

SHU Health Science Class Partners with the CT Mirror

BY THEO WEISMANN
Staff Writer

In 2022, Dr. Tricia Lewis, an Assistant Professor of Health Sciences at SHU, took the initiative of improving health advocacy head-on by establishing a partnership between her community health class and the CT Mirror. This partnership allows students to publish op-eds in areas of health science they are passionate about.

While studying at Emory University in Atlanta, Ga., Lewis worked with the Scholars Strategy Network, one dedicated to connecting researchers with lawmakers in pursuit of turning scientific research into policies.

“They really encourage their members to write op-eds, give public testimony or contact policymakers as experts in a topic,” said Lewis.

When Lewis returned to Connecticut in 2021, she published her op-ed about housing and security in the CT Mirror, which connected her with Paul Stern, an editor at the news organization.

After Lewis was hired at SHU in 2022, her department chair said they wanted to incorporate more of an advocacy element in the class.

Lewis immediately reached out to Stern, asking if there was a way to connect public health advocacy directly into her class. Through a grant-funded program called Student Voices, this official partnership was able to begin.

“A lot of times, the people who are writing op-eds are older adults who have the time and are retired,” said Lewis. “We’re doing these kinds

of projects to try to see more young people’s voices, like [Gen Zers]. People who are in college or high school now, maybe even younger, we are trying to get them to voice their opinions as well.”

When the Connecticut General Assembly is in session, Lewis has her students write about bills currently being proposed, which get students directly involved with local advocacy.

“That’s why you’ll see some of them writing, like, in favor of or against a certain bill; we also try to tie it to local policy as well,” Lewis said.

Immediately, Lewis noticed the positive impacts the partnership had on her students.

“For some students, they’re like, oh, this is just another class assignment at first, but then they get super interested when they realize they can publish their work and get their voices out there,” she said.

Having the opportunity to write and publish an official op-ed not only teaches students the qualities of professional writing, but also opens doors down the road for future employers to view their work firsthand.

“I’ve had students tell me that they’ve gotten internship requests after publishing. A local nonprofit read their op-ed and said, ‘hey, we’re interested in doing an internship with you,’” said Lewis.

Students are able to choose a topic of their own that relates to public health. This allows them to write about subjects they are personally

connected to and passionate about.

“Being able to write and have that published in the Connecticut Mirror, a major news outlet, is very impactful, especially because now I can tell future employers and businesses that my work was published and had an impact on Connecticut state government or that I voiced an opinion on something that truly matters to me,” said sophomore Deven Taggart, a health sciences student who wrote an op-ed about protecting women’s rights in Connecticut.

In the future, Lewis hopes this partnership could expand into other types of classes that are not health-oriented.

“To have more classes take this on, especially classes that are focused on advocacy or journalism, we can get a variety of opinions,” Lewis said.



Instagram, @ctmirror

Sacred Heart has a new partnership between SHU Health Science students and the CT Mirror, to allow students to talk about important public issues with a chance to be published.

Health

Our Health Coverage

Stories about health care access and affordability in Connecticut, as well as abortion, COVID-19, health equity and disparities, health systems and social determinants of health.



What CT residents should know about the measles

CT health officials said getting vaccinated is the best way to stay protected against the measles amid an outbreak. Here's what to know.

by Katy Golvale March 10, 2025 @ 7:30 am

CT Mirror

'Health' section on the CT Mirror website and their latest publication.

This Week in the White House

BY MADISON BEEKMAN
Editor in Chief

In the beginning of February, President Donald Trump announced a series of tariffs on imports from Canada, Mexico and China. He claimed that these tariffs would “protect Americans,” urging all three countries to do more to stop illegal fentanyl from being manufactured and exported, and for Canada and Mexico to reduce illegal immigration to the U.S., according to the Associated Press.

Both Canada and Mexico then proposed retaliatory tariffs on select U.S. goods, and

the Chinese government said they would “take necessary countermeasures” to these actions, AP News reported.

Since then, the U.S. tariffs have been postponed twice, most recently on Thursday, March 6. According to AP News, this decision delayed 25% tariffs for another month on many imports from Canada and Mexico, likely due to fears of a trade war.

Canada plans to keep their initial retaliatory tariffs in place unless Trump rescinds all of his proposed tariffs.

“Whether you like him or not, President Trump has built a reputation for himself in

both business and politics as a great negotiator and he has shown his willingness to play tough with other countries,” said sophomore Matthew Meaney.

“While no one really wants to get into a trade war, I think Trump has the advantage over [Canadian Prime Minister Justin] Trudeau in particular based on their respective approval ratings and the fact that Canada’s general election is coming much quicker than the U.S. midterms,” Meaney continued. “Trump has much more room to make adjustments if need be than Trudeau does.”

Lauren Kehrle contributed to this article.

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News

SHU Professor and Student Collaborate on Children's Book

BY JAYDEN ROSARIO
Staff Writer

SHU law professor Richard Pate has published a children's book titled "Bored and Loving It," which is illustrated by current SHU senior art student Julia Fernandez.



Mark F. Conrad, Sacred Heart University
Richard Pate, professor who wrote the children's book, "Bored and Loving It."

The ideas and characters within the book come from a story Pate used to share with his nieces and nephews and was then put into the context of cellphone usage among young people. Pate had no prior experience writing books, but it was something he wanted to do, starting off with a children's book.

"I decided to take the characters that I created casually and put them in the context of cellphone use," said Pate. "I wanted to put out there how addictive it can be and teach kids to be cautious of cellphones. They are good for some things but can also create bad results."

Pate decided to write a children's book because it would be a great way to caution that demographic

and ensure they don't fall into the same traps that previous generations have fallen victim to.

The book follows three characters who lose their cellphones and are overtaken by extreme boredom. After unlocking their own creativity, the three realize how much fun they can have in a world without their phones while using their own imaginations.

"If you have a cellphone full of ideas that are already created for you, that entertain you, that take your attention, you will never devote your time to any ideas of your own," said Pate.

Fernandez, who will be graduating in May as a double major in art & design with a concentration in graphic design and psychology, was tasked with illustrating Pate's book. When given the opportunity, she was immediately on board.

"Art has always been extremely important to me and knowing that my art is being used in an educational context to help foster creative thinking in children makes it that much more meaningful to me," said Fernandez. "Illustrating a children's book has always been a bucket list item for me, so if someone told me I would have illustrated a book before graduating from SHU, I absolutely never would have believed them."

Following graduation, Fernandez will be attending graduate school where she will study mental health counseling with an art therapy specialization. Fernandez hopes to continue to use her art in a positive way to help others and continue to do freelance art, graphic designing, and children's

book illustrations.

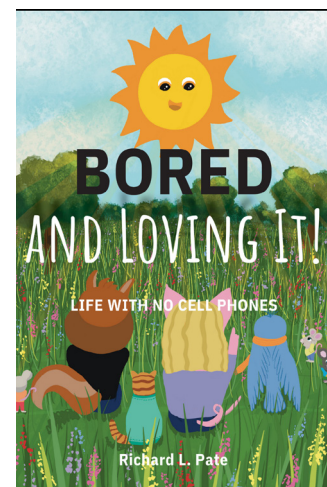
This project was a first for Fernandez, but after this experience, she is currently working on illustrating a series of children's books for another SHU professor, which should be completed sometime in the summer.

Prof. Nathan Lewis, chair of SHU's Art & Design department, was credited with connecting Pate with Fernandez for this project.

"The writing came first, and Julia created designs and illustrations that suited Richard's text," said Lewis. "Julia is talented, works hard, and is infinitely curious and positive. I knew she would be up to the task, and I learned from her that illustrating a children's book was an ambition she has always had."

The book can now be found for purchase on Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and the Kendall Hunt Publishing Company.

"Even if you are a college student, you can start working in the field, taking advantage of opportunities that present themselves or creating your own," said Lewis.



Contributed by Richard Pate, Law Professor
Cover art for book created by Senior Art & Design student, Julia Fernandez.

Senior Week 2025: The Final Show

BY DYLAN MILANO
Staff Writer

Are you excited for Senior Week 2025 from May 6-9? If so, then you're in luck, as several big events are scheduled that will give SHU's graduating class a chance to create lasting memories with their friends, professors and families.

Senior Week 2025 will kick off on Tuesday, May 6 with a visit to Stonebridge Restaurant, where students will get to dine and socialize. On Wednesday, May 7, they will travel to Mohegan Sun for a night of fun, games and amusement.

These two events have long been Senior Week traditions and continue to bring students together to celebrate the closure of their college careers.

"I hope that a majority of the seniors will



Tina Marie, Sacred Heart University
Students and Faculty dancing at the 2024 Commencement Ball.

participate. This is a great opportunity to make some final college memories with your friends that have become family," said Ray Mencio, Senior Class Board Advisor.

The highlight of the week will be the Commencement Ball on Thursday, May 8 at the Martire Family Arena, where seniors and faculty members can enjoy a classy evening before the big event. The final event, the Family Celebration, will also be held at the Martire Family Arena on Friday, May 9, where students and their families will gather to celebrate their achievements.

"The planning starts for senior week a full year before the week takes place. There are a lot of great traditions that we carry over from year to year, but the senior class board will think about themes and other ways to enhance the week," said Mencio.

Seniors are given the opportunity to buy specific packages that include tickets to the events, transportation and other perks so that students have everything they need to be able to enjoy the week to the fullest.

Senior Week packages can be purchased by students through March 21.

Payment for the packages will be collected at the Student Life Office on March 26 and 27, where students will need to present their SHU Card and ID. Tickets to single events will be on sale starting April 3.

Students can visit the SHU event website to access the registration portal and purchase packages or individual tickets.

"This year will be the same as last year because both the Commencement Ball and Family



Tina Marie, Sacred Heart University
The Senior Commencement Ball and Family Celebration will be held on Thursday, May 8 at the Martire Family Arena.

Celebration will be in Martire Family Arena, but for a series of years, we have had an almost identical schedule with starting Senior Week at Stonebridge Restaurant and heading to Mohegan Sun the next night," said Mencio.

The senior class attempts to add new twists and enhancements to Senior Week so that it is kept fresh and unforgettable for each graduating class.

The week of events allows students to bring their classmates together one more time before everyone goes their own way so that they can look back on their years at SHU while making new memories.

"During this year's Senior Week, I am mostly looking forward to being able to get one last hoorah with my best friends who I now consider family after all these years," said senior Jason Bonante.

**UPCOMING
EVENTS ON
CAMPUS**

**WEDNESDAY 3/12:
KAPPA DELTA SHAMROCK
THE RUNWAY
EDGERTON THEATRE
AT 7 P.M.**

**FRIDAY 3/14:
SHU SLAM
EDGERTON THEATRE
AT 8 P.M.**

**SATURDAY 2/15:
MEN'S LACROSSE
VS. SIENA
CAMPUS FIELD
AT 12 P.M.**

Features

SHUdents Share Dining Hall Favorites

BY ALEXA BORNER
Staff Writer

SHU offers a variety of dining halls across main campus including Linda's, Thea's Abbey, 63's and JP's Diner, along with other grab-and-go options. Open from early morning until late evening, these dinings halls are intended to accommodate students' busy schedules and are located all around campus.

SHU dining services provide made-to-order meals that allow students to customize their dishes to their preference. The dining halls focus on being convenient for students while providing healthy and balanced meals.

Sophomore Abigail Demarco said the dining halls offer a variety of options, but there is room for improvement.

"I would give the variety of options at the dining halls like an eight out of 10," said Demarco. "There is a decent amount of options, but there can always be more."

Sophomore Juliana Strippoli said that eating at the dining halls has introduced her to new foods.

"I love to get the caprese sandwich at Linda's but before coming to college I didn't like cheese," said Strippoli.

All of the dining halls on campus allow students to use their SHU card as payment. By using dining dollars or meal swipes, students can get different food options across campus. Students also have the option to pay with a credit or debit card.

Sophomore Sarina Paradiso enjoys the atmosphere in Thea's. Paradiso said Thea's serves as a great study spot with nice views of campus.

"It's a little more quiet to do homework and I like how you can look out onto upper quad," said Paradiso.

Paradiso also said that Linda's offers great deli options, and recently became one of her go-to spots.

"I recently tried a chicken bacon ranch wrap from Linda's and it's become my new favorite," said Paradiso.

Danielle Bahr, the Marketing Director for SHU Dining, said that they are constantly exploring new ways to innovate the dining experience.

"A new concept we are in the works of rolling out is Social Club," said Bahr. "It will be a family-style dinner with a theme, giving students the opportunity to dine and make friends with similar interests."

Bahr said that since the fall 2024 semester, there have been multiple additions to

dining on campus. 63's has been completely renovated and a new concession stand was added at the William H. Pitt Athletic and Convocation Center.

Bahr said that they gather student opinions by conducting surveys and providing a feedback section on their website. In addition, QR codes are placed around campus along with a phone number for anonymous contact with a manager.

The SHU dining staff takes various steps to accommodate students with dietary restrictions. Students can feel comfortable dining on campus without having to worry about coming in contact with certain food allergies.

"At 63's, we have a 'Delicious Without' station dedicated to menu options free from the nine major allergens and gluten," said Bahr.

To prevent cross-contamination, Bahr also said that Thea's and Linda's offer kiosk stations that allow students to order ahead.

"We are a nut-conscious campus, meaning we do not cook with or have open nut and tree nut ingredients," said Bahr. "All locations provide gluten-free and dairy-free alternatives."

Bahr said that all menus change throughout the semester and feature limited time offers monthly.

"We also have pop-up events, such as tastings, promotions and Premium Dinners. I have tried other university's campus food, and SHU is fantastic in comparison," said Bahr. "On Niche, SHU's campus food is rated an A- and No. 4 in the state of Connecticut."

To stay up to date with information about new meals, specials, and dining hall information, students can follow @shudining on Instagram.



Will Morgan, Staff Writer and Staff Photographer

Linda's, located on Upper Quad, is a popular dining hall that offers made to order food.

Off-Campus Food Finds

BY JESSICA KELLY
Staff Writer

From quick grab-and-go options to its iconic '50s style diner, SHU offers a wide variety of dining choices for its students. While these on-campus options keep students happy and well-fed, sometimes students enjoy venturing off campus and exploring the taste of local flavor.

"My favorite off-campus restaurant is Romanacci," said junior Emily Schablik. "I love Italian food."

Located on Madison Avenue in Trumbull, a quick five-minute drive from campus, Romanacci is an Italian restaurant offering all types of "Italian eats and treats." From pizza and pasta to paninis and pastries, Romanacci is a fan-favorite among SHU students, especially those looking to use their student discount.

"My favorite is their special pizza, called the SHU pizza, which includes vodka sauce and mozzarella with chicken cutlet," said junior Katie Ventisette.

"My favorite dish from there is penne vodka, along with the pizza," said Schablik.

Another favorite off-campus food find is J Bagels & Cafe, better known as JBC. JBC is a local bagel shop conveniently located on Madison Avenue, in the same plaza as Romanacci, which is beloved by students for its breakfast options and affordable prices.



Tracy Deer-Mirek, Sacred Heart University

J Bagels & Cafe, located at 4244 Madison Ave, Trumbull, is a popular breakfast spot for SHU students.

For students looking for a great Connecticut slice, but not looking to drive all the way to New Haven, Colony Grill is a deliciously affordable and conveniently

located spot for students. Known for its one-of-a-kind thin crust pizza and its famous "hot oil" topping, Colony Grill is a fan-favorite for SHU students.

"My favorite type of pizza is thin crust, so I love coming here and getting half plain half pepperoni," said Cahill. "It's the perfect mix."

Along with Colony Grill, other restaurants in Fairfield like Malibu Taco and The Sinclair, have also become favorites of students looking for a fancier meal.

"Malibu Taco is the perfect restaurant for a Friday or Saturday night," said Ventisette. "It is so fun to get dressed up and go out with friends."

Students also visit The Sinclair for time with family and friends, enjoying its spread of diverse American cuisine.

"The Sinclair is another one of my favorite restaurants. I came here with my family and the food was perfect," said Cahill. "It is so beautiful inside, and they have nice outdoor seating for when it gets warm out."

Finally, located closer to campus and in the same plaza as JBC and Romanacci, is The Sitting Duck Tavern that offers a variety of American style food and beer using locally and regionally grown produce. Some student-favorite menu items include their truffle fries, mac and cheese, burgers and wings.

"I love coming to The Sitting Duck Tavern. They always have sports games on so it is super fun to come and watch," said Schablik. "They have some of the best food I've ever tried."

For students looking to grab a bite off-campus, there are countless options that have been well-loved by the SHU community. For any questions or information, students can visit the Campus Concierge.



Tracy Deer-Mirek, Sacred Heart University

Romanacci, located at 4244 Madison Ave, Trumbull, is an Italian family restaurant that offers pizza, pasta dishes, paninis and more.

CampusLife

Celebrating Saint Patrick's Day in Connecticut

BY EMMA RICOTTA

Assistant Campus Life Editor

Saint Patrick's Day is a day to celebrate Irish culture and absolutely everything green. If you're looking into how to celebrate the holiday to the fullest, read this guide on how to celebrate near campus!

Attend a Parade or Run!

On March 17 at noon, be sure to check out the parade that travels down Broad St. to Fairfield Ave. to Main St. and ends by the Barnum Museum. Wear green!



Other Parades

March 14: The Greater Bridgeport St. Patrick's Day Celebration and parade will be held on Friday,

March 14 at noon. The parade will start at the Burroughs Community Center and end on Courtland Avenue.

March 15: Hartford is hosting the 53rd Annual Greater Hartford St. Patrick's Day Parade. The event, hosted by the Central Connecticut Celtic Cultural Committee, kicks off at the Capitol building at 11 a.m.

March 15: Milford is hosting their large St. Patrick's Day parade at Wasson Field on 71 West Main St. The festivities will run from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

March 16: New Haven will present music and marchers with various cultures in the city's annual Greater New Haven St. Patrick's Day Parade. The parade begins on Chapel Street at 1:30 p.m.

Runs

March 15: The O'Niantic 5K in Hartford will be Saint Patrick's Day themed and will include a running event for kids!

March 16: All runners will receive a custom shirt after their race at the O'Hartford 5k & 10k. Runners 21+ will also get free beer from the New England Brewing Company.

March 22: Mystic will host their Saint Patrick's Day themed Mystic Irish 5k run with everyone wearing green to show their holiday spirit.

On Campus Festivities!

On campus, specifically at 63's, keep an eye out for green bagels in honor of the holiday! If you're looking to get your green bagels off campus, be sure to stop by J Bagels & Cafe in Trumbull. What a great way to start your green day!

Caitlin's Shamrock The Runway is Kappa Delta's annual spring philanthropy event, held in honor of Caitlin Nelson. The event will be held Wednesday, March 12th at 7pm in the Edgerton theatre. Caitlin's shamrock shake will also be sold at JP's Diner.

63's knows how to celebrate Saint Patrick's Day! Be sure to stop by for dinner to get your corned beef and cabbage. Keep an eye out for their Irish soda bread too!

McDonald's Shamrock Shake

This one is a fan favorite for students. If you're craving a sweet treat after your corned beef, head to McDonald's to have their famous limited edition Shamrock Shake! Enjoy a minty green milkshake.

Other Limited Time Food Items

Starbucks: Iced Lavender Cream Oat Milk Matcha

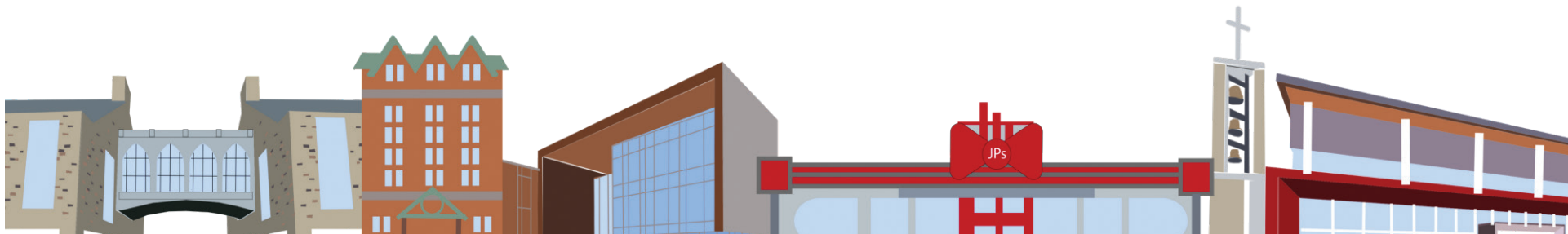
Dairy Queen: Mint Oreo Blizzard

Dunkin Donuts: Pistachio Latte



The Dress Code

It wouldn't be March 17 without the color green, am I right? Grab your greenest attire, whether it's a t-shirt, hat, socks, or all three!



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

CampusLife

NATURE'S HIGHWAY: FLYWAY OF LIFE



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FILM
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FLYWAY OF LIFE PREMIERE

Celebrate Earth Day with Explorers Club member, and Canon USA endorsed photographer and filmmaker Tomas Koeck and join us for the Film Premiere of Flyway of Life. The night will include a premiere of the film - which focuses on bird migration along the Atlantic Flyway, a red carpet, Q and A's with those involved with the production, a panel with locally based scientists, and much more.

APRIL 22ND 2025 | 7PM



TOMAS KOECK and the SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION, MEDIA & THE ARTS at SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY present
A film by TOMAS KOECK and executive producers JAMES CASTONGUAY and TC SCHULTZ
In association with CANON USA, NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY and COTOPAXI
and sponsored by CHURCHILL WILD, TRAVEL MANITOBA and FRIENDS OF SAX-ZIM BOG

Arts & Entertainment

The Stage is Set for TheatreFest Round Three

BY REBECCA WEINBERGER
Staff Writer

It's finally here; TheatreFest Round Three! The final step for student-written plays, which includes a set, costumes, props, sound and lighting in the Little Theatre from March 13-15 at 8 p.m. and March 16 at 3 p.m.

TheatreFest is an event hosted by the Theatre Arts Program (TAP) featuring a series of one-act plays and musicals created, directed, and performed by students in the intimate setting of the Little Theatre or Black Box Theatre.

The productions evolve from script readings to minimalistic staged performances, eventually progressing into fully developed shows. As the event unfolds, the number of performances decreases from 10 to two. This year's lineup includes "Calliope" by Adam Petrosino and "I'll Be Alright" by Lucas Orwicz.

"In all of its stages, TheatreFest is a fantastic opportunity to experience the process of new play development through student collaboration and effort, as well as a chance to share your voice in any role in the play development process," said sophomore Adam Petrosino, an English and Theater Arts major who plans to pursue a Master of Fine Arts in playwriting.

In the first two creative rounds of TheatreFest, each production is led by a writer, director, stage manager and a team of actors. As TheatreFest moves into its third round, the shows expand with a team of designers handling lighting, sound, projections, costumes, props, hair and makeup. Additionally, a crew is brought on to assist in bringing the designers' creations to life.

Petrosino's "Calliope" is a one-act play about a family's struggle to cope with tragedy, told through a cryptic encounter with a circus and its fortune teller. Petrosino was inspired to write this play at first from his fascination with tarot cards.

"The idea and illusions of fate in fortune telling then led to my idea of a circus, where

a family's dysfunction is shown through the acts they perform—the mime is a father unable to speak the truth, the knife thrower, a mother who wields truth blindly like a weapon, and the girl who encounters this circus, their daughter, refuses to hear truth's sound," Petrosino said.

Petrosino also emphasized the work that was put into making his vision a reality.

"Calliope" is a play of both wild magic and deep reality as the worlds of a troubled family and a string of circus acts blend together in an entirely unique performative piece. A chance to see something as special and strange as this show is seldom, but more than anything, I would encourage people to see the show because of the immense creative effort and dedication that our team of actors, designers, crew and creative team have put towards making the magic of this show real," said Petrosino.

Freshman TAP member Trish Reetz said she is very excited to see the final round of TheatreFest.

"I am excited to see the hard work of the crew and performers pay off in a great show, along with someone's own writing of a show come to life," Reetz said.

"Seeing TheatreFest is a great way to support student voices in the arts, as well as see stories not often told—from new, young perspectives and actors originating entirely new characters. It is rare for a university to showcase a fully student devised theatrical production, so this is quite a unique theatre experience," said Petrosino.



Instagram, @shutheatrearts

Sacred Heart's TheatreFest logo used in 2024.

Dance Program Presents SHU SLAM This Friday

BY ALESSIA CATINO AND JESSICA BALOGH
Staff Writer and Arts & Entertainment Editor

The dance program is hosting SHU SLAM, an annual performance on March 14 at 8 p.m. in the Edgerton Center for the Performing Arts.

The performance is hosted by the program's professional hip-hop group, Inception Dance Crew. Preparation for this performance has involved weekly rehearsals since the start of the semester. Despite the limited preparation time, they were able to choreograph unique pieces.

"The preparation for SHU SLAM has been a bit stressful due to the limited time we had to put together our routines. However, the outcome is always super rewarding and turns out better than anyone imagined," said senior Avery Alfano.

SHU SLAM, while known for being a celebration of hip-hop, showcases several styles of dance.

"I love SHU SLAM because it brings together so many different dance styles. Some are hip-hop, tap and more. This creates a fun and energetic atmosphere where students can celebrate their passion for performing," said senior Brayden Wihbey.

It's set up differently than the program's typical shows.

"My favorite part about being involved in SHU SLAM is the vibe of the show. This show is really upbeat. The dancers get to watch in the audience and cheer on their friends," said Alfano.

Performers highlighted several dances that stand out to them.

"My favorite dance of the night is my tap group piece with Emma Rosa, 'Feelin' Myself,' because it's such a blast to perform with my friends. I'm also excited to debut my solo in front of a crowd, especially since I'm preparing to compete with this in October in Prague for Team USA at the IDO World Tap Dance Championship,"

said Wihbey.

Senior Victoria Aufiero mentioned a dance choreographed by Lexi Sahagian, whom Inception Dance Crew members are required to take a two hour credited dance class with.

"The piece is a jazz-funk fusion with hip-hop, which is challenging but a lot of fun," said Aufiero.

"My favorite dance of the night is Emma Rosa's Inception heels piece. I love the message behind this piece and being able to perform her vision is amazing. SHU SLAM is one of the best shows of the year. The audience's energy is always so amazing, and the dances are so fun to watch," said Alfano.

During the performance, there are moments when the audience can participate, such as an open mic or a freestyle session. These opportunities allow the audience to feel actively involved in the performance.

"People should attend SHU SLAM because it's a celebration of dance, music and entertainment—there's something for everyone, and it's always an unforgettable night," said Wihbey.

The performance is free for SHU students with their student ID, the faculty and staff price is \$10, and general admission is \$25.



Instagram, @sacredheartuniversitydance

Promotional flyer for the 2025 SHU SLAM event hosted by SHU's Dance Program.

Short Filmmakers Club Showcases Reel Talent

BY MADELEINE MEDEIROS
Staff Writer

Two aliens disguised as humans are banished from their home world and sent to live on Earth as punishment. Sound familiar? The Short Filmmakers Club's current project may feel reminiscent of Syfy's "Resident Alien." For fans of this series, this plotline may bring to mind Alan Tudyk's character, the alien whose misadventures teach him the socially acceptable customs of human behavior.

Seniors and founding members Alexey Greim and Rob Jusko are working alongside their fellow club members on a short comedy called "Err to Be Human," in which two aliens learn what it means to be human and have freewill.

Founded during the 2024 spring semester, the student-run club works collaboratively with members to produce a short film each semester.

"It's a grueling job, to be honest, but it's a lot of fun," said Greim, current club president.

Having personally invested \$5,000 in gear for the club, Greim said that this is truly a student-led club.

"I see a whole group of students who are committed, and they're taking business level positions as if they are getting paid to do it. I am extremely proud of them for doing that," Greim said.

The filmmaking process starts in the writer's room. Club members pitch their ideas and discuss to come up with a single story that kicks off storyboarding and scriptwriting sessions. After several meetings of planning, they move on to prep days and filming. Members operate camera and audio equipment, lighting, and direct all themselves, teaching new members the ropes along the way. The final product comes together after editing.

"A short film could really be anything under an hour and a half. The ones we make are typically between 10 to 20 minutes long," said Jusko, former club president.

Last semester, the club hosted the Winter SHU Film Festival, where they opened the doors of the Martire Theatre for SHU community members and those in the surrounding Connecticut area.

"We put together a conglomeration of short films and skits. It's totally open to anyone in our region of Connecticut," Greim said. The next SHU Film Festival is expected to be May 3.

Junior James Shandrowski, current secretary of the club, got involved last year after hearing about it through a friend.

"I thought it was a good way to explore what I'm studying outside of the academic window," Shandrowski said.

Members' roles are dynamic throughout the process.

"The best thing about this club is that it switches around. We have people who are more attuned to filming and directing, but everyone else gets to switch around and try their hand at different things," said Shandrowski, having both filmed and written for past projects.

"If you're part of the crew, we want everyone to get a fully hands on experience with every aspect," said Jusko. "You get a little bit of everything."

For soon-to-be-graduate Jusko, he hopes the club he founded, "continues to grow professionally, creating bigger and better films." As a graduating senior he wants "to have films represent the creativity of Sacred Heart students, and to have a consistent outlet for those who aren't a film major."

The club's work is published on both their Instagram, @shu_shortfilmmakersclub, and on their YouTube channel, @SHUfilmmakersclub.

Sports



Men's Hockey Advances to AHA Semifinals

Jayden Hunter, Staff Writer and Photographer.

Senior defenseman Hunter Sansbury during pre-game warmups.

BY JAYDEN HUNTER
Staff Writer

Concluding their regular season at 19-10-5 overall and 15-7-3 in conference play, the men's hockey team gained the No. 2 seed of the Atlantic Hockey Association (AHA) playoffs. This earned the Pioneers a bye into the quarter-final and guaranteed home ice advantage until the championship game, if they advance.

"Our goal at the beginning of the year was to finish as high as we can possibly be seeded in the AHA standings," said head coach C.J. Marottolo. "That gives us the best opportunity to have success in the playoffs."

The quarter finals began on March 7, with the United States Air Force Academy being the Pioneers' first opponent in their playoff run. Coming into the matchup, the Pioneers split their regular season games against Air Force with one win and one loss.

In game one of a best of three series, the Pioneers came out with the win, courtesy of two goals from grad student Tyler Ghirardosi, a goal and assist from graduate student John Jaworski, and key blocks and defense from senior Hunter Sansbury.

"When the postseason comes, the games get tighter, teams are more dialed into their details. Everyone fine tunes their games; less mistakes are made. You also notice a higher commitment from their players. More teams lay out for block shots, take a hit, make a hit

and the teams become better during the postseason," said Sansbury.

Game two on the following day was a tough battle between the two teams and led to a double overtime loss to the Air Force. Freshman goalie Aljeet Gundurah recorded 55 saves, which is third in program history. The loss forced a game three between the two teams.

"The key to this series is going to be us doing what we do well, we will continue to play towards our identity, we are great at what we do on the ice, and we will continue that during this series," said Marottolo.

In game three, the attitude and momentum shifted after both teams knew that each program's respective season would come to an end after the series closing game.

After a scoreless first period, Jaworski opened the scoring with a goal in the second period. Running off the lead, the Pioneers added three more goals to cap off a 4-1 win and quarter-final victory over Air Force.

The series win advances the Pioneers into the semifinals against No. 3 Bentley University, who the Pioneers have history with. The Pioneers faced Bentley three times during regular season, losing two games and winning one.

The Pioneers will look to get back on the ice against Bentley on March 14 for the AHA semifinals at the Martire Family Arena.

Sacred Heart Athletics contributed to this article.

Play Ball! Spring Training Kicks Off New MLB Season

BY BRENT MCCREESH
Staff Writer

The new Major League Baseball (MLB) season is set to start March 27, but Spring Training began over a month earlier on Feb. 20.

Spring training began in 1886 when there were only 16 teams in the league and had some teams playing inside gymnasiums due to weather outside, according to MLB.com. This is a time for teams and players to get some practice in before the regular season games.



Instagram, @mets

Juan Soto finishing the swing of his first career home run in his first ever bat for the New York Mets.

"It is important to get people back into shape and build up for the season," said senior Sean Moro. "I'd also say it's more important for pitchers to build up endurance and get their arms ready for the year."

Just like training camp in the National Football League (NFL) or summer league in the National Basketball Association (NBA), Spring Training is MLB's way of having players prepare for the upcoming season.

Spring Training is not just about practice and getting into shape. MLB also uses this time to test out new rules in case they want to implement them in the regular season.

In 2019, MLB started using a pitch clock

in Spring Training games, according to ESPN. This would make pitchers take less time between pitches thrown to speed up the game and keep viewership up. Games would average around three hours before the pitch clock, which had people losing interest. The pitch clock was implemented in the regular season in 2023 and games lasted, on average, two hours and 36 minutes.

"I think it is important to try out new changes as baseball changes, like the robot umpires and the pitch clock, but I really think it has no benefit for the players," said senior Ryan Richter. "Baseball is a long season, it's basically all year round if you include Spring Training, which is a lot."

While practice is important, testing out different rules and regulations is equally important so MLB knows what rules to put in place to keep fans engaged.

While Richter likes the testing of the pitch clock in MLB, not everyone does.

"Baseball is meant to be a slow game," said senior Andrew Mongiello. "I completely disagree with the implementation of the pitch clock after testing it out during Spring Training. I believe that Spring Training should be used for coaches to see who they want to trade away, start or even cut. And for players, it's important to slowly come back in and see where they should improve."

In Spring Training, instead of the American League and the National League, there are the Cactus League and the Grapefruit League. The teams in the Cactus League each have a Spring Training stadium in Florida, while those in the Grapefruit League have their stadiums in Arizona. This allows for less money to be spent during Spring Training on players who may not make the major league roster in the spring.

With the MLB season right around the corner, the MLB will finalize rosters and rules to deliver the most exciting product for the fans this coming year.

Congratulations to the women's ice hockey team on their New England Women's Hockey Alliance Championship! For the first time in program history, the team is headed to the NCAA tournament to face No. 3 seed Minnesota Duluth on Thursday at 7 p.m. in Ithaca, N.Y. The game will stream on ESPN+.



Jack Cavicchi, Web Manager and Assistant Photo Editor

Senior Savannah Popick scoring a beautiful goal in SHU's overtime win against Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

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Tracking Winter Wolves in the Heart of Yellowstone

BY **COLLIN MOURA**
Campus Life Editor

Tracking wolves is not an easy endeavor. It requires an understanding of the animals' habits, collaboration with local experts and most importantly, patience. This January, I set out to photograph winter wolves while on assignment documenting bison conservation work in Yellowstone National Park.

Wolves and bison have a fascinating relationship, both are keystone species that have suffered historic extermination across the country. Bison influence the landscape through their grazing patterns while wolves exert top-down pressure that balances prey populations.



Collin Moura, Campus Life Editor

A much-needed rest break during a snowy morning trek, these moments were always a highlight.

through the snow. Coyotes were a frequent sight on these mornings, sometimes hunting for prey in the snow, other times being chased off by bison that had enough of their presence.

After three back-to-back mornings searching to no avail, we employed a different strategy. It was time to team up with the park rangers and the region's local community of wolf watchers. Our few days in the park was nothing compared to some of these spotters, many of whom spend every day observing the wildlife of Lamar.

As we began to learn about the different pack dynamics and hunting grounds, our plan shifted. We got a tip on a day-old bison carcass way out in the valley and began our trek to a lookout point in the area. Using a fallen tree as a marker, we set up a small camp of tripods and began our stakeout.

I'll never forget my first time hearing a pack of wild wolves howl. Long before Carter or I saw the pack, we heard them. Establishing their location at the edge of the tree line, the pack howled in a haunting yet beautiful chorus of vocalizations.

For the next hour, we stayed quiet and low, careful not to disturb the pack's natural behavior. From a few hundred yards out, we observed the Mollie's Pack feeding and playing, an incredible encounter from this expedition.



Contributed by Carter Johnson-Chen

Two of the Mollie's moving in on a bison carcass to feed.



Collin Moura, Campus Life Editor

Carter using his headlamp and poles to discern the terrain in front of us.

Getting into the field before first light is crucial when trying to find predators. Most hunting occurs at dawn and dusk, which meant we were beginning our days in the darkness of Lamar Valley. This northeast section of the park is where wolves were first reintroduced in 1995. Today, it is widely known as one of the world's top areas for spotting wolves in the wild.

My friend and fellow cameraman Carter Johnson-Chen carried the brunt of the driving during our 4 a.m. journeys into Yellowstone. Once we were into the valley, it was time to gear up. Microspikes, trekking poles and headlamps were our best friends on these frigid mornings. Temperatures were consistently below 10 degrees and in many spots, we were moving through waist-deep snow.

Our sunrise views were breathtaking. Watching the valley come to life as light entered the scene was a surreal moment. Hundreds of bison roamed the prairie below us, gathering together as they trudged



Collin Moura, Campus Life Editor

A female wolf in the Mollie's Pack stops above a frozen river in Lamar Valley.

The Mollie's Pack is Yellowstone's longest-reigning wolf pack, named after Mollie Beattie, the first female director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Highly intelligent animals, wolves pass down hunting strategies from one generation to the next. They are complex social beings that form close familial bonds. Many experts believe they can experience a wide range of emotions, including compassion, love, anxiety and grief.

Yellowstone's wolves will be featured in my upcoming documentary *Frozen Prairie*. More on that soon!

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