

**SENIORS! THE
COUNTDOWN IS
ON!**

31

DAYS UNTIL GRADUATION

...BUT WHO IS COUNTING?

THIS WEEK AT SHU!

WEDNESDAY- 4/13

**All Day
Fraternity &
Sorority Life
Easter Egg Hunt:
Campus Wide**

**6:30pm-9:30pm
Take Back the
Night: 63's Lawn**

**10:10pm
BINGO!
Edgerton Theater**

THURSDAY- 4/14

**3pm
Men's Baseball vs
CCSU: Veterans
Park**

**3:30pm
Women's Softball
vs Fairfield
University: Pioneer
Park**

Helping Ukraine from Fairfield

BY BRENDAN WILLIAMS
News Editor

As the war in Ukraine continues, the international community is banding together to help provide aid for the people of Ukraine. At Sacred Heart University, The College of Health Professions and Office of Volunteer Programs and Service Learning partnered together to lead the collection efforts.

"A number of faculty and myself were really interested in doing something for Ukraine, and we as the College of Health Professions tend to be very much engaged in community outreach," said Maura Iversen, Dean of the College of Health Professions. "I thought it would be a good idea to coordinate efforts, and to me it seemed to me that Volunteer Programs would be a natural synergy to help."

In order to connect with the local Ukrainian community, Iversen formed a relationship with Ulyana Bolgachenko, a Ukrainian who works at an immigration office.

"Ulyana had connections with Ukraine and had the ability to ship things abroad through her office," said Iversen. "We thought about collecting things that are most urgent."

Items being collected include: hygiene products, diapers and baby wipes, baby formula, socks, underwear, power banks, Tylenol, and Ibuprofen.

According to Annie Wendel, Director of the Office of Volunteer Programs and Service Learning, Ukraine's Ministry of Health has specifically requested first aid and toiletry items.

Sacred Heart is not the only organization collecting items for Ukraine in the area. The Fairfield Police Department has also announced on Facebook a joint effort with other departments in Fairfield County to ship over 200 ballistic vests and protective helmets to Ukraine.

Additionally, The Ukrainian American Club of Southport held a collection drive looking for gently used and new clothing items for Ukrainians displaced by the war.

"There's a lot of destruction in the area and as health care

professionals we're focusing on the health aspect of it. We know that unfortunately, a lot of young children have been impacted as well, so we're trying to boost the morale and show that people across the globe are sympathetic to their situation," said Iversen.

The collection efforts have brought people together, and for Iversen this was a way to connect in-person with people outside of her college.

"When we created the flyer, a woman from the College of Business

reached out, and now I'm actually hosting a dinner for students and faculty from Ukraine at my house next week," she said.

With all of the options to help Ukrainian people, students at Sacred Heart are excited to be doing something that could help even a little.

"I think it's great that we as a university are doing something to help the people of Ukraine," said sophomore Stephanie Encarnation.

"This is a great cause, I was very excited to hear that we put together a drive for the people of Ukraine," said sophomore Chris DiGangi. "I have a family heritage in Ukraine, so I'm excited for the opportunity to help."

One shipment is already on its way to Ukraine, and Iversen believes that students should feel a sense of accomplishment.

"I'm really proud about how committed our students are to social justice in our program," said Iversen. "We have thousands of volunteer hours every year, and our group is just very active. I know it gives them a sense that they can do something in a very difficult time."

Donations will be collected on an ongoing basis in the Center for Health Care Education room N106 and on Main Campus HC109.

"Through this donation collection, the SHU community has stepped up in solidarity with the Ukrainian community, a heartening reminder of our common humanity," said Wendel. "We'll continue to support the brave people of Ukraine and reaffirm our commitment to fundamental rights and freedoms around the world."



Aidan Daly, Staff Photographer

One of the many collection bins that can be found around campus.

Happy Easter
&
Happy
Passover!



News

Senior Week is Just Around the Corner

BY MEGHAN HARKINS
Staff Writer

The registration for Senior Week has just closed on March 23 for packages, and April 8 for individual tickets. It will be taking place May 10-13 under the theme of “Viva Las Senior Week.”

“The first event we have during Senior Week is an overnight stay at Mohegan Sun Casino for an all-inclusive night. Even if you’re not interested in gambling, there’s still a nightclub called Avalon that is reserved only for the Class of 2022,” said Student Body President Gabriela Dos Santos.

“The second night is Stonebridge, the third day, we have the commencement ball, and on the fourth morning, we get a chance to meet with President Petillo and the Alumni Association,” she said. “To end the week, we have the Family Soiree, which gives the seniors a chance to introduce some of their college friends to their family.”

“This is a period to truly finalize our college experience and we will be living in Seton and Merton Halls in order to truly relive our freshman experience,” she said. “Even though I’ve been waiting for this week for four years, I still can’t believe I’m nearly 40 days away from it.” Although some students are very excited for these events, others are curious as to whether the price for these events are truly worth it.

According to the Sacred Heart website, there were two options available for seniors to choose from ranging from \$500 to \$450 with the additional option to buy individual event tickets rather than participating in the entire week.

However, senior Olivia Sheppard believes the price is reasonable for what you are getting out of it.

“As far as the ticket prices go, I think it’s worth it considering the experience,” said Sheppard. “When you think about the cost of booking hotel rooms at Mohegan Sun, reserving the nightclub, and more. I think it makes sense considering we won’t have to make any additional payments during the actual events, but I feel like it’ll be worth it.”

While some students may not be participating in senior week due to the price, the question arises of the actual number of seniors who will be celebrating.

“I believe there is a considerable amount of people who chose to participate in Senior Week,” said Dos Santos. “People may choose to participate or not for a variety of reasons, but I can’t speak for everyone since every person has a different reason to participate or not.”

With many upcoming plans set for May, some seniors are really looking forward to this last celebration with their classmates.

“I am most excited for the senior week trip to Mohegan Sun,” said senior Lauren Hunter. “It’s a place I’ve been to many times before, but I am excited to go there and make new memories there with my friends.”

Despite the exciting week ahead for seniors, many are still thinking about the little time left they have here at SHU.

“While I am definitely sad that graduation is soon, since college will be over, I am also very excited about starting my career, getting my own place and experiencing the world,” said Maguire. “The way I see it, this is only the end of chapter one.”

Is Mike Pence Running for President?

BY COLLEEN SHAFFER
Staff Writer

Is former Vice President Mike Pence considering a presidential campaign in 2024?

“I think it’s very probable for Mike Pence to run,” said Dr. Gary Rose, Chairman of the Department of Government.

The Associated Press reported, Pence is setting up a “Freedom Agenda” for Republicans in preparation for the upcoming midterm elections. This would guide potential GOP candidates, and himself, for upcoming campaigns.

According to the AP, Pence has spent the past few months traveling, and giving speeches about policy development and raising money for GOP midterm candidates. Pence, in partnership with his political group, Advancing American Freedom, began a \$10 million ad campaign against congressional democrats.

“Elections are about the future, and I think it’s absolutely essential that, while we do our part to take the fight to the failed policies of the Biden administration and the radical left, at the same time, we want to offer a compelling vision built on our highest American ideals,” said Pence to AP reporters.

The former Congressman and Indiana Governor is creating a political identity outside of working with Trump. Attempting to separate himself, Pence has become more vocal in cases he previously stayed silent, such as the Jan. 6 insurrection.

“He gave the speech recently, and absolutely said in no uncertain terms that he did not have the right to overturn the election, which Trump wanted him to do,” said Rose. “To me, that was the start of his campaign.”

Some students question the likelihood of Pence’s potential campaign for president.

“I don’t think people would want to see a Mike Pence Presidency,” said junior Alejandro Ramos. “I think a majority of it has to do with being tied to Trump, and not appealing to the center.”

Other students think that his ties create a familiarity to voters.

“I think that students shouldn’t want former Vice President Mike Pence to run for President in 2024 considering his ties to Donald Trump,” said sophomore Ashley Czermack, President of Pioneer Vote. “However, I think that those who supported Trump may support Pence — of course, hypothetical, but I think that conservatives are going to stick with conservative names they’re familiar with.”

Pence is also not the first former vice president to consider a presidential bid. According to Rose, Biden is the most recent example of this, but looking back there are many instances like Al Gore in 2000.

“In some cases, it’s pretty clear who the party wants to nominate,” said Rose. “Somebody who was a vice president that runs for president can have challengers, but they are not always the front runner.”

Despite the possibility of Pence running, it does not mean he is the only option. According to the AP, the 2024 GOP primary will be a crowded ticket one that could



Instagram, @mikepence

Former Vice President Pence speaks to the American people with confidence and passion.



Instagram, @mikepence

The American people attend a conference with Former Vice President Mike Pence present.

include Trump himself.

According to Rose, he expects to see names like Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, Texas Senator Ted Cruz, as well as Maryland Governor Larry Hogan on the GOP ballot. The potential candidates are all familiar names to the GOP, but many people wonder who will best represent their party.

“I wouldn’t put Pence as a frontrunner. He can appeal to part of the party, but he doesn’t have the hype that DeSantis has been getting down in Florida,” said Rose.

Perspectives

The Expansion Of Campus

BY SAMANTHA INGRAM
Staff Writer

Over the past few years, Sacred Heart University has expanded its campus to new horizons, including additions of new dining halls, residential halls and a brand-new state of the art hockey arena called the Martire Family Arena coming in Jan. 2023.

With Sacred Heart still in the process of expanding, students are given a chance to experience all the new places on campus, like the Bobby Valentine Center, the parking garage, the Pioneer Village and the newest dining hall, Thea's Abbey that opened in the Fall of 2021.

"I really do believe that Sacred Heart has done a fantastic job at expanding campus and adding much more to the school. All these new places on campus to live and eat at are giving the best opportunities for students to enjoy their college experience," said junior Jenna Santoro.

Some students said that the new facilities on campus stood out to them when touring Sacred Heart.

"All the beautiful new buildings like the upper quad and the Bobby Valentine Center

were most intriguing to me when I took a tour of Sacred Heart before I committed here," said freshman Gianna Volpe. "The campus was just so beautiful, and I instantly fell in love with it, and I immediately knew this is where I wanted to spend the next four years at college."

Other students said that the Bobby Valentine Health and Recreation Center that opened in August of 2019 has been a new facility that they enjoy.

"The Bobby Valentine Center opened right before I started school as a freshman in



Staff Photographer, Jessica Fontanie

Just a few of the expansions that SHU has had including Bobby Valentine Center (left), the West Campus Martire Hockey Arena (Top Right), and the New Pioneer Village housing (Left Bottom).



2019 at Sacred Heart and I have been using the gym there ever since the first day I moved in," said junior Kirsten Calantone. "My favorite part of the Bobby Valentine Center would have to be the track on the second level that goes around the entire perimeter of the gym."

Some seniors feel Sacred Heart's campus has changed drastically from when they were freshman.

"The campus now versus when I started in 2018 is unrecognizable. Over the past four years, the school has added at least more than four new buildings," said senior Victoria Eger. "When I started, Toussaint was the newest dorm building and now there is a whole new village of freshman dorms."

Some students feel that the campus has expanded greatly in such a short period of time.

"I am a junior here at Sacred Heart and I have noticed that over the

past three years, things have been changing very quickly while maintaining a good pace. I feel as if the faster places on campus get built, the more attraction it has to students applying here," said junior Alison Dyevech.

According to some students, the future of Sacred Heart University's campus will be much different in years from now and will be more expanded as years go on.

"I am excited to come back for alumni weekend and see how the campus looks. Each semester we came back to school, there was something new," said Eger.

Covid Burnout in Nurses

BY BROOKE SENGER
Staff Writer

The pandemic has driven out so many healthcare workers that the number has become a crisis level, according to U.S. News.

Employee Benefit News states, "...the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that 500,000 seasoned nurses are expected to retire between now and the end of 2022, creating a shortage of 1.1 million nurses."

Chelsea McNulty, a graduate from Sacred Heart University's nursing program said, "Yes, I am worried about the shortage of nurses. I have also personally noticed the shortages at work such as short staffing and nurses calling out."

Sophomore nursing student Alyssa Merk said, "This national crisis of nurse shortages makes me feel anxious about going into the healthcare field, but not in a negative way. I want to learn everything I can and make sure I'm prepared. If anything, I'm anxious because I want to be able to help right now."

Others comment on their worries regarding the field.

"I'm nervous that the field is changing in a negative way. My mom is a nurse and worked through the pandemic. Seeing her burnout firsthand was not only sad, but also angering because she was not getting the support she needed," said junior nursing student Emma Tesler.

"My biggest fear is that after all of my hard work in nursing school, I'm going to get into the healthcare field and I'll burnout so fast because I won't have the support I need," Tesler continued.

Some say that the treatment of nurses adds to this issue.

"It does not surprise me that the shortage of nurses is considered a national crisis because the way that nurses are treated in some places is just awful," said McNulty.

According to U.S. News, during the pandemic nurses faced extended shifts, which could include working 24 hours a day in uncomfortable personal protective equipment and worrying about being exposed to COVID-19 themselves.

Other hospitals made it a priority to communicate throughout the pandemic.

According to U.S. News, Dr. Redonda Miller, president of Johns Hopkins Hospital explained that within hospitals and health systems, working together has been crucial during the pandemic to help decrease burnout.

"Asking staff what they needed was so important to learn what was working and what was not. Staff want to know that their voice is heard," said Miller, according to U.S. News.

"I did not know the true level of burnout when I started, but shortly after I figured it out and started to experience it myself," said McNulty.

According to Employee Benefit News, "76% of nurses feel the same exhaustion. Of those who walk away from their profession, 59% cite insufficient staffing levels as their top reason for quitting, 56% the demanding nature of their job, 54% the emotional toll, and 51% because they don't feel supported by their managers, according to a McKinsey survey."

Many comment on their hope for this issue to be solved in the future.

Junior Tori Paul said, "I could never be a nurse with this level of burnout. It takes a special person with a lot of motivation. A lot of my friends have desires to be nurses and are in nursing school, so I hope that in a few years the problem will be fixed."

Additionally, EBN reported how nursing schools typically graduate 188,000 new nurses each year, but by their second year in the workforce, 33% leave the bedside due to burnout, according to data from a nursing agency, IntelyCare.

"The number of nursing students going into the field soon may help fix this problem temporarily, but once they realize what nursing is really like, they most likely will leave the bedside," said McNulty.

Features

Student to Release “Keepers of the Blue” Documentary

BY VALENTINA MASSONI
Staff Writer

On a summer family trip, senior Tomas Koeck sat on a jetty overlooking the ocean. A casual conversation about recent shark sightings in the area created a vision for Koeck. “Why don’t just I do a film on sharks?” he said.

Koeck’s documentary, “Keepers of the Blue” will dive into the facts on all things ocean life, especially the effects of human interactions with it.

“The main purpose is to help educate people on the importance of conservation, ecological relationships between different species, as well as our impact and how we can better help the world we live in,” said Koeck.

The documentary premieres on YouTube, in the Sacred Heart University Community Theatre, and the Sacred Heart University Discovery Science Center and Planetarium on Earth Day, April 22 at 7 p.m. There will be speakers and presentations following the film’s live debut at the Discovery Museum.

“Keepers of the Blue is a film for nature lovers and curious minds in general. The ocean has something for everyone,” said Eric Torrens, Digital Production Coordinator.

According to Koeck’s website, “As an avid environmentalist, Koeck puts the subject first, this allowed him to be endorsed by the Connecticut Audubon Society as an ethical nature photographer.”

“Sentinels of the Boreal,” another film by Koeck was released on Earth Day in 2021. Though he has completed multiple projects heavily based around nature, he said that “Keepers of the Blue” was unlike any other.

Traveling to different oceans bordering the United States is what made the documentary possible. Koeck and his team spent six days in the Guadalupe Island area.

“In those six days, we just spent a lot of time in the water in cages filming these amazing great white sharks,” said Koeck.

Filming also took place in Block Island, Rhode Island and the Florida Keys.

Not only did creating the documentary require intensive filming, but content was also created with interviews from experts from the National Audubon Society and the Atlantic Shark Institute.

Koeck’s website lists the several collaborators involved in the project. He said that Tamron Optics and Canon USA specifically provided equipment, such as cameras and innovative lenses.

“It was a great project because we got to meet so many amazing people,” Koeck said.

The School of Communication, Media and the Arts (SCMA) also contributed to “Keepers of the Blue”.

“SCMA helped facilitate the trip through funding and access to camera equipment,” said Torrens.

While he has yet to receive his bachelor’s degree in digital media, Koeck has established his role in the world of communications with his past work. He was awarded for “Excellence in Journalism” by the Society of Professional Journalists, in 2020 in addition to other recognitions.

“I’m not this special person. Anyone else can do stuff that I’m doing, they just have to find something they’re passionate about,” said Koeck.



Sacred Heart UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION, MEDIA & THE ARTS
EARTH DAY 2022
TOMAS KOECK, SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION, MEDIA & THE ARTS, SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY
CONNECTICUT AUDUBON SOCIETY, ATLANTIC SHARK INSTITUTE, NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY, TAMRON OPTICS, CANON USA

Tomas Koeck is a 23 year old award-winning filmmaker, photographer and conservationist with a love for the outdoors and everything that it holds. He began taking photos in 2017 after he bought his first DSLR and soon found himself transferring out of biology at Pennsylvania State University to pursue digital media at Sacred Heart University. In 2020, Tomas was awarded for “Excellence in Journalism” by the Society of Professional Journalists. Other honors include several Undergraduate Research Institute Awards such as the Campus Choice Award as well as the MAX Presentation Award and first place finishes at the Connecticut Audubon Migration Madness Photo Contest.



TICKETS AND INFO: WWW.SHUCOMMUNITYTHEATRE.ORG • 203-371-7956



Contributed by Tomas Koeck

Koeck has a gift for capturing the beauty of nature.



Tomas Koeck on his most recent trip for filming.

Instagram, @tomaskoeck

Spotlight



The Importance of Mental Health

BY JORDAN GREENE
Contributing Writer

And just like that, the year is nearly done. With the second semester coming to a close, this is the time when the weather begins to warm, summer plans are made, and relaxation comes. This is also the time where we have to focus to end the year on a good note. With different assignments and finals, focusing and time management can be difficult.

I cannot speak for every college student or athlete, but I am confident that mental health has been a challenge for many at some point in time. Personally, the obstacles of balancing academics with athletics has

definitely led to low moments. College is a time where we truly find our strengths and weaknesses, and sometimes those weaknesses can be hard to find solutions for.

For those who struggle with mental health, you are not alone. There are many people who are struggling and wishing to find happiness. It is important when struggling with mental health to look forward to what lies ahead in the future. The hardships you are going through right now are just a part of your journey. Whenever you feel like giving up, remember why you wanted to come to SHU in the first place. There is an

abundance of resources on campus to help with your mental health like the counseling center.

I hope every single one of you has a strong end to this semester. And keep those in mind who are struggling right now with their mental health and help them whenever they need assistance. We will all be victorious by the end of this journey.

Features

Graduate Programs Rank Among The Best

BY ISABEL HAGLUND
Staff Writer

According to U.S. News & World Report, three of Sacred Heart University's graduate programs are among the best in the country.

One of the programs recognized is the Doctor of Nursing Practice.

"It's a very strong sense of community and that caring and compassion, that is our mission at SHU, is really implemented I think here in nursing because that's also part of the mission of nursing," said Karen Daley, Dean of the Davis and Henley College of Nursing.

A lot of the students in this graduate program went to Sacred Heart to get their undergraduate degree in nursing.

"Once SHU gets in your blood you come back," said Dean Daley.

"Being a part of this nursing community and seeing how the program is thriving is pretty amazing," said sophomore nursing student Abby Ricker. "Knowing that nurses are choosing to come back to SHU to further their education because of all that it has to offer is really exciting."

Another program recognized by U.S. News and World Reporting is Part-time Master of Business Administration (MBA).

"Our MBA builds mindful leaders for the digital transformation economy with a focus on social impact," said Nadene Koliopoulos, Director of Graduate Programs, Jack Welch College of Business and Technology.

"Through our experiential learning programs, we develop dynamic global and local perspectives that integrate entrepreneurship, ethical decision making, and data and technology literacy with positive contributions to our community," said Koliopoulos.

The students in these programs, have learned so much and credit some of their success to the foundation that the University has given them.

"The information and tools I picked up from the MBA program continue to play a role in my daily life," said alumnus Eric Sippin. "I would consider this degree an essential steppingstone to help advance my career and my advice to anyone else considering it is to go for it."

The final program that was recognized by U.S. News and World Reporting is Master of Social Work (MSW).

"Our MSW program is unique in that we offer it online and on ground and it's the same quality program online as on ground," said Jennifer Wilson, Clinical Associate Professor.

The program also focuses on using an integrated approach to educate its students on all levels of social work practice as well as focusing on common situations they will see.

"Our coursework really looks at how racism, discrimination, power, and privilege influence the lives of the people we serve and our community members and how we as social workers can affect change using an antiracist framework," said Wilson.

The faculty are very dedicated to their students and love to see them succeed.

"Graduate school can be challenging to navigate sometimes, so the opportunity to work alongside students as they take on this incredible endeavor is truly an honor," said Jill Manit, Clinical Asst. Professor.

Being recognized for these three programs is a great achievement.

Overall, Sacred Heart University would not have the programs it does without the faculty and students.

"We understand that our graduates are future leaders in the field, so we want them to leave the program feeling prepared, feeling like they have built colleagues, they have built their network, and that they are ready to practice," said Wilson.



Sacred Heart University Graduate Students in a meeting.

Sacred Heart University

Arts & Entertainment

The Last Musical of the Year

BY MICHAEL MORELLI
Staff Writer

On Thursday, April 7 the musical "A Chorus Line" was performed at the Edgerton Theatre by members of the Sacred Heart University Theatre Arts Program (TAP). The show was also performed on April 8, April 9 and concluded on April 10.

The musical centers a group of dancers from all different backgrounds who are auditioning to become members of the chorus line in an upcoming Broadway musical. During their time there, the director, Zach, asks the performers to talk about their life experiences. Some of the stories are comedic, while others are meant to be sad. Those involved in the musical said they enjoyed the experience.

"I'm excited because the students are excited," said the director of the musical and of the theater arts program at large, Jerry Goehring. "The joy for us is to watch that happen and then sit back and watch them make this particular production theirs," said Goehring. "This is Sacred Heart's production, we're doing it our way."

One actress said her role in the show had been one of a lifetime.

"I am so excited about this show," said Kiley Ondash, who acted as one of the dancers. "I have always adored it, and now I get to perform in my dream role," said Ondash. "This has been one of the greatest experiences."



Instagram, @sacredheartuniversityperformingarts
The dedicated cast of "A Chrous Line" made up of members of the Sacred Heart University Theater Arts Program.

Sean Ryan, SHU student who played the role of director Zach in the show, said this production has been a positive experience for him.

"There is so much history that lives within 'A Chorus Line' and I am so glad that I got to be a part of it," said Ryan. "We had a zoom call with the actress who played Cassie in the original Broadway production and she told us that we were now, 'a part of the family' and that has really stuck with me."

Before its debut at Sacred Heart, "A Chorus Line" has had a long history in the musical industry.

According to PBS, the show first premiered on July 25, 1975 on Broadway. PBS reported that the show's score was written by Marvin Hamlisch and the lyrics were written by Edward Kleban.

PBS also reported that the show received critical acclaim as soon it was released. "A Chorus Line" won every prize the theater could offer including the Pulitzer and nine Tonys... It went on to become Broadway's longest-running show in September of 1983 and continued to run for seven more years."

According to PBS, the show's success comes from the idea that everyone, not just those in the theater business, can relate to its content. "It had no scenery beyond some mirrors, no real costumes, no intermission and no star... The show captured the dreams of anyone who wanted-needed-to make it, to prove worth."



Instagram, @sacredheartuniversityperformingarts
One of the numbers performed during "A Chrous Line"

One member of the audience said similar things about the show's content.

"I think the show did a good job getting across the struggles of these people," said junior Zachary Pochay. "The

dance numbers were well choreographed, and it was a good time overall."

Goehring thought that the actors in the show were able to connect to their characters on a deep level.

The Biggest Night in Music

BY CODI LYNDERS
Staff Writer



Instagram, @oliviarodrigo
Olivia Rodrigo took home multiple Grammy's.

Music's biggest night finally took to the stage on April 3 at MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas. The Recording Academy postponed the event in January due to an increase of Covid-19 cases. The 64th Annual Grammy Awards aired on CBS at 8pm and welcomed back last year's host, Trevor Noah of "The Daily Show."

"From what I remember of last year's Grammys, they were affected by Covid, so it wasn't as much of a spectacle as this year's," said junior Matthew Sullivan.

There were 15 performances throughout the night, including Silk Sonic's "777," J Balvin and Maria Becerra's "Qué Más Pases?" and Justin Bieber's "Peaches," featuring Giveon and Daniel Caesar.

"I especially liked Lil Nas X's and Jon Batiste's," said Sullivan.

BTS, the South Korean boyband performed their hit "Butter," which Billboard ranked as top performance of the night.

"The Grammy-nominated septet took their 'criminal undercover' lyrics to a whole new level with their 007-inspired performance of their Billboard Hot 100-topping track," reported Billboard. "Proving that their creativity is equally as impressive as their musical talent."

Among the winners were Jon Baptiste's "We Are" for Album of The Year, Silk Sonic's "Leave the Door Open" for Record of The Year, and Doja Cat featuring SZA's "Kiss Me More" for Best Pop Duo/Group Performance.

There was some controversy surrounding the show, including questioning behind Best Rap Album being taken out of the main event.

"Tyler the Creator wasn't able to accept his award on the television broadcast because the Grammy's decided that his award didn't matter enough to make the main broadcast,"

said Sullivan.

While the focus was on music, artists were not afraid to flaunt their looks on the red carpet.

The New York Times described Billie Eilish as a "Gothic conceptualist in a black Rick Owens coat with a neckline that seemed to have migrated to her torso, thus suggesting everyone's perspective had flipped sort of sideways."

Sophomore Kate Bajor said "Doja's look was my favorite. I thought both outfits she wore fit her vibe beautifully and made her glow."

Dua Lipa and Megan Thee Stallion recreated Whitney Houston and Mariah Carey's iconic 1998 MTV Video Music Awards moment while presenting Best New Artist to Olivia Rodrigo, by showing up in the same Versace dress.



AP News
Justin and Hailey Biebers at the red carpet.

"That was a great tribute to Mariah and Whitney's moment in the 90's," said Bajor. "It was so memorable how Donatella Versace came onto the stage to fix Meg and Dua Lipa's looks, promoting Versace's dynamic fashion."

Adjunct Communications Professor Gary Russo has experience directing award shows and thought this year's tribute to Stephen Sondheim with Ben Platt, Cynthia Erivo, Leslie Odom Jr. and Rachel Zegler was memorable.

"I thought this year's tribute was beautifully done. A nice combination of un-rushed shots of the vocalists as they were added, finally settling and lingering on Sondheim as the vocalists reached the finale," Russo said.

Prof. Russo noted that there are many moving parts to a live award show and that

broadcasting a perfect stage is difficult.

"It was a goosebump moment for me," Russo said.

However, the show took a serious turn when a video played of Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelensky, asking for more international support of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.

This was followed by a performance from John Legend and Ukrainian artists Mika Newton, Lyuba Yakimchuk and Siuzanna Igidan.

As President Zelensky said in his speech, "Fill the silence with music."

Sports

SHU Equestrian Riding High after IHSA Regionals

BY BRENDAN CAPOZZI
Staff Writer

On April 2, the Sacred Heart University equestrian team competed at the Intercollegiate Horse Shows Association (IHSA) Regional Championship at Connecticut College in New London, Conn. The Pioneers had five riders who secured first place in their respective events.

“The team is feeling confident going into Zones but like I said, everyone there has won their region just as we did so we need to remember to ride every step,” said junior Reagan Olson. “Although we’re confident for this weekend, we’re prepared for the many other talented riders we’ll be showing against and plan to bring it our all.”

Olson placed first in the Limit Fences event and second in the Limit Flat event, despite some obstacles she had to face.

“I had a more difficult horse on the flat that really made me work for that second-place spot,” said Olson. “The luck of the draw really has a role in your placing sometimes which is what makes college riding so difficult. You must be able to quickly adapt to the horse you’re given.”

Riders who placed either first or second in their respective event at the Regional Championship qualified for the IHSA Zone Championships. Senior Alyssa Kinney got the job done by placing first in the Open Fences event.

“There is always pressure but we want that because of the desire to go to Zones individually,” said Kinney. “Qualifying for Zones is something that I wanted to accomplish.”

Another Pioneer qualifier was junior Lily Bove, who placed second in the Open Flat event.

Not only did Bove qualify for the IHSA Zone Championships, but she was also named to the National Collegiate Equestrian Association All-America Second Team in flat. In addition to this award, she was named to the National Collegiate Equestrian Association All-Academic Team.

“Going into the season, I was not expecting to win a big award like this,” said Bove. “It came as a surprise to me, but it feels great because I worked hard all year. We are in a big conference, and it was awesome to see my name on the list.”

Much of the team’s success can be credited to head coach Tiffany Hajdasz, who has been with the program since 2010.

“Coach knows what she is looking for, she knows what she wants, and she pushes us daily to become the best riders possible,” said Kinney. “It is nice to have a coach who wants you to succeed and wants you to do well.”

Overall, the Pioneers sent eight riders to the IHSA Zone Championships with an opportunity to qualify both individually and as a team for the IHSA National Championship in May as they competed at Mount Holyoke College on April 9 in South Hadley, Mass.

Bove and Olson will represent the Pioneers on the big stage as they were able to qualify individually with Bove finishing second in the Open Flat while Olson took first in the Limit Fences. This will be the first time since 2018 that the Pioneers have representation at the IHSA National Championship.

Sacred Heart Athletics Contributed to this Article.

Rookies on the Radar

BY MIA SANSANELLI
Managing Editor- Editorial

On Tuesday, March 29, first-year Sacred Heart University tennis players Matyas Venc and Olivia Kharkover were named Northeast Conference (NEC) Rookies of the Week. This was the first time either player had received this recognition for their respective teams.

“For me this achievement means a lot as it reflects the improvement of my game throughout the season that I try to consistently focus on,” Venc said. Freshman Matyas Venc is originally from the Czech Republic. He appreciates the consistent support and help from his family back home in Europe and noted a few other members of his team “My head coach helped me significantly during the season by giving me a chance to play, but I also appreciate his great communication on and off the court,” he said. “Both of my captains on the team, Tyler Lowe and William Wibmer, helped me tremendously throughout the season as well.”

He said Wibmer gave him tips and strategies before his singles matches and Lowe is his doubles partner; both players having an impact on his play. He also wanted to thank his freshman teammate, roommate and friend Antoine Hernandez for his support, as well as the rest of his teammates.

Freshman Olivia Kharkover said she is honored to have received this achievement. She was picked out of all the other NEC teams, and she described it as a big achievement that she did not expect to be awarded.

She has won a few matches in a row after coming back from an injury last month, including winning her fourth-consecutive singles match at number five in straight sets, which helped the Pioneers top the Bryant Bulldogs for the first time since 2013. “I’m happy with my results. A lot of [wins] were conference matches too which are the most important matches,” she said.

“Both have been great additions to our team this year along with the rest of our freshmen class,” said Coach Mike Guastelle, head coach of both the men’s and women’s tennis programs. “I think they have adapted to college tennis well in their first season and I feel they will continue to be impact players for us moving forward.”

Kharkover also mentioned what qualities of her head coach help lead her team to success.

“Coach Guastelle knows a lot about tennis, and he knows the way that each of us play and how we act on the court. He gives us suggestions on what we should do because he knows each specific player,” Kharkover said. “He really helps motivates us.”

Venc said that in the beginning, it was quite difficult to adjust to college tennis and a Division I program since it is very different compared to individual juniors tournaments. But with the help from the seniors and overall support from his team, he was able to adapt quickly.

Kharkover said being a student-athlete and a nursing major at Sacred Heart requires a lot of time management, especially in season. She makes sure to dedicate time each day for both studying as well as playing and spending time with her teammates.

She spoke highly of her teammates and their supportiveness as a group. “They’re here for you for literally anything. They’re like a second family for me because we’re always with each other so many hours every single week from matches and practices so it’s really nice having them.”

Venc said, “This award motivated me, especially for the NECs playoffs, to help and support my team by bringing important points for the team to then win the team matches.”

The freshman men’s player picked up his second-straight NEC Rookie of the Week this past Tuesday, April 5 after posting a perfect week. He currently is riding a four-game win streak and leads the Pioneers with a total of nine wins on the year.

Both the men’s and women’s tennis teams will compete at the NEC Tennis Championship from April 14-16 at Mercer County Park in West Windsor, N.J.

“Both players will be an important part of our success next week at the NEC tournament and I look forward to seeing how they compete in what is our most pressure-packed matches we will play in this year,” said Guastelle.

Sacred Heart Athletics Contributed to this Article.

Teamwork, Effort, and Focus Highlight SHU Softball Red Team

BY KENDALL VERSFELD
Staff Writer

The Sacred Heart Club Softball Red Team began their spring season with a double-header against Providence College, winning both games on March 26. The team followed up this victory with a triple-header win against Hofstra University on April 2.

“Our team was definitely prepared for the start of our spring season and it showed in our hitting, pitching and defense,” said head coach Ray Mencio. “It was a great way to get some momentum going.”

The Red Team was scheduled for another triple-header against Northeastern University, but due to poor weather conditions the games were canceled.

“The toughest challenge is always being prepared for anything that may be unexpected, such as weather,” said Mencio.

Despite the disappointment of the Northeastern cancellation, the team was able to have a successful triple-header against Hofstra the following Saturday.

“Hofstra went very well,” said senior Hailey King. “Everyone on the team had at least one hit, and our pitchers really stepped up and had probably their best combined efforts of the fall and spring season.”

Senior captains for the Pioneers include King and Carlie Corrigan. They have



Contributed by Softball Team Member Steph Villar
Sacred Heart University SHU Softball Red Team

been members of the team since freshman year and acknowledge the tremendous efforts of the entire team.

“The team performed great over the weekend,” said King. “We hit, fielded and pitched very well including a perfect game from our freshman pitcher to finish off the three-game series.”

The freshman who threw the perfect game was Kylie McNamara. McNamara focuses her pitching on one game at a time.

“What stood out to me was that all my pitches were working and I was able to hit all of my spots during the game against Providence College,” said McNamara. “It’s always nice to contribute offensively, as it allows me to help my cause as a pitcher.”

The Red team is hoping to make it to the National Club Softball Association (NCSA) World Series for a fourth time in program history, as they clinched a spot in the regional tournament for the eighth time in nine years.

“We have a team that is very dedicated and everyone plays a key role in our success. It’s truly a team effort every time we win,” said Mencio.

The Pioneers will compete at the Regional Tournament beginning on April 23 in Danville, Pa.

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