgeries and cardiac catheterizations. During his second surgery, doctors had to “crack open” his ribcage to get to his heart and use special handmade tools to operate.

Despite not remembering much about the surgeries, Esposito said his fondest memory is with his mother following his third open-heart surgery at five years old.

“[The] best memories I have with my mom is her putting me in one of those ‘big people’ wheelchairs and us getting a milkshake down the little cafe they had at the Rainbow Babies and Children’s Hospital,” Esposito said. “Me just laughing so hard and her laughing, that’s a core memory with her. I don’t know why I remember that so greatly but I just do.”

Esposito said while these surgeries and setbacks happened, he believes no one should be ashamed of overcoming uncontrollable situations.

“It’s not something to dwell on. Be proud of it. It’s a part of you. It’s a part of your history, and it makes you stronger,” Esposito said. “It makes you, you.”

Every year, Esposito still goes to a doctor for check-ins, and every two years he gets an MRI.

“I don’t think about it — it does its thing, I do my thing,” Esposito said. “It’s just a part of me like my eye color, my hair color ... what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.”

WHAT CAUSES HEART FAILURE?

Lifestyle factors: smoking, being overweight, eating foods high in fat and cholesterol, physical inactivity

COMMON SYMPTOMS:

Shortness of breath, persistent coughing or wheezing, a buildup of fluid in body tissues, tiredness or fatigue, lack of appetite or nausea, confusion and impaired thinking, increased heart rate, weight changes

Information courtesy of the American Heart Association



Photo by Elizabeth Coss / The Jambar

Gavin Esposito has undergone three open-heart surgeries and three heart catheterizations.

Ensuring justice, righting wrongs

By Matt Sotlar
The Jambar

The Ohio Innocence Project works to prevent and overturn cases of wrongfully convicted individuals, and its message is spreading at Youngstown State University.

In 1992, the Innocence Project began at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law in New York. In the following years, the nonprofit organization spread across the country.

The Ohio Innocence Project is located at the University of Cincinnati College of Law, but it operates across the state at multiple universities. Christopher Bellas, a YSU professor of criminal justice, said YSU's chapter of the Ohio Innocence Project primarily spreads awareness.

"There's an actual clinic in the law school — in Cincinnati — and those are primarily law school students who actually work on specific cases. We at YSU are not going to be working on an individual case. Our goal is to spread awareness about those that have been wrongfully convicted in Ohio," Bellas said.

Because YSU's chapter cannot work on cases, members have the opportunity to review the cases studied by the University of Cincinnati. Bellas said the organiza-

tion focuses mostly on Ohio-based cases.

"One of the things we do is we review documentaries of cases of wrongful conviction, primarily in Ohio. I think some members attended a virtual conference about the Innocence Project. We have done a number of things, but the organization is new, and we're trying to come up with new ideas," Bellas said.

According to Bellas, YSU's chapter began in early 2023, joining other Ohio universities that have their own chapters.

"It's maybe coming up on one year since we met with the people from Cincinnati about starting up the YSU chapter," Bellas said. "Kent State [University] has a student organization, [The University of Akron] has a student organization."

Bellas said his main goal for the semester is to promote community engagement.

"This would be a great way of having civic engagement and outreach with the community, that's my goal," Bellas said. "We have this club on campus, I think there are people in Youngstown that have an interest in this that would come to our event."

Priya Dhakal, a criminal justice graduate student, is the president of YSU's Ohio Innocence Project. Both Bellas and Dhakal are interested in bringing in a guest

speaker to the university.

"For this semester, Dr. Bellas planned to bring on a guest speaker ... we're kind of looking for that. Apart from that, I've been looking for conferences," Dhakal said.

YSU's Ohio Innocence Project aims to meet at least once a month. Dhakal said membership needs to increase to be more active.

"For the last semester, we had only four meetings. It kind of depends on the flow of students. Since we are less in number and we all are graduate students, we need undergraduate students for the club to run," Dhakal said.

To promote the organization, Dhakal has hung flyers around campus, including DeBartolo Hall and Cushman Hall. She said keeping students informed is a priority.

"Even the professors should kind of reach out to students, or we have to be more active on social media. Since we're here for a short time, we are also engaged in our own studies, which makes it hard to be involved with the undergrads," Dhakal said.

Anyone interested in joining YSU's Ohio Innocence Project can contact Bellas at cmbellas@ysu.edu or Dhakal at pdhakal03@student.ysu.edu to be added to the membership list.

TPUSA promotes civic rights

By Madeline Hippeard
Jambar Contributor

Youngstown State University is home to over 180 active student organizations, including a chapter of Turning Point USA.

Vice President Maddy Lutz said Turning Point USA works to educate students on the government and their rights.

"It's a national organization that has chapters at a ton of universities. They work to educate people on free speech, second amendment rights, pro-capitalism, and they have conservation efforts through the international order of [Theodore] Roosevelt," Lutz said.

According to Mike Costarell, TPUSA's faculty advisor and professor of engineering technology, YSU's chapter operates as a nonprofit organization, which prevents it from taking a stance on political matters.

Lutz said she believes TPUSA has gained an unfair reputation in the past because of its affiliation with Turning Point Action. According to its website, Turning Point Action has the mission to "provide voters with the necessary resources to elect conservative leaders."

"I would like to see people give it more of a chance. I saw us labeled as, on the Y-App or Instagram, as a right-wing hate group and that's not at all what I'm here for. I'm here to hopefully educate students on their rights and environmental matters. I love talking to people, and I'd love to engage in more conversation about it," Lutz said.

Although the club is not as active as its members hope, Lutz said when it's able to meet, members discuss current events both on and off campus. The club also holds tablings to hand out educational materials, pins and buttons to interested students.

Costarell said members are in total control of what is discussed in meetings. In the past, TPUSA conversations have focused on COVID-19, climate change, gender and race, which Costarell believes are topics members found stressful.

"We address one of those in our student meetings, and we come to some resolution where we acknowledge these problems, acknowledge our differences in each of these things," Costarell said. "Not arguments, not shouting with protest signs and megaphones and things like that. Those are arguments, not discussions."

In the future, TPUSA hopes to bring speakers to campus. Lutz said the club is working with former Olympian Anthony Watson

to schedule a visit in March.

Costarell said he would like to see speakers on campus with a wider range of education levels and political ideology.

Students interested in joining Turning Point USA can contact Lutz at mslutz@student.ysu.edu.



Photos courtesy of Maddy Lutz
A Turning Point USA table in Kilcawley Center.

GET REC'D

Get in shape with the Rec

By Daniel Shapiro
Jambar Contributor

The Andrews Student Recreation and Wellness Center at Youngstown State University offers classes, events and a gym decked out with a basketball court, track and workout equipment.

Ryan McNicholas, director of the rec, said the center offers several programs for students to get involved with.

“We have everything from adventure recreation programs to club sports, intramural [sports], fitness and wellness and your general recreation programs — in-group exercise classes. We have spinning, yoga, pilates. We do full body fitness, things like that,” McNicholas said.

Intramural and club sports at the Rec Center include programs such as basketball, baseball, bocce, dodgeball, flag football, tennis, volleyball and more. There are esports events as well.

According to McNicholas, students can also participate in the Adventure Rec program.

“For Adventure Rec, we have programs such as kayaking, mountain hiking, caving and things of that nature,” McNicholas said.

Dina Fabry, assistant director of Fit-

ness, Wellness and Special Events, said students can get in shape with classes at the Rec.

“We have numerous Group X classes or group fitness sessions, and they’re all free,” Fabry said. “We also have more [high intensity interval training] workouts or circuit workouts mixed in there as well.”

The Rec hosts several events throughout the year. Fabry said February will include competitions.

“On Feb. 22, we have an event called Rec up your Reps. That’s going to be a bench press competition from 4 to 6 [p.m.],” Fabry said. “On Feb. 24, we have a bouldering competition that’s going to take place at our Adventure Recreation rockwall downstairs. That one’s actually open to the public ... It’s \$20 for members, \$25 for non members. The whole event is from 9 a.m to 5:30 p.m.”

There will also be themed classes throughout spring, Fabry said.

“We have two special events on Feb. 27. We have puppy yoga from 4 to 5 p.m. in the aerobics studio in campus Rec. We also have a Taylor Swift spin class from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m that same evening in the spin studio,” Fabry said.

For Fabry, puppy yoga is a highlight in the Rec’s event lineup.

“Yoga is a very good stress relief for me and good relaxation,” Fabry said. “I also love puppies so very much. Who doesn’t?”

Those interested in personal training can sign up with trainers at the Rec. Prices vary per program and number of sessions signed up for. According to Fabry, the Rec is offering a spring break sale for personal training.

“You get 25% off of three, five or 10 sessions of all our personal training sessions,” Fabry said.

McNicholas said he hopes the Rec Center allows students to relax with friends and relieve stress.

“We are always looking forward to develop students’ engagement in our events, as well as to make sure students are getting the most of their collegiate experience here at YSU,” McNicholas said. “[The rec provides] a sense of community, a sense of belonging, some stress relief.”

Students get free access to the Rec with their YSU ID at the front desk. Membership fees vary for staff and community members.

Rec Membership Prices:

Price for affiliates Without parking

\$90/semester
\$200/year

With parking

\$250/semester
\$500/year

Price for community members

Without parking

\$125/semester
\$300/year

With parking

\$285/semester
\$600/year



Members of the Rec can use treadmills, weights, workout machines, a rockwall and more.



Photos by Daniel Shapiro / Jambar Contributor



Photo by Molly Burke / Jambar Contributor



Photo by Molly Burke / Jambar Contributor

Guests can purchase beverages, pasties and merchandise at Juny Café.



Photo courtesy of Grace Mazur



Photo by Molly Burke / Jambar Contributor



Photo courtesy of Grace Mazur

Check out the story on Juny Café on the next page!

Mazur painting the mural in Juny Café's seating area.

FROM COACHING TO COFFEE

Bienvenue à Juny Café

By Molly Burke
Jambar Contributor

French native Mickael Sopel is the head coach of the Youngstown State University women's tennis team. When he isn't coaching on campus or running a tennis club in France, Sopel is crafting drinks behind a coffee bar.

Juny Café, located at 5865 Mahoning Avenue in Austintown, is owned and operated by Sopel and his wife Danielle Putt-Sopel. Named after the couple's dog, Juny, the cafe opened Jan. 9.

Uniting French culture and local recipes, Sopel wanted to bring a cozy cafe to Austintown, where he and Putt-Sopel live.

"We didn't feel there was a space [in Austintown] where people could meet, enjoy a cup of coffee, a cup of tea, a little bit to eat and really feel like a cozy, comfortable space," Sopel said.

Juny Café's coffee and tea selection comes from Branch Street Coffee Roasters in Youngstown and features flavors from cafes in Wooster, where Putt-Sopel grew up.

"We don't roast, so we're working with local roasters to provide us with our beans," Putt-Sopel said. "We really love the relationship with Branch Street and then [Sure House Coffee Roasting Co.], which is out of Wooster and Orville, Ohio," Putt-Sopel said.

In addition to traditional cafe beverages, Juny Café sells macarons, doughnuts, bagels and pastries. Guests can also buy milkshakes and ice cream brought in from Columbus-based Jeni's Ice Cream.

Sopel said he plans to expand the cafe's menu beyond pastries and drinks.

"We want to have a lunch menu down the road. We will have flatbreads and we will have sandwiches," Sopel said.

According to its website, Juny Café will soon install a pick-up window for efficient carry out.

Across from the coffee bar, the cafe has an extensive collection of merchandise for sale, including jewelry, skin-care products, spices, syrup, dog treats and more. Sopel said the cafe collaborates with vendors from Ohio and Pennsylvania.

"We also have a merchandise section, which is very important to us, where we have a lot of local products, which are made by local vendors from Youngstown, all the way to Wooster — where Danielle is from — and [Pennsylvania]," Sopel said.

For those dining in, the cafe has an eating area furnished with French decor and florals draping the ceiling and walls. Putt-Sopel said she used her interior design experience to create the space's vibrant ambiance.

"In Paris, outside the cafes, there's always these cascading flowers and it's so beautiful. So we wanted to bring that inside," Putt-Sopel said. "I wanted to bring a bunch of color because I feel like color creates joy, and I want people to just feel really relaxed."

Along the walls is a black-and-white mural created by Grace Mazur, a junior art education major at YSU. Mazur said she aimed to make Putt-Sopel's vision come to life with the mural.

"We decided to do a look that is inspired by a lot of French folk art, and we also wanted it to look like you're looking out into Paris," Mazur said. "Whenever you're there, you feel like you're home, and I wanted it to feel like home when you walk in."

For Mazur, the cafe is the perfect spot to study and relax with friends.

"I like that it's close to campus, it's about a 12 to 15 minute drive," Mazur said. "I've brought [Kent State University] friends, I've brought YSU friends. It's so fun and the tables are set up. It's perfect for studying. They got WiFi, they got everything."

Juny Café is open Tuesday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.



Mickael Sopel and Danielle Putt-Sopel opened Juny Café on Mahoning Avenue on Jan. 9.

Photos by Molly Burke / Jambar Contributor

Valentine's Day Word Search

T	E	T	C	U	P	I	D	S	A	R	R	O	W
R	T	N	O	I	T	C	E	F	F	A	C	C	T
U	A	S	T	R	A	E	H	T	S	R	H	S	T
S	M	S	A	S	T	V	R	R	T	O	O	G	J
T	I	B	U	D	N	O	I	R	R	M	C	E	O
K	T	V	S	I	O	L	I	S	A	A	O	N	Y
I	N	E	Y	W	T	R	I	E	W	N	L	T	T
S	I	N	N	D	E	O	E	T	B	T	A	L	D
S	N	U	S	D	N	E	R	A	E	I	T	E	T
T	F	S	T	I	E	A	T	M	R	C	E	E	S
N	P	I	N	K	A	R	C	L	R	E	N	I	W
N	O	I	T	O	V	E	D	U	I	C	R	S	O
I	N	T	R	I	G	U	E	O	E	E	U	O	C
H	A	P	P	I	N	E	S	S	S	I	E	I	I

Romantic
 Tender
 Joy
 Affection
 Devotion
 Sweet
 Strawberries
 Candy
 Trust
 Gentle
 Cupid's Arrow
 Wine
 Soulmates
 Chocolate
 Happiness
 Pink
 Intimate
 Love
 Kiss
 Venus
 Adore
 Intrigue
 Suitor
 Hearts

The Jambar Column

Bee gone, fears

Spring is rapidly approaching, and it's time for many of my irrational fears to reappear. For some reason, I am terrified of basically every single insect — especially any form of bee.

You could say I'm absolutely petrified of bees, including the ones that don't sting, bite or otherwise harm you because I have been stung too many times to count. Thus, my fear of literally any flying insect started because I associated them with getting stung.

The first time I was stung by a yellow jacket was when I was around seven years old, running through my front lawn and minding my own business. That's when the yellow jerk decided to weasel its way underneath my toenail.

It was painful to say the least. It could just be because I was a child, but it felt like I could not walk properly for a while afterwards. The sting caused me to always look where I'm walking, even if it's a sidewalk.

From there, I believed that yellow jacket left me with a curse to be stung in the most inconvenient places known to mankind. I was once stung on my back in three different places within the span of an hour.

Cicadas and mayflies are two other flying creatures that are terrifying to me. Cicadas are too derpy looking and I am not a fan of that. I couldn't tell you the reason for mayflies, though. I think it's because of growing up and going to Cedar Point, where there's always been a mayfly problem at some point in the summer.



Alison Butz

This year will be a challenge for me with cicadas, since 2024 is a year where we will be seeing two different broods emerge. You will most likely not see me outside more than I have to be this summer.

Pincher bugs are also an irrational fear of mine because they are super ugly and mean, and they showed up on my front porch only on July 4. When I was younger I had a dream that one had stolen my gummy sharks, and that was pretty rude. So, I vowed to despise them for the rest of my life.

Speaking of sharks, I am also terrified of them. I want to believe it was because of the movie "Jaws," but I also think it's just because their sharp teeth scare me too much.

Sharks live in oceans, which is another one of my greatest fears. Not being able to see the bottom of the ocean — that's the scary part. Oh, and the sheer force of waves too.

Going completely left field, I am strangely afraid of tall people. I couldn't tell you the exact reason but for some reason needing to crane my neck just to have a conversation makes me unsettled. You're probably thinking, 'wow, this girl is terrified of everything.' You'd be right, I am.

Quote of the Week

"It is a miserable state of mind to have few things to desire and many things to fear."

— Francis Bacon
English philosopher and statesman

The Jambar Editorial

The greatest male athletes of all time

Throughout history, athletes have positively influenced children, younger athletes and altered the media's perception on how sports are viewed.

The Jambar has curated a top-five list of the greatest male athletes of all time. Rankings are based on how well athletes fought against adversity, their impact on the respective sport and overall change to the sports landscape.

Starting the list at No. 5, Professional Bowlers Association hall of famer Pete Weber not only changed the bowling landscape, but grabbed the attention of several media publications.

Weber joined the PBA in 1979. Since his arrival, he accumulated over 50 titles between the PBA Tour and the PBA50 tour. In total, Weber has amassed 107 total titles and holds the record for five wins at the Bowling United States Open.

Weber retired in 2021. After bowling his last frame, Weber was interviewed by FloBowling and he uttered a quote that still resonates with sports fans.

"Love me or hate me, you watched, and that's all you could do," Weber said.

At the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt shocked the world, placing him on the list at No. 4.

The 11-time world champion currently holds the world records in the 100 meter at 9.58 seconds and 200 meter at 19.19 seconds, both of which were set at the 2009 Berlin World Athletics Championships.

Highly regarded as "the fastest man alive" by several publications, Bolt has utilized his quickness to acquire eight Olympic gold medals.

With the 199th overall pick in the 2000 National Football League Draft, the New England Patriots selected quarterback Tom Brady. The Jambar regards Brady as the third greatest male athlete of all time.

For 23 seasons, Brady racked up seven Super Bowl wins, five Super Bowl MVPs, three NFL MVPs and was named two-time NFL Offensive Player of the Year in 2007 and 2010.

Proving he was a starter, Brady appeared in 10 Super Bowls and led the 2007 Patriots to an undefeated regular season.

Nicknamed "The Great One," professional ice hockey player Wayne Gretzky became the face of the National Hockey League. Gretzky skates his way to No. 2 on the list.

Gretzky sits as the NHL's leading goal scorer with 894, assist leader with 1,963 and career points leader with 2,857.

After Gretzky was traded in 1978 to the Edmonton Oilers, he led the team to four Stanley Cup championships. In 1988, Gretzky was dealt to the Los Angeles Kings and is credited with the popularization of hockey in California.

In 1999 Gretzky retired and was immediately inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame.

The start of the 90s ushered in a landscape of success for the Chicago Bulls with the third pick in the 1984 National Basketball Association Draft, Michael Jordan. The Jambar drafts Jordan at the No. 1 spot.

From 1991 to 1993 and 1996 to 1998, Jordan led the Bulls to six NBA championships and earned six NBA Finals MVPs.

Jordan not only popularized basketball, but he helped Nike become a popular shoe manufacturer with the introduction of the Air Jordan sneaker line. In 1985, Nike released Air Jordans and earned \$126 million in one year.

Although new athletes are always in the conversation as "the greatest of all time," the athletes on this list have paved the way for generations to come.

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, 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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Rookery Radio General Manager

* Must be available Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons

** Must be available Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons

Apply online at thejambar.com

For questions, contact Mary Dota at MFDOTA@YSU.EDU or call 330-941-3094

Men's basketball drops second game at home

By Cameron Niemi
The Jambar

The Youngstown State University men's basketball team returned home and began a three-game homestand inside Beeghly Center.

Coming off a loss on the road against Purdue University Fort Wayne, the Penguins hosted the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee on Feb. 8. The 'Guins bounced back with a 97-85 overtime victory over the Panthers.

Fifth-year senior Ziggy Reid led the way for the Penguins with a season-high 28 points, along with eight rebounds. Fifth-year senior DJ Burns posted his 15th double-double of the season with 12 points and 12 rebounds.

Fifth-year seniors Brett Thompson and Bryson Langdon both scored 20 points, a season-high scoring for Langdon. Freshman Gabe Dynes had a career-high seven blocks coming off the bench.

The Penguins trailed, 43-37, after the first half. Milwaukee extended the lead to eight points early in the second half. Youngstown State fought back to tie the game and eventually climbed out to a 10-point lead with under five minutes to play.

The Panthers rallied back from the deficit and tied the score at 77 to send the game into overtime. YSU locked up defensively in overtime and capitalized on the offensive end, outscoring Milwaukee, 20-8.

The win gave YSU its 10th conference win of the season and 12th win at home.

Youngstown State hosted first place University of Wisconsin Green-Bay on Feb. 10. Green Bay came to town with a 16-9 record on the season and 11-3 in the Horizon League conference.

The Phoenix defeated the Penguins in a close contest, 84-83, handing YSU its second loss of the season in Beeghly Center.

Despite the loss, Burns posted his eighth straight double-double, as he scored a season-high 32 points, including five 3-pointers and 16 rebounds. Burns is ranked 4th in the country with 16 double-doubles on the season.

Thompson added 23 points along with a team-high four steals.

In the first period, YSU fought back from Green Bay's 10-point lead and went into halftime up, 42-38.

The Penguins extended their lead to eight points in the second half. Green Bay came back from a deficit and took the lead with under nine minutes to play.

YSU's offense stalled as it was held scoreless for almost six minutes. The stout Phoenix defense capitalized and took a six-point lead.

The 'Guins climbed back into the game and tied it at 79 with under two minutes to play. Burns hit a 3-pointer with 30 seconds left to put the team back up by three points.

Down three, the Phoenix scored a layup with 15 seconds remaining to cut the lead to one. YSU was sent to the line, making just one of two free throws to put them up by two.

With seven seconds remaining, Green Bay drilled a 3-pointer which led to their victory.

Head coach Jerrod Calhoun spoke on the loss and gave high praise to Green Bay's success this season.

"They've been doing this all year, this is no surprise," Calhoun said. "We just had a lot of breakdowns — lack of discipline, throughout the game. When you don't guard and you're constantly putting pressure on your offense, you're not getting easy baskets. You're gonna lose."

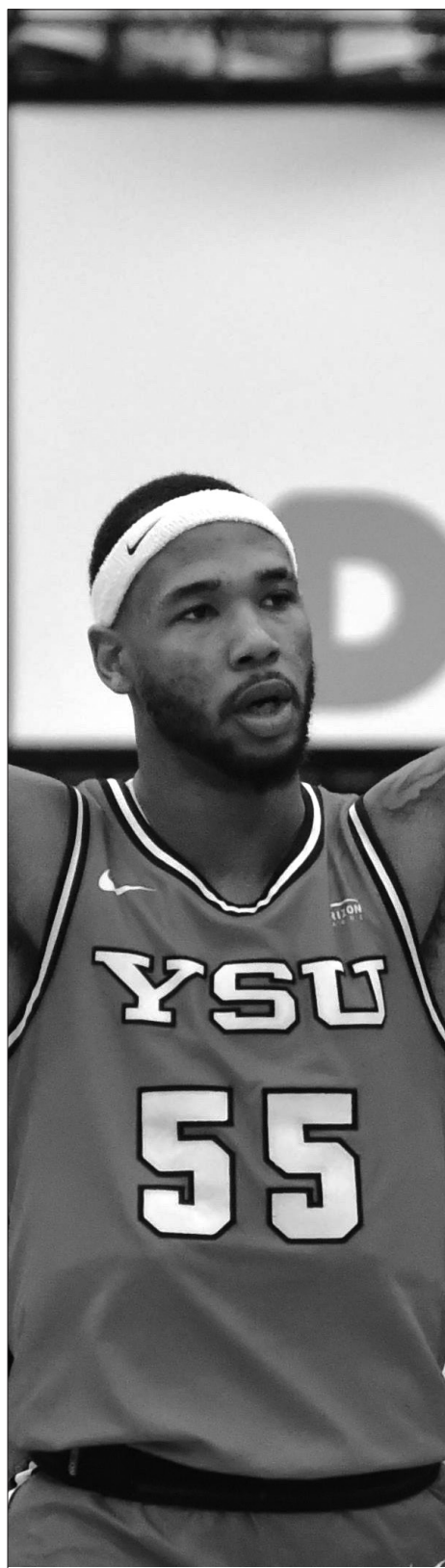
YSU moves to 18-8 on the season and 10-5 in the Horizon League. The team is sitting in third place with five games remaining in the regular season.

Burns spoke on the tough loss and focusing on the team's mistakes heading into the final stretch of the season.

"I feel disappointed," Burns said. "As one of the leaders, I'm gonna take it on the chin — we're gonna be right, we're gonna win — make sure this doesn't happen to us no more this year."

Youngstown State rounded out its homestand on Feb. 14 as they hosted Robert Morris University. To see the final score of the game versus RMU, visit espn.com.

YSU will begin a three-game road trip at 3 p.m. on Feb. 17 against Cleveland State University. To watch the game, visit ESPN+ or listen on 570 WKBN.



DJ Burns celebrates at home after an opponent turnover.



Photos by Dylan Lux / The Jambar
Brandon Rush dribbles around a Northern Kentucky opponent.

SINK OR SWIM

Penguins fall short in Miami Classic

By **Marissa Masano**
The Jambar

The Youngstown State University men's and women's swimming and diving teams traveled to Miami University to compete in the Miami Classic Invitational from Feb. 9 to 10 at the Nixon Aquatic Center in Oxford, Ohio.

Miami's men's and women's teams won the classic scoring 1,287 points and 1,491 points, respectively. Youngstown State's men placed second with 351 points and the women finished in third place with 236 points.

In total, 16 Penguins competed, many of which were freshman and sophomores. For head coach Brad Smith, choosing younger swimmers was about helping push many into the rankings.

"We look at mostly where they stand within the conference standings and how close they are to scoring or if they already have times that would place them in the top 16. It turned out, a lot of our younger ones were either on the cusp or not quite

there yet," Smith said.

The women's 200-yard freestyle relay opened the meet, as the women clocked in at 1:38.50, and the men clocked in at 1:25.5.

In the women's 500-yard freestyle, freshman Sydney Vandervelde was the first finisher for the Penguins, who placed seventh overall with a time of 5:11.51. Freshman Madi Hindman finished ninth with a time of 5:30.16.

Freshman David Grant was the Penguins' highest finisher in the men's 500-yard freestyle, placing seventh with a time of 4:54.99. In the men's 200-yard individual medley, freshman Jack Motl finished eighth, clocking in at 2:00.84.

Senior Kamden Batchik led the women in the 50-yard freestyle with a time of 24.21. She finished 14th overall. In the men's 50-yard freestyle, freshman Joey Lundgren placed 11th and was the highest finisher for the Penguins with a time of 22.43.

The women's 200-yard medley relay team swam at 1:48, while the men fin-

ished at 1:32.5.

Lundgren was one of two Penguins to swim the men's 100-yard butterfly. He was the team's highest finisher, with a time of 51.88.

Freshman Joseph Wyatt led YSU in the men's 400-yard individual medley. With a time of 4:22.59, Wyatt finished fifth.

In the men's 200-yard freestyle, Motl placed seventh at 1:46.86.

Sophomore Summer Raymer led the Penguins in the women's 100-yard backstroke with a time of 1:02.94. Raymer finished ninth, and three of her teammates followed.

As YSU's only swimmer in the women's 1650-yard freestyle, Vandervelde placed fifth at 17:57.57. Grant led the Penguins with a third-place finish in the men's event, clocking 17:10.

Hindman led YSU in the women's 200-yard backstroke with a time of 2:22. The freshman placed 11th.

In the women's 100-yard freestyle, Batchik led the Penguins, finishing 13th with a time of 53.35. Motl was YSU's highest

finisher in the men's event. The freshman clocked in a 48.03 to place fifth.

Wyatt placed sixth in the men's 200-yard butterfly with a time of 1:55.88.

Wyatt was able to lead the Penguins in two of his three races. Smith said the freshman has been progressing throughout the season.

"He picked up steam as the season went on and improved pretty much in each and every swim and every meet. I am happy to see him swim pretty well at the Miami classic and help the team out," Smith said.

YSU closed the event with the men's and women's 400-yard freestyle relay. The women swam at 3:33.5, while the men swam at 3:04.

The Penguins will travel to Indianapolis to compete in the Horizon League Championships, which will begin Feb. 14 and conclude Feb. 17. To watch the meets, visit ESPN+.

Penguins tussle with Power 5 opponent

By **Madeline Hippeard**
The Jambar

The Youngstown State University lacrosse team opened its 2024 season Feb. 9 with a 19-8 loss against the University of Oregon.

The 'Guins began the game by allowing Oregon three unanswered goals. Junior midfielder Molly Sheridan scored the 'Guins first goal of the season at the 9:10 mark of the first quarter.

Freshman attacker Lena Cox scored for the Penguins 35 seconds after Sheridan. Cox then scored again at the 5:14 mark of the first quarter, making the score 3-3.

The Ducks scored the next four points of the match.

With 7:20 left in the second quarter, Cox scored her third point of the game. Freshman midfielder Katie Grottenthaler followed with another score for the 'Guins a minute later, bringing the score to 8-5.

Oregon finished the first half with four more unan-

swered goals.

The Ducks scored the first point of the third quarter, followed by another goal by Grottenthaler, making the score 13-6.

Freshman attacker Brooke Peck scored for the Penguins with 7:20 left in the game in response to a 4-0 run by Oregon.

The 'Guins' final goal of the game was scored by Grottenthaler.

During the 2023 season, Youngstown State underwent a coaching change mid-season and finished with a 6-12 record.

In July 2023, the Penguins had another change when Rob Harris was named head coach.

Junior attacker Callie Vaudry said the Penguins focused on growing closer as a team throughout the off-season.

"Being able to trust each other is one of the most important things for lacrosse. By building those relation-

ships off the field, I think we're in a super good headspace going into our first game," Vaudry said.

Harris said he is excited to lead the 'Guins in the upcoming season.

"I think everyone's going to count us out. You're going to see this in preseason polls and things like that. They think that the team doesn't have a chance to be good, which I think is awesome to be the underdog," Harris said. "This year is going to be kind of a 'let's shock the world a little bit,' and just kind of show them that even though we're young and maybe we have lower numbers than others, we can still compete with the best."

Before serving Youngstown State, Harris led the Davenport University women's lacrosse team to a .700 win percentage over the course of nine seasons as head coach.

The lacrosse team will return to action at 3 p.m. on Feb. 16 when it hosts The Ohio State University in YSU's home opener at the Watson and Tressel Training Site.

February is for the girls



“[Magestro’s] aggressiveness of putting the ball on the floor

has certainly helped her production.”

- Interim head coach John Nicolais

The women’s basketball team celebrates after a made basket at home. INSET: Interim head coach John Nicolais

Photos by Dylan Lux / The Jambar

By Dylan Lux
The Jambar

Since the start of February, the Youngstown State University women’s basketball team has been 3-0 against Horizon League opponents.

The team started the month with a 73-66 win against the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee at home Feb. 3, splitting the season series with the Panthers.

Five days later, YSU traveled north to meet Michigan-based opponent Oakland University. The two 5-8 teams in the Horizon League fought for the seventh spot in the conference.

The Penguins shot 50% or higher from the field for

the length of the contest. They shot a game-high 62% from the field in the third quarter, hitting an average of 55% of their baskets.

The Penguins held the Golden Grizzlies to under 45% shooting en route to an 85-79 victory.

All five starters scored in double digits, as fifth-year senior Shay-Lee Kirby led the way with 24 points, nailing five 3-pointers on nine attempts.

Fifth-year guard Dena Jarrells put up 19 points, while senior guard Malia Magestro had 18. Junior guard Hailey Thierry and fifth-year forward Emily Saunders each pitched in 10 points.

Magestro was averaging just under 20 points per game after the Oakland contest.

Interim head coach John Nicolais said after a slow start to the season, Magestro’s aggressiveness and ability to attack the basket has allowed her to play a bigger role.

“[Magestro] did a great job in the Milwaukee game attacking her matchups and getting to the rim, sometimes getting fouled or just scoring on her own,” Nicolais said. “[Magestro’s] aggressiveness of putting the ball on the floor has certainly helped her production.”

With the win, Youngstown State stayed in Michigan to face off against the University of Detroit Mercy on Feb. 10.

The Penguins and the Titans had a low-scoring affair, as the combined total of the two final scores was 103

points.

Despite both teams having below average shooting percentages, YSU prevailed in the matchup with a 54-49 win. The ‘Guins held Detroit Mercy to 18% from beyond the arc while shooting 35% as a team.

Sitting at 7-8 in the Horizon League, the women’s basketball team can continue to move up the ranks with a win in its next game. The Penguins currently rank seventh in the conference.

If Detroit Mercy or Milwaukee lose their next contests, YSU could move up as high as fifth place.

Fifth-year senior Mady Aulbach said the road trip was good for the team’s confidence and showed it’s heading in the right direction.

“To get those wins on the road — which is harder to do — was really fun,” Aulbach said. “It shows the trend we’re on right now. Everything is kind of coming together for us, so hopefully the pieces keep coming together and we play our best basketball towards the end of February,” Aulbach said.

The next matchup for the Penguins brought them to the final game of their three-game road stint. They went head-to-head against Wright State University Raiders at 7 p.m. on Feb. 14 in Dayton.

In the previous matchup against WSU, the Raiders were victorious, 82-68. The Penguins didn’t share any love with Wright State on Valentine’s Day, as they’ll look to split the season series in the primetime matchup on ESPN+.