

# Jackson ties 'American Dream' to YSU

■ He encouraged YSU students to register to vote and make a difference locally.

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Jambar Editor

Wearing Youngstown Mayor George McKelvey's tie, Rev. Jesse Jackson Jr. walked up to the podium in Kilcawley Center's Chestnut Room.

"I am ... somebody ... I am ... somebody ... red, yellow, black, or white," his voice boomed into the microphone. Without being told, the audience repeated his word for word. "Keep hope ... alive," he finished.

Jackson was on campus Monday afternoon to encourage students to vote in the upcoming presidential election. He stopped in Youngstown on his way to Syracuse, N.Y.

Rep. Sylvester Patton, who coordinates the "Get Out the Vote" campaign in Youngstown, helped bring Jackson here, said Pia Brady, legislative aid for Patton.

Jackson was scheduled to speak to the YSU community at 1:30 p.m. When he walked into the Chestnut Room a few minutes after 2 p.m., the crowd of approximately 700 warmly welcomed him by applauding, cheering and whistling.

McKelvey presented Jackson with a key to the city. Saying he would give Jackson even the shirt off his back, McKelvey took off the tie he was wearing that Jackson had complimented earlier and handed it to him.

McKelvey introduced Pastor Kenny Simon, who in turn introduced Jackson.

Jackson spoke about the "American Dream," Martin Luther King Jr., the number of people in



**JACKSON:** Top left, Jesse Jackson Jr. speaks in Kilcawley Center Monday. Top right, Mayor George McKelvey takes off his tie to give it to Jackson. Middle left, Jackson speaks to the YSU community. Middle right, the men embrace. Bottom, audience members listen attentively to Jackson.

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## And Jackson said ...

Anybody who'd put [Dick] Cheney on the ticket and trade Sammy Sosa shouldn't be appointing Supreme Court Justices.

America's dream is not a slice for the few, but for the many. It is not [private school] vouchers for the few, it is education for all.

With a unified blindness, a one-eyed man could be king.

First, we ended slavery. We won that battle. Second, we ended legal segregation. We won that battle. Third, we secured the right to vote for everybody. Those battles are behind us. Our future is fighting the battles ... of shared economic security.

See JACKSON, page 7

jail, "C" students in California who receive free tuition, the Rodney King beatings, women athletes, Appalachia and the presidential candidates. He related everything to why Americans between the ages of 18 and 24 should vote.

"The American dream is more fully realized when we have the energy of ambitious young people who are mature," he said, as a way of emphasizing the need for the 400,000 unregistered black Americans and the 50,000 Hispanic Americans to register.

He stressed that King was a "student, student, student" when he got involved with the right to vote campaign.

"Young America wrote the voting right act. Congress did not do it," Jackson said. "Young America is why we have a voting right."

Jackson challenged young Americans to come alive and voice their opinions.

"Whenever young America has come alive great things have happened," he said.

Jackson knew the young audience would be skeptical about registering.

"Politicians have a way of trying to please their voters. That's the way democracy works," he explained.

He told students they must tell elected officials what they want. He said they do this by voting.

Jackson talked about students in California who have "C" averages and get free tuition.

"Do you want that?" he asked the audience. "You have to vote for it."

He appealed to those who disagree with criminal sentencing. He reminded them that only registered voters can serve on juries and

that judges, district attorneys and prosecutors are elected officials.

Jackson also reminded students to register by Oct. 7 in order to vote in November.

"Register to vote where you've spent the last two or three nights — that's where you live, not where your parents live," he said.

Students like Desiree Ballard, senior, political science and pre-law, James Suggs, junior, jazz performance, and Bryan Connell, junior, jazz performance, wanted to hear his opinion on the presidential candidates.

"I think he's going to talk about the candidates running for president and the debates. I think he's not in favor of either, so I'd like to hear what he has to say," said Suggs.

Jackson, however, sounded very much in favor of the democratic candidates. He praised Al Gore's vice presidential choice, saying it knocked down racial and ethnic barriers and opened doors.

"If [Joe] Lieberman wins, all of us will win," he said.

He criticized George W. Bush and Dick Cheney, calling them "dream busters."

He finished his speech to a standing ovation. Motioning for the audience to be seated, he asked that only unregistered voters stand. He then called them to the front of the room, where about half of the audience received voter registration forms.

Looking out to the people still seated, he told them to raise their right hands and swear that they were registered, under consequences of failing grades, lost jobs and Firestone tires.

"What makes America great is the right to fight for the right. It's the right to fight to change America for the better," said Jackson.