

Biden's Willow Project Disapproved by Gen Z

BY MADISON BEEKMAN
Assistant News Editor



AP Photo by ConocoPhillips

An exploratory drilling camp site at the the proposed location for the Willow Project, a massive venture for crude oil in Northern Alaska with potentially devastating environmental

On March 13, President Joe Biden's administration approved the current largest proposed oil project on federal lands, the Willow Project. The decades-long oil drilling venture, located in the federally designated National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska, could produce up to 180,000 barrels of oil per day, create almost 3,000 jobs, and generate billions of dollars for federal, state, and local governments, according to ConocoPhillips, the company in charge of the project.

Its approval resulted in a great deal of backlash, mostly by environmental groups. The Associated Press (AP) reported that these groups believe the project does not align with Biden's goals and campaign promises to cut carbon emissions and move to clean energy.

"Just this week, the UN released the latest in a series of devastating climate reports. We are simply not doing enough to avoid catastrophe," said Dr. Steven Michels, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, and chair of political science and global affairs. "The economic slowdown caused by the pandemic was the best thing to happen to the planet in decades, but now things have returned to a terrible normal. We are on pace to hit a three-degree increase by 2300."

Some Alaskan natives are also opposed to the project, especially for the future of wildlife and communities in the area. Mayor Rosemary Ahtuanguak of Nuiqsut, the city closest to the site, is among those who fought the project with these concerns at the forefront of her mind, according to the AP.

Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, the first Native American Cabinet member, was under pressure from environmental and Indigenous groups to use her position to block the project's approval, but was part of the ultimate decision. She released a Twitter video on Monday, March 13, responding to the announcement of the approval, and other environmental concerns of the American people.

"These are existing leases issued by previous administrations as far back as the 90s. As a result, we have limited decision space, but we focused on how to reduce the project's footprint and minimize its impacts to people and to wildlife," Haaland said in the video. "What was approved reflects a substantially smaller project than ConocoPhillips originally proposed, a 40% reduction. They're also relinquishing nearly 70,000 acres of their leases, land that will no longer be developed."

The ultimate approval, which Haaland referred to as difficult and complex, was partially

motivated by the pursuit of energy independence in America, according to Dr. Gary Rose, chair and professor of political science and global affairs.

"I can understand the resistance among climate activists, but American energy independence, which we were on the verge of achieving before Biden took office, is the far more important issue," Rose said. "At least with the Willow Program he is demonstrating why oil is necessary to our country's survival. But there needs to be even more drilling in my view."

Rose is among those who understands the Biden administration's ultimate decision on this project.

"The climate activists will, of course, continue to raise an alarm about global warming and environmental protection, but overall the American people will support the President. Politically, it is a smart move," Rose said. "Like almost every decision these days, there will be divisions and disagreement between and within the two parties. Climate activists don't win elections and Biden knows that."

Senior political science major Ciara Monteverdi can also see both sides of the argument surrounding this issue, despite being worried about its impacts on the climate and surrounding wildlife.

"I feel as though the public has every right to act on both sides of this project. I can understand how the public will think about this as a negative impact due to the environmental effects that will take place. However, there are economical benefits which makes the situation even harder," Monteverdi said.

Junior Ashley Czermak, a political science major on the pre-law track, was among those discouraged by the approval of the project.

"Putting business and profit above the environment has always been something that doesn't sit right with me. We get one planet, one environment. To prioritize drilling for oil, for profit over the land itself that is already suffering so much at the hands of humans and climate change, it's really disheartening to see that the Biden Administration was willing to sign this into law," Czermak said.

The #StopWillow campaign has been trending on social media, especially among Gen Z. Social media activists have been posting under the hashtag, both expressing their feelings on the project and promoting its petitions. Czermak also noted that many of this project's opposers are of younger generations.

"We are the ones who are most impacted by these decisions, the ones that hurt the environment. Since we were kids, we've heard about climate change and how many years we have left before there's irreversible change," said Czermak.

In response to backlash from Gen Z about the speed of achieving his climate goals, Biden told the AP that his administration is moving faster than any others in the past. After Russia's invasion of Ukraine, he said the energy situation "got really complicated" and recognized that America is going to need fossil fuel.

While ConocoPhillips is ready to start the project, the AP reported that there are lawsuits to stop the project pending in federal court in Alaska, which could delay this.

"The law might not be clear—that is, the law might need to be changed—but activists are right on the merits. This is another step in the wrong direction and cannot be allowed to happen without a fight," Michels said. "I don't like to make predictions, especially about the future, but this will likely happen. There's too little will to control ourselves. It's a pretty bad situation your generation is inheriting, so I hope you do better than we did."

The Associated Press contributed to this article.

HEY SENIORS!

COUNTDOWN TO GRADUATION:

46 DAYS

WATCH THE PIONEERS IN ACTION:

WEDNESDAY 3/29:
SOFTBALL
VS. SIENA COLLEGE
AT 3 P.M.

FRIDAY 3/31:
MEN'S VOLLEYBALL
VS. SAINT FRANCIS U.
AT 7 P.M.

SATURDAY 4/1:
WOMEN'S LACROSSE
VS. HOWARD
AT 3:30 P.M.

SATURDAY 4/1:
MEN'S TENNIS
VS. FAIRLEIGH
DICKINSON AT 7:45

News

SHU Doctoral Students Tackling Education and Race Relations

BY COURTNEY CHURCHILL
Staff Writer

Three of Sacred Heart University's doctoral students participated in an annual conference of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE). They presented their researched topics about racial issues within the United States education system at a conference held from Feb. 24 to Feb. 26 in Indianapolis, which encourages and invites scholarly educators around the nation.

David Title, the educational and literacy leadership department chair and clinical associate professor is the Holmes Scholars Program coordinator which runs in conjunction with the AACTE.

"You have to be a member of the AACTE in order to participate at Holmes and right now, we have a doctoral program in educational leadership that's been around since 2019 that the program director and I started," said Title. "We put in for it and got accepted, then did an application process for any students of color in the doctoral program and these three students were selected."

According to a SHU press release, Chanel Rice presented her ongoing research, "Educator Perceptions on the Disproportionality of Discipline for Students of Color," Bianca Shinn presented "Can You Hear Me? A Mixed Methods Study Exploring the Experiences of Black Caregivers Whose Child Experienced School Suspension," and Demetria Walters presented "Creating and Sustaining Affirming and More Inclusive Learning Environments for Black Girls through Professional Learning."

Shinn works for a nonprofit organization called "Domus Kids" that has transpired conversation of the engagement of parents and students of color who've experienced difficulty navigating the public school system. Her own observations influenced her to choose her respective topic.

"We work with kids, especially students of color who are often suspended, expelled and experience chronic absenteeism and we examine why it's happening and what are the root causes," said Shinn. "For example, in Stamford, although our black student population is small at the public school, they're disproportionately suspended compared to other student groups."

She combined what she learned from her professional work with her personal experience

in the U.S. public school system to research how to take measures to engage students and parents of color. Shinn also encouraged everyone, not just educators, to define family engagement in an educational setting.

"We shouldn't be engaging parents when kids are doing poorly, we should be engaging them in moments of celebration and joy early on by sharing positive feedback," said Shinn. "By building that bridge you are able to create an authentic relationship with Black parents."

Rice is a lead school counselor for New Haven public schools, a girls varsity assistant basketball coach at Hillhouse High School and owns a private practice as a licensed professional counselor. Her professional work experience inspired the topic for her potential dissertation.

"I chose my topic at the AACTE's Holmes Scholars' Pre-Conference through my intensive work with inner-city students and my general concern for racial disparities that typically occur through disciplinary practices," said Rice. "Although there continues to be a great deal of research and potential educational solutions, these disparities continue to prove to be extremely glaring and cause extreme academic and social-emotional consequences for these targeted students."

Rice expressed gratitude for being one out of the three selected members of the Holmes Scholars Program to present research and findings of racial issues within the education system at the conference.

"The most valuable part was networking with other students, some who've already completed their dissertation process," said Rice. "I've built relationships with students across the country who've provided great insight and will continue to be valuable resources as I continue this journey."

Title continuously ensures that the doctoral program meets the needs of students of color and provides opportunities like the AACTE conference.

"One of our goals in the program is to increase the number of doctorates who are of color. It's a real need, it will help their careers and they will be a role model for others to say, 'Hey look, Chanel, Bianca and Demetria did it, I can do it too,'" said Title.

Silicon Valley Bank Facing Major Collapse

BY ERIN CLARK
Staff Writer

Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) in Santa Clara, Calif. became the largest bank to collapse since the 2008 financial crisis on Monday, March 10.

SVB is the 16th largest bank in the United States. The bank grew rapidly during the pandemic and deposits were largely from technology start-ups.

"The broad understanding of a bank is that you deposit money into them, but they only keep a fraction of your deposit physically at the bank," said economics professor Dr. Nicholas Pusateri.

After a person deposits their money into a bank, they trust the bank and the dependence on federal deposit insurance to keep their money safe from risks.

"SVB took these deposits and put them in long-term assets while interest rates were low," said economics professor and bank expert Dr. Lucjan Orlowski.

These long-term assets resulted in the money the bank invested being stuck in their investments. In the past 12 months, these interest rates have been rising from what once was near zero to almost five percent. As these rates rose, the value of the assets invested declined.

"There are several factors that contributed to the SVB collapse," said Orlowski. "The lack of proper interest rate risk management was one of them."

As the depositors began to take out their money, SVB

had to liquidate their assets to meet the demand. Because they invested long term, they generated loss which resulted in SVB coming up with insufficient amounts to meet the requested withdrawals.

"The federal government essentially had to step in and make sure that people were going to get their money," said junior Julianna Aligo. "They had to replace the money SVB lost at a massive cost."

SVB previously had a \$250,000 federal deposit insurance with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). After the collapse, the federal government protected all the bank's deposits, even those exceeding \$250,000.

"One side of me looks at a bank like any other business. When I think of banks in those terms then I say the government should let the banks fail," said government professor Dr. Gary Rose. "There is also the side of me that realizes how the failure of a bank can affect financial institutions and the economy in a ripple effect that can be serious. With that said, I can justify the government bailing out mega banks."

Many depositors were start-up companies that took out loans from SVB to support their launch, a great deal of which were within the tech industry.

"The collapse of these banks may result in limited

funding sources for the tech sector," said Orlowski. "Ultimately, it may lead to the sector consolidation through mergers and acquisitions by larger, well-capitalized firms, as a partial solution to the funding problems."

President Joe Biden said that the American people can still have confidence in their bank deposits. The federal government is working to review the supervision of SVB to understand what went wrong. They plan to release this information on May 1.

"We briefly talked about it in class, I wish we learned more about it so we all could understand it better," said junior Marissa LaValle. "As students, we use bank accounts almost every day, it is important to be knowledgeable about something in our life that could potentially have large risks."

There is speculation that it may be time to raise deposit insurance thresholds, so the U.S. does not end up in another financial crisis. Lawmakers are calling for legislation to create stricter rules on regional banks, like those that tightened restrictions after the 2008 crisis.

"This is not like the financial crisis of 2008," said Pusateri. "We do not need to worry that this will become as large scale, we're going to be fine."

The Associated Press contributed to this article.

Connecticut Invests in Healthcare Workers of the Future

BY ANGUS HENDRICKS
Staff Writer

In an attempt to help both the state and national shortage of healthcare workers, CT Health Horizons gave Sacred Heart University a \$2.5 million grant in order to expand both the nursing program and the social work program.

According to a press release published by the university, "The grant is part of a three-year, \$35 million initiative that CT Health Horizons has taken up in partnership with the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU). Its aim is to grow and diversify the next generation of nurses and social workers."

The nationwide shortage of healthcare workers is evident. The Association of American Medical Colleges reported that, "The country faces a shortage of up to 124,000 physicians by 2034, including 48,000 primary care physicians."

According to the chair of undergraduate nursing, Dr. Heather Ferrillo, the funding from this grant is going towards many different aspects of the program.

"This funding is paramount to helping some of our students who are at risk for not graduating due to financial

reasons and to support students who have a degree going into our second degree accelerated (SDA) program," said Ferrillo.

Additionally, some of the funds will help faculty start a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) program. Ferrillo said that there is a major shortage in Mental Health (MH) providers.

"The reactions to this grant have been very positive. There is a lot of community interest in the PMHNP program and it will increase the number of MH providers which is desperately needed," Ferrillo said. "The second degree students also have limited other opportunities for funding since they already have an undergraduate degree. So this will make it possible for SDA students to come to SHU."

SHU's social work program will also be heavily impacted by this grant which is being overseen by director of field education and clinical assistant professor Katherine Sallaku.

"Governor Lamont is making efforts to address any barriers to education and provide financial

resources for social workers and nurses to stay in the state of Connecticut," said Sallaku. "This has become pretty evident with the community partners that we see supporting our field education program."

"I believe this grant is a piece of the puzzle to addressing the workforce shortage, and this is a way that the school of social work and Sacred Heart University can contribute to addressing this issue through financial support to students and accessing their education through tuition assistance. As well as eliminating barriers for students to progress from the Bachelor of Social Work program to the Master of Social Work program," said Sallaku.

Students in both the nursing and social work programs will benefit from this grant.

"I think nursing is extremely important and I think the added faculty resulting from the grant could potentially help the retention rate by offering more support and resources to current students," said sophomore nursing student, Tori Miller.

Features

Underrepresented Student Leaders Panel

BY GERALDINE PAGLIA
Staff Writer

On Thursday, March 23, Sacred Heart University hosted its second annual Underrepresented Student Leaders Panel in the Schine Auditorium. This event brought together members of clubs such as the Social Work Club, College Democrats, Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA), and La Hispanidad to discuss topics related to social justice.

Executive Director of Multicultural Affairs, Robert Johnson said, "The focal point is to further amplify the voices of underrepresented students."

The event provided a space for dialogue between the university's diverse student body and faculty network about how best to create an equitable environment for everyone on campus. Students had the chance to interact with each other, learn about resources available at Sacred Heart, and gained insight into how to achieve success despite their minority status.

Students had the opportunity to learn about the experiences of underrepresented student leaders on campus. Sophomore Khiara Browdy said, "I believe having this panel sheds light on how it is to be an underrepresented student on campus and also highlights ways and services that can help individuals navigate and feel more comfortable on campus."

Five questions were presented to the attendees and panelists. The moderators opened it up to the audience members first, ushering them to chat about their thoughts with their peers, then brought it back to the panelist. This formation engaged the audience and made audience members feel included in the discussion.

Senior and Spectrum editor Alejandro Ramos said, "I think that a public forum is always a great way to have students or anyone to really discuss the issues that are faced because a lot of times people deal with things, whether it's here at Sacred Heart or it's in other places, that maybe you don't want to vocalize, or you don't know who to talk to."

An impressive panel of speakers from a variety of backgrounds was featured. Many

of them shared their stories and spoke of the need for Sacred Heart to continue to provide equal access and resources to underrepresented students.

By listening, learning, and engaging with each other during this event, students gained insight into how to effectively create an environment where everyone feels safe, heard, and respected.

Ramos and Johnson gave attendees important definitions of words such as "marginalized" to further educate and inform students. They discussed how to create a more inclusive environment at Sacred Heart. Students asked questions in order to gain a better understanding of their peers' perspectives.

Senior Maria Pandolfo said, "I'm hoping that it will show people that there are people on campus who do care about them and who want to amplify their voices and just be supportive."

They discussed what it means to be a leader and how to create a more inclusive environment at Sacred Heart. Students shared their stories and asked questions in order to gain a better understanding of their peers' perspectives.

The Underrepresented Student Leaders Panel provided a unique insight into how members of minority communities feel within their universities and how these feelings can affect their overall college experiences. Much work still needs to be done in order to create a more inclusive atmosphere, but SHU is taking positive steps toward achieving this goal through events like this one.

"We have to be honest, and we have to be authentic about the areas where we're deficient," said Johnson. "This panel is one of the many or multitude of things that will allow for students to be able to voice and showcase and give examples as to where we are deficient, but also highlight what we're doing well."

Fraternities & Sororities Gear Up for Greek Week

BY DANIELLA BALDINO
Staff Writer



Instagram, @shuifc_original

Poster for the SHU 2023 Greek Week, a series of competitions and events for the fraternities and sororities on campus.

Greek Week started on Monday, March 27 and continues through Sunday, April 2. The Panhellenic community puts together a series of events and competitions for the fraternities and sororities, to see who the 2023 winners of Greek Week will be.

"The goal of Greek Week is to bring the Greek life community here at SHU together to have a good time," said junior Erin Polo, President of Panhellenic and member of Delta Zeta sorority. "Greek Week gives us a chance to bring us all together and support our community as a whole."

The week started off with a safari kick-off in the Martire Forum on Monday, March 27, where each organization collected their Greek Week shirts. The following day, a trivia trek game was hosted on Tuesday, March 28.

"Personally, my favorite event is Greek Sing which is a lip sync/dance

competition between all the organizations," said junior Halina Bridges, Vice President of Programming of Panhellenic and member of Alpha Delta Pi sorority. "It is exciting to be able to work on this event that will be held on such a large level at the arena this year."

Greek Sing is being held on Thursday, March 29 at 7 p.m. in the Martire Family Arena.

"Greek Sing is a dance style lip sync battle between all the Greek Life organizations," said sophomore Cassidy Williams, member of Kappa Alpha Theta sorority. "I highly recommend attending, as it is entertaining to not only the participants, but the audience as well." This event is welcomed to all SHU students.

On Friday, March 30, there will be a banner contest where each organization will create a banner in correlation to this year's theme.

"Greek Week is so fun and exciting, and it is a way to get closer with your sisters and you get to know people who you don't usually talk to," said sophomore Amanda Palladino, member of Kappa Alpha Theta sorority. "One of our goals during Greek Week is showing the new members what our sorority is all about and how we all are so supportive of each other."

"Saturday is the most important day, the Day of Service," said Williams. Saturday, March 31 is a day of service that includes a canned food drive where the sororities and fraternities donate nonperishables to help support Bridgeport Rescue Mission.

"One of the biggest things during Greek Week last year for Theta was donating canned foods. We got the most cans last year and hope for the same this year," said Palladino. "It's a fun way to raise the competition and to also give back to our community."

Sunday, April 2 is the final event of Greek Week, Greek Olympics. This event is hosted on Notre Dame High School's football field and is where each fraternity and sorority will compete in a series of games consisting of the Human Caterpillar, a Relay Race, Tug-O-War, and Flag Football. This is another event that is welcome to the whole SHU community to go and support.

"The best part about Greek Week is that all of our members have an opportunity to meet one another and grow closer as a community, as well as the fact that we get to serve our greater Bridgeport area through community service," said Bridges. "I can't wait to see my vision come to life this year."

If you want more information about Greek week or you are interested in joining the Panhellenic community you can visit www.sacredheart.edu/student-events--activities/fraternity--sorority-life/

A Fairytale Come True

BY SAMANTHA MARANO

Circulation Manager & Asst. Public Relations Manager

The sisters of Phi Sigma Sigma at Sacred Heart University invited all families and friends to their Princess for a Day (PFAD) event on Sunday, March 26.

The chapter philanthropy consists of School and College readiness to support and advance the needs of the local community schools through resources used in the classroom to set goals that they seek to achieve in the future.

Princess for a Day has been the signature philanthropy event of the Iota Nu chapter of Phi Sigma Sigma for more than 10 years. Each year the chapter members invite the community to bring their children to campus for an afternoon of fun. Sisters and members of Phi Sigma were dressed up as different Disney characters and superheroes.

"Princess for a Day is one of Phi Sig's best traditions. This wonderful event welcomes children from neighboring communities to see some of their favorite television and movie idols without having to make the trek to Disney World," said the Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life, Nick Frias. "I love how the chapter has begun to invite fraternity members to join and build up the Fraternity Sorority Life (FSL) camaraderie. I look forward to seeing how the chapter builds upon the event each year to improve it."

All donations and proceeds go to the chapter's philanthropy, the Phi Sigma Sigma Foundation, supporting students who cannot afford school supplies. The event aims to raise money for the Kids in Need Foundation and the sorority's foundation. Each Phi Sigma chapter is dedicated to a Title I school in their college community, the Iota Nu chapter works directly with John Winthrop Elementary School in Bridgeport, Conn.

"The money raised towards the event will allow students in financial need to gain opportunities for their future through schooling. Our chapter will use the money we raise for PFAD to buy school supplies for the next school year for students at John Winthrop," said Justine Ruvolo, Phi Sig's Philanthropy chairman.

"In the fall, members of the Iota Nu chapter will come together and put on an event called "backpack stuffing," where each member will stuff as many backpacks as possible with necessary school supplies. After we fill all the backpacks, several sisters will go to the elementary school and directly hand out the backpacks," said Ruvolo. "This moment is cherished and impactful not only for the students but for us as a chapter seeing that we are making a change to so many lives right here in our

college community."

All Greek life chapters have contributed to the success of "adopting a classroom" that covered the admission fee cost for students in Bridgeport, allowing them to experience opportunities other children do without having to worry about financial struggles. Phi Sig held table times the week of the event and raised over \$800.

Senior Abby Ganzle, a member of Phi Sigma, said, "Princess for a Day is my favorite time of year. My favorite part of the day is when we all decorate tiaras for all the princesses to wear, and my favorite room would have to be the dance party room. I'm looking forward being a part of it again this year."

"All of the sisters of the chapter work very hard to ensure that each child has a positive experience. The look on the children's faces the first time they see their favorite princess or superhero is so precious. The parents enjoy seeing their children have a great time," said Marcie Berson, Phi Sigma's Chapter Advisor. "I'm so proud of the hard work they put into creating this fun event to raise money to support their partner school."

Princess for a Day is geared towards young children who are starting to develop life skills through adaption in different environments, where everything is a learning experience, not just in the classroom.



Instagram, @phisig_shu

Senior and member of Phi Sigma Sigma, Abby Ganzle participating in "Princess for a Day."

Audrey's Corner



Contributions from SHU Faculty

In Audrey's Corner we like to spotlight the talent present in the amazing writers at Sacred Heart University. This week we wanted to show off the talent of Sacred Heart Professors in the English department.

Professor Marie Hulme on the success of her "Health Writing" course.

In teaching a course on creative writing within the health humanities field, I have witnessed extraordinary student understanding of how the writing process can be both a tool for healing and a means in which to share stories that enable deeper empathy of illness, trauma, and suffering. Across a wide range of genres, students read both fiction and nonfiction texts on mental illness, terminal disease, grief, disability, and chronic pain, as well as write creatively in response to those texts. As a final project, students focus on one area of interest which allows them to engage with both critical and creative texts on the topic and then to write about that topic in any genre of creative writing. It has been enormously rewarding to witness students tackle issues such as Alzheimer's disease, eating disorders, anxiety, or alcoholism, among others, through a creative lens that not only encourages their own deeper understanding of the topic but provides a reader with deeper empathy about those who suffer from it. Students have written one-act plays, collections of poetry, lyrical essays, and imagined journals and letters - the range of creativity and interests makes this one of the most inspiring creative writing classes.

Scar Maps

By Dr. Richard Magee

The best one is on my right knee
I fell on slippery limestone
and almost dropped into the Pacific.
A jagged point snagged my flesh
and I hung there for a long second
before pulling myself up
to stare at flowing blood.
A chunk of skin stuck to the rock
a tiny hair on it waving in the ocean breeze.

The one on my thumb is complicated.
It is a palimpsest scar:
layers of accidents.
At the base of the stratigraphy lies
13-year-old me
showing off for girls.
My bike skidded
I read the pavement.
Atop that a more recent crash
adds its own white scribble.

I had an old-fashioned doctor
so I sport an old-fashioned appendectomy scar.
It's a thin white line for half its length
until it widens to a squashed earthworm.
Brian Higginbotham punched me there
the day I returned to school
and the incision split open.
He said he thought I was faking.

Here's one from when I pretended
the steel ruler was a sword.
This one's from playing soccer on the street.
The one on the tip of my nose? Chicken pox.
The black dot in my palm
is the graphite tip of a pencil (light saber accident).
Knees and elbows:
so many bike crashes.

The bracelets of fortune hide that one
but the other pale hieroglyphs
emerged when the pain inside
needed to come out.

Balance, Blades, & Words on the Page

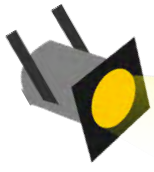
By Dr. Clare Kilgallen

Writing and ice skating have healed me since childhood;
they continue to do so today, as I enter my forty-fourth
year around the Sun.

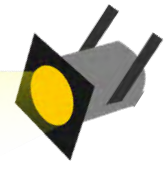
At ten years old, I became ill and turned towards two
places for refuge: the rink and the page. Having skated
since the age of three, I found solace and glory while
gliding on ice. Skating liberated me and allowed me to
find freedom in flight. In between jumping and spinning,
I would sit down and write reams of poetry.

Sixteen years later, as an aspiring author and academic,
I had the privilege to compete at the United States Adult
Figure Skating Championships in Dallas, Texas. During
the years leading up to this event, I had experienced
tremendous loss: my beloved grandmother passed from
Cancer; a dear family friend died tragically in a boating
accident; and my loving Godmother left this world after
a long bout with Alzheimer's. Stepping onto the ice, I
felt frozen in time and performed the routine of a lifetime
to win the Championship and honor those whom I had
lost. It has taken me nearly two decades to write about
the experience, and find solace in doing so.

Now, looking back nearly two decades later as an En-
glish professor and a writer, I am reminded of American
poet Ralph Waldo Emerson's words of wisdom, "In skat-
ing over thin ice, the safety is in our speed." The rink
remains a refuge for me, as do language and words, even
as life speeds along far too quickly.



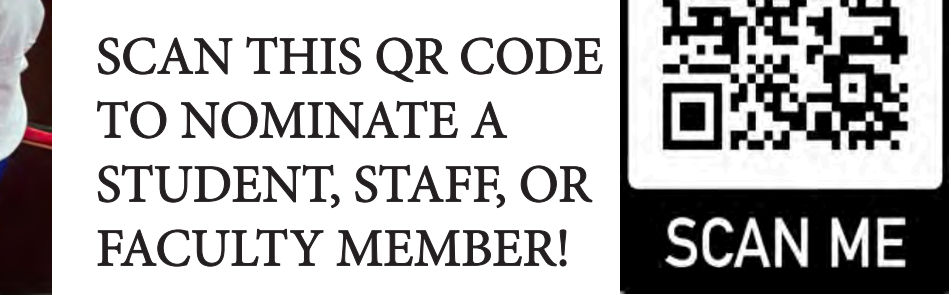
Spotlight



Social Justice Week From the Perspective of Little "Big Red"

BY ALEJANDRO RAMOS
Spotlight Editor

La Hispanidad hosted its annual Social Justice Week at Sacred Heart University, March 20-24. Students described it as a "fun filled week, for all to enjoy." The week was dubbed "Celebrating Diversity & Uniqueness." Take a look at some of this week's highlights:



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FACULTY MEMBER!



SCAN ME

Arts & Entertainment

SHU Welcomes Panel of Women in Film & TV

BY JESSICA BALOGH
Staff Writer

The room in the Martire Center began to fill as people made their way to hear the stories of accomplished women in the film industry. On March 22, Sacred Heart University's Film and Television Master's Program (FTMA) hosted a panel entitled "Women's Journeys in Film and Television" in which they invited four women to speak on their experiences within the industry.

"I think it's extremely important to acknowledge the work of outstanding biopic women like our panelists in the film and television industries," said Dr. Sally Ross, moderator and Director of FTMA. "We want to celebrate their achievements and also encourage aspiring filmmakers who may have had a hard time envisioning a path for themselves in the industry."

The first of these women is French native Ingrid Jean-Baptiste, a journalist, actor and the Founder/Director of the Chelsea Film Festival in New York. The Chelsea Film Festival was created in 2013 to promote the work of emerging filmmakers and engaging diverse audiences, according to Jean-Baptiste.

Each woman touched upon their own unique routes to get to their current state within the industry, including the challenges they faced and the communities they found along the way. As women of color, they expressed race being one obstacle often needed to be overcome.

Shetal Shah described one incident when auditioning where she was told she was too Indian while another said she wasn't Indian enough. Shah, according to her biography, is an Emmy-award-winning filmmaker, award-winning actor and performance poet.



Instagram, @ftmashu

Promotional poster for the Women in Film panel at the Martire Center on March 22.

Her most recent short film, "OFF DUTY", is now distributed internationally after having had a terrific run in the US and international festival circuits and can be seen on Alaska Airlines as part of their in-flight entertainment.

Sharbari Ahmed felt as though she was missing a sense of community for a long time and constantly felt the need to explain her own ethnicity as a Bangladeshi Muslim woman. She keeps reminding herself to fight for what she deserves because without screenwriters such as herself, Hollywood has no stories.

According to her biography, Ahmed was on the writing team for Season One of the TV series "Quantico" on ABC, writing two episodes and contributing to the rest. She is currently one of the head writers of the "Kriya Karam" to be released on Voot (Viacom/Paramount) in India in 2024 and on Sling in the US.

Ahmed is also an adjunct professor within FTMA, teaching screenwriting and television development. Both Ebony Washington and Sharbari Ahmed highlighted finding community within the FTMA Program.

"FTMA was where my community started because we were all helping each other with making short films and being each other's crew members," said Washington.

Washington is an alumnus of the FTMA program and current writer's assistant for "Grey's Anatomy," a job she desired when entering graduate school.

"Teaching keeps me grounded, I learn things from my students, and they remind me again and again why I love film," said Ahmed.

The panelists finished the talk with advice to aspiring filmmakers by saying how everyone's journey is different and that they must be their own advocates. They also noted the importance of rejection not being a sign that a person's creations are not of good quality.

"I thought that what the panelists said was really good advice for women in the film industry, especially surrounding rejection and how it is alright to be told no which is something that sticks with me because the future can be so unknown," said FTMA graduate student Ashley Gerckens.



Instagram, @eebbonyy

The panel was moderated by Dr. Sally Ross and featured (left-to-right: Sharbari Ahmed, Ingrid Jean-Baptiste, Shetal Shah, and Ebony Washington) to talk about their journey's in the film industry.

"The Rocky Horror Show" at SHU

BY NICK RUBANO
Staff Writer

"The Rocky Horror Show is a fun-filled reminder that life's too short to conform to society's standards and to explore yourself and the world around you outside of what you're used to," said sophomore Grace Peknic, who plays Janet in the Theatre Arts Program (TAP) production of "The Rocky Horror Show."

"The Rocky Horror Show" will hit the Edgerton stage on Thursday, April 13, 2023.

The hit musical is the inspiration for the 1975 cult classic film "The Rocky Horror Picture Show," which follows all-American couple Brad and Janet as they navigate a night stranded at the home of mad scientist Dr.

Frank-n-Furter. As the night unfolds, Janet and Brad must grapple with their traditional values and primal urges as they encounter Frank's sensual household of quirky characters.

The story, which heavily leans into LGBTQ+ themes and relationships, onstage intimacy and depicts characters living life for the thrill of pleasure, was quite controversial at the time of its conception and has become a beacon of representation and pride for the queer community.

Junior Nicky Duca, who plays Dr. Frank-N-Furter said, "As a student, I've felt nothing but love and care from Sacred Heart through the TAP program in my LGBT identity, so being able to play such an iconic character and be part of a cast of people like myself and respectful of my identity means a lot and really feels like home."

The show's themes are also expressed through some of the most famous songs in movie-musical history. Rock songs like "Time Warp" and "Touch-A-Touch-A-Touch Me" are accompanied by explosive choreography and rock concert-esque technical effects to transport audience members to the alien world of the show.

In addition to the show's on stage

performance elements, the material has taken on a life of its own among audience members.

"This is not going to be your usual theatre experience. Part of the draw of 'The Rocky Horror Show' is that the audience participates," said senior Grace Curley, assistant director of the production.

The dedicated fanbase of the "Rocky Horror" franchise continues to thrive decades after the show's conception, with countless online forums and message groups dedicated to the film and musical. Audience participation ranges from cheeky out loud callbacks to the characters' lines to the use of props that coincide with onstage action.

"There is a specific approach when taking on such iconic source material. You want to take care of the material and honor and respect it because it was so groundbreaking," said Curley. "You have to find that fine line between giving people the show they know and love while

giving them our own SHU TAP twist."

TAP's production comes at a time when the right to perform such content is being limited in parts of the United States. According to NPR, legislatures in 11 states have proposed bills

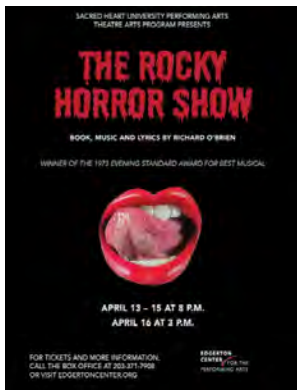
banning drag shows in public settings, with Tennessee already passing a law codifying the ban.

"It's a very polarizing show, inspired by the punk movement in the 70s so it's very queer and it contains a lot of the messages, quirkiness and campiness you don't get in other shows and it's really important to see today," said junior Lauren Baroletti, the

Production Stage Manager of the show.

TAP's "The Rocky Horror Show" runs in the Edgerton Center April 13, 14, and 15 at 8 P.M. and April 16 at 3 P.M.

Tickets are available in the Edgerton Box Office or by calling (203)-371-7908.



Instagram, @shutheatrearts

Promotional poster for "The Rocky Horror Show" presented by Sacred Heart's Performing Arts Program.



Instagram, @shutheatrearts

Advertisement for the spring musical, starring junior Nicky Duca.

A New Era for Swifties

BY ALANNA WUNSCH
Staff Writer

A new era has begun. Taylor Swift's "Eras" Tour has officially started. After the notorious Ticketmaster debacle, it was finally time for the long-awaited tour to begin. On March 17, the global pop sensation kicked off her record-breaking tour in Glendale, Ariz.

As shown on TikTok, tens of thousands of "Swifties" swarmed the stadium decked out in their best Swift-inspired costumes. Fans took inspiration from music videos, past performances, public appearances and even her childhood for their outfits. Fans weren't the only ones going all out for the occasion with Glendale's mayor even temporarily renamed the inaugural location to "Swift City," according to the Glendale, Ariz. website.

What makes this tour so special for fans,



Instagram, @taylorswift

Taylor Swift performing at her opening night in Glendale, Ariz.

which has been expressed on social media, is that Swift has released four original albums and two "Taylor's Version" albums since her last tour in 2018. This one serves as a culmination of those as well as a celebration for her other "eras." To commemorate each one, Swift performed a setlist that lasted more than three hours, showcasing 44 songs. She played some songs she has never played live before or hasn't played in over ten years.

It was also revealed that each night Swift chooses two different surprise songs to play acoustically. The first night featured "Mirrorball" off of her "Folklore" album and "Tim McGraw" from her self-titled debut album.

To accompany the exhaustive setlist, Swift included 16 outfit changes, multiple large sets, and elaborate special effects. Each "era" featured a new set piece, stage design or costume.

"Each costume is so distinct to the specific era, and it is so cool to see how different each is from the previous," said sophomore Paris Tampol.

One special effect that stood out to fans was Swift "diving" into the stage with the illusion of her swimming across it. This served as a distraction while she changed into her "Midnights Era." It made quite the splash on social media, with videos of this transition gaining over nine million views on TikTok.

One "Eras Tour Admirer" tweeted, "The Eras Tour feels like a musical reset. The burning of the 'Lover house,' the old 'eras' trapped in cages, her swimming from her acoustic set with old songs to being 'reborn' into the 'Midnights era.' It makes me excited for what comes next."

"She truly put her heart and soul into this tour, for herself and for her fans, it is just such an amazing spectacle," said junior Danielle Savino.

The "Swifties" have remained by Swift's side for decades, and many say are ready for this new "era."

"If I had a soundtrack to my life, it would definitely be all Taylor Swift songs. I love that whatever I am feeling, there is a Taylor Swift song to help get me through it," said Tampol.

Her empowering demeanor and impressive lyricism have captured fans for years.

According to chartmasters.org, throughout her entire discography, Swift has sold over 160.4 million units sold in downloads, making her one of the most successful digital artists of all-time. On Spotify alone, Swift has 81.4 billion monthly listeners.

"She is a role model to women everywhere showing that hard work pays off," said junior Lauren Storm.

According to the New York Times, Swift fell victim to the sale of Big Machine Label Group—the owner of her first six albums. With this sale, her work was now in the hands of music manager Scooter Braun, who she does not get along with. Due to this, Swift needed to find a way to gain control of her life's work—ultimately leading to her infamous re-recorded, "Taylor's Version" albums.

"She is someone who knows her worth and has fought with producers and big companies for the right to own her own music and her life's work. What a girlboss," said Savino.

While many fans like Savino and Tampol were unable to get tickets, they are still able to enjoy the show with social media's extensive coverage of the tour.

"Seeing the hard work she put into the tour, it was definitely worth the five-year wait, I can't wait to keep up with the rest of it on TikTok," said Savino.

Sports

Women's Basketball, A Year to Remember

BY VICTOR DIPIERRO
Staff Writer

If there is one lesson the Sacred Heart University (SHU) women's basketball team taught us this season, it's to never give up.

After finishing with an 8-17 overall record last season and starting off this season 1-8, it seemed like the women were primed for another losing season.

However, the team quickly turned it around and went on to win 18 of their last 24 games, finishing with an overall record of 19-14.

The women finished the regular season as the second overall seed in the Northeastern Conference (NEC) tournament, and would go onto beat number one seed Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU) in the championship game, securing them a spot in the NCAA tournament.

Much of the team's success was because of the play of freshman guard Ny'Ceara Pryor. In her first season at SHU, she took the NEC by storm, winning rookie, defensive, and player of the year.

"Making history so early in my collegiate career has been an amazing feeling," said Pryor. "Individual accolades didn't matter if we didn't win the whole thing. Winning the NEC championship was a feeling I can't explain."

Pryor was satisfied with what her and her team accomplished in her rookie season, but she is ready to put that behind her and focus her attention on next year.

"We are returning almost the whole championship team, so my expectations are to win back-to-back NEC championships," said Pryor.

After beating FDU, the SHU women's basketball team went on to defeat Southern University by a score of 57-47 in the "first-four" round of the NCAA tournament.

This win secured them the number 16 seed in the women's March Madness tournament and set the stage for a first-round matchup versus first-seeded Stanford.

"It was an incredible experience to get the chance to play against a team like Stanford," said head coach Jessica Mannetti. "Although we didn't come away with a victory, it didn't feel like a loss. We won the conference championship and we made history by becoming the first NEC team to win a game in the women's NCAA tournament."

Mannetti, who has been with the team since 2013, has watched this program develop before her eyes.

"It was so much fun to be a part of this journey," said Mannetti. "The season we had was nothing short of magical."

Freshman guard Amelia Wood also played a role in her team's success and was very appreciative of the team's journey this season.

"I am very grateful that my team and I had the opportunity to be out in California for March Madness," said Wood. "Our team didn't give up when we played against Stanford, we kept fighting until the very end and I am so grateful that I am a part of this team."

While their Cinderella story ended, Wood knows this season was the start of something special.

"It is a great feeling for both my team and I knowing that we made history," said Wood. "That was our goal when we went out there. We kept saying our story hasn't ended yet, and when it did end, it ended with our name in the record books."

Sacred Heart University Athletics contributed to this article.

The Madness of March

BY MARISA MUSACCHIO
Staff Writer

It's March, so that means all eyes are on men's college basketball to see who will win the tournament dubbed "March Madness" and capture the NCAA national championship.

The tournament tipped off on March 16 and there were many upsets that busted a lot of people's brackets. Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU), a 16-seed, beat 1-seed Purdue, just the second win for a 16-seed against a 1-seed in tournament history.

"It was a big shock to me to see a team that I had going far in my bracket get taken down by a team I expected to be a first round exit," said sophomore Dennis Morley.

FDU, a member of the Northeast Conference, lost to Sacred Heart twice this season.

"It's good for our conference because that gives our conference more attention and generates more money," said sophomore Will Sullivan.

Another huge upset from the round of 64 included 15-seed Princeton beating 2-seed Arizona. Princeton made it all the way to the Sweet Sixteen, but their Cinderella run was ended by Creighton on March 24.

"It shows how the game is changing, as every year now you see an upset," said Sullivan. "It shows the level of talent just keeps increasing."

Reigning champion Kansas was also quickly ousted as they did not make it out of the Round of 32 after losing to 8-seed Arkansas.

Number one overall seed Alabama suffered one of the more surprising losses of the tournament when they were ousted by San Diego State in the Sweet Sixteen. Alabama was a popular pick in many brackets to win it all.

As the tournament heads into the Final Four, there are zero one-seeded teams that remain.

Florida Atlantic, a 9-seed from Conference USA, defeated number 3 seed Kansas State in the East regional final to advance to the Final Four for the first time, where they will play San Diego State.

UConn, a 4-seed in the West, dispatched of 3-seed Gonzaga to reach their sixth Final Four and first since 2014. They will play Miami in the Final Four.

The semifinal games will take place on Saturday, April 1, and the championship game will be on Monday, April 3.



AP Photo, John Minchillo
Connecticut's Adama Sanogo (21) looks to pass after rebounding against St. Mary's Mitchell Saxen (11) in the first half of a second-round college basketball game in the NCAA Tournament.

Tennis Teams Serving It Up

BY CRISTIAN MARTINEZ
Staff Writer

Sacred Heart University's men's and women's tennis programs are having a successful start to their seasons. In Northeast Conference (NEC) matches, the men are 3-1 while the women are 3-0 after both teams won their recent match against Wagner College on March 18.

"The men have really impressed me as the season has progressed. Our doubles have been excellent, and we have competed well against some of the top teams in the northeast," said head coach Mike Guastelle. "I'm looking forward to what we can do in the NEC tournament in mid-April."

The men's team has been led by Arya Alla, who was named NEC Rookie of the Month for February.

"As a team, we are doing things correctly to win these conference matches. Hopefully we can keep the momentum going in these important conference matches and come out with more wins," said Alla.

The women are led by junior Katsiaryna Starastsenka, the NEC Player of the Month for February. Starastsenka has 12 individual wins so far this season.

"I am happy to receive 'Player of the Month' in February, as it is a reward for my hard work and something that gives more confidence moving forward into the season," said Starastsenka. "But I understand that it is just a step towards receiving the award 'Player of the Year' and I need to keep working hard and stay focused to achieve it."

Even with a statistically excellent start to the season the women know they must keep up the hard work as the season is not over

yet and they have goals to reach.

"I am sure that the most important goal for everyone on the team is to win the NEC championship this year," said Starastsenka. "I think that we have a very good schedule for the rest of the season for us to get ready for the NEC championship as much as possible."

Both the men and women Pioneers strategy for this season has been to give it all they got by playing hard, practicing often, and staying consistent.

"I go out on the court and just fight as hard as I can to win every point. Some of my matches have seemed to go perfectly and others have been far from perfect," said Alla. "However, I have found that by going out there and competing and not worrying about too much else, I have been able to perform at a high level for myself and my teammates."

One of the things that coach Guastelle has been preaching to his groups every day at practice this year is consistency.

"We practice on average four to five times a week with one to two matches a week," said Guastelle. "Each team needs to stay consistent in their work ethic and show consistency in their play the last three weeks before our conference tournament April 14-16."

The Pioneers next NEC match is on Saturday, April 1 when they host FDU at the Tennis Club of Trumbull.

Sacred Heart Athletics contributed to this article.

MLB Implements Rule Changes

BY BRYAN SMTIH & THOMAS MARRONE MUSSIO
Co-Sports Editor & Staff Writer

There are new rule changes coming to Major League Baseball in 2023. Along with the banning of defensive shifts, a pitch clock has been instituted in an effort to speed up the game.

The pitch clock is a rule that many fans have been clamoring for, and after being tested in the minor leagues last season, MLB is ready to roll it out in major league games. The pitcher will have 15 seconds to release the pitch, and if he doesn't, he will be charged with an automatic ball. Conversely, if the batter is not ready to hit with eight seconds left on the clock, they will be charged with an automatic strike.

"Young children would rather look at the final scores of a baseball game on the ESPN app than sit there for three and a half hours watching the game," said junior Molly Jacob. "Even for adults, it will be great to speed up the game. The original dynamics of baseball are still in play, which is important to note, it is just adapting to the current culture of society for the 162 regular season games."

Spring Training has acted as a bit of an adjustment period for players and pitchers, and there have been some players called for violations already this spring.

"I understand that baseball players have never played with a pitch clock before, especially those that have been in the game for over 20 years, but it is an adjustment that all players must go through, so it is fair," says Jacob.

The removal of the infield shift is

another big change for this upcoming season. There must be two infielders on each side of second base at all times now.

"I don't like the removal of shifting. I feel like it removes some strategy that is needed in baseball," said junior Justin Alter.

ESPN reported that, "If the hitting team reaches base and runners advance on a ball hit under the violation, the game proceeds without penalties. If the play has any other consequence -- an out, a sacrifice, etc. -- the hitting team can decide either to accept the penalty -- which would add one ball to the hitter's count -- or decline it, and the play would stand."

Part of the reasoning for this new rule is the drop in batting average league-wide. The batting average in 2022 was the lowest it has been since 1968, according to ESPN.

Overall, Jacob is optimistic that these changes will be positive for the game of baseball.

"As someone that works in the media for professional baseball, I think the changes will benefit all the networks in hopes that they will get more viewers that want to watch the shorter games," said Jacob. "Networks are always trying to get children's attention and the pitch clock will definitely be an improving factor."

Many fans and people around baseball hope that these new rule changes will add something new to the game and make the game better. Only time will tell.

Editorial

Where Heart Took Me

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If you follow me on Instagram or have had a conversation with me in the past three months you know that this past fall semester I studied abroad in Rome, Italy. Studying abroad was one of the best decisions I have made and forced me out of my comfort zone in every way possible.

I was lucky enough to travel to other countries and cities almost every weekend while I was there and was able to immerse myself in different cultures and traditions, while trying all different kinds of foods, which was one of my favorite parts.

People always joke that if you are lucky enough to study abroad you will never stop talking about it and before I went, I did not think that would be me, but I find myself referencing my experiences constantly and bringing it up anytime I can.

One of the classes that I took in Italy was Intercultural Communications. I remember the first day of class we talked about culture shock, which everyone before I left told me I would experience the first couple weeks being abroad.

The stages of culture shock are honeymoon, frustration, adaptation, and acceptance. I remember sitting in that class and thinking that I was already in the acceptance stage, because the airline had lost my luggage which luckily was found a week later.

I quickly became adapted to Italian culture and their way of life. I found that the way they live is more relaxed and a less high-strung environment which for me was definitely something I had to get used to.

Everyday my roommates and I would walk by the farmers market to go to class, and we would get fresh fruits, vegetables, along with snacks. The food in Italy was some of the best, most fresh food I've ever had.

Being able to live in another country for such a long period of time and adapting to their routine made me grow as a person in many ways.

In the same class, at the end of the semester in December, my professor spent a class period talking about reverse culture shock and how sometimes for people that can be worse than culture shock. He went on to say that it can be hard for students to immerse themselves back into their home culture and sometimes you can feel lost because you just came from this lifechanging experience that the only people who will really understand it and what you're going through are the people you went through it with.

Hearing him talk about his personal experience and some of my classmates who had been abroad before say that they experienced reverse culture shock more than culture shock made me wonder what my experience coming back to the US would be. I knew it was going to be so hard leaving my friends that I made from all over the world and the freedom that living in Italy offered me.

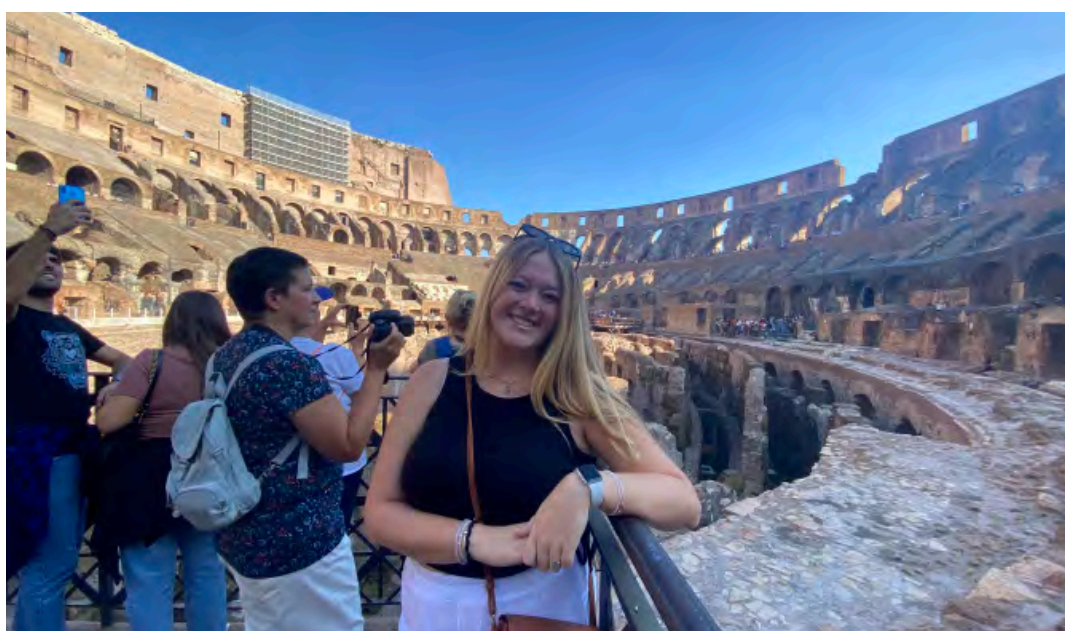
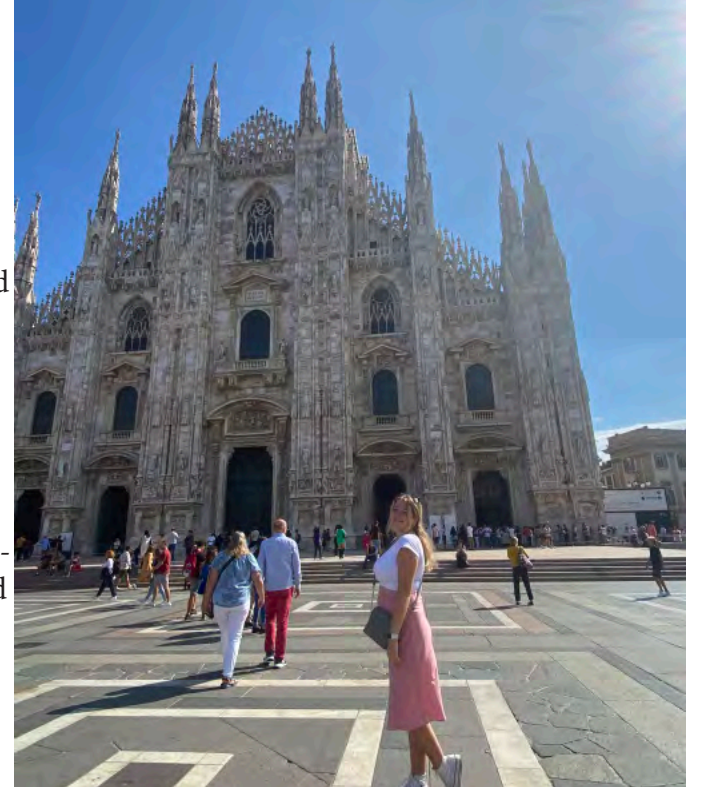
I remember so vividly getting off the plane in Rome in late August and thinking that these next months would go by so slow. I thought that at the end of my time there I would be ready to go home and come back to Sacred Heart.

My flight back home was five days before Christmas and the days before my flight I felt like I never wanted to leave and just wished my family and friends could come and live in Italy. I spent those last days in Rome with my roommates and new best friends going to all our favorite places, restaurants, gelato spots, and taking our last passeggiatas through Trastevere.

When I first came home, I was so excited to see my family and friends. After a while I realized that I won't be going back to Rome and will never have all of the amazing experiences that I had while abroad.

In the past couple of months, I have been slowly adapting back to reality. I know that my experiences abroad will be some of my favorite and best memories of my life.

I am so grateful for my family, Sacred Heart, and the office of global affairs for giving me the opportunity to study abroad and the impact that it will always have on my life.



The editorial page is an open forum. Editorials are the opinions of the individual editors and do not represent the opinions of the whole editorial board. Letters to the editor are encouraged and are due by Sunday at noon for consideration for each Wednesday's issue. All submissions are subject to editing for spelling, punctuation, and length.

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