

SHU Students Not Notified after Swatting Incident at Notre Dame



The exterior of the Notre Dame High School in Fairfield, CT.

Isabella Fabbo, Photo Editor

BY GEORGE TRIEBENBACHER
Staff Writer

On Thursday, April 11, Notre Dame Catholic High School was placed on lockdown after receiving a phone call containing threats of violence.

Around 1 p.m. on April 11, Fairfield police were notified of the situation and immediately arrived on scene at the school. It was then determined that all students and staff were safe and that the phone call was likely a swatting incident.

According to the Fairfield police, swatting refers to a fake phone call where a crime is reported to first responders to cause alarm to the public when first responders report to the scene.

Gary MacNamara, Chief and Executive Director of Public Safety & Government Affairs at Sacred Heart University, said that SHU Public Safety was notified of the situation when the police arrived on scene.

“The way in which it came in, it had all the ear markings of a fictitious report,” said MacNamara. “The school administrators took the appropriate action by locking down the school, notifying the police, and then the information as it was gleaned and as the officers arrived on scene determined that it was more likely than not a hoax.”

MacNamara said that a similar issue arose when he was Chief of Police in Fairfield, and

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Spring Fest Carnival Comes to Curtis on April 27

BY CAYLA MELLO
Staff Writer

With the academic year coming to a close, the Student Events Team (SET) is hosting its annual Spring Fest carnival that will take place in the Curtis Lot from noon to 6:00 p.m. on April 27.

SET is a group that organizes and runs activities and events that occur on campus. It is comprised of different committees that help campus events happen.

Kaitlyn Burrus, Director of Student Engagement and Involvement, explained the steps that go into planning an event like Spring Fest.

“Months of in-depth planning goes into making any event on campus, not just Spring Fest. We must ensure that contracts are reviewed, Town of Fairfield regulations are met, and ensure we have the appropriate staffing. This is all after communicating with vendors to build a contract for food or a service that is suitable for our events and finances,” said Burrus.

“It’s a lot of time and effort, especially with Spring Fest which is hosted by SET; they’re doing the legwork to make this happen for our students,” she said.

This will be the third consecutive year that SET has hosted the Spring Fest carnival and there are multiple activities included.

“We have carnival rides, a bunch of food trucks in store, we have some circus performers because we are making it carnival-themed,” said senior Molly Teeter, the current president of SET.

“Food trucks include Blue Chip Creamery, which is ice cream cookie sandwiches, we also have Taco Loco, a barbeque truck. There will also be cotton candy, popcorn, and then we will also have some giveaways in store so we have some tee shirts and promotional gifts to win,” said Teeter.

One change made to Spring Fest this year is that it is now themed.

“With this being our third year actually doing it, I definitely think we have gotten the hang of organizing it better. In terms of difference wise, we are actually bringing a theme to it this year. In the past, we have stuck to a color scheme but this year we are actually going full out with the whole circus theme,” said Teeter.

The carnival is on Saturday, but it isn’t the only event happening for SHU students the weekend before finals.

“Spring Fest has been a combination of a concert one night and then carnival the next. Quavo is kicking off our weekend down at the Hartford Healthcare Amphitheater on Friday night,” said Burrus.

Students don’t need to worry about the cost of food



Tracey Deer-Mirek, Sacred Heart University

Students on a carnival ride at the 2023 Spring Fest.

or games, as they can attend the Spring Fest carnival for free.

“There is no cost for students to attend Spring Fest. Students will be able to go on unlimited rides and will get tickets/ vouchers to use the food trucks. Additional food can be purchased by students once their tickets run out,” said Burrus.

While this is only year three of Spring Fest, there is no intent on switching up the tradition moving forward.

“We plan to always host Spring Fest! However, we acknowledge that students’ interests are always changing so we will be sure to keep it exciting and something to look forward to,” said Burrus.

Second Annual Lavender Graduation Ceremony Recognizes LGBTQ+ Community

BY SARA HASENEY
Staff Writer

On April 17, the second annual Lavender Graduation Ceremony took place in the West Campus Atrium at 4 p.m. This ceremony is held to recognize members of the LGBTQ+ community and it’s allies. The Lavender Graduation Ceremony was about an hour and a half long, and featured awards given to students and faculty, and a keynote speaker.

According to the Human Rights Campaign website, the origin of Lavender Graduation dates

back to 1995, where Dr. Ronni Sanlo was denied the opportunity to watch her children graduate because of her sexual orientation. Sanlo then went on to create the Lavender Graduation at the University of Michigan. Lavender Graduation ceremonies are now being held nationwide.

Senior Nicole Sperling, President of the Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA), was on the planning committee for the event. Seniors who are part of the LGBTQ+ community or allies were recognized at the ceremony.

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Contributed by Nicole Sperling, '24

Students Julianna Kanski '27, Nicole Sperling '24, and Talia Torrens '27 at the Lavender Graduation Ceremony.

News

ND Lockdown

BY GEORGE TRIEBENBACHER
Staff Writer

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it's important to take precautions in these situations.

"No one's going to go back to a normal school day after the [lockdown], so they made the determination to dismiss early," said MacNamara.

Sophomore Dylan Brown, who was at SHU's West Campus at the time of the lockdown, said that he believes that Notre Dame handled the situation properly.

"No matter where the call came from, I think it's better safe than sorry. They're obviously practicing their safety, and they put it to use," said Brown. "I feel like that's why we practice that stuff in school, to be safe."

The Fairfield police said in a statement that they are undergoing an investigation to determine the source of the phone call, and, according to MacNamara, the investigation remains ongoing as of April 16.

According to News 12 Connecticut, the belief is that the phone call came from out of state.

"It's not only the state; a lot of this is done through IP addresses and the internet. The belief is that it was done over some sort of an IP address as opposed to just a straight up phone number," said MacNamara.

Activities remained ongoing at SHU during the lockdown, and there was no email or text blast sent to inform the SHU community of the situation. According to MacNamara, the situation was quickly determined to not be any sort of threat.

"It was deemed not to be a threat, so there was no threat to the school and no threat to the Sacred Heart campus as a whole," said MacNamara. "We responded to the incident at Notre Dame and met with the Fairfield police."

Sophomore Tom Remmen said that he believes that the situation was resolved with no remaining threats if SHU students weren't notified.

"I think I trust the people who made the decision, so if they didn't let us know about this, I'm confident that the threat was neutralized and they didn't want to cause more panic over it," said Remmen, who was in class at West Campus at the time of the lockdown.

"If we weren't formally alerted, there was probably a good reason why. It's just that whoever decided that knows what they're doing," said Remmen.

MacNamara said that Notre Dame sent out an email to parents and families of students to inform them of the situation and their decision-making once the school went into lockdown.

Notre Dame is located across Jefferson Street from SHU's main campus and is adjacent to the Martire Center for Liberal Arts.

The Spectrum previously reported that SHU and the Diocese of Bridgeport reached an agreement to purchase Notre Dame for \$15 million on Feb. 1.

Giving Day Raises \$842,430

BY CALEB JEAN-PIERRE
Staff Writer

From noon to noon between April 3 and April 4, Sacred Heart University held its annual Giving Day celebration.

"SHU Giving Day is a special opportunity for our community to come together, show their Pioneer pride, and support the areas at Sacred Heart that mean the most to them," said Julia Olsen, Director of Annual Giving and Donor Engagement.

According to the university website, "Giving days are a great opportunity to engage with SHU's audience in a way that is dynamic and can tell the University's unique story."

"The act of charity - or love for one's neighbor - is a core principle of Catholic teaching. Giving Day encourages Pioneers to engage with this tradition in a way that both directly supports the members of our community as well as the University that has served as a steward of the broader Catholic Intellectual Tradition," Olsen said.

Focused on increasing student and alumni engagement, SHU Giving Day highlights various programs and university initiatives on campus.

"To have a celebration of all things SHU; exciting to see the culture of philanthropy (and impact!) building at our beloved Sacred Heart University. A great statement of pioneer pride," said Paul Sutera, Senior Vice President of University advancement.

Throughout April 3 and 4, different events were scheduled across campus where donors could make donations and have access to food, games, SHU merch, and more.

Food items ranging from Crumbl Cookies, Playa Bowls, and Pizza combined with the chance to get various SHU items such as water bottles and shirts, created a unique and dynamic experience for the campus community to engage

during Giving Day.

Combined with the on-campus activities, the efforts by different clubs and organizations also helped increase awareness about the initiative.

"The figure skating team decided to implement a social media challenge on Instagram to encourage donations. We posted a 'bingo sheet' type graphic, with each dollar amount corresponding to a different challenge. As the money amount increased the challenges got sillier," said graduate student and social media chair of the club figure skating team, Elise Jolie.

"I kept updating the Instagram with our progress throughout giving day and our challenges being completed and it was a lot of fun. We've never raised that much money before from Giving Day, so it was a success," Jolie said.

The money donated to the figure skating club will be used for competition fees, travel expenses, ice time, and team apparel.

"From supporting student scholarships, championing athletic teams, inspiring musical and theatrical performances and promoting faculty development and more, each investment helps enhance the Pioneer Journey for current and future students," Olsen said.

This year, from alumni, students, faculty, and other members of the SHU community, Sacred Heart was able to raise \$842,430. According to the university website, donations raised will help with scholarships and programming that will benefit over 100 areas across the university.

"Giving Day is not just about raising money for the team. It is about our support system engaging in the overall success of the program. We had more involvement this year than ever before. That to me is more important than the money. The support of our Alumni, Families, and Friends of the program is the ultimate goal for these types of events," said Jon Basti, Head Coach of the SHU Men's Lacrosse Team.

Lavender Graduation Ceremony

BY SARA HASENEY
Staff Writer

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"Lavender Graduation is an annual ceremony that acknowledges achievements and contributions of LGBTQ+ students at certain universities. Anyone can attend, as far as who will get recognized, it's any senior who is a part of the LGBTQ+ community or is an ally as well as graduate students if they RSVP," said Sperling.

The ceremony consists of awards, a keynote speaker, and a reception where people can connect with others after the ceremony. Lavender Graduation is held at many educational institutions across the nation.

"Lavender Graduation can be held on any college campus. Its very much student initiated, so if the students want to make it happen it can happen. It's very special that a catholic ceremony like SHU is letting us hold a lavender graduation ceremony," said Sperling.

Kyle Humphreys, Manager of LGBTQ+ Affairs and the SAGE Center, played a big role in organizing the event. Humphreys said the attendance of the event doubled from last year. The ceremony featured Tony Ferraiolo as the keynote speaker, who shared his own personal journey with gender and identity.

"Tony shared in a very vulnerable way, his experiences coming to terms with his gender, and how along his personal journey he was able to grow and develop as a person, and help others develop as well. It was very inspirational, raw, and emotional," said Humphreys.

All graduating members received certificates at the event. There were also a series of awards given out to those who have been recognized for their achievements. Three students were chosen to receive the Pioneer Pride Award, Ally of the Year Award, and Rising Star Award. Prof. Sharlene Kerelejza was also recognized to receive the Community Catalyst Award.

"All graduating LGBTQ+ individuals both graduate and undergraduate received certificates, cords, as well



Contributed by Kyle Humphreys, Manager of LGBTQ+ Affairs
Kyle Humphreys (right) and Nicole Sperling (left) pictured together at the Lavender Graduation.

as a gift. I gave everyone a copy of 'Punch Me Up to The Gods' by Brian Broome. I thought that was a great pick for this event. I was trying to have it subdully be themed about resilience, and recognize the achievements of our LGBTQ+ students, faculty and staff," said Humphreys.

Those who planned the Lavender Graduation Ceremony expect to make this a new tradition at SHU and have another event next year for graduating members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Sophomore Zoë Vella said, "SHU having the Lavender Graduation ceremony is very inclusive. I think it is great that those in the LGBTQ+ community as well as allies can receive recognition."

Campus Life

10 Things To Do Before Graduation

BY SARAH MARGERISON
Assistant Campus Life Editor



Participate in Senior Week



Go to every dining hall



Take pics around campus



Go to Red's



Spring concert



Attend one last game



Pass finals



Do homework on the steps



Take a pic with Big Red



Graduate!

In Honor of Audrey Niblo



Audrey's Corner was created in honor of junior Audrey Niblo, a Spectrum staff writer, who passed away from an illness in 2018. In living a life of kindness, positivity and love of animals, Audrey chose to follow a path of joy, even as she was open about the many struggles young people face, including bullying. In articles, creative writing and images, Spectrum continues to promote the messages of Audrey's life for all students.



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CampusLife

Prof. Joanne Kabak: Writer, Editor, Professor

BY COLLIN MOURA
Campus Life Editor

Writer, Editor, Professor.

Joanne Kabak has spent the last 16 years guiding students through their journalism careers in a professional environment.

Serving as the faculty advisor for the Spectrum since 2008, Prof. Kabak collaborates with the editors to ensure the publication of each weekly issue, while simultaneously teaching the staff writers the principles of news reporting.

“I think there’s a joyfulness about Spectrum,” said Kabak. “I love working with students, it’s my favorite part of all this. Their energy and perspective, they teach me so much about what their interested in. There’s a connection with their own experience and learning.”

Joining Sacred Heart University (SHU) as an adjunct professor for CM-101 (Intro to Media Culture) classes in 2005, her classes have since encompassed media topics in the fields of journalism, ethics, and business.

Brendan Williams, the current Editor-in-Chief of the Spectrum has spent the last four years learning directly from Kabak. Working in a range of positions on the editorial board, he has gained firsthand experience in newspaper publication, grateful for how she has pushed him to become a better writer.

“I think her love for journalism is so evident in everything she does. She genuinely wants to see every student succeed and that’s something that we really see behind the scenes,” said Williams.

For Kabak, the news has always been a fascinating topic.

“I started wanting to be a journalist when I was like 12 years old, always loved the news and growing up in Massachusetts, outside of Boston, was passionate about the Kennedy’s and all the excitement of that era,” she said.

Kabak attended Barnard College for her undergraduate studies, majoring in History and Latin American studies. She received her Master of Business Administration (MBA) from Columbia University, later receiving her journalism training at Norwalk Community College.

“Students today cannot imagine how little opportunity there was for women in journalism in past decades, I mean it just didn’t exist. So, while I was in college, I kind of got diverted from that and ended up doing administrative work for a while,” said Kabak.

She now sits on the Barnard College Leadership Council and serves as a member of the Barnard College Alumnae of Connecticut and the Norwalk Community College Communications Arts Advisory Board.

Kabak’s career in journalism kicked off through freelance and staff roles at the Stamford Advocate and Newsday, where she had the opportunity to interview high-profile names such as Joan Rivers and Steve Forbes.

“One of my favorite articles on Newsday was when I got to interview Joan Rivers. I was so nervous; it was a phone interview and I even got dressed for it just to have my mind in the right place,” said Kabak.

Rivers was an American entertainment icon, internationally known for her work as a comedian, actress, and talk-show host. She has received both an Emmy and Grammy award, widely renowned for her work as a pioneer of women in comedy and late-night television.

“It was just a really warm, fun conversation with this celebrity, going beyond whatever the topic of the article was,” said Kabak.

For the Stamford Advocate, Kabak led an interview of Steve Forbes, the publishing executive and politician who heads the Forbes media empire.

Kabak said, “I prepared, I read everything I could about Steve Forbes. He ended up being in a room with myself and one other reporter for a radio station who hadn’t done his research and was just there to ask a couple questions, but I sort of knew a lot about Steve Forbes at the time.”

To Kabak, this is one of the fundamental aspects of good reporting.

“You live in the moment in an interview, have your questions prepared, do your research. One of the best characteristics you can have is curiosity. Find out what’s



Joanne Kabak, the faculty advisor for the Spectrum Newspaper.

Isabella Fabbo, Photo Editor

going on, ask questions,” she said.

Numerous local and national newspapers have published her work on subjects from public relations and lifestyles to her own personal health column for Newsday. She has also collaborated with field experts on a number of book proposals, including as co-author on “The Woman’s Book of Money and Spiritual Vision.”

For the last two years, Kabak has served as chair of SHU’s adjunct council, a key component of university faculty governance.

“As this semester is ending, I’m ending my current term as chair of the adjunct council,” said Kabak. “Adjunct faculty bring incredible professional experience, there’s a voice for faculty to be included in the decisions, especially about academic issues.”

She has been interested in the news since a young age, following a diverse collection of outlets to stay informed on the state of the world. To her, a journalist’s obligation is to the truth.

It is the reporter’s job to shed light on the most important stories, and a critical part of a functioning democracy.

“I feel more confident about journalism perhaps than the state of the world itself. The current laws to me are unbelievable,” said Kabak. “The more authoritarianism spreads, the more we lose good reporting. Even our American journalism, is now cutting foreign bureaus, we have very little understanding of the world around us. There are a lot of things to worry about. But when I see my enrollment full, when I see every position applied for and filled on Spectrum, I know that younger people still value it, I just hope the jobs stay there.”

Mia Sansanelli, SCMA graduate student and former Editor-in-Chief praised Kabak’s ability to turn her expertise and passion for news writing into a learning opportunity for students.

“Prof. Kabak really had a big impact on my time at Sacred Heart,” said Sansanelli. “Her passion for student progress and for the ethics of journalism is really inspiring.”

Through her News Writing and Reporting course, students learn how to conduct interviews, utilize AP style, and ask better questions.

“My favorite part was just getting to learn from her expertise, and it helps you deal with feedback, it helps you want to be better a journalist. And she’s also just a really great person to be around, I miss working with her,” said Sansanelli.



Interested in contributing to Campus Life? Contact us at spectrum@sacredheart.edu

Arts & Entertainment

SHU Band to Perform Student Written Piece in Upcoming Concert

BY LAURYN ENGLISH
Staff Writer

Throughout the past few years, the Sacred Heart University (SHU) Band has traveled far and wide to learn and perform different types of music from around the world. Now, they have decided to celebrate all the knowledge and experiences they've gathered while abroad.

The Band is set to put on their new show "SHU Band World Tour," where they will highlight music from all around the globe, including Cuba, Japan, the Caribbean, Ireland and the United States. It will take place on Sunday, Apr. 28 at 3:00 p.m. in the Edgerton Center for Performing Arts.

"One of the things that we as musicians do, is we like to connect with each other around the world on a very musical basis," said the Director of SHU's Band and Orchestra, Keith Johnston. "It doesn't require words, but we can connect on that musical level."

Johnston said that one piece on the setlist is titled "Letter from Sato," which documents traveling to Sato, a Japanese island where individuals tend to venture in order to find themselves. The piece uses soundscapes so the audience can visualize themselves crossing the channel towards the island.

The band will also be performing music from "Riverdance," which Johnston describes as a "whirlwind" for the musicians. Riverdance is a set of traditional Irish music and dance that is both a challenge for the band, but a blast to perform as well.

The band has also been begging Johnston for a long time to play music from the "How to Train Your Dragon" film series. This concert finally gives them



Instagram, @shu_band

The SHU Band pictured on their trip in Dingle, Ireland.

the opportunity to do so, given the score's Scottish and Celtic characteristics.

"Who does not want to hear the soundtrack from 'How to Train Your Dragon?'" said freshman Noah Held, a clarinet player in the SHU Band. "That was a last-second addition, and everyone was so happy and excited for it, I know I was."

Held will be conducting his original piece, "Traversed," in the show as well. He wrote this piece while abroad in Dingle, Ireland to feel connected to home.

"It shows a lot of promise. I feel that it's the kind of thing we're so happy we're able to do because we want to encourage this next generation of composers," said Johnston.

Johnston believes with the addition of the new Performing Arts Wing, facilities will further help the university's new Music Program to flourish.

"This sets a way that this can happen, where

students are going to be more comfortable doing things like this," said Held. "It really gives people who write music more of an opportunity to be open to sharing what they wrote, and even asking 'Hey can we play this?'"

The SHU Band is a creative channel for all students passionate about music.

"It is important that those who may be reserved yet are talented in the musical aspect see that there is an outlet for them to be able to express themselves," said sophomore Xavier Moore, who plays the clarinet. "I think the audience should be excited about how the young talent that is in the SHU band can perform challenging pieces of music."

"They bring so much energy and so much dedication, and a level of experience and a skill set that is rippling through the program in the best possible way," said Johnston. "I'm really excited to see what these guys do."

All My Homies Hate Ticketmaster: Maggie Rogers Revamps Ticket Policy

BY ALANNA WUNSCH
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Maggie Rogers has announced her newest tour, "The Don't Forget Me Tour Part II." Her first headlining arena tour will kick off in Austin, Texas on Oct. 9, 2024, and conclude on Nov. 2, 2024 in Inglewood, Calif. She will also make stops in the area, performing on Oct. 17 at TD Garden and Oct. 19 at Madison Square Garden. This "Part II" follows the first leg of the tour, happening in smaller venues this spring.

In the wake of Ticketmaster fee scandals, scalpers and bots, Rogers decided to do something unique for her fans. On her TikTok page, she encouraged fans to "Come buy a ticket like it's 1965." Rogers decided to combat the surge in ticket fees and absurd resale prices by selling tickets the old-fashioned way, at the box office. This is something she implemented on her last tour, but has decided to take it to the next level. In something she has declared "Box Office Week," fans are able to purchase the tickets in their city as well as have the chance to participate in some fun.



Collin Moura, Campus Life Editor
Maggie Rogers performs at the Newport Folk Festival in 2023.

"Here's how it's going to work... from April 13th to April 20th, in every city where I'm playing an arena this fall, you can go to the local box office to choose your seats and buy your ticket for a special in-person price," said Rogers in a press release.

Fans in New York City,

Philadelphia, Boston and Chicago were able to purchase tickets from Rogers herself, and had the chance to see her perform her newest album, accompanied by a full band, that night. In addition to the ticket sales and concert, there were pop up activities, merchandise for sale and more. It was a chance for fans to connect with the artist and be able to have a more pleasant ticket-buying experience. For those unable to join in-person, there was also a small, online sale which began on April 22.

"Hosting an in-person ticket sales event combined with the same-day special concerts that she's doing is so unique. I think it is so cool that she's going old school, combating price gouging and fees. It's beautiful to see when artists truly care about their fans," said Campus Life Editor Collin Moura.

"I think that the new ticket policy is a breath of fresh air, I feel as if it has been so hectic lately to get tickets to the point where it is a turn off for concerts, especially for me. I think many artists should follow suit, it would be nice to not have to be glued to a computer for hours on a waiting screen hoping to maybe get a ticket if one is so lucky," said sophomore Isabella Defrancesco.

According to AP News, Ticketmaster has been under fire for their alleged monopoly over the ticketing industry, and their botched sale of Taylor Swift's Eras Tour tickets. In Jan. 2023, there was a Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing that explored, "whether the company's dominance in the ticketing industry led to its spectacular breakdown during a



Instagram, @maggierogers

Maggie Rogers seen at a box office promoting her "Box Office Week."

sale of Taylor Swift concert tickets." It also questioned the ethics of Ticketmaster's fees, which now range anywhere from 27% to 75% of the ticket cost. The anger seemed to be bipartisan, with both parties agreeing there is an issue to be solved.

"As someone who spends the majority of their paycheck on concert tickets, I have seen my share of crazy fees and overpriced tickets. It's one of those things that I know the artist isn't even benefiting from but that these major companies do it because they can. It turns into this vicious cycle since live music is still in such high demand post-covid. Though it has never stopped me from buying tickets, I have become

way more aware of the fees and also that I need to factor that into how much I am saving when it comes to purchasing tickets," said junior Lizzie Lyons.

Many fans agree that Rogers' approach to combat the Ticketmaster monopoly and connect with her fans on another level is admirable.

"I think it is important for artists to stand up for their fans in terms of fighting with Ticketmaster because it shows that they care, that they value the enjoyment and time of their fans rather than just their money," said Defrancesco.

"Everyone should make a point to support Maggie Rogers and other artists like her. She supports her fans in so many ways, which is everything you could want from an artist. Plus, she just makes some of the best indie pop music in the game," said Moura.

Arts & Entertainment

Gender and the Media Colloquium (Taylor's Version)



Eric Torrens, Sacred Heart University

Dr. Lori Bindig Yousman hosting the Taylor Swift, Gender, and the Media Colloquium in the Dr. Michelle Loris Forum.

BY GIA ESPOSITO
Staff Writer

On April 18, the Dr. Michelle Loris Forum hosted a colloquium focusing on the impact of Taylor Swift on the music industry and popular culture, with a particular emphasis on the role of gender in the media. Dr. Lori Bindig-Yousman, a professor in the School of Communications, Media and the Arts, led the discussion.

"As someone who's followed Taylor's career from the start, it was eye-opening to see how gender stereotypes play into the media's portrayal of her. The discussion shed light on aspects I hadn't considered before," said senior Jordan Wentworth.

Swift is known for making her mark on the music industry and a symbol of popular culture. However, alongside her success, questions have arisen regarding the media's portrayal of Swift and the influence of gender dynamics on her public

image.

For the colloquium, Bindig-Yousman aimed to dissect these complexities, examining how Swift's reputation and public persona have been shaped by societal expectations, especially those concerning young women. She invited the audience to think critically about media constructions and reflect on how the media is presenting it to viewers, using Taylor Swift as a case study.

"I wanted them to think about the ways in which the media messages they are getting might impact their own beliefs about the world and to think about if they are limiting themselves or others because of these messages," said Bindig-Yousman.

The presentation analyzed articles and media coverage about Swift, as well as Swift's career throughout the years with references to her different eras. The audience's reactions were positive and supportive, as there were definitely some "Swifties" in the house.

"Dr. Bindig-Yousman's approach to analyzing Taylor Swift was refreshing and I liked how she was able to get her message across while also being entertaining with her funny references," said senior Sarah Beam.

The goal was not to offer opinions but to encourage critical thinking and a deeper understanding of the broader implications of media representation on gender dynamics.

"I appreciated the emphasis on media literacy. It's so important; especially in today's age of social media," said Beam.

Swift, as a prominent figure in the public eye from a young age, has faced intense scrutiny and speculation regarding her personal and professional life. The colloquium sought to unpack how gender stereotypes and expectations influence her portrayal

in the media, from her lyrics and music videos to her public relationships and overall career trajectory.

Ultimately, the colloquium discussed the importance of media literacy and critical engagement with celebrity culture. Swift's journey serves as a lens through which to examine larger societal issues surrounding gender, power and representation in the media.

"Having more diverse writers or media creators play a huge role because they are bringing in their experiences which contradicts those stereotypical representations," said Bindig-Yousman.

The audience consisted primarily of students, accompanied by some faculty members and friends of Bindig-Yousman. Throughout the presentation, the attendees remained deeply engaged and despite the seriousness of the topic, Bindig managed to elicit laughter from the audience.

"I wanted to encourage them that every time they engage with popular culture to maybe not just wash over it but to start to think critically about what is being said," said Bindig-Yousman.



Brendan Murphy, Staff Photographer

The introduction slide at the Taylor Swift colloquia.

Coachella 2024: Lana, Doja, Tyler, and a No Doubt Reunion

BY MADISON DICKISON
Staff Writer

Some of the most popular music artists across all genres gathered at the grounds of Empire Polo Club for the highly anticipated music festival. Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival took place during two weekends, April 12-14 and April 19-21. This festival features numerous musical genres which showcase some of the industry's most celebrated artists.

Lana Del Rey, Doja Cat and Tyler, the Creator headlined this year's festival. They were also joined by No Doubt, which was an unexpected reunion.

According to AP News, "regional Mexican music superstar Peso Pluma, Ice Spice, Bizarrap, Young Miko, Lil Uzi Vert, Sabrina Carpenter, Deftones, Carin León, ATEEZ, LE SSERAFIM, Sublime, Blur, J Balvin, Lil Yachty, René Rapp, Bleachers, Grimes and many more" also took the stage at Coachella.

Musical performances weren't the only thing that stole the spotlight at this year's Coachella. Fashion took center stage as festival goers showcased their creativity with fun, unique outfits and eye-catching accessories. Some common fashion trends that were seen these past weekends include: boho chic styles, fringe details and bold patterns.

"Coachella style continues to ring true, as always, at Coachella 2024. We can always anticipate a Western aesthetic there - the denim and fringe, the leather and lace, and the ubiquitous cowboy boot, and we know we will see boho chic with long hippie skirts, lingerie-inspired camisole tops, laced-up corsets, crocheted looks, and a variety of DIY individualized styling," said Prof. Ellen Gang of the fashion marketing program in the marketing department.

"It's hard to say where these styles were born,



Charles Reagan via Instagram, @coachella

Coachella's Instagram post on April 14, 2024 with the caption, "You everseen anything like it?"

but one thing is clear: Coachella has a LOOK. It has a vibe. Designer markets will have a completely different take on their shared trend concepts, and everyone can give it their own twist," said Gang.

Among the already star-studded headliners, Coachella also saw surprise appearances from music artists like Billie Eilish, Kesha, Childish Gambino, A\$AP Rocky, Shakira and even Justin Bieber.

"I was not expecting to see a collab between Lana Del Rey and Billie Eilish during the first weekend or a collab between Lana and Camilla Cabello. I loved Lana and Billie Eilish's collab of 'Video Games,'" said sophomore Gia Hart.

With over 100 musicians and artists performing at Coachella, fans were able to experience numerous music genres throughout the festival, and a lot of fans have their opinions about which performances were their favorite.

"Lana was definitely my favorite performer because I've been a fan of her for so long and her entire setlist was just breathtaking, plus she has such an amazing stage presence," said Hart.

"I am very impressed with Sabrina Carpenter this year because I know it's her first big performance and I thought her stage presence was very authentic and different from everything I have seen," said Marisa Tache '19.

Coachella is an event music fans look forward to every year, whether it be for the artists and fashions. It has become a staple in pop culture.

"For years, I have loved Coachella and I thought this year's lineup was phenomenal and I loved the artists that they chose and the different days they scheduled them but, if we are talking about outfits, I was super underwhelmed with the fashion at Coachella this year," said Tache.

Sports

Dance Team Dominates in Daytona



Sacred Heart University Dance Team in Daytona, Florida competing at nationals.

Contributed by Jaclyn Doucette

BY JAKE WALSH
Staff Writer

The Pioneers Dance Team competed at the National Dance Alliance (NDA) college nationals in Daytona, Fla. on April 11-13. Led by Head Coach Reina Van Florcke, the team placed in the top 10 in three different categories: placing second in Jazz, fourth in Hip Hop, and sixth in Spirit Rally.

“Our team is humble. Something that is important to us is that everyone who comes in and teaches or talks to us talks about the culture,” said Van Florcke. “Every place that we got at nationals was for the team, not the individuals on the floor.”

Van Florcke gives credit to the three senior captains on the team for building a culture that allows the team to be successful.

“Our captains this year did a great job as leaders. The different qualities that they bring each day, worked really well for the team,” said Van Florcke.

Seniors Taylor Barone, Rielley Coles, and Jaclyn Doucette have been captains of the dance team for two straight years. Ending their careers with success at nationals was a goal they had in mind at the start of the season.

“We had a lot of strong leaders on this team.

Everyone knows even though we are captains, everyone’s voice is heard. We left in a good spot, and hopefully, the team can build off of that for the future,” said Coles.

With the dance team starting practice in August, they must learn their national routines while dancing at games for other sports like football and basketball. One thing that never leaves their mind throughout the year is dancing at nationals.

“The build up to nationals is insane. We think about it all year, even when we are learning routines. Every day it is one of the only things on our minds. We have a countdown for it, and the excitement for it is awesome,” said Barone.

Van Florcke did something a little different than most years. Usually, the team holds tryouts for nationals and not everyone travels, but this season, everyone on the team traveled.

“We felt strongly about the idea of getting more dancers on the floor. That is why we did three routines instead of two. It was in the back of everyone’s minds, and we all had the same end goal,” said Van Florcke.

Of the three dances the team’s highest placement was second in Jazz, making this the highest final score in SHU Dance Team history.

“Finding out we placed second in jazz has instilled a core memory. Teamwork is what made this dance so

successful. Whether you were a dancer on the Marley, as an alternate, or not in the dance at all, everyone had a part of this routine,” said Doucette. “I am so glad to see our hard work pay off. It is a rewarding feeling that proves the work is worth it.”

With nationals passing, the next season is right around the corner. Losing three senior captains the team will look to young dancers to keep the success alive.

Sophomore Abby Scott plans to take what she has learned the past two years from the captains and use it for the team next year.

“I have learned so much from my captains, they make up Sacred Heart dance. They love this team, and it was very apparent every day,” said Scott.

The team knows replacing them will not be easy, but taking what they have given them and building off it is something Scott looks to do.

“It is going to be a challenge to live up to their expectations. I plan to be open and understanding, and create a family,” said Scott.

Van Florcke also looks to build off of this season and continue where the captains left off.

“These girls have laid a foundation that no one can disrupt in the future. Underclassmen will take the qualities the captains have given them this season,” said Van Florcke.

Club Gymnastics Steps It Up A Level

BY MAURA CONWAY
Staff Writer

Sacred Heart University (SHU) club gymnastics team showcased their prowess on the national stage during the recent competition held from April 12-14 in Albuquerque, N. M.

Over 300 teams from across the nation were invited to compete at this year’s event. SHU gymnastics registered their team as level eight, a division that consisted of 19 total teams, and featured some of the best routines in the entire competition.

“By registering our team at a higher level, it motivated all of us to develop new skills and get creative with meeting the requirements for this level,” said senior captain Mollie McManus.

While they started off strong in their preliminary competition, SHU’s gymnastics team did not meet the requirements to compete in the finals on Saturday.

Despite falling short of their ultimate goal, the team was still able to enjoy their experiences from their time at nationals.

“I had a lot of fun traveling with my teammates and coach. It was so cool to be able to compete against gymnasts from all over the country,” said freshman Sophia Rauseo.

Sophomore Mackenzie Adair recalled what made this season so special for herself and the team.

“The highlight of our season was just having such a large, well-bonded team and getting to compete together multiple times,” said Adair. “We have built a sense of camaraderie and support.”

This year’s team featured a mix of girls who have been competing in gymnastics their whole lives, and some girls who were relatively new to the sport.

“Our highlight has been growing our team year after year,” said McManus. “We always try to foster an environment where we allow girls from levels to join and make them feel welcomed.”

Although the team was faced with adversity and had to deal with injuries throughout the season, they didn’t let that get in the way of competing at the highest level.

“We had some bumps in the road along the way,” said Adair. “Dealing with injuries throughout the season and even right before nationals made setting lineups and competing a little difficult at times, but we found a way to make it work.”

McManus credits the attitude of Amanda Sclafani, the team’s Head Coach, for their ability to stay resilient even when things weren’t going their way.



Contributed by Mollie McManus

The Club Gymnastics Team at Nationals on beam ready for their competition.

“Coach Sclafani has worked hard to build up our strength and help rehab existing injuries through strength and conditioning,” said McManus. “Although we have faced minor injuries and have dealt with the existing injuries, we have still persevered and put our best product on the mat every time we competed.”

Sports

Get'cha Head in the Game: Women's Basketball is on the Rise

BY MARISA MUSACCHIO
Assistant Sports Editor



Adam Hunger, AP News

Iowa's Caitlin Clark (left) poses for a photo with WNBA commissioner Cathy Engelbert (right) after being selected first overall by the Indiana Fever during the first round of the WNBA draft.

On April 15 in Brooklyn NY, The Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) held their annual draft. This was the most watched WNBA draft of all time, as 2.5 million people tuned in to watch 36 women learn what teams they will be taking their talents to.

Ratings in both women's college and professional basketball have jumped following the women's National College Athletic Association (NCAA) tournament that recently took place. NCAA stars, like Caitlin Clark, were eligible for this year's draft, making it a highly anticipated event.

The growth in popularity of women's basketball is welcomed, especially among the leading women at Sacred Heart University (SHU).

SHU women's head basketball coach, Jessica Mannetti, has been involved in the sport for the majority of her life.

Mannetti said, "I started playing when I was in the seventh grade, I think I was twelve years old."

Mannetti, having been at the helm of SHU women's basketball since 2013, has had a long standing passion for the sport.

"I knew from the moment I picked up a ball I loved it," said Mannetti. "It was one of those really incredible feelings where you knew this is what was supposed to be in your life forever."

For those like Manetti who have passion for the game, this year's WNBA Draft and women's NCAA tournament were two experiences that brought on many different emotions.

"The Final Four energy this year was bursting with excitement," said Mannetti. "There is such elevated exposure and awareness. People love women's basketball now and it just warms my heart."

The tournament this year also drew the eyes of many new fans that have never before engaged with women's basketball. Many other women on SHU's campus have found love for the sport this year.

Senior and Vice President of Operations of Delta Delta Delta, Jillian Spindel, reflected on her experience as a spectator of this year's tournament.

"I've never been a sports fan, especially women's sports. Before this year, I've never sat down and watched a women's basketball game," said Spindel. "With so many eyes on Caitlin Clark this year, it was hard not to watch, it seemed like she flooded all of my social media platforms in the last few weeks."

SHU's leading women are not the only ones who have a newfound appreciation for women's basketball.

Junior Dennis Morely also tuned in to the women's

tournament this year.

"I feel like until this season, women's sports didn't have much exposure and that's why many guys, like myself, never tuned in," said Morley. "I've always been a fan of the men's tournament, I do brackets and get really invested in March Madness, but with the women's tournament I felt like I never saw much coverage of it until now."

The expansive coverage of the women's tournament this season sparked a new found excitement for the WNBA as well.

The draft, typically held in a small ESPN studio with no audience, was transformed into a red carpet event.

The draft this year was also open for fans to attend, which has never been an option prior to this year.

"Talk about something that's so fun! Talk about the crowd and the spotlight and all the who's who of basketball being there," said Mannetti. "I could've never imagined this and now that it's happening I couldn't think of anything better."

Mannetti also added, "We have really benefited from this movement, this excitement, and this energy."

This overall rise in the love of women's basketball strikes right at the heart of the Pioneers, propelling the women of Sacred Heart basketball to success.

"Everyone who comes to support us is the best, our student body, professors, administration, everyone is excited about women's basketball," said Mannetti. "We have a lot of excitement around our program, our championship game was sold out and it was probably the most exciting experience to ever be a part of."



Michael DeCesare '25

The Sacred Heart University women's basketball team's winning championship game was sold out this season.

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