

**WATCH THE PIONEERS IN ACTION:**

THURSDAY 2/16:

**MEN'S BASKETBALL** VS. FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON, IN THE PITT AT 7 P.M.

FRIDAY 2/17:

**WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY** VS. SAINT MICHAEL'S AT THE MARTIRE FAMILY ARENA AT 7 P.M.

SATURDAY 2/18:

**MEN'S WRESTLING** VS. LIU AT 7 P.M. IN THE PITT CENTER

SUNDAY 2/19:

**MEN'S VOLLEYBALL** VS. DAEMEN UNIVERSITY AT 11 A.M. IN THE PITT CENTER

**WOMEN'S TENNIS** VS. MERRIMACK AT 5:30 P.M. IN TRUMBULL, CONN.

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

THURSDAY 2/16:

**COTTON CANDY FLOWERS** EDGERTON ART ATRIUM FROM 5 P.M. TO 9 P.M.

**HONOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH WITH COLLEGE**

**DEMOCRATS**

HC 105 FROM 7:30 P.M. TO 8:30 P.M.

FRIDAY 2/17:

**BALLOON ARTIST AND SUGAR SCRUBS**

LINDA'S THIRD FLOOR FROM 3 P.M. TO 7 P.M.

## Wifi Issues Plaguing the Sacred Heart Campus

BY ALEXANDRA BOTTO  
News Editor



Collin Moura, Photo Editor

A disheartened student dealing with WIFI connection issues on the Sacred Heart campus.

Since the fall semester, Sacred Heart University has been experiencing several network connection issues.

The Information Technology (IT) Department attempted to fix them while they were happening and over winter break. However, with everyone back on campus for the spring semester, it's clear that these technical issues have not been completely resolved.

Shirley Canaan is the Vice President of IT.

"Networking is comprised of hundreds of systems working together to get data to and from cyber destinations with Wi-Fi being the last leg on that journey, so if any component fails, the Wi-Fi often fails," said Canaan. "The cause could be anything from an authentication server protecting your account from a cyber invader to, as recently happened, a truck knocking down the utility pole that carries our internet circuit."

Saburo Usami is the Executive Director of IT Infrastructure at SHU.

"In August, when we discovered the corrupt database on the authentication server, we had to rebuild that server, so in the meantime, we built the BigRedNet network to bypass that system temporarily," said Usami. "It decreased the security of the connection somewhat but got people online quickly."

IT has decided to keep BigRedNet as a precautionary measure, but they advised users not to use it for online banking or business that requires credit cards, account numbers or personal information.

Dr. Mark Congdon Jr. is an assistant professor in the School of Communication, Media & the Arts at Sacred Heart.

"In the fall, campus IT attempted to solve this issue proactively by adding additional WiFi options, but I've found, at least in Martire where my office and classes are held, that they don't work when the main Sacred Heart network goes down," said Congdon.

There were also communication issues between the authentication server and the WiFi controller. IT worked with the hardware manufacturer to patch the systems so they could work together properly and now both are operating without any faults.

"The typical individual may have a phone, tablet, watch, smart TV, game console and an Alexa all in their dorm room," said Usami. "Each device relies on a number of subsystems – such as DeviceNet registration – to work, so anything that causes problems to any part of the network may result in the WiFi going down."

IT notified the SHU community recently of some improvements they've made to the infrastructure to avoid disruptions going forward. These adjustments include upgrading servers that oversee the network and creating redundancies in the servers to keep downtime at a low in case SHU's own provider goes down.

Sophomore Isabella Sardina discussed how the campus internet issue affects her both in and out of the classroom.

"The WiFi issue has disrupted my learning and affects my ability to do schoolwork, like taking notes in class," said Sardina. "This issue also impacts how I contact my family which can be extremely disheartening, especially with the stress of school."

IT also announced that they'll be adding antennas to all buildings to enhance the signals for Verizon, AT&T and T-Mobile carriers which should help situations like this.

"When the WiFi is out, it impacts my classes because some of my students cannot submit online assignments, causing me to extend due dates," said Congdon. "This puts me behind with grading and getting students caught up to the current work we're doing."

There was also an upgrade made to Blackboard that will now auto save test progress and notify students if they lose connection. When the system is reconnected, all their work will be restored.

Senior Divalee Iglesias is a former employee of The Factory, SHU's technical support facility on campus.

"One of the most prevalent issues we received calls about was the WiFi, which was especially complicated for us because there's a procedure that has to be followed," said Iglesias. "Sometimes we have to put ourselves in The Factory's shoes, have patience, and understand the difficulties they're facing to locate the problems."

If the connection does interfere with class and schoolwork, IT suggests some ways to deal with it. This includes using classrooms with hard-wired desk computers when classes are not taking place, communicating with professors, and turning off the private address setting on personal devices.

"The IT team is committed to providing the tools that students need to successfully complete their studies and that faculty and staff need to do their jobs," said Canaan. "We very much regret the interruptions and will continue to update you on our progress as solutions are implemented."

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### LOCATIONS NEWSPAPER RACKS

<b>Hawley Lounge</b> (next to stairs)	<b>Martire</b> (first floor by the main staircase)
<b>Student Life</b> (across from office between doors)	<b>Spectrum Office</b> (in the SCMA Wing)
<b>Library</b> (inside front doors)	<b>Curtis Hall</b> (inside the front doors)
<b>West Campus (West Building)</b> (first floor lobby)	<b>Linda's</b> (first floor)
<b>West Campus (East Building)</b> (outside East Cafe)	<b>Pitt Center</b> (inside front doors)
<b>Thea's Abbey</b> (lobby)	<b>SC Wing</b> (first floor near 63's and Edgerton)
<b>Melady Hall</b> (inside front doors)	<b>NC Wing</b> (first floor near couches)
<b>63's</b> (inside front doors)	<b>Pio's Kitchen</b> (inside front doors)



# News

## President Biden Delivers the State of the Union

BY ERIN CLARK  
Staff Writer

President Joe Biden presented his State of the Union address on Feb. 7 in the Chamber of the House in Washington D.C. This address is presented by the current president annually at the beginning of the calendar year as a constitutional duty to inform the people and Congress of the current state of the nation.

Vice President Kamala Harris and Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy attended at the House Chamber. This was the first address with a republican controlled House of Representatives since 2018.

“Living in a democracy, we the people elect leaders who we believe will be the best candidate to further this country toward the common good,” said senior Ciara Monteverdi. “The State of the Union is then used to inform Americans on how the leader we have elected is either excelling or failing at their job.”

Throughout the address, Biden spoke on several topics involving the progress of the nation. He covered the economy and inflation, the use of American products in federal projects, healthcare, the climate crisis, economic assistance in Ukraine, the opioid crisis, mental health and more.

Political science professor, Dr. Gary Rose, thought he did not spend enough time in his address on foreign affairs, particularly U.S. and China relations.

“We just shot down a Chinese spy balloon and he did not devote enough of his speech to what was a serious assault on our country’s airspace,” said Rose. “That to me was a huge gap in his address; I wanted to hear more about the balance between domestic and foreign policy concerns.”

The parents of Tyre Nichols, who was recently beaten to death by Memphis police officers, attended as well.

Biden made note of this in his address, saying, “what happened to Tyre in Memphis happens too often. We have to do better.”

Sophomore Anna Macaulay said this quote from the address resonated with her.

“He called upon not only Democrats, but all of those in Congress to work to ensure police brutality and the senseless killings of innocent Americans is put to an end,” she said.

President Biden invited other notable people to the address, including Brandon Tsay, who

wrestled a gunman who entered his grandparent’s dance studio. Immigrants Maurice and Kandace also attended. They are the parents of a four-year-old kidney cancer victim, soon-to-be survivor, Ava, who watched from the White House.

Ukraine’s U.S. ambassador attended the address, “representing not just her nation, but the courage of her people,” said Biden.

A father named Doug from New Hampshire, whose daughter died from an overdose of fentanyl at 20 years old, also attended the address.

“I thought the strongest part of his speech had to do with him addressing fentanyl,” said Rose. In his address, Biden informed that more than 70,000 Americans are killed a year from fentanyl overdoses.

“My overall takeaway from the address was that President Biden remains positive and hopeful amongst a partisan political world and unpredictable domestic and global backdrop,” said senior Ashley Czermak.

During Biden’s speech, he informed Americans not only of his progress but also of his future agendas.

“The State of the Union address is an opportunity to evaluate the strength and vitality of our country,” said Rose. “We are provided with a window into what the President plans to introduce to Congress in the months ahead. Additionally, the reaction of the two parties in Congress is interesting to watch and the reactions reveal where the parties agree and disagree.”



Instagram, @potus  
President Biden speaking at the State of the Union address. Vice President Harris and Speaker of the House McCarthy are pictured in the background.

## Get to Know Maurice Nelson

BY JEFF MILLER  
Staff Writer

On Jan. 30, the newly hired Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer (CDIO), Maurice Nelson was a guest on the “Diversity Straight Up” podcast where he spoke about his new role at Sacred Heart University.

According to the Corridor Business Journal, “Diversity Straight Up” is a business podcast that discusses topics like equity, diversity, and inclusion through constructive conversation. It is hosted by Sarika Bhakta, the President of Nikeya Diversity Consulting, and Anthony Arrington, the co-founder and managing partner with Top RANK, a professional search and diversity consulting firm.

During the podcast, Bhakta and Arrington talked to Nelson about his background, core values, job as CDIO, relationship with President Petillo, and much more.

“I wouldn’t be here if I didn’t think we did a good job of living by our values,” said Nelson. “My role is to help hold us accountable to our stated values through our journey to Inclusive Excellence.”

Nelson, who identifies as Black and Mexican, is originally from Savannah, Georgia. He got his Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration at Savannah State University (SSU), which is a historically black college/university (HBCU).

While at SSU, Nelson’s passion grew for social justice, diversity and inclusion. He was also involved with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

“I was president of the SSU chapter and vice president for the Georgia NAACP youth and college division. In that role, I really explored the depths of diversity, because although I was in a predominantly Black environment, it was incredibly diverse from the perspective of other intersecting identities and lived experiences,” Nelson said.

Nelson’s time at SSU allowed him to

grow both academically and professionally.

“My involvement and leadership roles with NAACP and SSU SGA illuminated my purpose and passion for advocacy, reform, and social change,” said Nelson.

While discussing his role at SHU, he talked about what he does and what he wants to accomplish as the CDIO. His job includes overseeing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) at the university.

“As the CDIO, I set the direction for DEIB at SHU, which is our journey toward inclusive excellence and fostering a sustained sense of belonging for all members of the SHU family,” said Nelson. “I define DEIB-related terms for SHU, I write our strategic plan, and commission other groups to help advance our work.”

Nelson also mentioned his relationship with President Petillo and the importance of his DEIB efforts.

“President Petillo has been incredibly supportive and empowers me with the autonomy to truly lead and act in the best interest of Inclusive Excellence at SHU,” said Nelson. “He is also committed to Inclusive Excellence himself, and vocally expresses his unwavering commitment to DEIB.”

Nelson, who has only been at SHU for five months, has already had an impact on campus and is working on a plan to grow diversity and inclusion.

“I am really excited to be working on the Pioneer Plan for Inclusive Excellence, which is our DEIB strategic plan. This is being developed with the assistance of the Inclusive Excellence Advisory Council and is slated to be effective by fall 2023,” he said. “Students, faculty, and staff will have the opportunity to contribute feedback and other ideas to the plan. This five-year plan will give us clear, actionable, and accountable guidance to move us closer to Inclusive Excellence.”

## Prof. Gillespie Ready to Lead Students on the Pioneer Journey

BY ALENA KLADIS  
Staff Writer



Sacred Heart University photo by Tracy Deer-Mirek  
Pictured is Charles A. Gillespie, the director of the SHU Pioneer Journey.

Charles A. Gillespie, a Sacred Heart University assistant professor in the department of Catholic Studies, is taking on a new role as Pioneer Journey Director this year, with the mission to acknowledge how special experiences are at SHU.

The Pioneer Journey is about expressing what it means to be a Pioneer and appreciating the unique experiences and memories made here. Whether it be learning something new in class, getting lost in a city in Europe while abroad, or simply just not being able to find parking in the morning, Gillespie wants to recognize that it’s all part of the unique Pioneer Journey.

According to Gillespie, his role as the director consists of three main goals. The first dives into the idea of what being a Pioneer means and how to own it. It’s about the idea of discovering new things as a community and recognizing that what SHU is doing is special.

The second goal is to align the community’s words and language to be able to share experiences with one another.

“We’re all doing something special, but we all talk about it in different ways,” said Gillespie. “So my first step is to try to get people to share words and language.”

Gillespie’s third goal is to encourage students to not think about their required courses as a stressful box they need to check off, but rather to see it as the unique education

and experience they are getting from this university.

“I want to change those required courses from being a chore to an opportunity, that’s my big goal this spring,” he said.

According to the university’s press release, a description of the Pioneer Journey has been integrated into the freshman orientation program and embedded into SHU’s core classes. A part of the university’s new focus is to ensure that SHU’s specific mission and culture are incorporated into each student’s journey as a Pioneer.

At SHU, Gillespie teaches seminars in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition as well as a class of his own creation, God on Broadway, which discusses how religious, ethical, and cross-cultural themes come into plays and musicals. He is working on a book of the same name, challenging others to raise questions about God and religion within theatre. He also incorporates these missions of the Pioneer Journey within the classroom.

“There’s a lot of uncertainty in our world, and one of the things we always think about is just getting through our to-do list as quickly as possible,” said Gillespie. “We need a culture that every time I’m doing something, it’s about my transformative education and how we can start to support one another in that.”

Gillespie’s dedication and passion for the Pioneer Journey truly reflect his love for this university and its students. He finds importance in making certain that everyone’s experience at SHU is special and enjoyed.

Gillespie’s end goal is to have the SHU community acknowledge its journey together and simply own it. The mission of his new role is to appreciate that the community is doing something special every day, in and outside the classroom.

“My practical end goal is to hear some group of students yell ‘We’re on a Pioneer Journey!’ while going to something,” Gillespie said. “Why? Because that shows that we’re a community doing something special.”



# Features

## No, You Can't Touch My Hair

BY SARAH MARGERISON  
Staff Writer

On Feb. 9, Sacred Heart University's Multicultural Center and Black Student Union (BSU) held an event called "No, You Can't Touch My Hair" in celebration of Black History Month.

The concept of "No, You Can't Touch My Hair" is to share the evolution and history of Black hair in America.

Senior Sydney Worthen-Jenkins, President of the BSU, explained that Black hair represents more than style, but also pride and identity.

"Braiding and cornrow styles are connected to freedom, and people would store rice in their hair during the slave trade, so there's so many historical ties," said Worthen-Jenkins. "For us it's not just hair."

Students were able to come together and lead a conversation about the love and pride they have for their own hair, and establish a connection between other Black students at SHU. At the end of the event, attendees received a "hair care journey" starter kit.

Sophomore Greg Dort attended the event and learned ways of making those around him more comfortable with their hair.

"Being at the event helped me understand more about my Black culture and why the natural hair movement began to rise more recently as opposed to 10 years ago," said Dort. "I also learned how to speak up if I see someone making a fellow sister or brother of mine uncomfortable when it comes to their hair."

Dort mentioned that the information at the event is helpful in informing those of all cultures in what is acceptable to say and expect of one another.

According to senior Kimani Long, Treasurer and Social Media Team member of the BSU, meetings and events put on by the Multicultural Center give Black students a sense of community at SHU.

"It's a safe space for us," said Long. "We're able to talk about struggles of being the only Black kid in the classroom."

The Multicultural Center and BSU are hosting more events throughout February, including the "Black Love Gala," "Black Resistance Pt. 2," and "Hip Hop Museum," to continue celebrating Black History Month.

The organizations held two additional events, "Courageous Conversations: Holding Community Space to Discuss Policing in the United States" and "Soul Food Night," at the beginning of the month.

Worthen-Jenkins and Long are looking forward to the "Black Love Gala," a celebration of Black Love Day and a different take on Valentine's Day, the most out of all of the events this month. To them, the gala will be a time for love for friends and SHU peers.

"It's love for your friends, love for your community, love for God, and really just loving all the people around you and loving yourself," said Worthen-Jenkins.

Members of the BSU believe that the "Black Love Gala" will be one of the most exciting and highly anticipated events for the club.

The Black Love Gala is a formal event and will take place in the West Campus on Thursday, Feb. 16. Students from other surrounding schools such as Central Connecticut State University and Fairfield are also invited.

The BSU meets biweekly at 8 p.m. in the Multicultural Center, room HC111. The club's next meeting time will be on Wednesday, Feb. 22.

For students interested in visiting the Multicultural Center, the area is open Monday through Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.

To learn more about the BSU, visit the club's Instagram: @bsu\_shu.



Contributed by Rob Johnson

Students pictured attending the Feb. 9 event, "No, You Can't Touch My Hair."

## Sacred Heart Helps Fight Addiction

BY RYAN MCNEILL  
Staff Writer

This past October, Sacred Heart University welcomed back alumnus Brian Dolan as a leader in the Collegiate Recovery Program. He returned to campus after managing Fairfield University's recovery program for nearly five years.

"It's pretty surreal for me to be back here," said Dolan. "I never thought that I'd be doing this type of work."

Dr. James Geisler, the Director of Counseling and Student Wellness, believes Dolan's role is very important. "Brian's role is to map and build the short- and long-term future of collegiate recovery here," said Geisler.

The program aids students recovering from substance use disorders and provides residential housing, meetings, recreational activities, etc. Dolan himself is in long-term recovery and celebrates six years of sobriety this month.

"My life got really out of control with alcohol and drugs," said Dolan. "I get to work with people who don't have to go through the pain that I did."

He hopes students appreciate their opportunity to attend the university and acknowledged the inescapability of these issues. Dolan said, "drugs and alcohol are such a big part of the college experience."

"Addiction does not discriminate," said Dolan. "Every student here is going deal with it one way or another."

Dolan commends Sacred Heart for addressing difficult situations and looks forward to raising awareness for the program.

"My drinking here was definitely an issue, but I didn't even know anything about the world of recovery," said Dolan. "It's forward-thinking by the university to create and give resources to a program like this. They're not naive to what's really going on in the student body."

One of his biggest goals is to make the university known as a place where someone can receive higher education while being provided with the tools to stay sober.

"Addiction is a big business so it's about getting Sacred Heart listed as a resource," Dolan said.

"His ability to build relationships within Sacred Heart and the greater community will be a positive asset as he continues to develop programming and support for students in recovery," said Geisler.

"The connections he has made off-campus in this new role are admirable, as he is eager to sup-

port students in recovery on their academic path," said Geisler.

They maintain contact with different treatment centers throughout the northeast to assist in the university's mission. This progress is what Dolan believes can make this resource more accessible as he aims to make the program's purpose better known.

"My job right now is the residential piece but it's also to educate the whole student body," said Dolan.

Junior Ethan Dubrosky said, "That's definitely a good resource for us to have and more people should know about it because I don't think many do."

Dolan is optimistic about the development of the programs and how the recovery population is growing every day.

"Some of the stigma has been lifted," said Dolan. "I'm very open about my struggles and what decisions I made and didn't make."

Geisler said, "Brian has very unique personal and professional experiences, as well as big ideas for Collegiate Recovery, while still remaining curious and open about opportunities for students in recovery to thrive during their time here."

Dolan feels that education and a better understanding of what the road to recovery looks like are integral to the program's effectiveness.

"If anyone ever has a concern about not only themselves but a roommate or a family member or something like that, and they just want to talk with someone who's had a wealth of experience in and around addiction," said Dolan.

Please contact Brian Dolan, [dolanb3@sacred-heart.edu](mailto:dolanb3@sacred-heart.edu) if you or someone you know needs help or think the Collegiate Recovery Program could assist.

## New Hockey Rink: What's on the Menu?

BY SAMANTHA KATZENBACK  
Staff Writer

The Martire Family Arena has officially been open since Jan. 14. With the excitement of the new arena comes the excitement for all the food that is purchasable to fans and students.

The arena offers some of the classic game day snacks as well as some options exclusive to the arena.

"We offer Neapolitan style pizza, Nathan hot dogs, chicken tenders and fries, popcorn, and some of our SHU signature items from campus. For example, we offer the SHU burger from JP's as well as the Nashville chicken sandwich," said David Garcia, Sacred Heart's Executive Chef.

Out of all the food selections they serve at the Martire Family Arena, there are some options that are the fan favorites.

"The most popular items bought by fans at the Martire Family Arena has to be either the chicken tenders and fries or our Neapolitan style pizza," said Garcia. "My personal favorite is the Neapolitan pizza."

Freshman Ben Lemos always chooses the chicken tenders at the games. "The batter on the chicken tenders is what makes them so delicious," said Lemos. "Overall, I would rate the chicken tenders a 10 out of 10."

The arena also offers gluten-free options to those who may have an allergy to gluten.

"We offer popcorn that is gluten-free and our Philly steak meat can be served without a bun to individuals who may prefer that or have an allergy," said Garcia.

The Martire Family Arena food concession stands opened for the first time on Jan. 14 in accordance with the men's hockey opening game at the arena.

As of now The Martire Family Arena food concession stands are only open for operation during Sacred Heart University hockey games.

"We open an hour before the game start time and close mid-3rd period," said Garcia.

Senior Nicole Uttaro tells us a little about her experience with ordering food at the Martire Family Arena.

"Every time I've visited the Martire Family Arena for a men's hockey game it has been extremely crowded," said Uttaro. "The lines to order food are very long but move fairly fast. When I ordered my food, the staff was extremely polite and the food was ready in a reasonable amount of time."

Be on the lookout for new items coming to the Martire Family Arena food concession stands. "We have buckets and mini hockey helmet serving dishes coming in with the pioneer hockey logo on it," said Garcia.

If you are interested in checking out and trying the arena food selection for yourself visit the Martire Family Arena for the next Sacred Heart University men's hockey game Saturday, Feb. 25 at 7 p.m.

# Audrey's Corner



## POEMS

This week, Audrey's Corner promotes student poets by showcasing their work. Kailey Blount, senior English major and manager of Audrey's Corner, shares "I Want to Know my Mother". Julianna Rezza, talented contributing writer, shares "The Thief".

### I Want to Know my Mother

by Kailey Blount

i want to know my mother like only her mother can  
the rhythm of her bare feet hitting kitchen tile on  
    Sunday mornings  
the top of her head lolling back on car rides home from  
    dance class  
waking up at midnight to her  
knees on my chest  
cheek on my breasts  
she'll ask me  
will everything be okay?

I want to know my mother like her father with a liquored heart  
carrying her yellowed picture in my wallet bent on the corners  
    like my spine  
my pockmarked face staring in the bar's bathroom mirror  
smudged with drunken sweat and drowning regret  
    beer on my breath  
i'll stumble home to her epiphany  
we've got the same eyes

I want to know my mother like her sister sent to be her shadow  
our fingers intertwined on home's sloping steps  
i'll steal her shoes, her socks, her face  
her place in a world too small for two cut from the same  
    wrinkled cloth  
she'll hold me tight to her chest until i find shoes that look  
    like hers yet fit like mine  
she'll chase the pressure my soul left behind  
climbing up stairs I built crooked  
to hug me one more time to tell me one last time  
you'll be alright you'll be just fine

I want to know my mother like her best friend lost to  
    growing pains  
sipping on stolen wine beneath the covers of her childhood  
    bed sheets  
talking about our futures to the moon  
swearing to the stars we will stay silly little fools  
and when its 64 degrees in december i'll pray all her wishes  
    came true  
because there's a whisper on the wind saying  
I'm still rooting for you too

I want to know my mother like her first love  
left in basement boxed photographs

teezed hair and teasing smiles  
tripping through her teens  
alive on green beans and what could be  
a green lanterned man whittled with age  
i'll hold her picture the way i should've kept her safe  
so she'll live on in dust mite bitten memories  
a broken piece of ecstasy  
whispering incessantly  
I could've been okay if only you had stayed

Most of all  
I want to know my mother before she knew me  
when all she had to be  
was herself

### The Thief

By Julianna Rezza

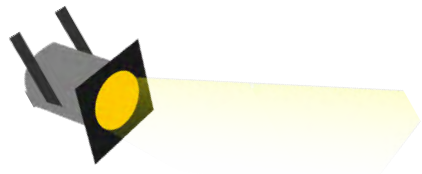
when i was 8 i stole a block of cheese.  
i was on vacation and i packed the bags, i always did  
and the person before must've left behind a bar,  
the hot summer air rushing into the convenience store  
had melted it warm and by all means inedible but  
with a moral obligation stricter than most laws  
i begged, cried to my mother to let me take it back,  
to give the cheese back to the cashier. and everyone in my  
family groaned because it was 6 ounces, an accident, and gross,  
but the tears only stopped when my mother said:  
you probably saved someone. it was bad anyway.

and we laughed and my eight-year-old brain,  
with justification and simplicity, forgave herself.

but what if the cashier gave me the cheese  
what if he swiped it from the shelf and didn't tell his boss  
what if he slipped it to me, telling me to take it  
and i hadn't eaten anything for a thousand days or maybe  
i had it every day and had become so violently addicted that  
saying no would have taken an army i didn't have  
what if the man kept offering and offering and offering  
in the dead of night, begging me to comply and i did,  
the ache spreading in my stomach and my heart  
what if i took it not on purpose, but intentionally  
an accomplice of a crime i never initiated,  
a deformed and broken thing in my hands  
that i threw out and kept a secret.

what if i didn't save anyone.  
how do i forgive myself then?





# Spotlight



## Jill Pusateri: O Captain! My Captain!

BY ALEJANDRO RAMOS  
Spotlight Editor

Jillian Pusateri is a senior political science major from Franklin Square, New York. At Sacred Heart University, she is best known for being captain of the Swim and Dive Team.

When asked why Pusateri was chosen as team captain, John Spadafina, Head Swimming Coach said, “she exemplifies the team core values and shows leadership characteristics.”

Pusateri, 21, has swam for the past 17 years. “I don’t remember life before swimming to be honest. Well, my parents threw me into swim lessons. Then I did a summer team and I fell in love with it.”

For a brief time during her career Pusateri was not the only one of the same last name swimming with a SHU cap on. Her older sister, Julia, was on the team in her senior year when Jillian started her freshman year.

“I’ve always looked up to her. It was kind of cool to have my big sister be a big dog on the team when I first came in,” said Pusateri.

In Spadafina’s tenure with the swim team, he has seen four sets of sisters complete the program.

“Jill and Julia are total opposites, but we endorse the family atmosphere and the siblings that come through the program. The Pusateri’s, in my tenure, are the second set of sisters to come through,” said Spadafina.

During the meet season, August to February, the swim and dive team practices from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Monday through Saturday. They then have a one-hour team lift session twice a week. Their home base is located at the McCann Natatorium in Milford, Conn.



Contributed by SHU Athletic Communications  
Captain Pusateri being carried by SHU swim teammates Grace Bergstrom (left) and Christianna Tzepos (right).



Contributed by SHU Athletic Communications  
Jill Pusateri, the captain of the SHU Swim and Dive Team pictured in the pool after a meet.

In the off season, the team gets a day off with practices running from Monday to Friday. In lieu of a practice, the team has three one-hour team lift sessions.

“Swim has become a part of my life,” said Pusateri. “It has taught me so much, time management, patience, and motivation. Aside from the lessons, it has given me lifelong friends.”

Pusateri’s events for meets are the 100 breaststroke, 500 freestyle stroke, and the mile. Her favorite event is the breaststroke.

She has been supported in her career by loved ones. “My parents are my driving force. They have never missed a meet,” Pusateri said.

Michael and Diana Pusateri were recognized at this year’s senior day festivities. “We all are a family,” said Spadafina.

Other SHU athletic team captains recognize the work that she put into everything. “I would describe Jill as diligent,” said Alexa Setteducati captain of the SHU equestrian team and Pusateri’s housemate.

“She puts 110% into everything she does whether it’s her academics, swimming, or friendships. She is so hardworking and keeps herself busy by not only being a full-time student athlete as a Captain, but she also tutors in the Pitt [Center] and works,” Setteducati said.

Pusateri is off to Hofstra Law School when she graduates this year from SHU. For her this is a bitter-sweet ending, but she already has retirement plans.

Pusateri said, “My retirement will be spent competing in triathlons. Triathlons plus law school... that should keep me busy.”





# Arts & Entertainment

## Harry's House Filled With Hardware

BY PAUL KEEGAN  
Staff Writer

In the midst of award season, it was time for music's biggest night: the Grammy awards. According to Nielsen, over 12.4 million viewers tuned in on Feb. 5 to see if their favorite stars would take home the famed gold-plated gramophone, an increase of 31% from last year, where only 9.6 million viewers tuned in, Billboard.com reports.

Among those watching at home was sophomore Billy Kasheta, a SHU FORCE Dance Ensemble Choreographer. Kasheta has been a fan of the Grammy's since he was in middle school.

Kasheta's favorite moment in the show came from Harry Styles, who snagged "Best Pop Vocal Album" for "Harry's House," beating out the likes of ABBA, Adele, and Coldplay.

"I can't say enough about Harry Styles," said Kasheta. "The performance was top notch. I love seeing how creative he can be with his outfits, too. His silver jumpsuit was so fun. It really added to his performance."

Sophomore Sean Ryan, a performer recently seen as John Proctor in Sacred Heart's production of "The Crucible," is a fan of award shows as well. He sees them as a time to connect with family, noting that he enjoys watching the red carpet with his mother.

Ryan was especially happy to see Viola Davis take home her first Grammy for "Best Audiobook, Narration, and Storytelling," which has earned her EGOT status, having now received an Emmy, a Grammy, an Oscar and a Tony.

"It's so well deserved," Ryan said. "She's multi-talented. Coming from theatre, I'll watch anything she's in. She steals the show with every performance she gives. Her work speaks



AP Photo by Chris Pizzello

Harry Styles accepting the award for Album of the Year at the 2023 Grammy's.

volumes."

According to Time.com, she is also now the "third Black woman to attain the most coveted status in the entertainment industry."

"She pulls people in with her work and spreads love and kindness through her words," said Kasheta.

Beyonce made history by taking home four awards, now holding the title for the most Grammy wins of all time: 32. She holds 79 total nominations. "Good for Beyonce," said Kasheta. "She puts hard work into her music and her career. It's a title well earned. She has a kind heart and a strong work ethic."

Chris Ortega, a graduate student in the School of Communication, Media and the Arts (SCMA) was particularly moved by Beyonce's achievement.

"It's just a great feeling," said Ortega. "Most of us grew up watching her journey as an artist, from being in 'Destiny's Child' to an icon."

Questlove's thoroughly curated tribute to the 50th anniversary of Hip-Hop was nearly 15 minutes long and featured stars like LL Cool J, Salt-N-Pepa, Queen Latifah and more. The tribute is one of the night's most searched performances on YouTube, totaling nearly 4 million views across the platform.

But the night wasn't perfect, according to Ryan. "I really did not care for Sam Smith's performance of 'Unholy.' The whole 'demonic' performance—it just seemed very strange. I think a lot of the time artists can only perform one song so they think 'how can we get people to talk about us,' rather than 'how can we put on a good performance.'"

He believes that music is harder to judge than film or theatre.

"It's more subjective," Ryan said. "It's hard to say what was the best song or album of the year, because what does 'best' mean? Harry Styles won album of the year, but I believe it's because of how popular he is. I think there were other albums in that category that had more to say."

As for how the awards are chosen, Ryan said, "It's more about how well received the music is—how big the fanbase is—rather than what music is the best."

Award season will conclude with the 95th annual Academy Awards on March 12.

## From Video Game to Screen

BY HAIELY GENZALE  
Staff Writer



Instagram, @thelastofus

The official announcement for the HBO Max original, based off the popular video game of the same name.

On Jan. 15, HBO Max premiered the first of what will be nine episodes of the new original, "The Last of Us." The show stars Pedro Pascal as Joel and Bella Ramsey as Ellie, the show is based off a video game made by Naughty Dog, which came out in 2013.

The show explores a world being taken over by a zombie apocalypse, caused by a mutated strain of a fungus. It portrays the journey of characters Joel and Ellie after Joel is instructed to bring Ellie, who is immune to the fungus, to safety while he is on the search for his brother, Tommy.

With the apocalypse starting in 2003, it fast forwards two decades to the year 2023 in which viewers see a torn-up world, where everyone is either dead, infected by the fungus, or struggling to stay alive, and viewers can't get enough of it.

"I would have to say this is currently my favorite show to watch right now," said sophomore Carolyn Doherty.

The series has received a lot of popularity with over 20 million viewers just through its first few episodes, according to the Los Angeles Times.

"I look forward to every Sunday night to watch the newest episode," said Doherty. "It's one of those shows that keeps you on your toes and excited to see what comes next."

"The Last of Us" has an overall rating of four and a half stars according to Google. Viewers only have good things to say about the show, with little to no bad

reviews.

"The show does a really good job depicting the video game it is based off of," said Doherty. "I really have nothing to criticize about it."

Sophomore Matthew Kling also had some things to say about the show, "I wasn't expecting the show to be so similar to the video game, and the fact that it is made it a lot more enjoyable to watch."

Kling isn't the only person who feels this way, as many online reviews agree.

The show is a deconstruction of the video game, and mostly leans on character and storytelling, unlike the game itself which is mostly action.

"Having played the game and watched the show, I can easily say that I feel more of a connection to the characters watching the show than I would playing the video game," said Kling.

With the genres of "The Last of Us" being apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic fiction and drama, the show is recommended to viewers who enjoy things involving a drama-full storyline and a gory addition to it.

"What I like the most about this show is how it has an equal part of everything, it can make you laugh, cry, scream, it's the best of every world," said Doherty.

It isn't the gore that catches the eye of viewers, but the connection that people feel to the characters that makes it so entertaining to watch.

"Normally I wouldn't watch shows like this, since I get scared really easily, but this show catches my attention like no other," said Doherty.

Doherty said, "I would recommend this show to really anyone, it has all amazing qualities and the suspension each week of waiting to see what happens will make a person want to watch it even more."



Instagram, @thelastofus

Pedro Pascal and Bella Ramsay star as Joel and Ellie in 2023's new hit show, "The Last of Us."

## Who Will Win TheatreFest?

BY BRAD HUTCHINSON  
Staff Writer

Two shows have advanced to the final round of TheatreFest: "Taking a Drive" by seniors Sam Deluise and Paul Keegan, a staff writer for the Spectrum, and "My Big Fat (Ancient) Greek Wedding" by seniors Noah Vargoshe and Codi Lynders, PR manager for the Spectrum.

"This is a great year for TheatreFest. Actually, the best year since the beginning many years ago. We had 18 amazing scripts, which means we had to double the performance days to hear all of the shows in the first round," said Executive Director of Performing Arts, Jerry Goehring.

TheatreFest is a playwriting festival where students have the opportunity to write an original show and bring it to life on the stage. Being a festival that is student-driven, there are a variety of roles available for students to get involved, whether it be as a writer, director, stage manager, or actor.

This festival is comprised of three rounds, which take place between both the fall and spring semesters. The first round is a version of reader's theatre, where the actors read the script with nothing besides a script and music stand. Shows that move forward participate in Round 2, where the director incorporates simple blocking with limited set and tech elements. From that point, whichever shows that have shown the most potential throughout the 3 rounds receive the opportunity to be a fully produced show.

Goehring, selects the shows that move on throughout the festival. This was a groundbreaking year for the festival, as there were so many submissions that Round 1 had to be split into two parts.

"Taking a Drive" is an original musical, where Deluise wrote the script and lyrics, while Keegan covered the musical aspects. Their show was the only musical submitted to the festival this year.

"Most of the time I'll write lyrics for a



Contributed by Steph Patella

Pictured above is Steph Patella, the coordinator of TheatreFest.

song with a melody in mind. Then I'll sing the song acappella into my phone and send it to Paul along with a text copy of the lyrics," said Deluise. "Then Paul works his magic [and I do mean real magic] and he makes the instrumental from scratch."

"Taking a Drive" is an insight to the connection between four old friends. The characters form deeper connections throughout the story and allow the audience to share the ride.

Sophomore Sean Ryan is an actor in the show, and he has been a part of the cast since September when the show was submitted for the first round. The show specifically resonated with him because it is based off of Rhode Island, his home state.

"The show taught me to live your life with no regrets, and that you should spend every moment you can appreciating the people around you and appreciating what you have," Ryan said.

"My Big Fat (Ancient) Greek Wedding" is the second show, and the story follows Aphrodite, the goddess of love, and what would happen if she could not keep a relationship to save her life. The show is a comedy, and it showcases Aphrodite if she ended up like one of the women on "The Bachelor."

"Taking a Drive" and "My Big Fat (Ancient) Greek Wedding" are free and open to the public. They will run the weekend of Feb. 23-26 in the Little Theatre.



Contributed by Steph Patella

The past lineup for Round 2 of TheatreFest.



# Sports

## Pioneers Make a Splash on Senior Day

BY TYLER CIAVARELLA  
Staff Writer



Instagram, @shuswimdivecoach  
SHU Swim and Dive Seniors pause to take a picture with their families prior to their meet vs Merrimack.

The Sacred Heart University (SHU) swimming and diving team held their annual senior day on Feb. 4 defeating Merrimack College 186-74 at the McCann Natatorium in Milford.

SHU's seven seniors were honored during a ceremony before the meet. It was the team's final meet before they compete for the Northeast Conference (NEC) championship from Feb. 21-25. The seniors were a big part of the team's identity this season and they

ultimately helped propel the team to victory on Senior Day.

"I am grateful to this university to help me meet so many wonderful people. With swimming and diving, I am especially grateful," said senior Kelly Bartnett. "The team is so supportive and kind, I am very glad to have spent these 4 years with my team and at this university."

Bartnett won twice, once in the 200 freestyle and another in the 100 freestyle against Merrimack.

"Ever since move-in day I have loved Sacred Heart, being on the swimming and diving team has made it an experience I wouldn't trade for the world," said senior Casey Barrett. "My teammates are like family to me."

Barrett also won twice, winning the 100m backstroke and the 200m individual medley.

While swimming is largely considered an "individual" sport, Bartnett says that isn't the case.

"Doing something for the team is much more rewarding than doing something for yourself. Swimming is classified as an 'individual' sport, and we are taught that until college," said Bartnett. "As the program goes on, you find out that it's more of a team sport than anyone realizes. I believe this is a good lesson for the future, where doing something for somebody else will always be more rewarding than doing something for yourself," said Kelly Bartnett.

Being a Division 1 athlete is more than just performing in your select sport. You pick up life lessons along the way from your coaches, teammates and competitors, lessons that you take with you for the rest of your life.

"Being a Division 1 athlete has taught me a lot of things throughout these four years but the main lessons I have learned are organization, discipline, and the ability to work hard," said Bartnett.

As a senior, Barrett and the rest of her senior class went through their fair share of adversity. However, she is proud of the way they adapted and grew from the struggles.

"The seniors impacted our program in a positive way. They were all freshmen when Covid-19 came and changed our way of living," said Barrett. "Their adjustments and buying into the program was different year-by-year and they did it which showed resilience."

Head coach John Spadafina believes his team is ready for the NEC Championships and is peaking at just the right time.

"It's not how you start but how you finish. We had a rough start. Some injuries early, but we were training very well," said Spadafina. "Our divers were crushing it all season and our swimmers were following the plan but the dual meet results didn't equate to the hard work they were putting in. With our mid-Season invite results and how we trained during the training trip, the results are now coming to fruition at the right time"

The NEC Championships take place over five days, from Feb. 21-25 in Geneva, Ohio. "There is an old saying that 'hay is in the barn,'" Spadafina said. "The work is done, so it's time to refine our skills, have fun and perform."

*Sacred Heart Athletics contributed to this article.*

## Pioneers Returning to MAACtion

BY JOHN GREENE  
Staff Writer

The Sacred Heart University (SHU) men's lacrosse team is gearing up for the start of a new journey this season.

With the Northeast Conference (NEC) no longer supporting men's lacrosse, the Pioneers 2023 campaign begins their first year as members of the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC).

In the MAAC's coaches poll for the upcoming season, the Pioneers were picked to finish in eighth place out of the ten in the conference.

Jon Basti is entering his seventh year as the Pioneers head coach, but is not too concerned with the recent coach's poll.

"It is what it is," said Basti. "The MAAC is a great league for us. All the programs are very similar and very competitive. It is a gritty league which we are excited to compete in."

Graduate student and captain Thomas Houlihan also says his team isn't worried about their positioning in the coach's poll.

"Truthfully that doesn't faze me in the slightest," said Houlihan. "People don't understand how hard this group of guys have worked and how far we have come. It is just fuel to the fire."

Sacred Heart is eager to face some new conference opponents this season with the likes of Marist, Manhattan, Siena, Quinnipiac, Canisius and the Virginia Military

Institute. They will also have some familiar teams from the NEC joining them in Wagner College, Long Island University (LIU), and Mount St. Mary's.

After an underwhelming 2022 season, in which they finished with a 3-10 overall record and a 1-6 record in conference play, Sacred Heart's offseason focus has been about learning to compete at a higher level.

"The off-season consisted of constant competition and high paced play," said senior captain Ryan Stout. "Our drive to win is stronger than ever, I believe that gives us the edge we need to be successful for the spring season."

The culture that Basti has created in his seven years here is one he hopes is beneficial to team success this year.

"Our program is based on energy and excitement," said Basti. "We have a strong culture based on trust and accountability which allows each player to be themselves while confirming to certain principles within the collective which makes us even tighter."

The team focuses on camaraderie, highlighting the fact that their team has meshed together perfectly.

"Our culture is truly that of a brotherhood," said Houlihan. "We truly are a family through all the ups and downs and in between."

One of the key members of their brotherhood is sophomore Jake Ward, who started in 12 of 13 games for the Pioneers last season. The reigning NEC Rookie of the Year recorded 17 goals and 9 assists while setting a conference record with seven Rookie of the Week nominations a year ago.

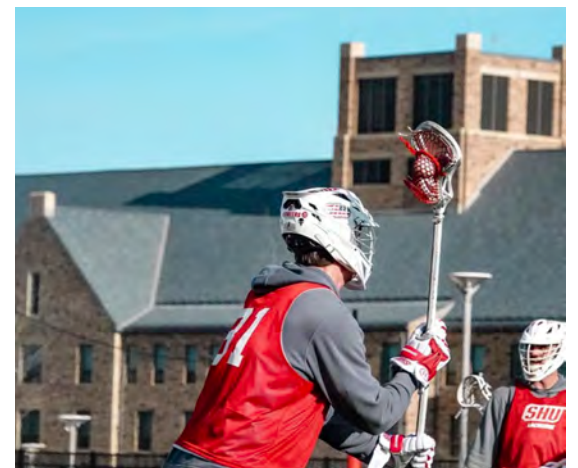
"It was definitely an honor and something I am grateful to have accomplished but something I could not have accomplished without the support and leadership of the older guys on offense and Coach Chris Doctor," said Ward. "Being a sophomore with a whole year of experience gives me confidence and allows me to play more poised and loose."

Ward mentioned that he is ecstatic and confident for the upcoming season, and the team is ready to roll.

The Pioneers dropped their season opener to nationally ranked Saint Joseph's University on Feb. 11. They play three more games against Lafayette, Fairfield and Stony Brook before taking on Drexel University for their home opener on March 4.

"I am definitely looking forward to playing in our new conference," said Ward. "I believe our brand of lacrosse will be successful against new competition and gives us a chance to prove and solidify ourselves at the top of the conference."

*Sacred Heart Athletics contributed to this article.*



Instagram, @shumenslax  
The Sacred Heart men's lacrosse team running through drills during a winter practice.



Instagram, @shumenslax  
The Pioneers face off at Lafayette College next on Saturday, Feb. 18, where they will look for their first win of the season.



# Editorial

## A Writer's Life

KAILEY BLOUNT

CO-MANAGER OF AUDREY'S CORNER

I became a writer on a subway station staircase. I was ten, tucked beneath my father's arms, dark circles weighing down my eyes, evidence of my literary induced crimes against bedtime. That morning, I'd woken up with my cheek pressed up against the last chapter, a human bookmark. My mother, back then my alarm clock, forbid reading for the day on account of my highly suspicious pillow choice. I spent the train ride to the city brewing. My day could not begin without that stolen ending. Somewhere between Hoboken and Manhattan, I realized I could make up my own. I walked up those gum-stained steps with my first story written. Above me, the world waited.

After my hand was forced to find a pen, I realized pens were everywhere: jammed underneath my crush's desk, stuck in my teacher's bun, piled beneath my parents' bills. Already a late-night literary criminal, I stole their pens and wrote their stories and didn't stop until someone asked me to read them theirs. Freshly eighteen, I hadn't thought anyone wanted to listen to my words, much less read them. It made me think about what I was writing and who I was writing for.

I spent my covid years grappling with this question under the heavy shadows of an autoimmune disease diagnosis and over six million deaths. It was in that climate; I found my answer. In her introduction to "A House on Mango Street", Sandra Cisneros writes about wishing to serve others through her writing. From the point of view of Esperanza, a young Latina girl struggling to find herself in an impoverished and oppressed patriarchal culture, she gives a voice to the people she left behind.

I wish to give a voice to my home. I wish to give a voice to the girl sitting in a church pew next to her friend who's only ever supposed to be her friend. I wish to give a voice to the first generation American struggling to find a place between her father's African roots and the soil she now stands on. I wish to give a voice to the young woman pinned beneath bed sheet, tangled in wires, praying for prayers to keep her alive. I wish for my stories to shelter, to heal, to hold.

The Spectrum has given me a space to share my writing and the inspiring writing of my peers. I am so grateful to have found myself in these pages. Thank you to the board, my talented team of writers, and you, our readers.

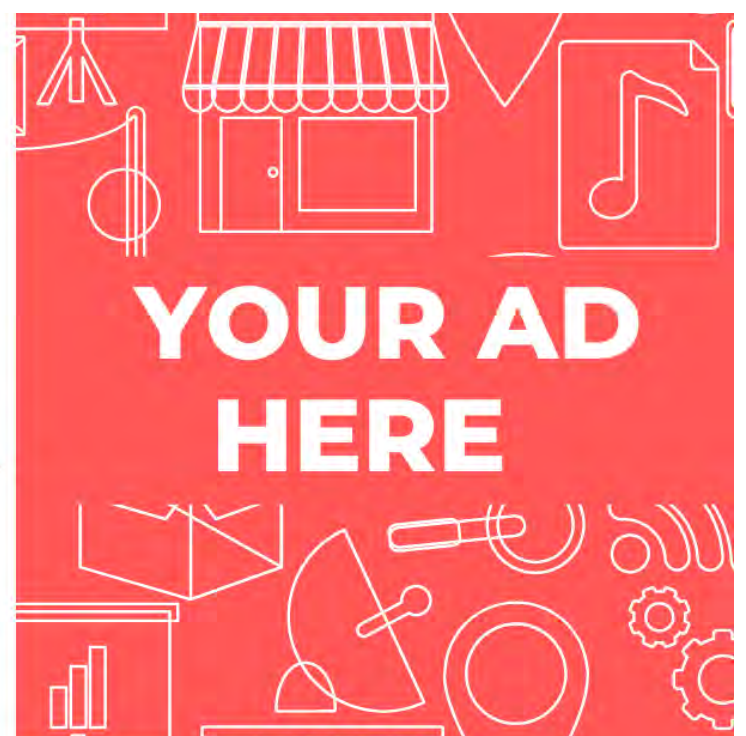


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