

New Wing to Sing: Naclerio Commons to Become Performing Arts Wing



Tracy Deer-Mirek, Sacred Heart University

Outside the Edgerton Center for the Performing Arts.

BY CAYLA MELLO
Staff Writer

Have you noticed the construction going on in the main academic building on campus? In the past year, there has been construction to build a new performing arts wing, amongst other changes, where the Naclerio Commons (NC) is. The Performing Arts program consists of students involved in theatre, dance, band & orchestra and chorus. Since the programs have grown more in recent years, the program needed more space for every cohort to be able to practice without disruption.

Students in the performing arts program are looking forward to the new wing's debut.

"I think overall, everyone in performing arts is eager to

get a look at and start using the new spaces. It's time that the performing arts have a space that belongs to just them, and can be utilized in so many ways," said senior Kayla Goncalves, who is involved in the Theater Arts Program.

"We have started at the bare minimum of 100, maybe 115 students, and now it's almost to 1,000 students. We have practiced in old locker rooms, in the chapel basement, in so many different locations on campus," said Denise Tiberio, the Dean of Students.

"The talent that we bring in every year, they just deserve this. We have done such a great job bringing in students that are so talented that I am so glad that

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Post-Grad Job Market

BY GEORGE TRIEBENBACHER
Staff Writer

If you're wondering why college seniors can be stressed as they approach graduation rather than purely excited, it might be because they're in the process of finding a job.

This isn't the case for all seniors, however, 61.6% of all surveyed graduates are employed full-time within a year of graduation while 37% continue education after they receive

their bachelor's degree, according to a survey given by the Center for Career & Professional Development. The survey includes data from the graduating classes from 2018 through 2022.

The primary fields of study that survey participants work in following graduation are health science, nursing, education and accounting.

Sacred Heart University alumnus
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Photo Contributed by Justin Zenchuk

Performing Arts Wing concept art.

Changes to the FAFSA Cause Initial Delays

BY CALEB JEAN-PIERRE
Staff Writer

If you are preparing to submit the 2024-2025 FAFSA form, the U.S. Department of Education recently released new information about changes made to the FAFSA application and the application process.

There was a delay to the originally scheduled launch of the 2024-2025 FAFSA, due to "student and families limited availability and glitches," according to the Associated Press. The planned Oct. 1 launch was instead released unprecedentedly in December and stated that changes were made to the FAFSA application.

The FAFSA itself, according to the Associated Press, "is a free government

application that uses financial information from you and your family to determine whether you can get financial aid from the federal government to pay for college."

It can also help determine qualifications for other federal grants, work-study programs, federal/state student loans, and other merit-based scholarships.

The new changes to the application are designed to make it easier for colleges to process records while ensuring an easier application process for students.

According to the Department of Education, "The Better FAFSA is simplified, redesigned, and streamlined. It is faster and easier to fill out, with most students and families completing it in less than 15 minutes."

Here is what to know about the recent changes:

"It is a new form with fewer questions and there is direct data exchange with the IRS so when students sign up, it is question by question application that also sends information to a parent or someone who supports the student, now known as a contributor," said Julie Savino, Associate Vice President of Student Financial Assistance.

The new FAFSA uses the Student Aid Index formula, so students can find out how much federal student aid they may be eligible for.

"With the new FAFSA, the federal government is expanding eligibility for Pell Grants by calculating differently by tying the Pell Grant to family size and the federal poverty level," said Savino.

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Tracy Deer-Mirek, Sacred Heart University

Sacred Heart's Financial Assistance office is located at Curtis Hall. The office is there to help students and families navigate the changes to FAFSA.

For more... shuspectrum.com @shuspectrum @TheSpectrumSHU @shuspectrum

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News

PA Wing

BY CAYLA MELLO
Staff Writer

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they have the space they will have a great chance to display their talents in,” said Tiberio.

The new wing is equipped with multiple amenities that the program did not have in previous years. Now every cohort of the performing arts program can practice in the same area.

“We do have in the new space three dance studios, a full band room, choir room, a scene shop, costume shop, new little theatre, lots of storage, and five individual practice rooms,” said Tiberio.

Gerald Goehring, Director of Performing Arts, said that the university made renovations that have been designed specifically for the performing arts.

“There’s a lot of really nice things that are specifically designed for each of the cohorts,” said Goehring. “The band room for instance is equipped acoustically so we can have 100 trumpets in there blaring loudly, doesn’t hurt anybody’s hearing, and they can hear the music and work on it. Then our sound systems can record it and they can hear back and really listen to make it world class.”

“I think having a new space for so many students to explore and be creative is part of why it will be so successful. I also think that maybe with more performing arts space on campus, it will encourage other students to try new things, or go support these cohorts,” said Goncalves.

The performing arts program isn’t the only thing that is being renovated with the construction. Sacred Heart also implemented new heaters for the shuttle area, and a new glass door in the NC, separating the performing arts wing from the rest of the academic building.

The new wing will have its grand opening this coming fall semester.

“We will start slowly bringing some of the practices back to the main campus after spring break. The grand opening will be in September, but we did want to allow the seniors the opportunity to experience the space,” said Tiberio.



Contributed by Josh Archilla, Staff Photographer
New doors are in place at what will be the new entrance to the Performing Arts wing.

FAFSA Changes

BY CALEB JEAN-PIERRE
Staff Writer

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The new FAFSA can now also be found in the 11 most common languages, according to the Federal Student Aid website.

According to the Associated Press, “Since the process has been delayed this year, students will begin to receive their offers later than usual.”

However, it is recommended that students fill out the FAFSA sooner than later, while they still can.

“The national deadline for incoming students to submit the FAFSA is May 1 and the returning student’s deadline is typically March 15 but is very flexible and the Office of Financial Assistance will still take a FAFSA any time after that,” said the Director of the Office of Student Financial Assistance, Mathew Magliocco.

“It is important to make sure that your forms are filed and

your FAFSA is completed. Do not worry about getting other information, just make sure your applications are filed and in the pipeline, so your FAFSA information is not delayed even more,” said Savino.

Sophomore Charles Pritcher said, “Applying for the FAFSA in the past has been difficult so hopefully with these new changes, it will make things easier.”

A Feb. 16 email to the SHU community from the Office of Student Financial Assistance addressed concerns regarding the delay and offered advice for the next steps in the FAFSA application process.

“Obviously, every family is different, and each situation is different. This new process can be tricky when determining who’s a contributor or other instances, but we will work with them to make sure they have the information and resources to succeed,” said Magliocco.

Post-Grad Job Market



BY GEORGE TRIBENBACHER
Staff Writer

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John Goodnough was in the same position as current seniors when he was graduating in May 2019, and he said that several different opportunities at SHU helped him prepare for the job market.

“Just trying to boost up your resume in different ways could be helpful, whether it’s being a Welch Mentor, being an ambassador,” Goodnough said. “All these different things could help with your resume, and it helps when you go to the different career fairs.”

Goodnough, who majored in finance and marketing, also said that SHU’s location in proximity to several big cities was an advantage when searching for a job, post-graduation.

“Overall, there’s a lot of good opportunities. As a student, you just have to take advantage of the different opportunities and career fairs that they offer,” said Goodnough.

These internships and connections made at SHU helped Goodnough find his current job at Ameriprise Financial, where he’s been employed for over four years.

Economics and finance professor Lucjan Orlowski said that graduates need to have certain traits when searching for a job, such as curiosity, confidence and the drive to succeed.

“They should take risks because they are young and can experiment, and [they have] to learn not to give up if they fail with their first experiment. You fail in order to draw lessons for the next time,” Orlowski said.

Orlowski also said that the job market is undergoing major changes in the types of jobs needed, with artificial intelligence playing a major role.

“Ten years ago, we had more needs for programmers, financial analysts, technical analysts and more micro-oriented jobs,” Orlowski said. “Right now, you have to

Contributed by Molly Jacob, '24
Senior Molly Jacob at her internship with the YES Network getting ready for an interview at Yankee Stadium.

have a macro-perspective or a global perspective with analytical skills.”

According to the Associated Press, the job market has been trending in the right direction recently, as the number of people applying for unemployment benefits dropped from 220,000 to 212,000 during the week of Feb. 4 until Feb. 10.

The Associated Press reports that “The unemployment rate stayed at 3.7% and has been below 4% for 24 straight months – two full years – the longest such streak since the 1960s.”

According to Orlowski, the job market has made recoveries from the Covid-19 pandemic, but it varies depending on the field.

Sophomore Laura Schroeder said that she feels more prepared to explore job opportunities thanks to an internship with the Falmouth Commodores of the Cape Cod Baseball League.

“These internships are your chance to be in a professional setting before there are big, real risks,” Schroeder said. “You’re able to make those mistakes that might cost you a job in the future and learn before that could possibly happen.”

Schroeder, who majors in sports management and business management, said that her internship helped her identify that she prefers a job with more action and movement rather than a desk job.

“If I was doing the same thing every day, eventually I would get bored. I liked the unpredictability of my job over the summer because the games were unpredictable,” Schroeder said.

For more information on job and internship opportunities, visit the Center for Career and Professional Development, located on the second floor of Linda E. McMahon Commons.

Features

A Whole New Virtual World at the NeXReality Lab



Students using virtual reality at Sacred Heart's NeXReality Lab.

Tracy Deer-Mirek, Sacred Heart University

BY SARA HASENEY
Staff Writer

The NeXReality Lab at Sacred Heart University's West Campus offers opportunities for students and faculty to get hands-on experience with virtual reality (VR), extended reality (XR), and augmented reality (AR).

The lab is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, where students can utilize the lab's resources for projects and research.

Prof. Shanshan Wang is the director of the NeXReality Lab, and assistant professor of the Immersive Media and Mixed Reality (IMMR) program at SHU.

"The lab serves as a production hub for students in the IMMR and Game Design programs who are working on VR/AR/XR development. Students learn game design principles, mechanics, and techniques specific to immersive technologies," said Wang.

The lab also gives students the resources to engage in 3D scanning and printing. By utilizing the lab's equipment, students get hands-on experience regarding the techniques and overall process of printing and scanning.

"The lab provides resources for students to learn and practice 3D scanning and printing techniques. They can capture real-world objects and environments, manipulate, and modify 3D models, and create physical prototypes using 3D printers," said Wang.

The NeXReality Lab gave senior Devin O'Connell, a previous intern of the lab, numerous opportunities. One of O'Connell's previous projects gave him the chance to construct a three-dimensional replica of the classroom to be transformed into a home screen of a VR headset in the lab.

"There are benefits to learning the technology and equipment at the lab," said O'Connell. "By using it, it increases your creativity and innovation including creating immersive experiences and designing virtual objects and creating those interactive elements when using these systems."

The lab is most commonly utilized by students within the computer science, media, and game design majors, although the lab is available to a variety of programs at SHU.

"Game design, media, and computer science students tend to go but it can definitely be used for architectural degrees, the medical field, and engineering. Hopefully, it can branch off into different majors. I think that's the goal they're looking for eventually," said O'Connell.

Sophomore Isabella Zalescik is currently in Prof. Wang's immersive media production course and has gained experience in the lab. She has gained experience with the lab's resources and has created an environment where she and other students can acquire the necessary skills to navigate the latest technological advancements.

"Students can learn how to use the new technology that is becoming more present in our day to day lives. It's extremely cool what VR can do and how we experience it, and to have it here on campus is really cool," said Zalescik.

The equipment in the NeXReality Lab is not limited to only educational purposes. Its diverse use can allow students to engage in VR for entertainment and gaming purposes as well.

"The lab has VR sets, controls, and special computers for students to use and play VR games on. The class I'm in is surrounded by experiencing VR and making some VR videos," said Zalescik.

The NeXReality Lab of Sacred Heart University promotes innovative research and learning, where faculty and staff are able to utilize the equipment of the lab. The lab is located at West Campus W248-249, and for questions about the lab, email NeXReality_Lab@sacredheart.edu.

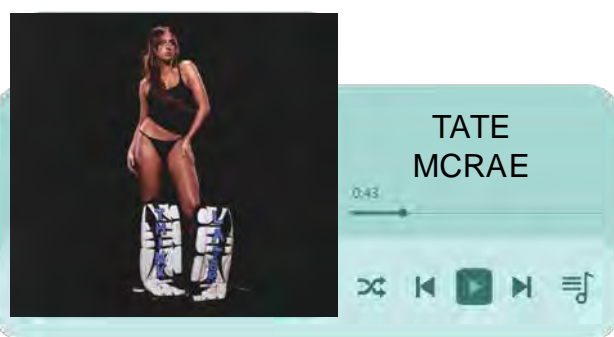
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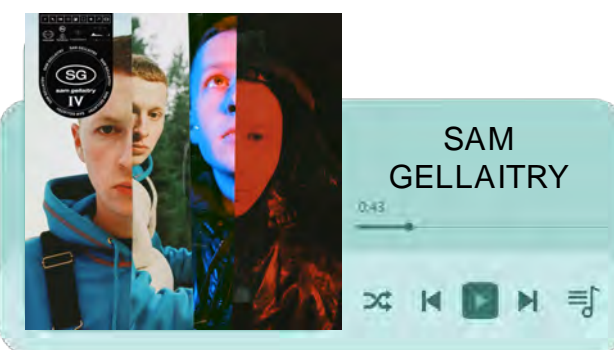
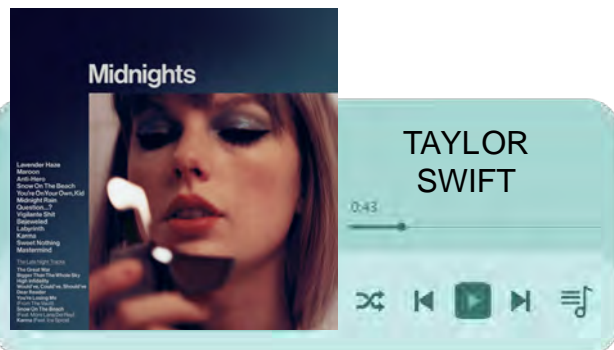
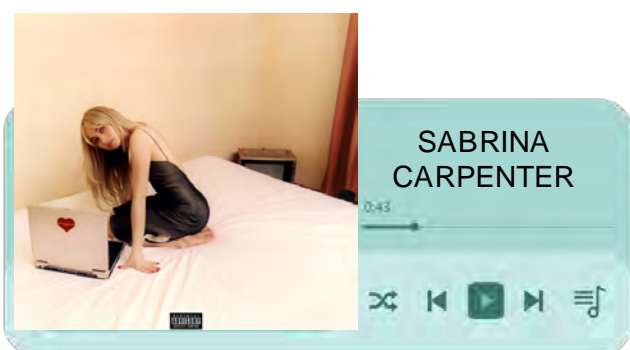
What's SHU Listening to?



"I love to blast both Tate McRae and Luke Combs when I'm driving, especially when I drive back home to Delaware. Their songs never get old. Tate McRae's 'think later' and 'all the things I never said' albums are my absolute favorites. I love the songs 'greedy' and 'exes' on 'think later' and also I love 'that way' on 'all the things I never said'. Luke Combs' album 'This One's For You' is one of my favorites. I love 'When It Rains, It Pours', 'Hurricane', 'Beer Can' and 'One Number Away'." - senior Meghan Haggerty

"I've been listening to Top 40's music such as Tate McRae, Rihanna and Drake. 'greedy' and 'exes' by Tate McRae and 'Take Care' by Rihanna and Drake have been my go-to songs." - senior Cenzo Dastoli

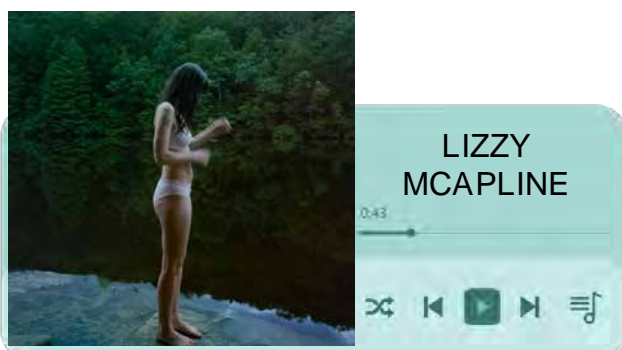
"I've been listening to a lot of Renee Rapp recently, as well as country music. I love listening to country when the weather starts to turn to spring. I've been listening to a lot of Kacey Musgraves to get ready for her new album. My Chill Homework Mix that Spotify generates for me is the best when I'm doing any kind of work." - senior Kathleen Chiodo



"'Feather' by Sabrina Carpenter has been my favorite song recently. It's the best hype-up song and I love to dance to it." - senior Kayla Goncalves

"Taylor [Swift] always. She has so many albums with different kinds of music and the diversity allows me to have music for almost any situation." - junior Giusi Maniscalco

"'Assumptions' by Sam Gellaitry, 'Money Longer' by Lil Uzi Vert, and 'Said N Done' by 21 Savage and Metro Boomin." - junior Giovanna Mascia



"'Far Away' by Junip and 'Older' by Lizzy McAlpine have been my go-to songs of the winter. 'Older' is a new release, and is the perfect song for a sentimental cold morning. On the other hand, 'Far Away' provokes feelings of adventure and mystery, inspiring me to look into the unknown." - junior Collin Moura

"'Just' by Radiohead." - junior Julia Rossback

CampusLife

Calling All Writers and Artists

BY ISABELLA FABBO
Photography Editor

Heartlines is Sacred Heart's own literary magazine, and it's gearing up for its third issue this spring. Submissions for pieces in a number of different genres, including poetry, flash fiction, fiction, and creative nonfiction, are due on March 8. The magazine encourages beginner and experienced writers and artists alike to submit for the chance to be published.

"I think students should submit to Heartlines because it is a great opportunity for them to showcase pieces they have been working on either in class or independently. All submissions are read blindly and considered for publishing in an unbiased manner, so it is a safe space to get work out there and gain some feedback on things students have been working on," said senior Hannah Schultz, co-editor of the magazine.

Poetry submissions can be up to four pages, whether it is a single poem or multiple poems. Flash fiction pieces must not exceed 750 words. Fiction submissions can be 751-3000 words, and creative nonfiction pieces can be up to 2000 words. Students interested in submitting artwork can submit two pieces.

"In the end, what we're looking for in submissions, other than adhering to the

guidelines, of course, is that it exemplifies their heart as a writer. Anybody can write a technical fiction piece between 751 and 3000 words and it's just 'content.' But we aren't just looking for 'content' to meet a quota or fill a void, we're looking for something that really can connect with people," said senior co-editor Sam Kealey.

Full submission guidelines can be found on the Heartlines website, <https://www.heartlinesliterarymagazine.org/>. Students can submit their work there or directly to the Heartlines email, shuliterarymagazine@gmail.com.



Scan this QR code to submit your work!

Just Like Her

BY ERIN DUNN, '25
Contributing Writer

I send the New York Times puzzles to my mother every morning. We do the Wordle and Connections. She sends back her attempts every night.

We don't chat much. Don't have that "best-friend" mother and daughter bond. Too practical for that.

I don't call her to dish about my love life or the parties I went to over the weekend. Too stern for that.

She has never bought me alcohol or taken me out of school for a day of shopping. Too strict for that.

But we send the puzzles.

I look forward to it actually. It might be my favorite part of the morning. Discussing our thought process, why we picked certain Wordle words, how we interpreted the day's Connections. That's much more like us than "chatting."

And I'm much more like her than I realized.

She raised me to be independent, strong-willed. Mom doesn't take any shit. She is the most badass woman I know. When she wants something, she goes after it. Throughout high school, Mom wanted pictures of me doing my sports to get framed, but the yearbook photographer could never get flattering ones. So, she took thousands of pictures of me and my teammates to make sure everyone had memories for our end of the year banquet.

She encouraged my intelligence, my curiosity. Determined to ensure I amounted to more than just a pretty face. Mom's a doctor by profession, the breadwinner of our family. That typical nuclear structure of Dad bringing home the bacon and Mom taking care of the kids had no place in our house.

Her favorite thing to gift me was books of all shapes and sizes and subject matters. Though she jokingly regrets instilling a love of reading in me now – books are one of my more expensive hobbies – I act as Mom's librarian. Every month (ish) without fail, she texts me from my bedroom library to discuss my latest book recommendation that she should read next.

Above all, she taught me to be singular. To be remarkable. To know there is no one else quite like me in the world and that is a good thing. Mom showed me that clothes and shoes are not measures in which a person's worth can be counted. The fads of the fashion world are inconsequential in the face of kind words, a sharp wit, and a good personality.

So, while I take after my mom, truly, I am simply me.



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

Arts & Entertainment

SHU Alum Premiere's Film At TCL Chinese Theatre

BY GIA ESPOSITO
Staff Writer

Sacred Heart University (SHU) alum Eric Patrick Cameron '23 is set to debut his senior project, "The Space Western of the Southwest," at the TCL Chinese Theatre in Los Angeles on Feb. 28.

Cameron earned his bachelor's degree in film and television media studies from the School of Communication, Media and the Arts (SCMA) at SHU. Cameron's decision to attend SHU had much to do with the study abroad program in Dingle, Ireland.

Cameron's piece is a short film based on the untold stories from the "Star Wars: The Last Jedi" production in Dingle, and how a big movie impacted a little town. Cameron revealed that the inspiration for his film was planted during his semester in Dingle.

"The Last Jedi" shot its first scene 10 years ago and Cameron's film recognizes the impact of "Star Wars" on the town, intertwining behind-the-scenes tales and Cameron's cultural experience in present-day Dingle.

"I knew I was going to make a movie," Cameron said. "Being a 'Star Wars' fan, I knew the town had been a filming location for the new sequels."

Part of the creative process was determining how Cameron would bring the untold stories to light, while also touching on his journey.

"Thematically, the film started as a way to showcase the impact 'Star Wars' had on the people of Dingle, but as the overall story evolved, the film became a story about passion, perseverance, and tenacity," said Cameron.

Cameron knew from a young age that he wanted to make movies, whether that meant acting, directing, etc. The memories of being at Walt Disney World during his childhood contributed to his ongoing passion for movies.

"To have my film screen at the real Chinese Theatre is daunting," said Cameron. "I'm so honored and so excited. I can't wait to share the film with everyone there."

Cameron's creative process came with a set of challenges, including restructuring the film. Cameron was able to interview one of the most in-demand filmmakers in Hollywood, Rian Johnson, who helped Cameron fill in a missing piece to his story.



Contributed by Eric Cameron, '23

SHU alumnus, Eric Cameron, signs posters for his short film.

"The entire film was essentially edited in three months—so working on that tight of a deadline was definitely a challenge," said Cameron.

Cameron submitted "The Space Western of the Southwest" to 36 festivals and was accepted into three. Part of the process of being a filmmaker is facing some rejection and despite his rejection, Cameron kept going.

"We as artists can't focus on how many people consume our art and what people think of it—we just need to worry about creating," said Cameron. "If you never quit, you might just make it."

One of Cameron's most rewarding parts of his journey was being able to show his film to people. The first time a public audience ever saw the film was at the Féile na Bealtaine Arts Festival in Dingle on April 30, 2023. Cameron and his friends handed out flyers hours before the premiere to try and get people to attend, however, Cameron later realized that the show had completely sold out online.

The film premiered in Boston a few months later. Alum Paul Richard Keegan '23, Cameron's composer for the film and friend, attended the premiere with him with an audience of 200+ Star Wars fans. About 100 of those people asked them to sign posters before or after the show.

Keegan is one of the many people who have helped contribute to Cameron's journey. Some professors that Cameron recognized from the SCMA program are Dr. Sidney Gottlieb, Prof. Gregory Golda, and Prof. Todd Barnes.

"Their instruction and support during my time at SHU was invaluable," said Cameron.

Gottlieb, an SCMA professor at SHU, was happy to talk about his experience with Cameron and comment on Cameron's successes since graduating from SHU.

"Eric has a very valuable combination of talent, energy, and ambition," said Gottlieb. "It was clear to me from the first moment I met him that he was not at SHU to go along for a ride but to be a driver, and he has done that very well."

After graduating from SHU, Cameron moved on to study for his master's degree at NYU. He has been making movies for the past 13 years, and each one has been longer than the last with "Space Western" being the longest at 35 minutes. His goal to make movies did not end with his degree, as he now has landed himself a premiere at such a renowned location.

"It is one of my great joys as a teacher to see students find what they want to do and then actually go do it," said Gottlieb.

Cameron's experience at SHU and SHU in Dingle has contributed to his creative vision, process, and execution. His time in Dingle marks not merely a chapter but the pivotal genesis of a narrative poised to resonate with audiences worldwide.

"SHU in Dingle was the reason I chose to attend SHU for my undergrad, and I wouldn't trade in that experience," said Cameron. "My time abroad was genuinely the greatest time in my life, so I just wanted to share that deep love, appreciation, and admiration for this town and its people."

SHU Influencers Take on Fashion Week

BY MADISON DICKISON
Staff Writer

New York Fashion Week (NYFW) held the first of its bi-annual presentations from Feb. 9 to Feb. 14, unveiling collections for the fall/winter season. It showcased the trends and fashions by numerous designers including Marc Jacobs, Ralph Lauren and Tom Ford.

NYFW has two show options: industry or open-to-the-public. The industry shows are reserved for the buyers and press, while attaining seats for the open-to-the-public shows are unlikely. Briella Novello, content creator and senior at Sacred Heart University, was able to attend.

Novello is a content creator on numerous platforms, including TikTok (@briellanovello) and Instagram (@briellaa). Her content varies but often consists of pictures of her outfits and video reviews of different products.

"I was able to attend because I was invited by the PR agencies of the designers," said Novello. "I attended the LAPOINTE runway show, the Indonesia Now show, and the Tiffany Brown Designs show, as well as a few shows hosted by smaller, up and coming designers."

NYFW not only consists of the runway shows, but also events and designer shows that are more available to the public. Novello had the opportunity to attend some of these additional

events.

"Besides fashion shows, I attended the creator loft hosted by Campus Fashionistas, as well as Catwalk Carnival which was hosted by a fellow content creator named Zoelle Korogodsky," said Novello.

"Both of these events were so much fun and gave me the opportunity to meet lots of other creators. Both events also had gifting suites from sponsoring brands which were so cool," said Novello. "Additionally, I stopped at the Yves Saint Laurent pop up going on in SoHo where they engraved my lipstick."

Numerous designers take NYFW as the opportunity to showcase their newest designs and trends for people to see for the first time. Novello was one of those few people who got to see the unveiling of the designers' new work.

"I love fashion and love getting to see it on the runway. Each fashion week basically sets the stage for upcoming trends so it's fun to be able to see new things first hand and how it's reflected into modern fashion the following season," said Novello. "I also really enjoy being able to meet new people that share my love for fashion and media at these events."

Given the intense popularity of social media today, the styles that are featured in these shows can be discovered online, prompting multiple opinions, both positive and negative, to be expressed about them.

"I liked this year's fashion week because it was very unique

and artisanal. A lot of designers are also bringing back a lot of trends from the early 2010s which I really like," said sophomore Nicole D'Aries who is a fashion major at Sacred Heart.

"I think designers are becoming smarter, I saw a lot of models that aren't the typical unachievable beauty standard. Brands are using older models, plus size models, and all different demographics, probably striving to relate to their customers more," said senior Jessica Romano, who is also a fashion major at Sacred Heart.

"I think designers are starting to realize how important a customer's loyalty is and if you see yourself on the runway there is no better feeling," said Romano.

Jessica Balogh contributed to this article.



Contributed by Briella Novello, '24

Senior Briella Novello pictured in NYC during New York Fashion Week.

Curtain Closes on Round Three of Theaterfest

BY LAURYN ENGLISH
Staff Writer

Sacred Heart University's Theater Arts Program held the third and final round of Theaterfest on the weekend of Feb. 23 to Feb. 25 in the Little Theater. Theaterfest is an event where Sacred Heart students can submit and produce their original plays.

Senior Kayla Goncalves, writer of "Don't Forget to Visit," explained each round of Theaterfest. Round one involves a simple table read of each student's script. The students that get selected for round two work with a director and actors to block the scenes. For the final round, the remaining students get a fully produced show, with costumes, props, lighting and an audience.

When writing her show, Goncalves used her own grief journey as inspiration.

"Writing the show had me looking at grief in kind of a more hopeful and positive lens," said Goncalves. "That's just kind of the goal that I want for everybody else who comes to see my show is to leave with a different perspective and outlook on life as well as maybe helping them through their own grief journeys."

Goncalves' show followed a young couple in their kitchen talking about those they've lost, while their late relatives watched

from a bench up above. Although the show covered an emotional topic, there were moments of comedic relief to keep a lively energy in the theater.

"I think my favorite part is getting to work with so many different people and getting to see everyone shine in their prospective roles," said Goncalves. "I have nothing but amazing things to say about my creative team, which is my director and stage manager, as well as my cast."

"What We Do is Beautiful," is "made by actors for actors," said senior Maggie Devlin, the director of the performance. "It plays a lot on people's insecurities, and they learn how to be confident in themselves and work together through that," Devlin said.

"I love seeing all three of the actresses go from the very beginning where we had basically nothing to work with to where we are now with a fully developed show," said Devlin. "They've really made my image come to life and it's just something I'm really proud of."

Devlin believes Theaterfest is very important for students to

gain independence in the entertainment field. "It's such a great learning experience because you get to originate a role for the actors which is something people rarely get to do."

Freshman Adam Petrosino wrote "Metronome," a show about a poet who battles with his own rigidity in both his writing and his relationships. "He clings to form when he writes his poems, following the ticking of the metronome on his desk for ideas," said Petrosino.

"Metronome is a message about the importance of openness and accountability of one's mistakes, not only in poetry but in one's relationships with others," said Petrosino. "True freedom is recognizing your mistakes and then learning from them."

"The process of putting a show together for Theaterfest has been an amazing creative and collaborative experience. I feel incredibly lucky to have been able to work with the company I had, with my creative team and actors just as passionate about the piece as I was," said Petrosino. "Seeing Metronome come alive has been the most impactful creative experience of my life."

Sports



SHU Celebrates Athletic Trainer Appreciation Month

BY MAURA CONWAY
Staff Writer

March is Athletic Trainer Appreciation Month, a time to honor the role these professionals play in maintaining the well-being of athletes all around the world.

With an athletic program featuring 33 Division 1 sports, Sacred Heart University (SHU) relies on the expertise of its 13 athletic trainers to ensure the health and performance of its athletes.

"The trust and autonomy from my mentors and the administration here at SHU allowed me to grow as a professional and gave me the confidence I needed to help continue to lead a great department with amazing athletic trainers," said Sacred Heart head athletic trainer Leo Katsetos.

Katsetos is the head athletic trainer here at Sacred Heart. Katsetos has been with SHU since 2001. In 2005, Katsetos got promoted to associate health athletic trainer and then took over full time duties as head athletic trainer in 2012.

Katsetos commented on what Athletic Trainer Appreciation Month means to her.

"It serves as a platform for recognizing the hard work and commitment of athletic trainers who strive each day to provide quality healthcare services to our student-athletes," said Katsetos.

Two other athletic trainers who work at SHU and are honored this month are Colin Bemis and Stephanie Petery.

Bemis has been with the university for four years and oversees men's basketball and the women's cross country teams. He grew up loving sports and the life lessons that came from them.

"When it came down to it, I thought there was not a better profession than

athletic training because it allowed me to help individuals and practice medicine while also allowing me to be around sports which have been extremely influential in my life," said Bemis.

Bemis understands that when treating student athletes, he is not solely treating the injury, but he is also treating the person.

"With this thinking I think it allows you to build such a great relationship with the individual and build the trust that you would do anything for them as a person to help them deal with whatever they are going through," said Bemis.

Kyle McGee, a senior on the men's basketball team, thinks Bemis's approach extends beyond athletics, and his athletes have proven to take notice.

"[Bemis] means a lot to us, he is just somebody I can always rely on," said McGee. "He is a big part of the team, and we couldn't win or succeed without him."

Petery is in her second year working with SHU. She works with the women's wrestling and men's volleyball teams. She said she always knew she wanted to work in the medical field, especially with athletes.

"As a college athlete, I suffered a season ending injury my junior season," said Petery. "During this time, I saw what an integral role athletic trainers play in positively affecting the recovery process for an athlete, both physically and mentally."

Petery believes she is a part of something special when reflecting on the rest of the athletic training staff at SHU.

"I firmly believe that no other staff in the nation comes to work every day with the energy and optimism about their role in an athlete's life," said Petery. "The staff at SHU is intentionally passionate about advocating for the athletic training profession which can be seen through their selfless acts of kindness."

MLB In Hot Water Over New Jerseys

BY JAKE WALSH
Staff Writer

Major League Baseball (MLB) is gearing up for the upcoming season and fans are anticipating the debut of new uniforms. As Spring Training kicked off on Feb. 14, fans and players were given a first look at the Fanatics and Nike Vapor Premier jersey.

However, the initial unveiling has sparked negative feedback from fans and players. The feedback has reached a point where the Major League Baseball Players Association (MLBPA) Executive Director, Tony Clark, acknowledged the frustration and confirmed they are addressing concerns from both sides.

"Any time there's change, there's an adjustment period. Sometimes that adjustment period goes well, sometimes not so much," said Clark. "In this instance, there appear to be some misses that could have otherwise not been misses."

MLB claims that the new uniforms will improve a player's mobility and will be more breathable and comfortable.

Fans have been vocal about the new uniforms as well. Sacred Heart University juniors Ryan Breihof and Carson McKinnon are two fans who believe the switch will hurt the sport as a whole.

"I think it's about the balance of comfort and style. It is important for players to perform well in their uniform, but it is just as important for the fans who are watching and buying the jerseys," said McKinnon. "If fans think the jerseys aren't worth what they are, the league will miss out on a lot of profit."

Breihof had similar thoughts on the appearance of the new uniforms.

"This is their job and putting them in uniforms that look like they were made at Target is not appealing to those that watch the sport," said Breihof.

The price of a New York Yankees Nike Vapor Premier jersey on MLB.com is \$325. Although the price has not changed from past Nike jerseys, the product for fans was more appealing than the product they are selling right now.

According to the New York Post, Los Angeles Angels outfielder Taylor Ward expressed how the product does not look like the price they are selling them for.

"It feels kind of like papery. It could be great when you're out there sweating, it may be breathable. But I haven't had that opportunity yet to try that out. But from the looks of it, it doesn't look like a \$450 jersey," Ward said, "So far thumbs down."

In the age of social media, many fans have also expressed their opinion that way. Especially those who are not the biggest baseball fans.

Sacred Heart University sophomore Michael Argenziano who does not watch a lot of baseball, was aware of the uniforms due to social media.

"I am a Yankees fan but do not watch a lot of the games. As I was scrolling through Instagram and I thought that the jersey looked different," said Argenziano. "It really made me appreciate the jersey that I own now, because I would not want to buy the new ones."

With constant feedback, the MLBPA is taking in all they can and looking to move as quickly as possible. The season will officially begin on March 28, giving the league a few weeks to get everything figured out.

"Hopefully, we can get some things done over the course of the next six weeks of spring training," said Clark. "Because I'd hate to be in a place where we are still having conversations about some of the challenges we have in that regard once the lights come on."



Instagram, @mlb
Baltimore Orioles Pitcher Corbin Burnes throwing his first bullpen in a Orioles uniform during Spring Training.

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NBA All-Star Weekend Recap

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BY VICTOR DIPIERRO
Sports Editor

The 2024 NBA All-Star Weekend was filled with incredible displays of talent, excitement, and entertainment that left basketball fans buzzing with excitement. Held in Indianapolis, Ind. from Feb. 16-18, the weekend festivities showcased the league's top stars competing in various competitions and exhibitions.

The action-packed weekend kicked off on Friday with the Panini Rising Stars game that featured some of the league's most exciting young talent. Third-year guard and Indiana Pacers' very own Bennedict Mathurin took home MVP honors, scoring 13 points in a 26-13 victory in the championship game while receiving "MVP" chants from his home crowd.

Saturday kicked off with the Kia Skills Challenge that featured "Team Pacers," comprised of Tyrese Haliburton, Bennedict Mathurin, and Myles Turner; "Team Top Picks" comprised of the number one overall draft picks over the past three years, Anthony Edwards (Minnesota Timberwolves- 2021) Paolo Banchero (Orlando Magic-2022), and Victor Wembanyama (San Antonio Spurs-2023); and "Team All-Stars" that consisted of Scottie Barnes from the Toronto Raptors, Tyrese Maxey from the Philadelphia 76ers, and Trae Young from the Atlanta Hawks. The skills challenge consists of various events such as dribbling circuits, passing challenges, layups, three pointers, and half court shots. "Team Pacers" won the first two rounds, each worth 100 challenge points. "Team All-Stars" dominated the shooting round, which was worth 200 challenge points, setting up a tiebreaker to determine the winner. "Team Pacers" edged out "Team All-Stars" to win the skills competition in front of their home fans.

The next event was the Starry three-point Contest that featured some of the best shooters in the league. This year's contest came down to the very last shot, with Damian Lillard of the Milwaukee Bucks defeating Trae Young of the Atlanta Hawks by a score of 26-25. This victory marked back-to-back titles for Lillard, who proved himself once again as one of the league's best three-point shooters.



Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry hugs New York Liberty guard Sabrina Ionescu after Curry won their competition at the NBA basketball All-Star weekend, Saturday, Feb. 17, 2024, in Indianapolis.

Immediately following the three-point contest was the Stephen Curry vs. Sabrina Ionescu three-point challenge. This was a huge milestone for basketball, as it was the first ever NBA vs. WNBA event at an all-star weekend. Ionescu, who is a member of the WNBA's New York Liberty, was on fire, scoring 26 points. Stephen Curry, who plays for NBA's Golden State Warriors and is considered the best shooter of all time, edged out Ionescu and finished with a final score of 29. Each shot made in this challenge triggered a donation from State Farm to the NBA Foundation to support economic empowerment in African American communities.

The night concluded with the AT&T Slam Dunk Contest that featured Jaylen Brown from the Boston Celtics, Jaime Jaquez Jr. from the Miami Heat, Mac McClung from the Osceola Magic (Orlando Magic's G-League affiliate), and Jacob Toppin from the Westchester Knicks (New York Knicks G-League affiliate). The final round featured a showdown between McClung and Brown, but it was McClung who stole the show when he jumped over 7'1" NBA Hall of Famer Shaquille O'Neal to win back-to-back dunk contests, making him the first player since Chicago Bulls Zach Lavine to repeat as champion.

To cap off an already exciting weekend, the all-star game itself was held on Sunday night that featured the Eastern Conference all-star team vs. the Western Conference all-star team. This game was an offensive lover's dream, as the final score was 211-186, with the Eastern Conference coming out on top. The 211 points scored by the Eastern Conference were the most points scored in all-star game history. Milwaukee Bucks guard Damian Lillard took home his second piece of hardware of the weekend, winning all-star game MVP as he led the way for the East with 39 points. Lillard became the first player since Michael Jordan in 1988 to win two events in the same All-Star weekend.

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Letters to the editor should not exceed 600 words and should be emailed to spectrum@sacredheart.edu. The Spectrum does not assume copyright for any published material. We are not responsible for the opinions of the writers voiced in this forum.



Milwaukee Bucks' Damian Lillard holds the trophy after winning the 3-point contest at the NBA basketball All-Star weekend, Saturday, Feb. 17, 2024, in Indianapolis.