

What's New at SHU (in Dingle)?

BY JAYDEN ROSARIO
Staff Writer

Have you considered studying abroad at the SHU in Dingle campus? Well, new renovations to this international site may make your decision a whole lot easier.

On March 28, Sacred Heart opened a brand-new extension to the Dingle campus after renovations to the old Christian Brothers school in Dingle, which was purchased by SHU at the end of 2017. The new building, named Ollscoil An Chróí Naofa, will provide SHU with its own private space to conduct courses.

“The building will have capacity for 180 students and will include teaching facilities such as a hospital skills lab, simulation room for students of health occupations, and multiple lecturing and seminar rooms fitted with state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment,” according to the SHU in Dingle website. “The site will also have substantial social, circulatory and recreational spaces, both internally and externally.”

SHU in Dingle offers a variety of courses, with the option of studying within four different terms. Students can study abroad for either the entire fall or spring semester, or they can opt to study in Dingle in either the winter or summer short-term programs.

The expansion will offer new opportunities to the more than 500 students who participate in SHU’s study abroad program in Dingle every year, as well as to faculty and staff.

“Some faculty teach in one of the sessions every year, but many also rotate. Thus, over 30 SHU professors get to teach in Dingle, giving them a very rich experience with students, outside the regular SHU Fairfield classrooms,” said Dr. John Roney, co-director of the Center



Sacred Heart University

Sacred Heart University officially opened its newly renovated and expanded campus in Dingle, Ireland, on March 28, 2025.

for Irish Studies.

The renovations have been taking place since 2017 as the program continues to grow, intending to make it an innovative center where students can engage in high-level learning and research. For those who have previously been to or are currently studying in Dingle, these changes bring about a lot of excitement.

“I think it will inspire more students to take advantage of SHU in Dingle and use the brand-new facilities the campus has to offer. The state-of-the-art facilities blend the rich culture of Dingle with the state-of-the-art technology of SHU,” said senior Billy Kasheta, who previously studied at SHU in Dingle.

SHU has been conducting its programs in Dingle since 2004, and students continue to have experiences where they see an entirely new part of the world. This allows them to fully immerse themselves in an entirely new culture while still working towards earning their degrees.

“My experience in Dingle has been life-changing. Between the students I’ve met through the program and the adventures we

have had the chance to do, I could not be happier. The classes create hands-on learning moments during class time field trips to different parts of the Dingle peninsula,” said sophomore Molly McDonald, who is currently studying in Dingle.

“I believe I am becoming more independent through my time here. I have gotten to explore living on my own, from buying groceries to planning independent travel. As silly as that may sound, I believe that development is important,” McDonald said.

SHU has worked closely with the town of Dingle and created a strong relationship with locals. With more students studying in Dingle, local businesses, restaurants, and cultural sites may experience increased engagement. The renovations have also sparked interest among local residents, as the upgraded facility brings a fresh and modernized look to the town.

“The community of Dingle’s response was overwhelmingly positive since previously the old building was an ‘eye-sore’ whereas now it raises the level of class and interest in the town,” said Roney.

This Week in the White House

BY GEORGE TRIEBENBACHER
News Editor

On Wednesday, April 2, President Donald Trump placed new tariffs on imports from the majority of US trading partners.

According to AP, these include a 34% tax on Chinese imports and a 20% tax on European Union imports.

These imports were done in an effort to boost US-based manufacturing and are a result of Trump’s desire to “lead with his instincts” in his second term, per AP.

Following the worst week that financial markets have faced since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, fears exist from

economists that the retaliation from foreign markets can boost inflation and send the US into a recession.

Rallies were held on Saturday amongst democratic activists across the country.

“Because Trump’s decision to impose tariffs is meant to protect U.S. manufacturing but has led to worry about inflation, it comes with pros and cons. As a result, the tariffs’ long-term effects might not be clear for a while moving forward,” said senior Amanda Valency.

Lauren Kehrle contributed to this article.



Yuki Iwamura, AP Photo

The National Debt Clock is displayed, Monday, April 7, 2025, in New York.

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News

Give It Up for Giving Day!

BY JAKE CALANNI
Staff Writer

Sacred Heart University celebrated Giving Day, its 24-hour fundraising campaign, from noon on Wednesday, April 2 to noon on Thursday, April 3. Students, alumni, parents, faculty and staff united in a mission of giving back by making donations to university programs that can transform the future of Sacred Heart as well as its students.

Every year, SHU works towards making the community aware of Giving Day, ensuring that it is well-advertised to promote participation.

"I think the message to our students is that



Instagram, @sacredheartuniversity

#SHUGives letters shines bright in Linda's dining hall to inspire students to donate.

Pioneers give to Pioneers. That 56,000-person alumni network celebrates the students of today, and our students of today need to be celebrating the students of tomorrow. It's this great big family," said Paul Sutera, Senior Vice President for University Advancement. "We have the heart of Sacred Heart. We want our community of faculty, students, families, and alumni to come together and celebrate all the great things about Sacred Heart."

Prior to the event, the university requested students, alumni, faculty members and staff to compose Giving Day messages on social networking websites as a means of trying to motivate other individuals in their communities to donate and support programs.

SHU supports some of its various programs with money raised through donations on Giving Day. Some of these include its academic departments and student clubs and organizations.

Sacred Heart athletes also contribute to the event's success.

"I spread the word about Giving Day by not only posting on our team's social media in search of donations, but also encouraging members of my team to send the link to friends and family in hopes of support," said Brendan Murphy, AAU Division 1 club hockey team captain.

As calculations are tallied, money donated on Giving Day is spent on enhancing the student experience and furthering SHU's educational and athletic programs. Whether in scholarship programs,

building construction, or the more immediate work of cultural and extracurricular activity development, all donations forward the university's overall mission.

"This day will positively impact us by not only helping to fund for next season, but also show the support that the SHU community has for each other," said Murphy. "Giving Day is a response to the close, family-like nature of community at Sacred Heart."

Varsity and club athletic teams in the university rely significantly on donations to improve training facilities and equipment, as well as travel to competitions.

Donations to university departments are used to subsidize the activities of the faculty, research and students.

"Donations from students, faculty, and alumni on Giving Day are a demonstration of the SHU family in that each donation is a vote for future success of Sacred Heart University and its students for many years to come," said SHU's Director of Annual Giving & Donor Engagement, Julia Olsen.

"We exceeded last year's numbers. I was really proud of our alumni gifts increasing substantially from the year before; that's a huge positive for faculty and staff. They work here, they spend their time here, but it's part of their family as well with them taking the dollars they earned and giving back as well," said Sutera.

As of April 6, a total of \$620,061 between 1,954 donors has been raised through Giving Day.

SHU Provides a Forum for the "Voices of Tomorrow"

BY THEODORE WEISMANN
Staff Writer

On April 1, seats were filled at the Martire Center Loris Forum, and attendees were ready for a night of debate at "The Voices of Tomorrow II: Shaping Our Future" event.

The debate discussed Trump's recently-introduced policies regarding climate change, immigration reform, DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) policies, abortion access, and U.S. foreign policy in Israel and Gaza. Moderated by Dr. Gary Rose, Scholar in Residence at SHU, it featured sharp arguments and an interactive Q&A to keep the audience engaged.

The debaters featured a mix of student organizations—including SHU's Get Out the Vote Student Coalition, College Democrats and College Republicans—giving students a chance to dive into today's most prominent political issues and possibly see the topics from a new perspective.

"The primary goal of these debates is to bring into focus contemporary political and policy issues that have direct bearing on the lives of Sacred Heart students," said Rose. "Students who attend the debates not only gain knowledge of key policy issues, but also gain insight into the positions embraced by the two major parties."

Exposure to both views of the differing political parties allows students to develop a broad understanding of both sides, especially during school-promoted public discourse events.

"As much as I admire and appreciate our faculty panels, they often fail to create an environment that promotes meaningful student engagement," said senior Anna Macaulay, president of the SHU College Democrats Club. "I love when students

challenge us with questions and really engage in a thoughtful dialogue—even if it escalates, spirited debate is the backbone of democracy."

Once the debate kicked off, the discussion quickly heated up. From the first topic, it was clear that students came ready to defend and expand on their viewpoints.

"I think the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Federal Policy and the Middle Eastern policy debates brought the most audience engagement," Macaulay said.

U.S. foreign policy in Israel and Gaza has been one of the most prevalent issues covered in recent headlines, making it one of the central topics of the night.

"It was great to see Republican debater, Aidan, get into a spirited audience-debater discourse with our classmate, Liam, who came to watch and support the event," said Macaulay.

However, when the DEI policy was introduced, it hit closer to home.

"With DEI, our own Sacred Heart University community was impacted by such executive orders, especially our students who work in the Multicultural Center or participate in identity-culture clubs (like the Black Student Union, the Women's Political Engagement Club, etc.)," Macaulay said.

When discussing DEI policies, the Republican side argued that in today's work environment, a person's race is too important a factor in hiring and meeting specific diversity standards. They went on to say that America should focus more on the particular qualifications a person brings to the job rather than on inclusivity.

On the other hand, the Democratic side argued



Will Morgan, Staff Writer and Photographer

Opening remarks made by students on DEI policies at the "Voices of Tomorrow II: Shaping Our Future" event held on April 1.

that this mindset would further ignore the racism that many minorities have to deal with. This went directly against the right's view, arguing that structural inequality isn't as prevalent as Democrats claim.

Despite the differing views, all discussions remained cordial and constructive.

"The debate unfolded perfectly due to the exceptional organization and detailed work of the students who planned the event; most notably Anna Macaulay and Izzy Sardina. Every issue was debated in a balanced manner with exceptional timekeepers," Rose said.

As the night wrapped up, students continued discussing what they had heard—some still firm in their beliefs, others more open to new perspectives.

"As a junior at SHU, I've learned to be open-minded, especially with politics and current events," said junior attendee Javier Alicea-Kahn. "Many of my peers are mixed, standing for both parties for different reasons."

**DANCE
PROGRAM
SHOW
WEEKEND**

**FRIDAY 4/11:
IRISH DANCE
SHOWCASE
EDGERTON THEATRE
AT 7 P.M.**

**SATURDAY 4/12 &
SUNDAY 4/13:
ENSEMBLE SHOWCASES
EDGERTON THEATRE
AT 2 P.M.**

**SATURDAY 4/12 &
SUNDAY 4/13:
COMPANY SHOWCASES
EDGERTON THEATRE
AT 7 P.M.**

Features

Dance Program Seniors Prepare for Their Final Bow

BY ALEXA BORNER
Staff Writer

The Sacred Heart University dance program is hosting its annual spring shows from April 11 to 13. The program will host shows for many different dance groups, such as the Dance Company, SHU Movement, Company Choreography Fellowship Program, Dance Ensemble, SHU Force, Irish Dance Ensemble, SHU Claddagh Dancers, Hip Hop Production, and Inception Dance Crew.

Brianne Chave, senior member of the dance company, said that they will be performing contemporary, modern, ballet, and jazz routines. She said that their Saturday show, *Moving Contra(diction)*, features two residencies, as well as additional performances with other choreographers.

“For our Sunday show, *7 Impressions*, we will be showcasing our Company Choreography Fellowship Program,” said Chave. “These dances are all choreographed by members of the Dance Company and are all 7 minutes in length.”

Chave said that the professional track company has opened her eyes to career opportunities for dancers. Dance is a huge part of her life, and she hopes to continue after commencement.

“I hope that after graduation I can keep dance as a vital part of my life since I have been doing it for 19 years now,” said Chave.

Senior Samantha Cunniff, Captain of the Claddagh Dancers Irish Dance Ensemble, said that her most memorable experiences have come from the two trips she’s taken to Dingle, Ireland with the team.

“One of my favorite memories of these trips is going horseback riding on the beach and seeing the breathtaking view of the mountains along the horizon with the ocean glistening in the sunlight peeking through the clouds, while surrounded by my teammates,” said Cunniff.

Cunniff hopes this won’t be her last time performing. She says dancing gives her a feeling like no other, and this chapter coming to a close is sad but rewarding.

“It is a bittersweet feeling to be performing on the Edgerton stage for the last time. The joy I feel every time I step on stage is the best feeling in the world,” said Cunniff.

Cunniff advised to look out for the dance they learned while in Dingle for spring break.

“We mix traditional brush dancing and light shoe dancing, so it creates an interesting dynamic between the contrasting dance styles and we had a blast learning it in just a few days,” said Cunniff.

Zoe Vella, senior dance ensemble member, said that each ensemble show offers a variety of dance genres.

“Each show is about an hour long and consists of around 15 dance numbers, including tap, contemporary, hip-hop, heels, and jazz,” said Vella.

Vella said that dancing has always been an outlet for her. The Dance Ensemble program gave her a place to be herself, as well as meet others with the same passion and love for dance.

“It is an amazing release of any negativity I was feeling and allows me



Contributed by Samantha Cunniff, '25

The SHU Dance Program is hosting its annual spring shows from April 11-13 at the Edgerton Center for Performing Arts.

to express myself,” said Vella. “I have met so many great people through the program that inspire me every day.”

Vella said she is grateful that SHU offers so many programs for people to continue their passion for dance in college. She said many students at other schools do not have that opportunity, so she is thankful to have had the dance program.

“Although I am sad, I also feel extremely thankful for the opportunity that the dance ensemble at SHU has given me to continue my greatest passion through college because most people do not get that chance,” said Vella.

Vella said that if she were to give advice for incoming freshmen, she would encourage them to put themselves out there and do whatever makes them happy.

“College is a place to figure yourself out, so don’t be shy when it comes to trying new things,” said Vella. “The time flies by and you deserve to have the best four years of your life!”

Senior Sydney Stavrika, also a member of the dance ensemble, said that dance has shaped her into the person she is today. She said the dance program fosters a supportive community where members work together to create a comfortable and connected environment.

“The Performing Arts Program makes campus life more creative and connected, giving students a way to express themselves and be part of something bigger,” said Stavrika.

Students can purchase tickets for free with their SHU ID at the Edgerton Box from 12 p.m. until 4 p.m. Tickets will be available starting the week of the show until one hour before each performance.

Meet Alpha Kappa Psi, SHU’s Business Brotherhood

BY JESSICA KELLY
Staff Writer

Alpha Kappa Psi (AKPsi) is a business fraternity at Sacred Heart University and is a part of the Chi Mu Chapter. The Chi Mu Chapter was established in 2015 and has over 325 brothers. The accomplishments of the brothers in Alpha Kappa Psi stem from the chapter’s commitment to recognizing the professional skills and basic understandings of fields ranging from a wide spectrum of backgrounds.

“Alpha Kappa Psi is the oldest and largest co-ed professional business fraternity that aims to develop principled business leaders in all fields,” said junior Laura Schroeder, president of AKPsi.

“The Chi Mu Chapter has been supporting this mission at Sacred Heart since 2015, promoting our core values of brotherhood, knowledge, integrity, service, and unity,” Schroeder said.

Through its extensive alumni network, mentorship programs, professional workshops, intramural teams, and committees, brothers are able to expand their personal experiences and hone their professional skills.

“You will have access to our alumni network of over 200 members,” said junior Alex Deluca, vice president of administration. “You will also gain valuable professional development experience, such as enhancing your resume, LinkedIn profile, and email etiquette.”

Besides professional workshops, AKPsi hosts several philanthropic and social events to create a community within their chapter, embracing the idea of brotherhood.

“Our tagline is ‘Shaping people, Shaping business,’ which I think is huge,” said junior Daniella Zacharis, executive vice president. “We give students the opportunity to network with their peers who are looking to grow [skills] in resume building, interview skills, networking, and many more.”

“Brothers of AKPsi learn the skills necessary to walk into any professional setting with confidence, build lifelong bonds, and practice leadership development,” says Schroeder. “AKPsi was the first group I joined on campus, and the brothers have been my greatest support system since day one.”

All majors are welcome to join AKPsi and develop their professional and personal skills, creating bonds and friendships that will last a lifetime.

“I truly love to see the growth of our chapter, the committee heads, and the culture of our organization becoming more unified,

filled with brotherly bonds, and continue forming the connections that have already helped me become a better person and a better leader,” said Zacharis.

“The friends I have made along the way are ones that I want to be by my side for the rest of my life,” she said.

Follow @shuakpsi on Instagram for more information on meetings, events, and fall registration.



Daniel Greene, Assistant News Editor

The current E-Board for the Alpha Kappa Psi business fraternity at Sacred Heart.

CampusLife

A Boogie Wit da Hoodie: Through My Lens

BY JACK CAVICCHI

Assistant Photo Editor and Web Manager



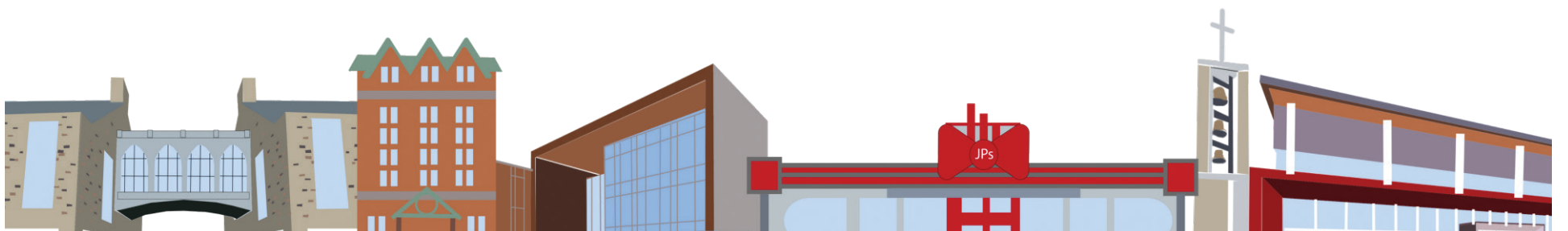
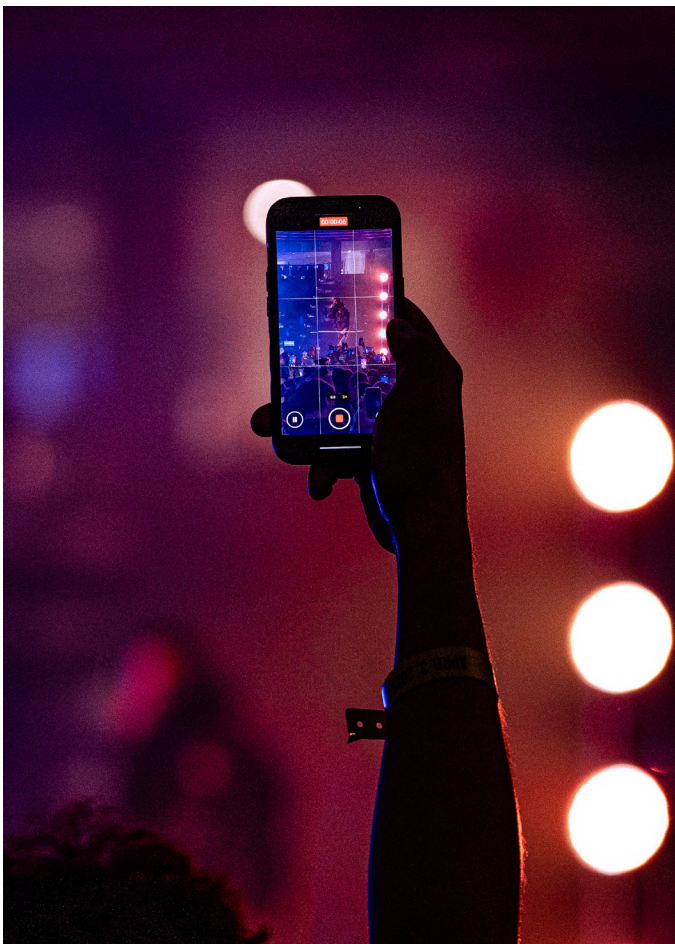
Jack Cavicchi, Assistant Photo Editor and Web Manager

Sacred Heart University hosted DJ Pauly D and A Boogie Wit da Hoodie at Martire Family Arena on April 4, 2025.

My name is Jack Cavicchi, and I am a sophomore Sports Communication and Media student here at SHU. Over the past 1.5 years, I have taught myself and fallen in love with photography. I started with shooting athletics, specifically hockey, as a way to stay in touch with a sport that I no longer played competitively. During the spring 2024 semester of school, I took Professor Falco's CM-223 class: Digital Photography. Here, I started to expand and gain experience in photojournalism. At first I did not enjoy the assignments for the class, because I knew I wanted to take photos of sports, but as I learned to appreciate different types of photography, I created some of my best work and grew in technique and style.

In the beginning of my Fall 2024 semester, I applied to work as a Photography Intern for the Sacred Heart University Marketing Department. Dan Passapera, the Photography Coordinator at SHU, took me on as an intern and has provided me with invaluable guidance and experience to help me grow as a photographer, but also an intern in a professional setting. This past semester I was granted access to shoot multiple ceremonies and events, the CT Ice tournament, and most recently the Spring Concert featuring A Boogie Wit da Hoodie.

More of my photography work can be seen on my Instagram account, @cavicchimedia!



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Arts & Entertainment

TAP Presents “American Idiot”

BY **ALESSIA CATINO**
Staff Writer

The Theatre Arts Program (TAP) presented Green Day’s “American Idiot” at the Edgerton Center for the Performing Arts from April 4-6.

“American Idiot” tells the story of three friends: Johnny, Will and Tunny. They want to leave their suburban lives behind for the city, despite their soon estranged paths. Will stays behind as his girlfriend is expecting, and Tunny joins the military, leaving Johnny alone. Meanwhile, Johnny has a heated romance and falls into drugs. With little dialogue, the show uses Green Day’s music to tell the story.

“I loved the show, it is very different from what we usually do. This show was very high energy. It is by far one of my favorite sets we have done. So much hard work has gone into this, it truly is amazing to watch the result,” said sophomore Samantha Madigan, TAP’s Co-Advertising Chair.

The performance was packed with high energy, not only through the music but also in the choreography. Though a simple set, there were many spectacles for the audience to see, whether through quick outfit changes or lighting designs.

“As one of the assistant directors, the preparation had to do a lot with scene work, blocking and learning music. Production included a live band, lights, hair and makeup, props, costumes, sound, and projections,” said junior Erin Pellegrini, the Spectrum’s Circulation Manager. “Then this must be finished in about a week in time for the weekend. Production is a ton of student-led work and designs, performances, and leadership.”



Instagram, @shutheatrearts
SHU Theatre Arts put on multiple performances of “American Idiot,” set to music by Green Day, from April 4-6, 2025.

Preparation for this production was extensive for both students and faculty.

“My favorite part of the production was either the first day with the band or the first run with all the tech elements. It’s the first time you get to see the full picture of the production,” said Pellegrini. “My least favorite part of any production is the long tech days. These are tedious, although the result is incredibly rewarding. It’s also very interesting to see designers work in that environment and see them communicate with each other in a very different way.”

This production is based on the band’s Grammy-winning album. The show featured every song from “American Idiot,” with select tracks from the follow-up album “21st Century Breakdown.”

“This story is woven with the amazing music from Green Day that will leave the audience feeling a certain way. I think a lot of people will relate to some aspect of the show because we all, at one time or another, felt trapped in our lives and wanted to start somewhere new,” said senior Sean Ryan, who played Johnny.

The original “American Idiot” album lends itself to theatrics. According to Billboard, the band infused pop-punk with classic-rock, creating an anti-war storyline of disillusionment in its 57 minute runtime. The musical version is roughly 90 minutes and extends these themes with emotion and an enhanced storyline.

“I had to do a lot of preparation for this show because of how physically demanding this musical is. Once this show starts, it doesn’t stop. I had to take good care of my voice like steaming and drinking lots of tea with honey. Everyone in the cast has worked extremely hard to give this show one hundred percent every single night,” said Ryan.

With no intermission, this production had the actors consistently in-character and on-stage performing high octane songs.

“My favorite part about being in this production is watching the tech elements shine. The lights and huge band make me feel like I’m performing in a rock concert every night. Whether you are a fan of Green Day or just simply want to be swept off your feet with a compelling story, there is something for everyone in this show,” said Ryan.

Jessica Balogh contributed to this article.

From Building Blocks to Blockbuster

BY **MADELEINE MEDEIROS**
Staff Writer

“In the Overworld, anything you can dream about, you can create,” said actor Jack Black in the opening line of the official trailer of Warner Brothers’ “A Minecraft Movie.” The Overworld refers to the hyper-realistic cascading landscape of cubes, filled with blockish animals. This is the land of Minecraft that users of the game are familiar with.

Black stars as Steve, the main user profile in the game, who also contributed musically to the film. One of the film’s original songs by Black is “I Feel Alive,” which features Foo Fighters lead singer and guitarist Dave Grohl on the drums, according to an interview with Vanity Magazine.

Joining Black is Jason Momoa as Garret the garbage man, Jennifer Coolidge as a school principal and Danielle Brooks as Dawn, with Emma Myers and Sebastian Hansen as siblings Natalie and Henry. These characters’ goals were to save the Overworld from the Nether—a place void of the joy and creativity that runs wild in the Overworld.

Freshman Clara Bragagnolo, a seasoned Minecraft player, is still on the fence about whether she will attend the movie.

“This film was quite unexpected news for me, before the first trailer came out, I had no idea it was coming out,” said Bragagnolo.

The live-action film’s extensive use of animation and special effects seems to be the sticking point.

“I do not have the highest expectations for the film. I would much rather prefer that it was an animated movie. Nevertheless, I believe it could still hold up as a regular comedy movie, and a relatively acceptable adaptation of the game, though nothing outstanding,” said

Bragagnolo.

While the elements of design seem to be consistent with the three-dimensional block world of the video game, the storyline of the film is fresh, as the game itself lacks an underlying storyline, merely giving users the ability to create and survive in its fictional digital world.

“[In the game, Steve] never had any dialogues or specified story, he was simply the character you controlled in the game,” Bragagnolo said.

However, the film features Steve as an “expert crafter” who, together with his fellow misfits, must master the Overworld and protect it from the Nether, including fictional creatures such as “piglins” and zombies, according to a Rotten Tomatoes synopsis.

As far as Coolidge’s role, she plays a school principal who falls for a Minecraft creature that is pulled into the real world via a portal, which acts as a humorous subplot to the rest of the film.

Junior Grace Schramm, who has dabbled in Minecraft over the years, is hopeful for the future of video game-inspired films like this one.

“I think it’s going to be a good entryway to other game movies because it’s all pixels, so it’s a new way of looking at things,” said Schramm, referencing the game’s block-centered world design. “I feel like people wouldn’t know what to expect, which opens up so much for a new understanding and appreciation of Minecraft.”

As for the star-studded cast, Schramm thinks it will help bring the cube-shaped world to those unfamiliar with it. “If people see a movie with their favorite actors and it’s about a game that they are unfamiliar with, it would open up the movie to new audiences,” said Schramm.

While the SHU Community Theatre located in downtown Fairfield is not currently set to have any showings of the film, the AMC Marquis 16 movie theater in Trumbull has been showing the movie since its premiere on Friday, April 4.

SCMA Seniors Create Capstone Projects

BY **REBECCA WEINBERGER**
Staff Writer

The students in the School of Communication, Media and the Arts (SCMA) are tasked with working on a capstone project for the duration of their senior year. A mix of the creative theories they have learned are used to create something for their portfolio.

Students are given creative liberty to do what they are passionate about and wish to showcase. Projects can include a documentary, podcast, photojournalism story or an original feature-length screenplay.

Two senior students who are working on unique projects are Samantha Cuniff and Connor Smith.

“My senior project is a series of oil paintings on the theme of unrestricted creativity. It consists of three large oil paintings that are reflective of Surrealist and Cubist artwork. My body of work is titled ‘Conversations with my Imagination,’” said Cuniff, who is an Art & Design major.

Cuniff’s senior project allowed her to explore a new avenue of art, reaching out of her comfort zone.

“I have really enjoyed experimenting with a new style throughout this project. I am used to making representational pieces, such as portraits and landscapes, but this project has challenged me to expand my boundaries as an artist and make more abstract, unique paintings,” said Cuniff. “I feel as though I have pushed the limits of my creativity past where they used to sit comfortably. Taking risks helps us grow not only as artists, but as humans. I want that to come across in my work.”

Studio arts students’ projects look a bit different from other majors. “We have to create artwork in our chosen medium(s) and curate our own section of the Art & Design Gallery in the Edgerton,” said Cuniff.

There will be an exhibit of their work on display in the Edgerton Atrium, and their Opening Reception is on April 10. This year, there are four studio art majors presenting their works in the gallery.

Smith is creating a 3D model of the Martire Family Arena. “I do a lot of video creations, I shoot for the hockey teams and I do video editing for them. I’ve done some things with animation before where I do 3D motion graphics so that would be what this is,” Smith said.

Smith took his passion and made it into a project. He was inspired by a video from the Entertainment and Sports Broadcasting Network (ESPN) to begin this project.

“I saw a video from ESPN from before a football game where they did a 3D animation of the arena and then they cut to actual footage of the arena, so that is where I got this from and I want to incorporate it in some of my videos somehow,” said Smith.

Smith has done things like this before and has always felt rewarded after he was finished with the process. “Being able to build something this big and this cool and seeing it all pay off in the end is very rewarding,” said Smith.

A lot of the current seniors were inspired by the creative minds of their fellow classmates. “I strive to be as free with my ideas as they are,” said Cuniff.

Jessica Balogh contributed to this article.



Mark F. Conrad, Sacred Heart University
Sacred Heart University’s Art and Design Gallery hosted Senior Projects in 2019.

Sports

Men's Lacrosse Honors Heroes at Annual Paws of War Game

BY KEANE PELLETIER
Staff Writer

The men's division I lacrosse team played in their annual "Paws of War" game against Marist University on March 29 at Campus Field.

Paws of War is an organization that helps veterans, first responders and their families, especially those suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, by providing them with service dogs, according to the organization's website. The lacrosse game is designed to create a positive and meaningful experience for veterans, first responders, and rescued animals, promoting healing and mutual understanding.

"I think it just shows you that it's bigger than ourselves. It really shows how important it is, especially with our team," said junior John Murray. "We're very centered around the military. You can see on pretty much all of our helmets for the past three years, there's an American flag somewhere on there."

"It's just different when you're playing in front of other people. Different types of people who have done things to protect you, protect your freedom," said head coach Jon Basti. "You kind of have a little bit more of a heightened sense of awareness about what we are, where we live and what we have, and that we're lucky to have what we have and lucky to live where we live. Is this country perfect? No, but I still think it's the greatest country on the planet."

The Pioneers defeated Marist in a back-and-forth overtime thriller. Grad student Tucker Spencer led the game with three goals and Murray led the team in total points with four.

Trailing by two as the fourth quarter began, Sacred Heart rallied with three consecutive goals from junior Michael Moreschi, sophomore James Moran, and Murray, making the

score 11-10 Pioneers with 10:51 remaining.

Marist answered with two quick goals to regain the lead, 12-11, with just 3:53 left. With eight seconds left in regulation, Murray found sophomore Tim Kiely, who was able to put the ball in the back of the net to send the game into overtime.

"We had a lot of good opportunities to score. We just didn't finish those earlier. And then for Timmy to step up, I'm not surprised. I mean the dude's got ice in his veins. He's a tough kid and we recruited him for that reason," said Basti.

"It's always good when you see those guys down there getting the job done. I try not to focus on it too much. I try to just stay focused on the defensive side of the field. But, you know, obviously with a goal that magnitude, it's hard not to notice it," said grad student Alex Pazienza.

The Pioneers were able to make some defensive stops and hold Marist scoreless through overtime.

With the game still tied in overtime with two seconds left, Murray outran his defender and scored on a crease dive, securing a thrilling 13-12 overtime victory for Sacred Heart.

"I didn't even know that we had such a short time. I really had no clue that there were eight seconds left," said Murray. "I was lucky enough to dodge down, and then I saw the crease was wide open, so I just decided to take a shot at it."

After the game, Pazienza became the university's all-time wins leader for men's lacrosse with 26 career wins.

"It means a lot to me. And you know, also that's sort of something that I look at as a team thing. I wouldn't be able to do that without the guys around me," said Pazienza. "You know, obviously it's cool. I notice it and I enjoy that, but there's more work to be done."

Sacred Heart Athletics contributed to this article.

How Torpedo Bats Are Changing the MLB

BY JAYDEN HUNTER
Staff Writer

A new world of professional baseball is coming to notice this spring. Torpedo bats are hot, with more notably used by the New York Yankees. Some top athletes who use the bat include Jazz Chisolm, Dansby Swanson, Anthony Volpe and Elly De La Cruz.

Designed by a team of engineers, the bat will revolutionize the offense of playing with its custom aerodynamic design and enhanced performance attributes. The torpedo bat, named by the fact that its barrel narrows into a torpedo shape, employs the shape in reducing air resistance while still retaining the traditional feel of a wood bat. According to MLB officials, the appearance of the bat was based on the torpedo for its potential in delivering maximum power and speed on swings without compromising control or durability of the bat.

Having this design provides great improvement to smaller ball players' power and contact. Players like Volpe and Chisolm become at a greater advantage when using the torpedo bat. The new bat design was first introduced in limited trials during the 2024 offseason, with several major league players testing it out in batting practice.

Initial response has been positive, with players noting the responsiveness of the bat and enhanced barrel control. "The bat does feel wonderful," said New York Yankees outfielder



AP News, Pamela Smith

New York Yankees' Jazz Chisolm Jr. flips his bat after hitting a three-run home run during the seventh inning of a baseball game against the Milwaukee Brewers, Sunday, March 30, 2025.

Aaron Judge, who participated in the initial testing, according to CBS Sports. "It feels very natural, but you can certainly tell that it's power based. I think it's going to take the game to the next level."

"I think the torpedo bat will change the game of baseball and make the game more fun to watch. What I don't think is fair is that people are against the Yankees for using the bat when almost every team is using the bat," said sophomore Frank Scarpaci.

While promising, the torpedo bat has caused some controversy. Some complain that the redesigned bat can continue to fuel the increasing number of home runs in the game and possibly disrupt the sport's offense-defense balance. With concerns already on the brew about the so-called "juiced ball" era, some old-school advocates fear that the torpedo bat would further exacerbate the problem.

"It's going to be an interesting game; pitchers will struggle and hitters are going to be able to capitalize now. It sucks for people who really love the pitching side of the game, but at the same time this makes the game way more watchable and enjoyable," said sophomore Enzo Capano.

The torpedo bat's Major League Baseball (MLB) approval follows a comprehensive analysis by the league's equipment committee. The committee reviewed the bat's performance, player safety and overall impact on the game. The final nod follows months of testing and fine-tuning to ascertain that the bat is up to the league's high standards of equity and integrity.

"MLB should be happy the torpedo bat is taking off, this brings enjoyment to the game now, adds some power to the players who don't really show off their power," said sophomore CJ Sonta.

Even though the bat's official introduction was this 2025 season, players are already incorporating the design into their training regimens. As the torpedo bat slowly finds its way onto every team's diamond, all eyes will be on how it impacts offense statistics, including batting average, home runs and strikeouts.

Five Pioneers Looking to the Pros

BY RYAN BRADLEY JR
Staff Writer

Are we going to see more Pioneers in the National Football League (NFL)? On May 22, 2022, Julius Chestnut and Josh Sokol, a standout running back and offensive guard from SHU, were signed to the Tennessee Titans and Minnesota Vikings, respectively. Now, five more Pioneers threw their names into the draft process in the annual University of Connecticut (UConn) Pro Day on March 25.

Tyreke Brown, Jalen Madison, Caleb Dennis, Isaiah Bishop and Marques Mason were the five that were invited from the Pioneers team this year.

"I think it is an outstanding opportunity for the players involved. It gets them in front of NFL scouts, and they also can get their times and measurements from NFL teams. Any exposure the player gets only helps them in the long run," said head coach Mark Nofri.

Pro Days are events that are held by college football teams that allow scouts from the NFL and the Canadian Football League (CFL) to come see the talent that is draft eligible every year. 30 NFL Scouts were in attendance for this year's showcase at UConn.

"It was an incredible experience. Just being out there competing, surrounded by other talented guys, and getting the chance to perform in front of scouts meant a lot. It's something I've been working toward for a long time, so to finally have that moment was special," said Madison, a graduate student.

Madison was a key part of the Pioneers offense this year, rushing for 948 yards and scoring seven touchdowns, amassing over 2000 yards of offense over his five-year career.

"Jalen has worked his butt off both in the classroom and on the field and has developed into an All-New England running back for us. I am so happy for Jay to leave Sacred Heart on a good note, having the success he has had. He is a great person and represented the university in a terrific manner," said Nofri.

Tyreke Brown was another standout Pioneer. A graduate defensive end and two-year captain of the Pioneers, Brown finished tied for the most sacks on the team this past year and was also fifth in the team in total tackles.

"I'm grateful for the opportunity. Any chance given is a chance taken, so just thankful I got to be a part of the Pro Day," said Brown.

"Tyreke has been a great leader and a great player for us. A lot of the young guys have learned from Tyreke on how to be a leader and how to work," said Nofri.

Graduate student Marques Mason also looked to the pro league after he was the Pioneers' second-leading tackler this past season.

"Mason has been one of the most unselfish players I have ever coached. He is a great example of a student-athlete who excels both on and off the field," said Nofri.

Dennis and Bishop were also both leaders of this Sacred Heart football team.

"It was great to see CT college players getting an opportunity to perform for NFL scouts and to be included with an FBS program like UConn only helps Connecticut college football," said Nofri.



Jayden Hunter, Staff Writer and Photographer

Graduate student Jalen Madison smiles on the bench after an offensive possession against Mercyhurst on Oct. 26, 2024.

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Remembering Julianna Sannino

BY MADISON BEEKMAN
Editor in Chief

The Sacred Heart University community, especially the Sacred Heart Dance Company, suffered a great loss last Thursday when junior Julianna “JJ” Sannino passed away. JJ was an interdisciplinary studies major who planned to work with elementary school students. She participated in a service trip to Colombia and mentored students in grades 6-8.



JJ lit up every room she walked into and had the most infectious smile and laugh. She was extremely dedicated to dance and the friendships she created within the Dance Company. She took every opportunity to be in the studio and shined each time she took the stage.

There are no words to describe the tremendous loss we feel within the Dance Company. JJ was a part of our family, and there is a hole in each of our hearts that only she could fill. It feels so strange walking into the studio and remembering that she won't be there with us again, especially with this semester's shows coming up this weekend. But we know she would want us to continue this great passion she had and honor her legacy through dance.

Dance Company will never be the same without her, but we will always cherish the time we were lucky enough to get with her. We will forever wish we could take the stage with her one more time.

Sending love, prayers and strength to all those who knew and loved JJ as much as we did. We are grateful to have such an amazing community of support and love during this heavy time.

We love you JJ and we will miss you forever, it was a privilege to know you. We dance for you today and every day.



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

Counseling Center
Open 9-5 on Weekdays
Make an Appointment:
203-371-7955
or counselingcenter@sacredheart.edu

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
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Campus Ministry
Call 203-365-471 or email campusministry@sacredheart.edu

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