

Five SHU Students, One Adult Injured In Two-Car Collision on Jefferson Street

BY MADISON BEEKMAN
Manager of Editorial Content

Just after midnight on Friday, Sept. 29, six people, including five Sacred Heart students and an Uber driver, were seriously injured in a two-car collision on Jefferson Street in Fairfield, near the entrance to the Martire Center, officials said.

Four female students were in an Uber going westbound on Jefferson Street, when an eastbound car, driven by a male student, hit a curb, lost control and collided with the Uber. The collision left the eastbound car on its roof, according to Fairfield police. The five students and the Uber driver were all transported to the area hospitals with critical injuries.

University President Dr. John Petillo reported that as of Oct. 2, one of the injured women was released from the hospital on Sunday afternoon.

Gary MacNamara, Executive Director of Public Safety and Government Affairs at SHU, reported that SHU Public Safety officers were the first ones on scene, some of whom were on their way home when they came upon the crash.

“They immediately began assessing the occupants, providing medical attention and working with first responders to help ensure the scene was safe,” MacNamara said. “Other first responders came from Fairfield Police, Fairfield Fire Dept., AMR and even Bridgeport Fire Dept.”

Following the emergency response, MacNamara said that he, Petillo, and SHU Dean of Students, Denise Tiberio, among others, went to both hospitals to meet with families and injured students. Since then, Tiberio reported that they have made multiple visits.

“It’s a very hard day at Sacred Heart University on campus today. Not only for these students and their families, but other students who saw the crash, maybe not witnessed the crash, but were there when the response occurred. As well as the myriad of family members who send students to a university, it’s concerning for them and we know that,” MacNamara said in a news conference on Friday, Sept. 29, according to WFSB, a CBS affiliate for the Hartford–New Haven area.

Many students became aware of the incident shortly after it occurred. Sophomore Emma Ricotta was on her way back to her residence hall when she heard the news.

“I first heard about the incident on my way home in an Uber from a friend’s birthday party. I was approaching my dorm room 10 minutes after the incident had occurred,” she said. “My initial reaction was straight shock and fear. The worry of not knowing exactly what happened 10 minutes earlier was absolutely terrifying and heart breaking.”

The rest of the students and faculty found out later on Friday morning when Petillo emailed students and staff at 8:50 a.m., notifying them that classes were canceled from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. to give them the chance to attend a prayer service held in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit on campus at 11 a.m.

The email also let the community know that counseling would be available throughout the day from both the Counseling Center and Campus Ministry.

SHU parents also received an email from Tiberio that said, “Many of you have reached out regarding the car accident early this morning involving five SHU students. If you have not been able to reach your student, we want you to know that the parents of the students involved in the accident have been notified.”

At the prayer service, the Chapel of the Holy Spirit was filled to capacity, with many standing outside in the rain.

“The prayer service was so comforting. I felt the presence of every single person. I really felt the community in the chapel,” said freshman Rachel Minto. “So many people were there to show their love and support, even if it meant standing out in the rain.”

In an email to SHU students and staff on the morning of Saturday, Sept. 30, Petillo thanked those who attended Friday’s service.

“It is always heartwarming to see the incredible support for our own and be reminded of the special caring of the Sacred Heart community,” he said.

Campus organizations showed their support throughout the weekend by posting statements to their social media accounts, many of which used the caption and/or hashtag “Pray for SHU.” Among those was the fraternity Delta Tau Delta, who also sent flowers to the female students in the hospital, according to junior Gregory Van Sant, who is the Outreach Chair for the organization.

“All of the women involved in the accident

were sent a bouquet followed by a kind message. [We] wanted to show them that the entire school and Delta Tau Delta is sending them nonstop prayers,” Van Sant said. “The victims, families, and their loved ones will also know how much love and support they have from their peers. As an organization, we are here and willing to help in any way that will benefit them.”

Petillo said that the university held moments of reflection before the women’s hockey game on Friday night and the football game on Saturday. He is also asking that the entire SHU community continue to pray for everyone involved in the accident and their families.

Some families of the injured students have created GoFundMe pages in order to support medical costs for those who were injured.

In an ongoing effort to make the area as safe as possible, SHU is working with local police on different initiatives for area roadways.

“We have been working with state and town officials on a variety of safety improvements on the streets that run adjacent to the University,” MacNamara said. “In addition, we have worked with local police to increase speed enforcement on Jefferson Street.”

In the Sept. 29 news conference, as reported by WFSB, MacNamara extended his gratitude to the community both within and surrounding the university.

“Sacred Heart is a community within a community... and we have received outreach from not only the town of Fairfield, but also from the city of Bridgeport and members of that greater community, supporting our students, supporting our families, and supporting the university as a whole,” he said. “We will get through this, all of us will get through this together, but it’s certainly going to take some time. And the SHU community thanks all that those other communities have given us.”

According to the Fairfield Police report, its Reconstruction Team is investigating the accident and will continue to release information as it becomes available.

For mental health resources on campus, see page 8

News

Emergency Blood Drive Held due to National Blood Shortage

BY MOLLY BRUTON
Assistant News Editor & Copy Editor

In the midst of a national blood shortage, Sacred Heart University (SHU) held an emergency blood drive on Sept. 27 and 28.

According to the American Red Cross (ARC), fewer donors than needed donated blood this summer, drawing down the national blood supply and reducing distributions of some of the most needed blood types to hospitals.

“Our blood supply is below the ideal five to seven day supply. There is a need for all blood types, but especially type O+, O- and B-. This is the second blood emergency we have declared this year as last year we declared five,” said Caitlin Grimaldi-Flick, Marketing and Communications Manager of Rhode Island Blood Center.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 800,000 blood donations were made at blood drives hosted by businesses. Last year, the ARC saw only about 500,000 blood donations at these locations – a nearly 40% drop from pre-pandemic levels, according to the ARC Press Release on Sept. 26.

“Blood donations have not returned to pre-pandemic levels as lifestyles have changed over the past few years. That combined with a prolonged 50% decrease in youth and first-time donors and a difficult summer for blood donations have led to this blood emergency declaration. Our region is not alone in experiencing this shortage, as it is happening nationwide,” said Grimaldi-Flick.

“I donated blood today because my sister is a nurse at Bridgeport Hospital. It’s extremely vital that our campus comes together and donates,” said junior Caitlin MacDonald.

As for the medical personnel at St. Vincent’s Medical Center (SVMC) in Bridgeport, they have been taking necessary precautions to prevent the hospital from running out of blood.

“The staff has to be aware and use our current supply when necessary by not wasting blood and blood products,” said Eugene H. Lewis III, D.O. FCAP,

Chairman of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine with Hartford HealthCare at SVMC.

The ARC is calling for a minimum of 10,000 additional blood donations nationwide each week over the next month to offset the critical shortage.

“Connecticut Blood Center is operated by the Rhode Island Blood Center. Together, we service over 60 hospitals in our region. We work to provide blood product needs to these hospitals so they can provide patients with lifesaving treatment. This is why it is pivotal that everyone who is eligible comes out and donates blood,” said Grimaldi-Flick.

Once donated, the blood is sent through an extensive process to ensure safe delivery to patients.

“The blood is transported back to Middletown the same day, where it is tested for infectious diseases such as HIV and Hepatitis. Once the blood has tested negative, the components are separated into packed red blood cells, plasma and platelets,” said Lewis.

“Each time a person donates blood, they are helping multiple people because of how the blood components are separated. The blood products are then distributed to the hospitals that

Connecticut Blood Center supplies,” added Lewis.

According to the ARC, someone in the U.S. needs blood and or platelets every two seconds.

“It is important that everyone who is eligible comes out and donates. Together, we can all play a role in helping the blood center navigate out of this blood shortage and help patients in our community. To prevent future blood shortages, we are encouraging everyone to rebook their next appointment,” said Grimaldi-Flick.

SHU will be holding an additional “Pioneers Have Heart” blood drive on Wednesday, Dec. 6 and Thursday, Dec. 7 in the Edgerton Center Atrium. To check for available dates and to schedule a donation appointment, visit ctblood.org/drives using the SHU sponsor code: C008.



Molly Bruton, Assistant News Editor

The staff at the Connecticut Blood Center assist donors with warm welcomes as they check in.

New Dean of Welch College of Business and Technology

BY EMMA TURNER
Staff Writer

David Taylor has been newly named Dean of the Jack Welch College of Business and Technology (WCBT).

“I came here for a visit, and I just loved the people, and I loved the environment. And I just loved the Sacred Heart vibe,” said Taylor.

His time at Sacred Heart began in the fall of 2010 as an Assistant Professor of Marketing.

“It’s sort of like a student when you come to visit a university– it’s the same thing, you’re looking for someplace you’d fit in,” Taylor said.

Taylor has worked his way up from professor to Department Chair to Associate Dean.

“I’ve seen the university grow from about 4,000 students to where we are now, I think we had 30 faculty, now we have 65. I feel like I’ve grown up with the university to some extent,” said Taylor.

He also ran SHU’s former Luxembourg campus for the past five years. Taylor remembers his time in Luxembourg very fondly. His favorite part was “spending time with students, watching them explore and learn about other cultures.”

Mia Cirillo, a senior studying marketing and management in the WCBT, had this experience with Taylor.

“I had the pleasure of having Dean David Taylor while studying abroad in Luxembourg. His Marketing in Europe course was very enlightening as he provided my classmates and I an intercultural understanding of Europe,” said Cirillo.

Due to this time with him, Cirillo was hopeful when she heard of his new position.

“Once I heard he was promoted to full time dean, I was excited as I knew he would be as passionate as he was while teaching students,” said Cirillo.

Moving forward, Taylor is excited to be the face of the WCBT at Sacred Heart at events with other universities.

“[Part of] my job is to represent the college at external events; I’m the cheerleader, I’m the advocate, the salesperson,” Taylor said.

“My colleagues who come here for conferences say, ‘I’ve been to your campus, and it’s amazing.’ It’s not an exaggeration to say that the building has been a big part of our growth as a university and as a College of Business and Technology,” said Taylor.

However, there have also been some challenges the business school has had to face throughout this experience.

Since Taylor took the position full-time, he hopes to facilitate a smooth adjustment for faculty and students.

“It’s been a really easy transition; I think for everyone. Because normally if you have a new dean that comes in that’s completely new, they have to get to know the university, the students, the faculty, and the culture,” Taylor said. “I’ve been around, so I know the students, the faculty- and they know me.”

He also wants to work to increase the technology aspect of the Jack Welch College of Business and Technology. The School of Computer Science and Engineering has had engineering programs in place for the past five years.

“Business students can expect to see a lot more technology, and vice versa- the computer science and engineering students will have the opportunity to be more involved in the business of things,” said Taylor.

He is excited to encourage students to be more involved in programs Sacred Heart offers, as well as seeing where the school can improve going into this next phase of business technology.



Emma Turner, Staff Photographer

David Taylor has taken on the position of Dean of the Jack Welch College of Business and Technology after previously serving as Associate Dean.

Features

SHU Dance Company's Italian Summer

BY ANNA MCGRADY
Staff Writer

In July, the Sacred Heart University Dance Company made their way to Italy to take class and perform in the World Dance Movement Festival (WDM). The 34 students danced alongside peers from all over the world in Castellana Grotte.

"Dancing on the stage in the middle of an Italian city was the most amazing feeling," said junior and SHU dancer Maura Walters.

The festival has participants from nearly 35 countries and Sacred Heart Dance Company had the opportunity to learn alongside experts from different cultures and communities, as well as learning different techniques.

According to a statement from WDM, the festival's mission is to build connections between dance and diverse cultures in order to inspire and transform dancers around the world.



Madison Beekman, Manager of Editorial Content
Members of Sacred Heart's Dance Company pictured in the town of Castellana Grotte in Italy, where they had the opportunity to perform this past summer.

The SHU Dance Company is a collection of dancers of all class years who share the same passion for dance. Their love for dance stems from the years of work they put into training.

"I have been dancing my whole life and at a certain point it became more than a hobby or sport, but my passion," said junior Shannon Fallon, a dancer at SHU. "It has allowed me to express myself through movement and this is something I love about dance."

"We all learned how to be confident in an unfamiliar environment. Walking into class on the first day was ridiculously intimidating," said Walters.

"However, we all learned that to feel fully acclimated we had to work hard and leave it all on the floor."

The dancers attended five days of classes where they had two professional choreography workshops each day. In both classes, the students were required to learn a piece to perform at the end of the week.



Madison Beekman, Manager of Editorial Content
Some members of the SHU Dance Company pictured in a class with Italian choreographer, Fabrizio Prolli.

"I learned so much from the other dancers and instructors through this experience. We were given the opportunity to pick up artistry and different moves that we are not normally trained in," said Fallon.

WDM takes place every summer. Sacred Heart Dance Company has gone in previous

years, but this was the first trip since the COVID-19 pandemic.

WDM chose three pieces for the Dance Company to perform. SHU dance alumni and current dancers worked together to choreograph these performances. They got to perform and train with dancers around the world and prepare them for their performance.

"Performing in the festival was surreal. There were so many talented and insane dancers that we got to perform with," said Fallon. "Seeing all the work and training that was put into it was so inspiring."

"Learning from Italian professionals has helped me to embrace the dramatics of dance and to use every part of my body in my movement," said Walters.

The SHU Dance Company will perform their semester show the weekend of Nov. 17 to 19 at the Edgerton Theater. Students can find the performances and buy tickets by going online at <https://edgertoncenter.org/event-type/dance-program/>.

Diners, Drive-ins, and Dining Halls

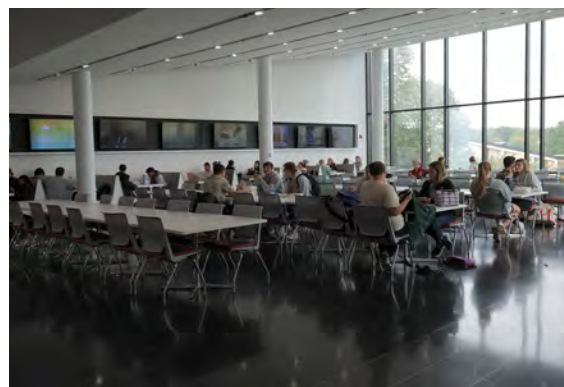
BY KATHLEEN CHIODO
Staff Writer

Across Sacred Heart University's campus there are a total of 11 places to grab a meal, ranging from cafés to dining halls, giving the campus and its students a variety of dining options.

A few of these dining halls, like Pio's Kitchen and Thea's Abbey, have only been placed on campus within the last three years.

Senior Meghan Haggerty said that Thea's Abbey is her favorite dining hall on campus.

"When I was living on campus it was a really easy walk from my dorm and I like the variety of options that they have," she said. "The burrito bowls and breakfast sandwiches have always been my favorite meals to get. Also, the employees are always really nice there."



Nicholas Vukota, Staff Photographer
Linda's dining hall is a favorite amongst many SHU students because of its wide variety of options. The dining hall also offers a variety of seating options.

A majority of the dining halls on campus are open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. A few exceptions would be Einstein's Bagels, Café Rosso, and Pio's Kitchen, which are primarily open for breakfast and lunch time.

Senior Kayla Goncalves has two favorite dining halls on campus for different reasons.

"I would say that Linda's or Pio's Kitchen are my top two on campus. I like that they added a new dining hall at West Campus because basically all of

my classes are there, so it's really convenient for me," said Goncalves. "The sandwiches and wraps are my favorite at Pio's Kitchen, and they always make them really quick."

Sacred Heart's West Campus did not have any official dining options at all until the last two years.

All of the dining halls at Sacred Heart accept either dining dollars or meal swipes as a form of payment. Visitors are able to pay with a regular debit or credit card if they happen to be eating on campus.

Each student at the university has their own meal plan catered to them which allows them to pay for their food on campus.

There are a few other options as to where to eat on campus that aren't traditional dining hall style, such as the Market in the main academic building and Café Rosso, or the East Café, located on West Campus. Both of these places are more of a grab-and-go dining experience, as there are not many places to sit and eat your food directly inside or around them.

"In my opinion, Linda's is the best dining hall because of the variety. I can always count on Linda's when I don't know exactly what I want to eat," said senior Hadley Bansal. "63's was a go-to for me as well when I lived on campus, but I didn't love how you had to swipe in before you got to see the meal options for that day."

JP's Diner, named after the university's current president Dr. John J. Petillo, is a '50s style diner that offers a variety of food options as well as desserts. This red and white themed dining option can be found on campus directly behind Mother Teresa Hall and next to the Pioneer Park softball field.

"Living off campus, I don't get to JP's very often, I think it is probably one of the best places to sit down and eat when I'm with a group of friends or my roommates," said Bansal. "The cookie skillet is the best dessert you can find on campus."



Nicholas Vukota, Staff Photographer
JP's Diner is a retro style diner located right on Sacred Heart's main campus where students can get restaurant service or opt for take out.

Audrey's Corner



Easy Recipes for On-Campus Living: Trader Joe's Edition

BY CAROLINE CLIFFORD
Audrey's Corner Editor

As first-year students embark on their college journey, the newfound freedom of living on campus often brings the challenge of limited cooking resources. Trader Joe's, known for its affordable and diverse selection, offers a range of ingredients that can help students whip up delicious meals without the need for a fully equipped kitchen.

Chicken Caesar Salad Wrap:

One of the standout recipes for dorm-dwellers is the Chicken Caesar Salad Wrap. With just three ingredients, this meal is a breeze to assemble. All you need are Trader Joe's grilled chicken strips, caesar salad mix, and tortillas. No cooking required! Simply combine the ingredients, wrap them up, and enjoy a satisfying and nutritious meal that's ready in minutes.

Avocado Toast with Smoked Salmon:

For a breakfast or brunch option that's both nutritious and indulgent, look no further than Avocado Toast with Smoked Salmon. This delightful dish combines creamy avocado with the rich, savory flavor of smoked salmon. To make it, grab a loaf of your preferred bread from Trader Joe's, ripe avocados, and a pack of their premium smoked salmon. Mash the avocado on toasted bread, top it with the smoked salmon, and voila! You have a gourmet-level meal right in your dorm.

Mediterranean Quinoa Bowl:

Elevate your dorm meal experience with a Mediterranean Quinoa Bowl that's both wholesome and flavorful. Start with Trader Joe's pre-cooked quinoa, canned chickpeas, and a selection of Mediterranean-inspired ingredients like

cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, feta cheese, and olives. Toss them together in a bowl with olive oil and lemon juice for a refreshing and protein-packed meal. This dish not only tastes fantastic but also provides the nutrients needed for a day of studying and activities.

Caprese Pasta Salad:

When you're in the mood for something light yet satisfying, consider whipping up a Caprese Pasta Salad. Trader Joe's offers a wide variety of pasta options, so choose your favorite, and cook it according to the package instructions. Add cherry tomatoes, fresh mozzarella cheese, basil leaves, and a drizzle of balsamic glaze. This dish is perfect for a quick lunch or dinner, and the ingredients can easily be stored in your dorm's mini-fridge.

Tips for Dorm Cooking Success:

Invest in Multi-Purpose Utensils: Look for kitchen tools that can serve multiple functions. A microwave-safe bowl with a lid, a sharp knife, and a cutting board can go a long way in preparing dorm-friendly meals.

Plan Ahead: Create a simple meal plan for the week, making sure to incorporate versatile ingredients that can be used in multiple recipes.

Embrace Pre-Cut and Pre-Cooked Options: Trader Joe's offers a range of pre-cut vegetables, pre-cooked grains, and marinated proteins that can save time and effort.

With a little creativity and the right ingredients from Trader Joe's, students can enjoy delicious homemade meals right from the comfort of their dorm room.

Local Activities for Fall

BY NATHALIA COLLAZO
Contributing Writer

Fall is around the corner! It's time to lace up your boots and take a hike at "Lake Mohegan Loop." Don't worry, they're dog-friendly, but keep them on a leash. "Lake Mohegan Loop" hiking trails take you around the lake, over a foot bridge, and through the woods at this 170-acre property. Become one with nature and find its beauty and peace. While you're there, don't forget to take a look at the beautiful fall leaves that start changing late in September through November.

Want a bite to eat? Head down to Galaxy Diner on Main Street in Bridgeport, CT, where the general money on your SHU cards is accepted. This diner provides home-cooked meals, light meals, appetizers, and desserts. If you're missing home, they've got just what you need to satisfy your home-cooked meal cravings.

Missing Summer? Enjoy the fall with a relaxing day at the beach. Jennings Beach is the largest beach in Fairfield, CT, with 27 acres of land. It is located on Benson Rd. and has great views of Long Island Sound. Bring a blanket, picnic basket, sunscreen, and a beach chair to enjoy the sun and watch the waves gently douse the sand. Hear the pigeons coo while searching for food. Enjoy a novel as it slowly relaxes you, putting you to sleep. Watch the sunset and enjoy some s'mores over a bonfire, frozen yogurt at "16 Handles," or some rolled ice cream at "Rolling Moo" in Fairfield, CT.

You can't enjoy your fall without these fun fall activities at Silverman's Farm in Easton, CT. They have a petting farm (fee for admission), a pick-your-own (check their website for more information), a pumpkin patch, and a delicious variety of pies ranging from \$22 to \$25. Luckily, Sacred Heart University's annual Family Weekend event is next week, from September 29th to October 1st. This is a great opportunity for SHU students to kick off the weekend with their family and friends. If you miss out, you can always head to Sherman Green on Post Road in Fairfield, CT, on Sundays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. until October 8 for some fresh fruits and veggies at their Farmers Market.

More hiking trails/parks to consider:

- Seaside Park
- Beardsley Park
- Veterans Memorial Park in Bridgeport, CT (near Roncalli Hall)
- Pequonnock Valley Wildlife Management Area
- Lake Mohegan Recreational Area
- Grace Richardson Loop
- Connecticut Audubon Society Country Lane Trail
- Jennings Beach to Pine Creek Point Trail

HAPPENINGS ON CAMPUS:

FRIDAY 10/6:

FIRST YEAR FRIDAY

63'S PATIO
AT 10 A.M.

THURSDAY 10/5:

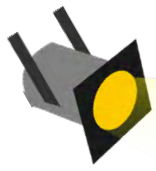
PAINT AND PRAY

CHAPEL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
NARTHEX
AT 7 P.M.

SATURDAY 10/7:

MANHATTAN COMEDY NIGHT LIVE

SHU COMMUNITY THEATER
AT 8 P.M.



Spotlight



Professor Peter Ronai

BY VALENTINA MASSONI
Co-Spotlight Editor

With over 35 years of experience in the exercise science field, Prof. Peter Ronai has significantly impacted Sacred Heart University's community during his time teaching both undergraduate and graduate classes. Most prominently, he stands out due to his persistent dedication to his students.

"My students and other colleagues and faculty, they're what keep me going," said Ronai.

Ronai initially received his Bachelor's degree in Health Science and Public Health from Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) in 1983. In 1988, he also earned his master's degree in Exercise Science and Human Performance from SCSU.

He has had an extensive career both on and off campus. Prior to his job at SHU, Ronai's longest-held role was at the Bridgeport Hospital Ahlbin Rehab Center, as an exercise physiologist and site supervisor/manager.

"I got this phone call from a colleague of mine asking if I would consider coming over to teach," Ronai said. "That was a very scary process because it meant change – a big change career-wise."

It was not initially Ronai's intention to become a professor, and this required him to leave behind the comfort of his career at Bridgeport Hospital. Over the past 18 years, however, Ronai has grown fond of his experience at the university.

"I look at teaching and I look at working at Sacred Heart as a labor of love for me," he said. "But I feel like I'm still a work in progress at what I do."

Since entering the world of teaching, Ronai has also returned as an adjunct professor to SCSU. He continues to build his personal knowledge by researching, writing, and presenting about exercise science.

"I only do things that I know I can then bring into the classroom and parlay that information for students' betterness," Ronai said. "I'm always looking for how I can write or present something that will make people all over say, 'Hey, I can use that!'"

In past years, Ronai has been recognized as the faculty member of the year through Sacred Heart's Residential Life awards. He has also been recognized as advisor of the year for the College of Health Professions.

"Those are nice things to have, but more importantly to me, it just means that I'm making connections; that my students and I are connecting and good things are happening," said Ronai.

Ronai was also asked to be the faculty advisor for the exercise science club. His involvement in the SHU community consistently goes above and beyond the expectations of an average professor.

On top of his successes within the university, Ronai has also been recognized highly in other regards of the exercise science field. One of his highest achievements is his recognition as a Fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM).

"That is very big professionally. That is one of the greatest honors or distinctions you can get in the exercise science and sports medicine profession," Ronai said. "It is a very selective



Sacred Heart University photo by Tracy Deer-Mirek
Clinical Associate Professor of Exercise Science Peter Ronai, MS, ACSM
RCEP, CSCS-D, FACSM

process and getting that professionally was very important because it confirms that I'm doing what I'm supposed to do, with effectiveness."

While Ronai's individual career has had a multitude of successes, he finds many of the highlights to involve the achievements of his students.

"One of the greatest moments for me – and one that I get really emotional about – is when I go to graduation every year and I watch all of my students go through the line receiving their diploma. That, to me, is sort of the pinnacle of why I'm here," he said.

Ronai makes it a goal to remember the names and faces of the students he works with. He aims to empower students by showing them that they are important.

"SHU students are great people. I think that's what's keeping me here," Ronai said. "At this stage of my professional life, I can't think of anything else I'd rather do, or anything that gives me a greater feeling of fulfillment."



NOMINATE SOMEONE!

Do you know a person,
club, organization, etc.
that deserves a Spectrum
Spotlight? Scan the QR code
below to send suggestions to
our editors!

Arts & Entertainment

Now Showing: The SHU Community Theatre

BY ANGELISE ROY
Staff Writer

The Sacred Heart University (SHU) Community Theatre welcomes SHU students and other public audiences to visit their unique venue located in the heart of downtown Fairfield.

According to the Community Theatre website, the venue provides diverse programming such as live concerts, theatrical performances and film screenings.

Gary Lindemann, the front of the house manager, said that the theatre's appeal stretches far beyond Fairfield. People throughout the southern Connecticut area and even western New York frequently attend shows.

"It is such a unique historic space, and it has been a beloved theatre to the community of Fairfield and its surroundings for 100 years," said Lindemann. "It remained empty for 12 years until Sacred Heart took it over and renovated it and now it's this beautiful space."

"Over my four years at SHU, I have visited the SHU Community Theatre a few times, and each time was very memorable," said senior Lauren Iacoviello. "My favorite movie I saw at the theatre was probably 'Barbie', because it was such a fun and unique thing to experience with my friends."

According to Lindemann, "Barbie" was the biggest event the theatre has held so far, having around 10,000 people come to see it over the course of three weeks.

"We took 'Barbie' to all different levels," said Maureen Lucier, the director of theatre services. "Just to see the community come together where every man, child, woman, older woman, younger woman was in pink, was an experience. We really let the town know we're there now."

That same week, the theatre announced their events for the 2023-2024 season and, according to Lucier, sold hundreds of tickets a day since people found out they offer various performances and viewings, such as comedy, Broadway, jazz, and more.



The Sacred Heart Community Theatre, located in downtown Fairfield, offers a variety of entertainment for SHU students and members of the general public from movie screenings to live performances and stand-up comedy.

Some highlights of the upcoming season include: a discussion with New York Times Columnist and Chief Political Correspondent for Slate Magazine, Janelle Bouie; an evening with Two-Time United States Poet Laureate, Billy Collins; a performance by "America's Got Talent" finalist, Drew Lynch; and a performance by Rock and Roll Hall of Famer, Darlene Love. Details on all of these performances can be found at SHUcommunitytheatre.org.

Despite the popularity of certain showings like "Barbie," the theatre still faces challenges regarding student attendance on a regular basis.

Lindemann said, "We've not had, to be honest, a great deal of success in getting students to come over and watch our shows or our movies."

In the future, he said they want to improve the shuttle transportation from campus to the theatre because it has been limiting students' ability to attend showings. They also have had trouble getting students to work at the theatre for the same reason.

"We are willing to give them work study hours for basically ushering the show, watching a free concert after that and pay them to do it," said Lindemann. "But it's difficult."

"It may be a hassle to get there at times for some students, especially freshmen and sophomores who don't have cars," said Iacoviello. "But the fun that people will have when they go,

makes it worth it."

At the theatre, being a SHU student has its perks. All SHU students can see movies at the theatre for free. Also, according to Lucier, students have the opportunity to reach out to the theatre to suggest ideas on what to bring to it.

"We want the students to join us and be a part of it," said Lindemann. "When they come, they'll want to come again."

For more information on scheduled shows and tickets available for purchase, visit SHUcommunitytheatre.org.

Alix Earle Launches "Hot Mess" Podcast

BY MOIRA STAPLES
Staff Writer

On Sept. 21, TikTok influencer Alix Earle released the first episode of her weekly podcast "Hot Mess" on Spotify. Earle exposes the truth behind her "chaotic life" on her show as she brings listeners along on her journey into adulthood.

"My life changed overnight. My senior year of college, I got millions of followers, and now people are talking and speculating about where I am, what I am doing, who I am dating, so I figured I would just get on here and tell you guys myself," said Earle on her new podcast.

The launch of the "Hot Mess" podcast is under the new "Unwell" network founded by Alex Cooper, who is known for her hit podcast, "Call Her Daddy."

Cooper hosted Earle on her show for her season four premiere with a look into Earle's life. The episode launched on Sept. 20, a day before "Hot Mess" hit the internet.

The 22-year-old internet sensation gained popularity over TikTok for her "Get Ready With Me" videos and unfiltered honesty in 2022. Earle's "hot mess" aesthetic attracted viewers to her page, and the "Alix Earle Effect" soon took over. Girls imitating her makeup, fashion, and lifestyle swept the internet.

While a large portion of her image is connected to appearance, Earle's transparency captures her audience's hearts.

"She consistently emphasizes how she is not perfect: she has a messy room, messy bathroom, and messy lifestyle, which lives up to her podcast name 'Hot Mess,'" said sophomore Aileen Klaus. "I appreciate her honesty on social media, which is notoriously a place where people, especially celebrities, are dishonest."

Earle uses her platform to connect with her viewers on both her TikTok and podcast. She talks to them not from the pedestal of a celebrity but as an equal.

"She talks to her followers as if they are her close friends, which creates a sense of community on her TikTok page," said Klaus. "It is kind of like having an older sister on the internet looking out for you."

Sophomore Elizabeth Kennedy said she often watches Earle's videos and connects to the female narrative she embodies.

"I definitely see why people admire her for her transparency and think she voices the female experience," said Kennedy. "Although I don't think she's always one hundred percent relatable, I think some of her videos do display themes that all women and girls experience."

Sophomore Nora Reilly said that while much of Earle's stories seem glamorous to the average college student, like her expensive lifestyle, luxury brand trips, and celebrity status, she also discusses many universal issues that viewers can connect with.

"She has been candid about her experiences not getting into sororities or struggling with acne," said Reilly. "Despite very surface level problems, they are still valid for many teenage girls who don't know their place in the world."

While these friend-like "chit-chats" may lead to seemingly sincere, intimate connections between listeners and the content, Reilly said that it is essential not to let celebrities and pop culture "distract" from what is important.

"Celebrities like her [Earle] can be great role models to identify with, but we should be wary of their places in our lives and how much space they hold in our minds," said Reilly. "Space we could use to discover ourselves, influence policy, fight for things we believe in, and try to be more in touch with the world."

As Klaus commented, "Alix is not necessarily solving any world problems, but she is helping her followers accept themselves by being honest on her platform and showing that it is okay not to be perfect, even if the whole world perceives you that way."



Instagram, @alix_earle

A promotional poster for social media influencer Alix Earle's new podcast, "Hot Mess," that gives audiences a look into her personal life.

Sports

From Spain to SHU: Men's Soccer Standout, David Garcia Gallego

BY SHANNON TUTTLE
Staff Writer

Sacred Heart University (SHU) sophomore David Garcia Gallego kicked off the men's soccer team to a great start. With three goals and two assists in just nine games, Garcia Gallego is making recognizable improvements since his previous season.

At this time last year, Garcia Gallego had zero points. He experienced this difficulty not only because it was his first year playing soccer on a Division I team, but also because it was his first year playing soccer in the United States. Garcia Gallego grew up in Leon, Spain.

"It was at the playground of my school. In our free time we took a ball and played soccer with my classmates," said Garcia Gallego.

Soccer is a popular sport in Spain.

"I think every kid played soccer when they were young," said Garcia Gallego.

After discovering his passion, the rest of his youth was spent playing for Puente Castro FC until college recruiters discovered his incredible talent.

Head coach Anthony Anzevui first became aware of Garcia Gallego through one of their contacts in Spain. He watched videos of Garcia Gallego's play and was highly impressed by his skill, but it was his work ethic and attitude that stood out to Anzevui.

The team was so blown away with Garcia Gallego's abilities that assistant coach, Oscar Curras, flew out to Madrid to watch him play in person.

This was the start of a great relationship between Curras and Garcia Gallego that ultimately persuaded him to come and play soccer at SHU.



Greg Vasil, Sacred Heart University
David Garcia Gallego pictured during a game against Siena, where he scored the only goal.

Upon arriving at the university, Garcia Gallego said his first year playing soccer in the United States was not easy.

"In Spain, we perfect the technique more, but here it is more physical," said Garcia Gallego.

Garcia Gallego used his freshman year to adjust to the different aspects of the sport he was not familiar with. Now more accustomed to the play, Garcia Gallego started his sophomore season out strong.

He scored the lone goal in their game against Siena on Aug. 29 to secure the Pioneer's first win. He did this once again on Sept. 9 against Columbia.

"I don't know why, but this season it has been easier to score goals," said Garcia Gallego.

Anzevui described Garcia Gallego as a natural leader. He credited him for his team-first attitude, positive communication, and incredible work ethic.

With the hope of a successful season ahead of him, Garcia Gallego reflected on why soccer is such an important part of his life.

"The 90 minutes on the field is what I most enjoy," said Garcia Gallego.

The men's soccer team will travel to New Jersey on Oct. 8 to face off against the Fairleigh Dickinson University Knights.

Sacred Heart Athletics contributed to this article.

Football Fumbles First Half of Season

BY JOHN HEINZE
Staff Writer

The Sacred Heart University (SHU) football team is now five games into their season. A team that was once the kings of the Northeast Conference (NEC), is off to a rocky start to their 2023 campaign.

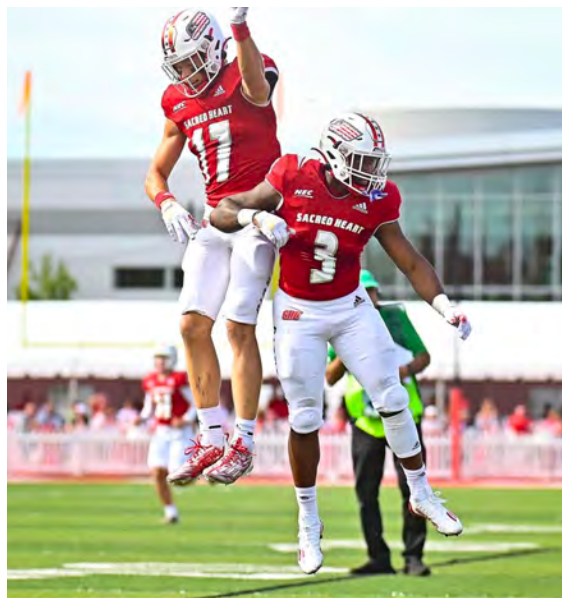
The team is sitting on a 1-4 record after its family weekend loss to Merrimack this past Saturday.

"I think we've been a little inconsistent. There's been times where we've played really well for a quarter or two and then we haven't played the way we are capable of playing for a few quarters and it has kind of put us in the hole," said head coach Mark Nofri.

SHU displayed these inconsistencies again on family weekend. They scored off a fumble recovery to take an early 7-0 lead but that was all the scoring they produced. Merrimack went on to win 17-7.

In their losses, offense has been hard to come by. They scored 14 against Lafayette and 10 against Georgetown and Wagner.

The game that provided optimism was their win against Saint Francis University (SFU). SHU defeated SFU 37-34 on a game winning field goal by Sam Renzi.



Instagram, @shufb_

SHU football players pictured celebrating during their family weekend game.

"We were down 10-0. We came back to take the lead and it was back and forth all game and we found a way to win at the end, so I think it's all about the kids and their grit that they showed," said Nofri.

Running back Malik Grant added 118 rush yards and a touchdown.

"I'd definitely say we played below our standards and below our expectations for the first three games. That game versus Saint Francis is when you saw that we can definitely do a lot of great

things throughout the season," said Grant.

Another key contributor versus SFU was starting quarterback Rob McCoy. He threw for 185 yards and two touchdowns, while adding 60 yards rushing.

"We stayed together, and we knew that no matter what we had the ability to go make plays and had the opportunity to run and pass and we stuck to that the whole game," said McCoy.

Both Grant and McCoy look to play pivotal roles in turning this season in the right direction.

"I'd say the way that we maintain that momentum going forward is going into practice each and every day knowing it's a new day. We've got new reps, new plays, whatever it is, whatever it might be, and try and get better each and every rep, and each and every practice," said Grant.

Sacred Heart is currently sixth in the NEC.

"The key to stringing wins is being able to play like they're capable of and not taking plays off and not taking quarters off, to play a full 60 minutes with their ability and potential because they are talented when they want to be," said Nofri.

SHU's next game is Saturday, Oct. 7 as they take on Long Island University.

Sacred Heart Athletics contributed to this article.



Instagram, @shufb_

Sacred Heart's football team pictured in a huddle ahead of their game against Wagner.

EDITOR IN CHIEF
BRENDAN WILLIAMS
2024

MANAGER OF EDITORIAL CONTENT
MADISON BEEKMAN
2025

MANAGING EDITOR:
ADMINISTRATION
JULIE DUNN
2024

EDITOR AT LARGE
COLLIN MOURA
2025

COPY EDITORS
MOLLY BRUTON
2025

MEG HARKINS
2024

SARAH MARGERISON
2024

NEWS EDITOR
ERIN CLARK
2024

ASST. NEWS EDITOR
MOLLY BRUTON
2025

FEATURES EDITOR
ISABEL HAGLUND
2024

ASST. FEATURES EDITOR
GERALDINE PAGLIA
2024

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR
ALANNA WUNSCH
2024

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR
SAM MARANO
2025

ASST. ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT
EDITOR
JESSICA BALOGH
2025

SPORTS EDITOR
JAKE CARDINALE
2024

SPORTS EDITOR
VICTOR DIPIERRO
2024

ASST. SPORTS EDITOR
MARISA MUSACCHIO
2025

AUDREY'S CORNER EDITOR
CAROLINE CLIFFORD
2025

AUDREY'S CORNER EDITOR
OLIVIA TEDESCO
2026

SPOTLIGHT EDITOR
BRAD HUTCHISON
2024

SPOTLIGHT EDITOR
VALENTINA MASSONI
2025

PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR
ISABELLA FABBO
2024

ASST. PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR
DANIELLA BALDINO
2025

PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER
ALENA KLADIS
2024

PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER
KAYLA KUTCH
2024

WEB/GRAPHICS MANAGER
RYAN TASHMAN
2025

AD SALES/FINANCE MANAGER
NICHOLAS MEACHEN
2024

CIRCULATION MANAGER
OLIVIA TEDESCO
2026

FACULTY ADVISOR
PROF. JOANNE KABAK

Reflecting

MADISON BEEKMAN
MANAGER OF EDITORIAL CONTENT

Writing my article for this issue was a lot harder than usual. This wasn't due to the fact that I haven't written an article since last spring or the extremely fast turnaround I had to write the piece in, though I wish I could attribute it to one of these. It was because I had to write about a tragedy that had an impact on the whole SHU community last week. And because I had to write it as a journalist, not as an emotional and anxiety-filled student who was also affected by what happened.

Throughout my time in newswriting, which includes both high school, and the past few years here at SHU, I have never had to report on an incident like this, let alone one that's so close to home. Let me tell you, it was not easy to stay objective.

As I've been telling my friends since Friday, I've never handled things like this well, regardless of whether they directly affect me or not. When tragedies like this occur, I always find myself extra reflective and appreciate of what I have, and a little more anxious than usual.

The thought I keep circling back to is: "This could've happened to anyone."

I know plenty of people who weren't home yet in the late hours of Thursday night and the early hours of Friday morning, myself and some of my closest friends included. It could've been any of us.

I am lucky enough to be surrounded by people who were continuously checking on each other throughout the night to make sure everyone made it home safe as the incident unfolded. I am also lucky enough to be surrounded by people who offered each other comfort and support as they grappled with this horrific event, both on Friday and throughout the weekend. I cannot thank them enough for this and I can only hope that everyone has people like this in such a tough emotional time.

The prayer service on Friday was one of the most bittersweet events I have ever attended. When Dr. P started off by ensuring students and faculty that no fatalities had occurred, you could feel a wave of relief wash over the crowd. However, as the service continued and myself and others began to more fully process what had happened, it became harder and harder to find a dry eye in the chapel. The fact that students were standing out in the rain because they couldn't fit, or were in locations where they couldn't hear but stayed anyway shows the strength and support that exists within our community. Even after the service had ended, many people stuck around to comfort each other in any way possible – most being in the form of hugs and/or shoulders to cry on.

The sense of community that was shown at the service continued throughout the weekend, as organizations across campus posted on social media in support of the victims, and students began to share the GoFundMe pages that were being created by the families of the injured students.

I have never been so proud to call myself a SHU student.

Though this tragedy has affected all of us in one way or another, we are a community and we are going to get through this together, which we have already proved.

Moments like these always remind me to appreciate and be grateful for what I have, so I encourage you all to do the same.

If you need additional mental health resources at this time, please reach out to someone, whether it be a friend, family member, faculty member, or a professional. Sacred Heart, as always, is offering counseling services to those who may need it and those resources are listed below.

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.

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.

For counseling services and support reach out to the university resources:

Counseling Center
Open 9-5 on Weekdays
Make an Appointment:
203-371-7955

s.w.e.e.t. Peers
Follow the s.w.e.e.t. Peers on
Instagram @shu_sweetpeered
and stay updated on the
programs run by their team

Public Safety
Routine Calls: 203-371-7995
Emergency Calls: 203-371-7911
or 203-374-9352