

SHU Receives \$3 Million Grant for Education Program

BY JACK CAVICCHI
Staff Writer

Sacred Heart University has become the only institution in the northeast to earn a Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

The nearly \$3.4 million grant, awarded in September, will bolster SHU’s Teacher Residency Program (SHUTRP) and help provide hands-on training for aspiring educators. Funding to support recruitment into the teacher residency program will begin this month and continue through 2029.

“The SHU Teacher Residency program is a unique aspect of our graduate programs in elementary, secondary and special education, which combines graduate-level coursework with intense clinical preparation,” said Dr. Rene Roselle, the Department Chair of Teacher Education at SHU.

Teacher residencies are similar to medical residencies, which are used to train doctors and other health clinicians. Graduate students at SHU are eligible to participate in teacher residencies to gain hands-on experience in classrooms.

According to an article from the University of Rochester’s Warner School of Education, research on teacher residencies suggests that they improve retention in teacher education programs and effective practice during teachers’ novice years, contributing to long-term stability and student learning gains in schools.

“Sacred Heart teacher residents gain the content knowledge and teaching skills they need to make a difference in the lives of every student in the classroom,” said Prof. Katie Cunningham, Associate Professor of Education. “The residency takes place in a collaborative mentoring environment where residents learn effective and culturally responsive instructional practices, how to create a welcoming classroom and how to build a sense

of community and gain understanding of what students need.”

Funding from the grant came at a time when the need for quality educators for the state of Connecticut is at a record high, according to a SHU press release. The grant money will allow SHU’s Farrington College of Education & Human Development to combat the shortage of teachers in “high-need areas” and craft a diverse workforce of educators.

“The purpose of the grant is to recruit future teachers from underrepresented backgrounds, provide stipends for cohorts within the program, partner residents with a school-based mentor and prepare future educators with the knowledge and skills needed for today’s diverse classrooms,” said Roselle.

Diverse classrooms require teacher adaptation to foster successful learning environments; SHU’s TRP allows prospective teachers to experience this firsthand in a classroom setting.

“Sacred Heart has partnerships with many schools all across Fairfield and New Haven counties including Bridgeport, Fairfield, Trumbull, Norwalk and more,” said



Tracy Deer-Mirek, Sacred Heart University

Farrington College of Education & Human Development students complete residencies at local schools.

Roselle. SHU has a five-year education program that enables students to earn a bachelor’s degree in an academic major, initial teaching certification and a master’s degree, while participating in a school-based internship or residency during their graduate year. Current undergraduate students enrolled in this five-year program have the opportunity to benefit from the grant in the coming years.

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Become an Informed Voter

BY DANIEL GREENE
Staff Writer

Election Day 2024 is Nov. 5, but there is still time to become an informed voter.

The 2024 Presidential Election between Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump headline the ballot, which also consists of state and local elections.

“Students should vote for every office in every election because regardless of level and regardless of office, elections have consequences with respect to public policies. Lives are directly impacted by election results,” said Dr. Gary Rose, Professor of Politics and Scholar in Residence.

According to the New York Times, the national polling average has Harris up by a slight margin as of Monday, Oct. 21. Polls typically have a percentage of error margin,

so Harris’s lead could be larger or smaller than reported.

“The latest poll results indicate that the election is much too close to call. We may not know the results on the night of the election,” said Rose.

Ballots have already been cast for the 2024 election, but there is still time to become a registered voter and request a mail-in ballot. The deadline to request a mail-in ballot is Saturday, Oct. 26 in New York and Tuesday, Oct. 29 in both New Jersey and Massachusetts. In Connecticut, the deadline to request is Monday, Nov. 4.

“I am voting via an absentee ballot. I requested it a while ago through my home state of Massachusetts, and now I am eagerly awaiting its arrival so I can cast my vote,” said sophomore Molly McDonald.

As Election Day draws closer,

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ZTA Thinks Pink

BY MAIA SANTORO
Staff Writer

According to the American Cancer Society, around 42,000 women will die due to Breast Cancer in 2024. Breast cancer affects thousands of individuals and families all over the world, and Sacred Heart University’s chapter of the Zeta Tau Alpha (ZTA) sorority raises money in hopes of decreasing this number.

ZTA’s philanthropy is Breast Cancer Awareness and Education, making the fight against breast cancer a crucial aspect of their sorority.

Throughout the academic year, ZTA hosts fundraisers, partnering with local restaurants and ice cream shops, such as Romanacci’s and Main Street Creamery, to donate to their philanthropy.

Vice President of Programming for the Panhellenic Council and member of ZTA, junior Victoria Del Re said the chapter hosts interactive events throughout the year, such as Z-Factor, to fundraise for breast cancer research. ZTA’s Z-Factor is a talent show put on by the sorority in support of breast cancer awareness and education. This year’s

Z-Factor will be held in the Edgerton Center on Thursday, Oct. 24.

“One fundraiser we have that’s super fun is Z-Factor. Think of the TV show the X-Factor, and then ZETA-fy it. We raise money through tickets and raffle baskets that are donated by businesses and families. All the money we raise goes back to the ZTA philanthropy and foundation, all supporting breast cancer education and awareness,” said Del Re.

When Del Re was going through the ZTA recruitment process, members wrote letters for breast cancer survivors or anyone going through treatment in the hospital.

“I really love how our fundraisers are in person, all hands-on with breast cancer survivors and patients. It’s truly meaningful to go to those walks and be with the people you’re fundraising for and supporting,” said Del Re.

ZTA members also participate and volunteer in Breast Cancer Awareness walks around Connecticut. The campus chapter attended one walk in early October in Hartford, Conn., and another called “Making Strides” in Westport, Conn., this past Sunday, Oct. 20.

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News

\$3 Million Education Grant

BY JACK CAVICCHI
Staff Writer

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“The grant specifically supports students who become residents in Bridgeport Public Schools and Stamford Public Schools in the areas of secondary science and math (grades 4-12), elementary and special education cross endorsement (PK-6), and special education (PK-12),” said Dr. Sally Drew, associate professor and Special Education Program Director.

One of SHU’s graduate programs that will reap the benefits of the grant is the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) special education program, “Para Pioneers.”

“This program is a once in a lifetime opportunity you just don’t pass up,” said graduate student Shanice Morris. “As a mom working full-time, pursuing a master’s degree in special education sounded pretty farfetched. However, being a Para Pioneer means taking courses in the comfort of your home, having access to certified Special Education teachers and gaining hands-on experience in the field during a yearlong teacher residency. The program is the quickest alternative route to obtaining a master’s in special education.”

“My career is going to elevate from being a building substitute to a certified Special Education teacher in 14 months,” Morris said.

Become an Informed Voter

BY DANIEL GREENE
Staff Writer

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there is an increase in political advertisements on television, radio and social media. The ads air during sporting events and primetime news broadcasting to optimize the number of viewers.

“Media is a huge factor, especially campaign ads. Ads on television and social media can in fact move the needle. But the ground game is equally important with respect to get-out-the-vote efforts,” said Rose.

During this election cycle, both the Trump and Harris campaigns have been supported by social media influencers such as Bryce Hall and Harry Sisson. Harris was on an episode of Alex Cooper’s podcast, “Call Her Daddy,” and Trump was interviewed by Dave Ramsey on “The Ramsey Show.”

“I think social media can be a good source, but not to trust everything you see on there. It is also good to do your own research,” said sophomore Matthew Meaney. “Read about the election on news sources, but do not just take one news resource; go through a few of them. Get your facts from a spectrum of sources.”

There are widespread resources available to learn about both the election and candidates. Campaign websites frequently contain candidate policies and other information. Each state has a website with information about its elections, deadlines, how to vote and in some cases, sample ballots.

“According to the old axion, ‘knowledge is power.’ The more knowledgeable one has when voting lends itself to more personal power and efficacy,” Rose said.

The deadline is drawing nearer for ballots to be submitted by all registered voters. There are a vast number of resources to be utilized to continue learning about the local, state and national elections that will affect the nation over the next two to four years.

“I do not think I am fully informed yet. I still have a lot of information to gather in terms of my state elections, but I want to be as knowledgeable as possible before filling out my ballot,” said McDonald.



Paul Sancya, AP News
A voter from Michigan inserting her absentee ballot in a drop box last election.

SHU “Thrive(s) Together” at First Annual Event

BY KAYLEE SHINDEL
Staff Writer

Sacred Heart University’s Wellness Center and Collegiate Recovery Program (CRP) held the first annual wellness event on Thursday, Oct. 17 in the Loris Forum at the Martire Center for the Liberal Arts.

The Maureen Hamilton Wellness Center served as partners for the event titled “Thrive Together.” The goal of fostering a conversation about self-care and creating meaningful connections was executed by a panel consisting of SHU wellness staff, mental health professionals, students and campus ministry.

This event was created by the CRP due to a shared passion for supporting student wellness through a lens of mental health and recovery.

“Our board member, Bill Mitchell, has been a driving force behind this initiative, as he is deeply committed to expanding and supporting the Collegiate Recovery program here at Sacred Heart University. His dedication, combined with the recognition of growing concerns around loneliness, mental health and addiction helped inspire this event,” said Jeffery LaBella, Collegiate Recovery Program Member and Director of Counseling.

This event strived to promote several key messages, such as making connections, self care, community support and mental health awareness.

“We focused on building supportive relationships with oneself and others while prioritizing mental and physical health through activities like mindfulness and movement. Community support through recovery programs, peer support or faculty connections can lead to transformative healing,” said Kathy Katts, Administrative Associate and Special Projects Coordinator of Student Affairs and Athletics.



Tracy Deer-Mirek, Sacred Heart University
The Maureen Hamilton Wellness Center holds the "Thrive Together," featuring a panel of mental health professionals, SHU wellness staff, students, and campus ministry.

professionals, learn from expert panelists and take practical steps toward their own well-being,” said Katts.

This is the first wellness event to take place on campus due to a recent spike in interpersonal issues among faculty, staff and students.

“This is the first large-scale wellness event of its

kind because although wellness staff have always been involved in supporting individual students, we recognized the increasing need for a comprehensive, campus-wide conversation about mental health and connection in the aftermath of recent global and societal challenges,” said LaBella.

SHU students reacted positively to the panel discussion that sparked meaningful conversations amongst the attendees. There was not an empty seat in the forum.

“I felt supported by the speakers and more connected to my peers,” said senior Ava Robb. “I learned to implement a wellness routine into my daily life.”

The panelists for the event hosted one combined discussion, titled “Connection Through Self-Care and Caring For Others.” This conversation included topics such as prioritizing wellness while acknowledging and supporting others on their unique mental health path.

“Our panelists, who include wellness professionals, mental health advocates and recovery experts, discussed how self-care practices like mindfulness, physical activity and emotional awareness can enhance personal well-being, and how compassion, empathy and helping others contribute to stronger community bonds,” said LaBella.

SHU’s wellness journey will not stop with this singular wellness event. The wellness staff is dedicated to ensuring the health of staff and students for years to come.

“Our intention is to make ‘Thrive Together’ an annual event,” Katts said. “Wellness is an ongoing journey, and we want to ensure that our students, faculty and staff have the opportunity to engage in these important conversations year after year.”

**UPCOMING
EVENTS ON
CAMPUS**

**FRIDAY 10/25:
MEN’S ICE HOCKEY
VS. HOLY CROSS
MARTIRE FAMILY ARENA
AT 7:00 P.M.**

**SATURDAY 10/26:
FOOTBALL
VS. MERCYHURST
CAMPUS FIELD
AT 12:00 P.M.**

**SUNDAY 10/27:
FLEA MARKET
63’S PATIO
AT 10:00 A.M.**

Features

SHU Hosts Annual Walk to End Alzheimer’s

BY ANGELINA VARGAS
Staff Writer

According to the Alzheimer’s Association, more than 55 million people worldwide are living with dementia, including the nearly 7 million Americans who have Alzheimer’s.

The Alzheimer’s Association is a voluntary health organization dedicated to the spread of Alzheimer’s awareness. Each year, in over 600 communities throughout the country, the association hosts their Walk to End Alzheimers, the world’s largest fundraiser for Alzheimer’s research, patient care, and support.

On Oct. 18, the Sacred Heart University community collaborated with the Alzheimer’s Association to host their annual Alzheimer’s Awareness Walk. Students, faculty, and staff gathered around the Chapel Quad to take part in a walk that honors those whose lives have been affected by Alzhemier’s. SHU athletics, sorority and fraternity life,



Supporters walking to raise money for Alzheimer's research at SHU's awareness walk.

and club sports were in attendance and competed to raise funds for this cause.

“It was amazing to be a part of something bigger than myself and it made me proud to be a part of a university that holds events so important and impactful,” said sophomore Olivia Cavallo.

Alzheimer’s disease is a

progressive cognitive brain disorder, impacting memory, thinking, and behavior. It is the most common cause of dementia. Due to their cognitive decline, daily tasks like driving, cooking, and eating can become difficult for patients, oftentimes robbing them of their independence.

Although there is no cure yet, events like the Walk to End Alzheimer’s help raise the funds necessary to work on finding one and provide patients with the other support they need.

The walk began at 11 a.m. with an opening ceremony. The event featured guest speakers and other fun activities like a Zumba instructor, chalk art, photo booth, snacks, and t-shirt sales.

“One of the key components of the ceremony is that we invite a member of the Mosaic senior living, who is currently living with Alzheimer’s to say a few words and be an advocate for those suffering with the disease,” said the Office of Community Engagement Director, Annie Johnson.

Participants were able to carry color-specific flowers to indicate the significance of this event and their connection to the disease.

Blue flowers were for those living with Alzhieimer’s, purple flowers were for those who have lost someone to this disease, yellow flowers were for caregivers, and orange flowers were for supporters of the cause.

The ceremony ended with a garden planted full of colorful flowers in honor and memory of Alzheimer’s as a campus community.

“I think it’s important for students to understand different ways of giving back, not only through hands-on service but to engage in that advocacy, awareness, and fundraising,” said Johnson. “It is a way we live out our mission as a university to do good in the world.”

Together, the SHU community successfully raised \$21,742 and had over 400 participants, far exceeding their goal.

If you are interested in learning more about Alzheimer’s or getting involved in future walks, visit the Alzheimer’s Association’s website <https://act.alz.org>.

WGSS Program Advances SHU’s Course Offerings

BY MADELINE MANGIONE
Staff Writer

How can students gain a deeper understanding of gender and sexuality-related issues? The Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies (WGSS) program, led by Professor Kelly Marino, provides a comprehensive curriculum along with engaging speaker events.

The WGSS program at Sacred Heart University includes a wide range of subjects in its curriculum, such as history, media studies, sociology, and psychology. Students can investigate important topics in the program by taking a variety of courses, including “Women in History” and “The Psychology of Gender and Sexuality.”

Marino, the Coordinator of WGSS, teaches different courses on United States History, western civilization, and women’s studies. She explained that the program focuses on topics regarding all aspects of personal identity.

“We are continually updating our course offerings to ensure they reflect the most relevant and pressing issues. We don’t just deal exclusively with gender and sexuality but also other important topics like ethnicity, race, disability and class,” said Marino.

“The program covers so many different areas that there is almost always a class available to pique an individual’s interest,” said Sophomore Talia Torrens, the Inclusion Chair of the Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA).

Torrens said the value of the program’s focus is on intersectionality and multicultural perspectives. She said that the program encourages critical thinking about societal structures.

“Taking a course like Psychology of Gender and Sexuality helped me deepen my understanding of psychology as a whole,” said Torrens.

The WGSS program hosts numerous events throughout the academic year, such as faculty-staffed panel discussions and guest speaker series. This fall, the program is hosting a series of lectures from various historians and authors. On Nov. 20, historian Monica Mercado will be coming to the Dr. Michelle Loris Forum to discuss Catholic girlhood and

education.

The WGSS program has hosted different events like book clubs and film screenings, further engaging students and faculty in relevant themes.

“It’s important for students to learn about the experiences of women from diverse backgrounds and recognize their leadership roles throughout history,” said Marino.

As the elections approach, both Torrens and Marino emphasize the importance of civic engagement.

“This election will play a major role in determining the direction of the country over the next decade,” said Marino. “Everyone eligible should cast a ballot and weigh in on these critical issues.”

Torrens said, “At this time, it is kind of difficult to say exactly how this election will impact the future of women’s rights as there are so many guiding factors, but with the possible nullification of protective women’s healthcare legislation, if there’s one message I could get out there it would be vote.”

Junior Charlotte Copp has taken courses with Professor Marino. Copp said the program’s courses hold significance, touching upon important topics that are relevant to the world.

“Having Professor Marino opened my eyes to the importance of gender studies in understanding our society,” said Copp.

Copp said that the WGSS program has enhanced her education. Through her studies within the program, Copp said she has gained critical insights into how gender intersects with various aspects of identity such as race and class.

“The WGSS program is essential to creating a more welcoming community at Sacred Heart. It challenges us to consider problems that impact everyone, not just women,” said Copp.

For more information on the Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies program at SHU and their upcoming events, visit the program’s webpage at www.sacredheart.edu under “minors.”

ZTA Thinks Pink for Breast Cancer Awareness Month

BY MAIA SANTORO
Staff Writer

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Junior Andrea Haggerty said ZTA’s role during these walks is to “cheer on the survivors and current fighters,” while also helping set-up, check-in participants, and pass out goodie bags.

Haggerty said that ZTA’s philanthropy resonates deeply with her, and that the sorority’s events and walks are an emotionally rewarding experience for her.

“I wanted to join a sorority to find my people, but it was also more than that for me. When we go to these breast cancer walks it’s so rewarding, because we get to see how much it means to the survivors, the fighters and all of the family members,” said Haggerty. “It honestly makes you emotional and it makes everything so worth it. You know why you’re there and it makes it so worth it for everyone.”

Director of Greek Life at SHU, Nick Frias, said the mission behind ZTA’s philanthropy is very important. Frias said that especially on a college campus, bringing awareness to something so prevalent is an important step for fighting for the cause.

“I think on any campus the impact is at first making people aware that such a thing is so prevalent, unfortunately, in a lot of women and some men. They’re really bringing the exposure to the issue and doing their best to have people share their stories about why the ZTA philanthropy means so much to them. They can see first-hand the people that benefit from the work they are putting on,” said Frias.

SHU’s ZTA chapter has an ongoing online fundraiser through www.crowdchange.co where anyone can donate money that goes to the ZTA philanthropy. The fund opened on Oct. 1, and will stay open through Dec. 8.

“Proceeds benefit the Zeta Tau Alpha Foundation to support scholarships, educational programming, leadership development, and our fight against breast cancer, which includes our partnerships with the NFL and the American Cancer Society,” said the CrowdChange website for ZTA at SHU.

To find more information regarding ZTA and their philanthropy for Breast Cancer Awareness and Education, visit @zta_shu on Instagram.



ZTA members cheering on those walking for Breast Cancer Awareness.

Contributed by Andrea Haggerty, '26



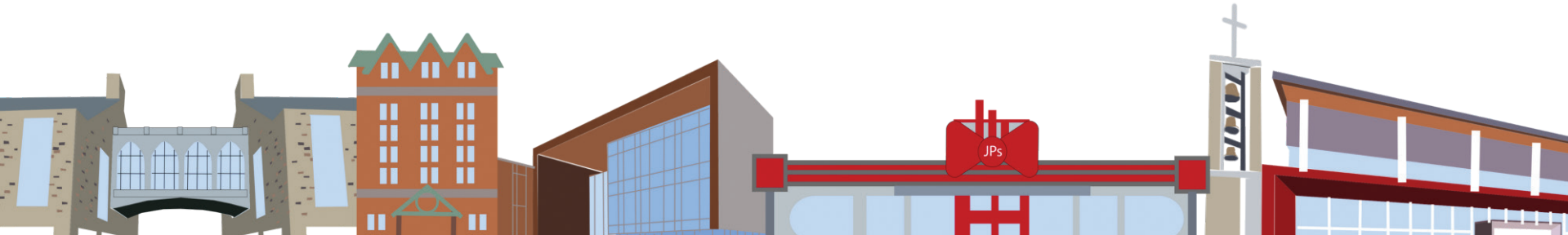
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CampusLife

Trust But Verify: Engaging With Reliable News Sources

BY COLLIN MOURA
Campus Life Editor

Critically evaluating the news you interact with is a crucial media literacy skill. Credible sources provide accurate and up-to-date information, adhering to ethical journalistic standards. With today’s constant threat of misinformation, it is becoming harder to consume news responsibly. While no source is perfect, this list contains a variety of respected and reliable outlets. Each of these domestic and international outlets consistently score high in balanced perspectives and unbiased reporting. Local journalism is also important, keeping readers educated on the issues that affect their individual communities. These reliable news sources are fundamental in maintaining an informed and democratic society.



Arts & Entertainment

Saturday Night Live Hits the Big Screen

BY CAMRYN MCCUTCHEON
Staff Writer

SNL is a cornerstone of American television that continues to surprise and delight its viewers.

From the show’s first broadcast on Oct. 11, 1975 to the present, the show stays relevant through its comedy, timeliness and relevancy with pop culture.

Saturday Night Live, also known as SNL, is a sketch comedy show that airs on Saturdays at 11:30 p.m. “The ‘Weekend Update’ always stays timely and brings people in. In election years, the show really speaks to what’s happening in popular culture,” said Dr. Lori Bindig Yousman, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs for the College of Arts & Sciences and professor in the communication & media department.

“The show remains such a fixture in pop culture due to the fantastic writers, comedians that are part of the show, and they stay culturally relevant by bringing in celebrities and musical guests people want to see and hear from,” said Bindig Yousman.

The recent Oct. 12 broadcast featured skits from guest host Ariana Grande, which have followed the path of other skits in the past with its viral internet response.

“The first thing that comes to mind when I think of SNL is that Timothée Chalamet and Pete Davidson skit. I think it’s just so funny and iconic,” said sophomore Amanda Console.

Console is referencing the “Rap Roundtable” skit from December 2020, where Chalamet and Davidson portray and poke fun at SoundCloud rappers.

“Taylor Swift is probably my favorite guest. Her ‘All Too Well (10 Minute Version)’ performance was so iconic,” said Console.

For 49 years, SNL has brought viewers in with its comedy and skits. “I think people

watch because a large number of people grew up with it and it’s part of their youth,” said Bindig Yousman. “People like me, it’s been on my whole life. It’s just something you watch and it becomes part of this shared experience across generations.”

SNL is known for its guest appearances, featuring prominent comedians and musical guests.

“I think of the really iconic comedians, whether it’s Tina Fey, Kristen Wiig, Will Ferrell and Adam Sandler,” said Bindig Yousman. “My parents had their own comedians that really stood out for them and were part of the cast. Each generation has that.”

Upon its 50th season, director Jasion Reitman’s film “Saturday Night” is an ode to the show and its longevity.

The film follows the 90 minutes leading up to the first ever broadcast of Saturday Night Live. The chaos, anxiety and stars are all captured in 109 minutes on the big-screen.

According to a review by AP News writer Jake Coyle, “Reitman’s movie is striving for a myth of ‘Saturday Night Live.’” Released on Friday, Oct. 11, the film has scored an 80% on Rotten Tomatoes, 7.4/10 on IMBD and 63% on Metacritic, as of Oct. 17.

Manohla Dargis of the New York Times both criticized and complimented the film, saying that the movie is a fantastical retelling of the original story.

According to Bindig Yousman, SNL has lasted and stayed relevant this long for two reasons: “People want to laugh, no matter how good or bad times are, and that’s what SNL does. Timeliness, what sticks out to me is the Dan Levy skit about Zillow and looking at houses during the pandemic, when so many people were doing the same thing. It was a way to take something that was scary and make us laugh.”

The next SNL episode will air on Saturday, Nov. 2 at 11:30 p.m. and will be hosted by John Mulaney with musical guest Chappell Roan.

SHUpermen Return from Hiatus

BY OLIVIA MCNAMARA
Staff Writer

SHUpermen has returned to campus after being gone for over a year to “revitalize the group,” said John Morrow, Assistant Director of Choral Programs, who also serves as the groups conductor.

The SHUpermen is a student choral group open to all tenor and bass singers at Sacred Heart University.

SHUpermen kicked off their return at the Family Weekend Teaser Concert on Sunday, Oct. 6, performing alongside other choir ensembles. SHUpermen performed the “Austrialian Sea Shanty” and “The Wellerman.”

“Finding ways to engage students with a more traditional type of song like ‘The Wellerman’ that has had a life of its own in recent pop culture is a helpful way to bridge the gap for some of our singers who have maybe never sung in a choir before and might feel apprehensive about singing,” said Morrow.

SHUpermen members incorporate all different types of music in their performances like spirituals, jazz, pop, classical and acapella. Although choir groups can be intimidating, there is a spot for everyone in SHUpermen, even if someone



Contributed by Jackson Sokolowski, '25
The revamped SHUpermen made their 2024-2025 debut at the Family Weekend Choir Concert singing “The Wellerman.”

is new to choir itself.

John McCaffrey, member and Co-Recruitment Chair for the Choral Program’s executive board describes SHUpermen as, “An excellent environment for beginners to explore their voices, but challenging enough for advanced vocalists to develop their musical skills.”

Sophomore John Wassersug said, “We have such a wide range of songs we practice during rehearsals and there really is something for everybody.”

Although SHUpermen is a male-based ensemble group, all students in the tenor and bass vocal range are encouraged to join.

“SHUpermen is for everyone. At first, I was a bit nervous about joining as a woman, but it’s a really fun and welcoming environment. It wasn’t hard at all to make friends and get into the music with everyone,” said sophomore Tamyra Lorthe.

The SHUpermen group offers opportunities for all types of students. “We have students from all walks of life in the group, choir, band, orchestra, but also business, nursing and education,” said Murrow. “For some, this is the first time they’ve sung in a choir, which is incredibly exciting. The group is open to anyone and everyone who sings in the tenor/bass ranges.”

In addition to the excitement and reactions that the return of SHUpermen has encouraged, sophomore Ricky Rodriguez, a music major and SHUpermen member, said, “People were thrilled. We received lots of love and support from friends, family and the community.”

“I am looking forward to the effects that this group will have on the choir program as a whole,” said McCaffrey. “It serves as a fun and educational introduction to the program for students who might never have considered joining. I believe it will encourage members to audition for other choirs at SHU.”

As SHUpermen continues to return, students are excited to see its progression and the group’s growth.

Sophomore Ryan Buchan, a music major, said, “We like to balance the line of fun and business and I can’t wait to see how far we grow.”

Now Playing at the SHU Community Theatre

BY ERIN PELLEGRINNI
Staff Writer and Circulation Manager

Would you describe yourself as a “Horror Movie Buff,” a comedy enthusiast or a music lover? If so, the SHU Community Theatre has a fall season of events that may be of interest to you.

For movie fans, the SHU Community Theatre is having a showing of “The Shining.” The film by Stanley Kubrick will be screened on Oct. 25 at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. It is the final movie being screened in the theatre’s Halloween movie collection for October 2024.

Junior Anna Allegretti enjoyed her experience as a movie goer when she joined the SHU Theatre Repertory Company to see a screening of the film “Theatre Camp.”

“It was really nice; all of the staff was really welcoming and the facilities were very impressive,” Allegretti said.

In addition, Allegretti was also a part of a concert on behalf of the SHU Choirs, which took place at the SHU Community Theatre. Those looking for their chance to sing are in luck, as the theatre is hosting an “EPIC QUEEN Sing-Along” event presented by “Choir! Choir! Choir!” on Nov. 17 at 7 p.m.

For the comedy fans, on Oct. 23 at 7:30 p.m., a unique opportunity is happening at the SHU Community Theatre. Stephen Kellogg is performing his comedy special “Midlife Crisis,” which is the special’s first taping.

On Oct. 26 at 8 p.m., a group of seasoned Broadway professionals called “The Midtown Men” will perform at a benefit for SHU Performing Arts. Dr. John Petillo invited all Performing Arts students to attend the event, and the funds raised will go towards Performing Arts Scholarships.

On Oct. 27, SHU Community Theatre is presenting “Untamed,” a performance by SHU Mo(VE)ment and Inception Dance Crew. The Dance Program is one of the many performing arts ensembles that have had the chance to perform on the theatre’s stage.

Then on Nov. 2 at 8 p.m., Grammy award winning vocalist Lisa Fischer and her band, Grand Baton, are hosting a concert. Their music influences include progressive rock, psychedelic soul and Caribbean influence, among others.

With so many events, the planning process always starts with a mission, said Matt Oestreicher, Director of the SHU Community Theatre. “We reach out. We say, ‘Hey, do you want to play here? What would it take to get you to do your event here?’ Then there’s some preproduction and a lot of communication contracts,” said Oestreicher.

“We are always thinking about how we can represent the values and the mission of Sacred Heart through our own presentation of artistic and educational events,” said Oestreicher.

The theatre presents music in all different styles, featuring a rock series, jazz series and a classical series. According to Oestricher, with every series, whether it be film, comedy, or music, the SHU Community Theatre always strives to be a supporter of the arts.

“It’s your theater,” said Oestreicher. “You’re welcome here all the time and you can always reach out.”



Tracy Deer-Mirek, Sacred Heart University
The SHU Community Theatre, home of performances, concerts, and films.

Sports



Josh Gee, Sacred Heart University

BY SHANNON TUTTLE
Co-Sports Editor

Back-to-back doubleheader games welcomed Sacred Heart University’s women’s ice hockey team to their 2024-2025 season. The Pioneers faced off against Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) on their home-opening weekend from Oct. 4-5 and against Saint Anselm College from the following weekend of Oct. 11-12.

The women finished both doubleheaders even, winning and losing two games. Their first victory was against RPI in overtime for the team’s first game of the season. Graduate student Savannah Popick backhanded the game-winning goal with two minutes left in the three-on-three overtime.

“It was great to get that team win and to do it in that way,” said Popick. “It was such a great game and all-around great team effort from top to bottom.”

The women took their celebration on the bus and headed to Troy, N.Y. for the back half of their doubleheader. With less than 24 hours to recover and no home-ice advantage, the Pioneers fell four goals short to the Engineers.

“RPI had a chance to sleep in their own beds and have their own pregame meal, while we hopped on a bus,” said Head Coach Thomas O’Malley.

The next weekend against Saint Anselm would also feature back-to-back games with less than a day’s recovery. The Pioneers lost by one goal on Saturday but came back on Sunday to win with four unanswered goals.

This quick recovery process between games is something the women must master, as their next five weekends in the fall semester are all doubleheaders. This requires the team to understand and take care of their physical and mental body.

“Our athletic training staff takes such great care of us, and we are given so many things

to help out with that recovery,” said Popick. “We have the utmost care in the world where we can go into an ice bath after a game, we can take a hot bath, or we can put on thermatech boots to help our legs out.”

Popick describes that her body is adjusted to the quick turnaround between games because of the support from the athletic trainers. SHU currently has eight full-time and five graduate student/intern athletic trainers for Division I sports, with facilities in the Valentine Health & Recreation Center and the William H. Pitt Athletic & Convocation Center

“Our athletic trainer sets us up with all the resources we need, but it’s also mental,” said junior Olivia LaRoche. “Reflecting after the game, if it goes poorly, we have to flush it. If it goes well, we need to play off that energy.”

The mental switch from one game to the next in less than 24 hours is also a challenge that the women face. LaRoche explained how difficult it is to lose the first game, quickly shake it off, and find the energy to play well in the second game.

A driving force that helps LaRoche and her teammates endure the short physical and mental recovery process between games is their shared love for the game.

“I personally have a lot of excitement when I think ‘That was a great win, but we still have tomorrow so let’s get ready for that,’” said Popick. “I think that’s such an underrated feeling.”

Popick’s words were put into play by the women’s third back-to-back games of the season. They were able to adequately adjust to the quick turnaround by winning 4-3 against Stonehill College on Friday and 2-0 against the same opponents on Saturday.

“I think it’s really fun that we get the opportunity to play a team twice in one weekend,” said LaRoche.

The Pioneers will be looking to extend their three-game winning streak when they face off against Long Island University in a doubleheader weekend from Nov. 1-2.

Women’s Bowling Finishes Second in First Tournament

BY PRINCELY SEME
Staff Writer

The Sacred Heart University women’s bowling team opened their season on Oct. 12-13, where they placed second at the Bud Whitman Memorial, hosted by Chestnut Hill College.

The Pioneer’s went 7-2 at the tournament, securing a second place finish after a narrow 1237-1217 defeat to Fairleigh Dickinson University.

“The performance at the first tournament was promising,” said junior Megan Prettyman. “We had some lows, but that’s expected at the first tournament with a slightly different group of girls. It was a promising showing.”

The Pioneers were led by junior transfer Hope Bunk, with a 218.40 average across five traditional matches. Graduate student Paige Donovan followed with a 215.60 average, while Prettyman posted 192.60, both over the same five matches.

The Bud Whitman Memorial tournament marked the Pioneer’s first bowl as an independent team, as the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) does not sponsor bowling. The university switched to the MAAC after leaving the Northeast Conference (NEC) last year.

“Our goal while in the NEC was to win matches, our goal now as an independent is to win matches to hopefully make postseason as an at large, without the opportunity to win an automatic qualifier,” said Prettyman.

Despite the challenges of competing as an independent team for the first time, the Pioneers remain focused on consistent performance and execution.

“Preparation this season was no different than any other year,” said sophomore Karleigh LeMond. “As a team, we focused on incorporating new teammates into our mix to see how their talents add to the team. Individually, we each had our own goals and tasks to work on before the season started.”

LeMond is following up on a standout first year, where she made both All-NEC First Team and All-Rookie Team.

“I do not feel any extra individual pressure coming into this season from my successful season last year,” said LeMond. “I believe my personal success comes from having a strong

mental game and confidence in myself. I am more excited than anything for this season to see how far I can go and how successful I can be.”

Before the women’s independent debut at the Bud Whitman Memorial, they were ranked 18th in the NTCA Preseason Poll. This is one spot behind where they were ranked last year, being one of only five ranked independent teams.

“I can’t say there’s more or less pressure. Perhaps just different pressure,” said Prettyman. “No pressure to win a conference, but there’s still pressure to up our win-loss record for ranking.”

Previous seasons in the NEC, the women won six championships since 2010 and finished in the top two for eight consecutive years. This season as an independent team, they are focused on building on their success and on performing well to qualify for postseason play.

“We are trying to boost our ranking as an independent team so we can get an at large since we aren’t in a conference,” said LeMond. “We do not have the NEC championship as an automatic qualifier for the NCAA postseason tournaments. We really must focus on making every match count, especially the ones against high-ranking teams.”

The team competes next on Nov. 9-10 at the Bowl for the Cure tournament in East Haven, Conn., hosted by Sacred Heart University.



Instagram, @sacredheartbowling

The Sacred Heart women's bowling team ahead of the 2023-2024 NEC championship match.

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Media Literacy Education as a Civic Service

BY BELINHA DE ABREU, PHD.

Ubuntu. ‘*I am because we are.*’ Nuance, discernment, reflection are all words that can be used to describe what is most needed today in media messaging especially as we go into another election cycle. The ability to engage and understand in this way has purpose to building peaceful interactions within our communities.

As the conduit and influencer, the media is the repository for these connections. It is the messenger, the producer, the innovator, and the creator. We, all people, live within the frames of the development of the media, and we have become the communicators as encoders, decoders, and even the methods of delivery. In many ways, the media has become an augmentation of our person. Our human distinction, which separates us from the media as a tool, is our ability to discern and consider the media as a platform, as a vehicle, as a tool, and as a representation.

ELECTION 2024:

Divisive, polarized, disconnected, disenfranchised -- words suggesting a breakdown in the framework of our global society from the lack of civilized discourse during this election year. These words come to life on our screens daily with the messaging produced by candidates on the local and national level. Add to this the clash of structures and ideologies, conflicting strategies in response to world events, and mounting frustration due to disinformation are just some of the many polarizing debates of our day. These struggles have left a widening gap between people in understanding, collaboration, and cooperation.

Adam Sternbergh from the New York Times, in his Dec. 17, 2023 article states, “We are living in a rage-filled emotional dystopia.” Sherry Turkle in her book, Reclaiming Conversation, states that “We have sacrificed conversation for mere connection.” Her point being that the only thing that hold us together is technology. The media often uses the phrase, “We have to have a national conversation.” Yet, the moment for dialogue and real in-depth awareness seems to be passing us by at every turn. These points are observable whether in higher education, in work spaces or in our interpersonal relationships. It has become evident in the last several years that something has gone wrong with our ability to have sincere, respectful, and transparent dialogue. So how do we bridge conversations both in spite of and because of differing opinions? What are some of the root causes of these dialogic problems? Ultimately how do we engage in conversation using a media literacy lens as the backdrop to move our communities forward peacefully. Is this not the route to civic society?

VIEWPOINT:

As a media literacy educator, what has become more evident is the lack of ability for people to listen to various perspectives and then engage in dialogue. In media literacy, information literacy and news literacy circles so much time has been spent pointing out misinformation or disinformation that the deeper essence of media literacy education has been forgotten such as understanding who we are, what we believe and what we are willing to hear when presented with mediated views. Subsequently, people believe that being disconnected and uninvolved is a better solution than to be a part of the process of civic engagement due to the discord which is repeatedly exhibited on our screens. What is most concerning is that there is uncertainty regarding what engagement is as well as how we perceive interaction and how we negotiate meaning in all these spaces. It also is a step into how conversations can lead to empathy and also better mental health practices.

Engaging in the process of communicating people to each other is directed work where all parties involved want to be present and willingly interact. The work of media literacy education requires this depth of collaboration. On a surface level, it is about asking the basics of questions which takes us to the what is happening as well as the why of what is occurring. The problem we see in our society is that the assumption of those ideas is being misrepresented. Those pieces of misrepresentation and misinformation are then discharged by those in the political arena, repeated by the media without clarification or factual knowledge, and then in turn this contributes to the waste which is muddled in media environments that later seeps out into the world and further our interpersonal relationships.

Our disengagement is front and center and carried daily to viewers by our news media. As an observer and researcher of the media, this issue is the central public debate of our time. In the past several years, we have seen how misguided communication, enraged conversations, and divisions have been at the forefront. In personal and professional spaces, people are unable to express their thoughts or opinions without feeling in jeopardy. There is a distrust in the sources of information. More to the point, we have stopped listening to each other which is most concerning. The work of media literacy is to bridge conversations to offer the proverbial olive branch so that communication can be broadened. As two of my colleagues noted in a recent publication:

Media literacy helps us respond to media from a grounded place, not an emotional one. Taking the time to discern the broader context of media messages allows for us to engage with them constructively. Practicing civic discourse in the midst of a live conversation would require us to listen carefully to the speaker to identify what it is they are trying to communicate, wait patiently for them to finish so we can make sure we understand the full context of their argument, ask questions about that which we don’t understand, differentiate between facts and opinions, and then identify common ground to share and move forward (Baldi and Seraydarian, 2022).

This statement fully encompasses the idea behind what correlates media literacy in participating in genuine as well as timely moments. The ability to be present and to accept the connection to converse is fundamental ending our societal discord. It promotes the human connection and not a reactive one.

Election day is literally around the corner. People are beginning to pick their corners in order to be the loudest person behind the bullhorn. The work of media literacy education is a necessity in order to foster viewpoint diversity and create productive engagement despite differences. Be one of those people – receptive to dialogue, listening, and engaging. And, don’t forget to Go Vote!

Belinha De Abreu, PhD.

Belinha S. De Abreu, PhD. is a global media literacy educator professor at Sacred Heart University. She served as an International Expert to the Forum on Media & Information Literacy for UNESCO's Communication & Information Section. Dr. De Abreu was the recipient of the 2021 US National Media Literacy Research Award. For more information: www.belinhadeabreu.org.

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