

# THE SPECTRUM



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## New Scholarship to Support Engineering Students

BY DECLAN TOLAND  
Staff Writer

The School of Computer Science and Engineering has partnered with two Connecticut-based companies, Microboard Processing Inc. and PTA Plastics, to launch a new scholarship program designed to support students in engineering and technology.

The initiative aims to invest in the future of advanced manufacturing by offering financial support, mentorship and internship opportunities that connect students directly to the region's growing technology industry.

"This partnership helps students realize that what they do in school, their grades, projects and involvement, matters and is noticed by future employers," said Dr. Tolga Kaya, director of engineering at Sacred Heart. "It shows that the industry is paying attention."

The scholarship will benefit continuously enrolled undergraduates in the School of Computer Science and Engineering, with preference given to students pursuing degrees in electrical or mechanical engineering. While the award is modest, faculty say its impact goes beyond tuition assistance.

"Even a small amount of financial relief can make a meaningful difference for students facing unexpected challenges," said Kevin Bowlyn, associate professor of computer science and engineering. "It allows them to focus more on their studies rather than financial concerns."

Bowlyn said the collaboration also aligns with Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont's ongoing effort to strengthen the state's manufacturing sector.

"Local companies have a strong incentive to invest in Sacred Heart's engineering students," said Bowlyn. "It's a way to keep talented graduates in Connecticut and support a sustainable, highly skilled workforce."

Kaya said the partnership is mutually beneficial, helping both students and local businesses prepare for long-term success.

"The manufacturing industry always struggles to find the right talent," said Kaya. "By working closely with universities, companies can identify skilled students early, while our students gain real-world experience and are better prepared for the workforce."

Students have welcomed the initiative as a sign of growing recognition for Sacred Heart's expanding engineering program.

Junior Christopher Altomare, an electrical and computer engineering major, said he first heard about the partnership through an email from one of his professors.

"When I first heard of the collaboration, I was excited," said Altomare. "Both companies are well respected in the field and open up new opportunities for engineering students to learn and connect."

Altomare said he believes the scholarship will not only help individual recipients but also strengthen the broader community.

"It helps future engineers pay for college, but it also opens doors for internships and employment," said Altomare. "Partnerships like this show that companies see the value in SHU students and want to invest in that potential."

The scholarship also reflects Sacred Heart's focus on applied learning. Partner companies plan to host



Contributed by Professor Kevin Bowlyn

Local Tech Companies Start Scholarship for SHU STEM Students.

workshops and site visits to give students hands-on experience with advanced technologies, such as printed circuit board design, injection molding and electronic testing.

Kaya said the university's engineering programs are known for adapting quickly to meet industry needs.

"We have developed strong connections with local industries and have been recognized as an agile, innovative program," said Kaya. "This scholarship is just the beginning of a long-term collaboration that will continue to grow."

Bowlyn said he hopes other companies will follow this model and continue supporting Sacred Heart's engineering programs.

"This initiative not only supports students financially, but also builds relationships that connect classrooms to real-world applications," said Bowlyn.

Altomare said he believes the partnership sends a clear message to future students.

"It shows that our hard work is being noticed," said Bowlyn. "That motivates all of us to keep pushing forward."

## Writing to be Understood: Lecture by Dr. Leonard Cassuto

BY LAUREN RAUSO  
Staff Writer

Dr. Leonard Cassuto, professor of English at Fordham University, held a talk on Oct. 23 in the Loris Forum about ethics and the importance of writing in higher education in today's world.

Cassuto's latest published book, *Academic Writing as If Readers Matter*, explains the importance of how academic writing should be clear to understand and reader-friendly. Cassuto also touches on how writing in higher education does not need to be overcomplicated and how it is more beneficial to sound smart while still being easy to understand.

This event was introduced to students and faculty by Dr. Cara Kilgallen, an associate English professor. Kilgallen has been a SHU professor for about sixteen years, and she specializes in American literature, nonfiction and creative writing. Kilgallen attended Fordham University, where she earned her doctorate.

"[Cassuto] was my mentor at Fordham, along with many other professors' mentors, and Leonard is all about giving back," said Kilgallen.

After the talk, Cassuto and Kilgallen held a Q&A panel open to

both students and faculty members.

The talk was organized by the Department of English, the Human Journey series, the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, and the Hersher Institute of Ethics.

"All of these departments came together in hopes to make a difference in students' writings and allow them to connect their writing to ethics and for future education," said Kilgallen.

While there were more faculty members than students in attendance, the students present were able to take away key information about how to make writing clearer and stronger.

"I am happy that I attended this talk today because I learned how to improve my writing," said junior Amy Southall. "I always thought that my writing had to be written a certain way to sound smart and strong; however, today I was told it is more beneficial to write in a more understanding style so that it is inclusive for all readers to understand."

Writing in higher education at the moment is contentious because students' reliance on artificial intelligence (AI) has been on the uptick. Rather than relying on these tools, professors are trying to ensure students can write and edit

See Writing to be Understood: Lecture by Dr. Leonard Cassuto  
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# News

## Immigration crackdown stokes fear and solidarity at a Catholic church in DC

BY LUIS ANDRES HENAO AND TIFFANY STANLEY  
AP Newsroom

WASHINGTON (AP) — The imposing Shrine of the Sacred Heart, a Catholic church a short drive from the White House, was intended to be a sanctuary for worshippers. Now, its mostly immigrant congregation is steeped in fear.

Church leaders say more than 40 members of their parish have been detained, deported or both since federal law enforcement stepped up their deployment in August.

Many parishioners are too scared to leave home to attend Mass, buy food or seek medical care, as the Trump administration's immigration crackdown targets their communities.

Cardinal Robert McElroy, who leads the Archdiocese of Washington, said the government was using fear to rob immigrants "of any sense of real peace or security."

"It really is an instrument of terror," he told The Associated Press.

Trump's federal law enforcement surge technically ended on Sept. 10. But National Guard troops and federal agents remain in the nation's capital. That includes immigration authorities, who continue to prowl near Sacred Heart, which sits in a vibrant Latino community flanked by two neighborhoods — Columbia Heights and Mt. Pleasant — that have been home to successive waves of immigrants.

The parish was established more than 100 years ago by Irish, Italian and German immigrants. Today, most of its 5,600 members came from El Salvador, but also from Haiti, Brazil and Vietnam.

The immigration raids have upended lives and worship at Sacred Heart. Families grieve for missing loved ones. Attendance at Masses, which are held in several languages, has dropped dramatically, visible in the many empty pews under the domed church's colorful mosaics.

"About half the people are afraid to come," said the Rev. Emilio Biosca, the church's pastor.

But the church community rejects being reduced to powerless victims. During the crisis, pastors and church volunteers have attended immigration court hearings, covered rent and legal fees, and donated and delivered food to those fearful of leaving home.

"Our role here at the church has changed, also dramatically," Biosca said. "Because we have so many people who are adversely affected by that situation, we cannot possibly go on as business as usual."

### Active church volunteers face deportation

On a recent day, parishioners dedicated a rosary to the detained and deported church members. They pray daily on Zoom because so many are fearful of stepping outside their homes.

Among them was a woman who hasn't returned to the church since last month, when U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers detained her husband while the couple sold fruits and vegetables from a stand that was their main source of income.

They entered the U.S. illegally nearly two decades ago to escape gang violence in El Salvador. They met at Sacred Heart, where they both have been active volunteers, often leading retreats and programs. For years, her husband helped coordinate popular Holy Week processions.

When her husband was detained, the first person the woman called was her pastor. Since then, the church has helped to pay her rent. She is now preparing to move to Boston with family members as her husband faces deportation from a Louisiana detention center. Barring some unforeseen change that would allow him to stay in the U.S., she plans to move back to El Salvador to be with him.

"It's been a very difficult, bitter month of crying and suffering," she said, speaking on condition of anonymity out of fear she could be deported. "Our lives changed from one day to the next. We had so many dreams."

In her apartment, she clutched rosary beads, surrounded by the cardboard boxes she had been packing with their belongings. On her desk near a makeshift altar of the Virgin Mary, she keeps a prayer card of Pope Leo XIV, who has vowed to "stand with" migrants.

When someone on the Zoom worship read a name from a long list of the detained, she flinched and whispered sadly: "That's my husband." Above her hung a framed photo of the couple, smiling joyfully on their wedding day at Sacred Heart.

### The Catholic Church supports migrants

A top archdiocesan leader, Auxiliary Bishop Evelio Menjivar, crossed into the U.S. illegally

in 1990 after fleeing El Salvador. His journey to the church hierarchy — after working odd jobs and obtaining asylum and then U.S. citizenship — has made him an important symbol for the area's Catholic immigrants.

Of the recent ICE detentions, Menjivar said, "That could have been me, you know."

He recently helped lead a procession in support of migrants and refugees that began at Sacred Heart.

He said the parish feels like home to him. "It holds a very special place not just for me, but for many, many immigrants."

The Catholic Church staunchly defends the rights of migrants, even as it acknowledges the rights of nations to control their borders. U.S. Catholics depend on foreign-born priests to serve parishes. In the Washington Archdiocese, which includes D.C. and parts of Maryland, more than 40% of parishioners are Latino.

Tricia McLaughlin, Department of Homeland Security assistant secretary, said via email that "DHS law enforcement in Washington, D.C. is targeting the worst of the worst violent criminal aliens."

Biosca, Sacred Heart's pastor, had thought the Trump administration's immigration enforcement would target violent criminals. But then, he said, they began to go after his congregation.

"It became very unbearable," he said, adding that the targets seemed like anyone who "just looked Hispanic."

At the Sacred Heart School, principal Elias Blanco said at least two families withdrew their children because they didn't want to risk being detained while dropping them off.

"There's certainly a lot of fear with our parents," he said.

Many of the children at the school are U.S. citizens who have parents in the country illegally. In case they are detained, some parents have signed caregiver affidavits, which designate a legal guardian, in hopes their children stay out of foster care.

"It's like a ripple effect," Blanco said of the immigration detentions. "It might be one person, but that individual is the father of someone, the husband of someone, the brother, and then it impacts the whole family."

### Clergy join immigrants at court

Church leaders have accompanied congregants to immigration court, where, in cities nationwide, masked ICE officers have arrested immigrants as they leave hearings.

The Rev. Carlos Reyes, a Sacred Heart priest originally from El Salvador, attended a hearing with a 20-year-old congregant who recently arrived in the U.S. illegally from Bolivia.

Thanks to support from Reyes and Sacred Heart, she said her hope and her Catholic faith have deepened.

"It's a refuge for me because it's all I have here, because I don't have anyone," she said, sobbing after a Sunday Mass. She spoke on condition of anonymity because she has another court hearing soon and fears deportation.

### Parishioners make deliveries to those in hiding

On a recent Saturday, volunteers gathered in the church basement. They formed a circle to pray before they packed bags of donated food.

Then they made deliveries to immigrant congregants who hadn't left their homes in weeks, not even to buy groceries. Some recipients stepped out to thank the volunteers, cautiously looking around for ICE personnel.

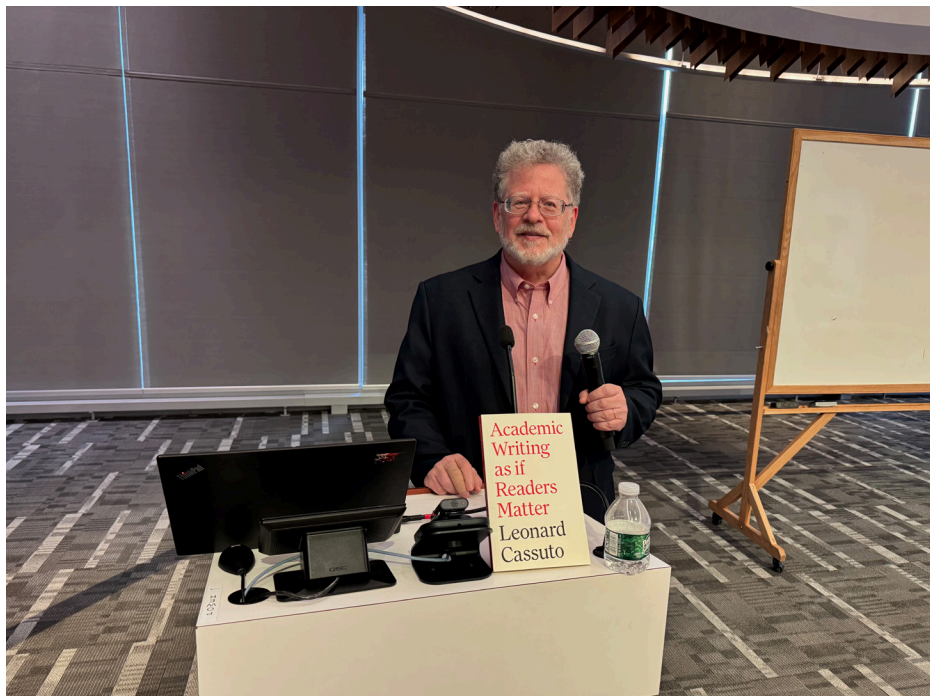
"These people are losing their dignity," said a congregant who helped deliver the food and is a legal U.S. resident. She spoke on condition of anonymity, fearing her U.S. citizenship process could still be disrupted.

"As people of God, we can't just sit and watch," she said. "We have to do what we can."

*Associated Press video journalist Jessie Wardarski contributed to this report.*

## Writing to be Understood: Lecture by Dr. Leonard Cassuto

BY LAUREN RAUSO  
Staff Writer



Nicholas Maisano, Staff Writer and Photographer

Dr. Leonard Cassuto with his book "Academic Writing as if Readers Matter" prior to his book talk in the Loris Forum on Oct. 23, 2025.

their own work.

"With the use of AI, it does not allow us to tell our own story within writing, and what I hope students take away from this talk is the importance of connecting human relationships through writing," said Kilgallen.

Dr. Brian Stiltner, a professor in the Theology and Religious Studies dept., had many strong feelings about having Leonard Cassuto on campus and the impact he would have on SHU students in attendance.

"I hope that all students will take away that good writing requires taking care of your reader, which means making your writing useful and readable," said Stiltner.

Stiltner not only attended this talk for his students but also to improve his own skills to enable his writing to benefit his students and other readers.

"Professor Cassuto is reminding everyone to use these skills, professors too, and I hope students will see professors are constantly trying to improve their writing ability and will be willing to make more efforts to improve their own writing as well," said Stiltner.

# Features

## The Look of Sustainability

BY CAROLINE DAVINO  
Staff Writer

Across campus, sustainability has become part of daily life with Stanley cups, thrifted outfits, and campus programs that push for less waste. But for many, one question remains: are students being environmentally conscious out of genuine care or because it's the latest trend?

"I think students do what they can, and I do believe that, over the past several years, student commitment to sustainability and environmental care has indeed increased," said Dr. June-Ann Greeley, a member of the Laudato Si' Office of Sustainability & Social Justice advisory board.

"I can remember when even the idea of recycling plastic bottles was seen as 'radical' and now students readily comply with that directive," said Greeley.

Greeley said younger generations are more aware of the environmental impacts from previous generations.

"My sense is that Gen Z especially is attuned to the needs of the planet as my generation has done so much damage. Young people are much more aware of the fragility of the earth and how damage can last for generations," said Greeley.

According to Greeley, change begins with daily awareness. Even small steps can help contribute to making a difference.

"One action that I think might be helpful is to cultivate a 'sustainable' approach to everything we do," said Greeley. "Be sure to recycle, support locally sourced foods, reflect daily on our carbon footprint, and think about initiating a thrift store program at the end of the year."

Senior Paris Sonnenberg, vice president of Community and Unity for Student Government, said sustainable habits are common across campus.

"I've noticed students that have been making small but meaningful sustainable habits," said Sonnenberg. "Almost everyone carries a Stanley or Owala bottle everywhere instead of using single use plastic water bottles."

Sonnenberg said some choices lean more toward trends than impact.

"I'd like to believe that some students genuinely care about the environment and want to reduce waste, but others are definitely influenced by trends," said Sonnenberg. "When Owalas started to become more popular, students started to throw away their Stanleys and replace it with an Owala, which defeats the purpose of a reusable water bottle."

Sonnenberg said social media adds another layer. With new trends popping up frequently, it makes people more likely to partake, even if they aren't aware of how environmentally conscious they are being.

"Between 2019 and 2021, thrifting was huge," said Sonnenberg. "Lately, it feels like fast fashion has made a comeback, especially with TikTok micro trends that push cheap, quick styles from places like Edikt or Zara."

According to Sonnenberg, Student Government contributes to making an effort to increase sustainability on campus. She said Student Government hosts an annual textbook drive which helps in reusing text books instead of going to waste.

"My main motivation is to make education more affordable to students, but it's also a

great sustainability initiative because it encourages reusing materials and reducing waste," said Sonnenberg.

Dr. Chelsea King, a member of the Laudato Si' advisory board, said visibility can lead to real progress.

"Trends can be an entry point into deeper awareness," said King. "What matters is what happens after the trend: does it stay at the level of aesthetics, or does it grow into a genuine sense of care for creation?"

She said the university continues to expand its sustainability work.

"Sacred Heart is taking real, tangible steps. We've expanded outdoor spaces, promoted recycling through our SHU RED bins, and we're building community projects that make sustainability visible," said King. "The Outdoors Club and Laudato Si' Office also host events like wellness walks and Earth Week celebrations."

King said small choices can make the biggest difference.

"Start small. Be mindful. It's not about changing the entire world overnight," said King. "When you act from that place of awareness and gratitude, even the simplest choices — a reusable bottle, walking instead of driving, choosing secondhand — become acts of love."



Caroline Davino, Staff Writer and Photographer

Sacred Heart trash and recycling bins paired together outside of the parking garage on the Park Avenue Campus.

## Springing into Registration

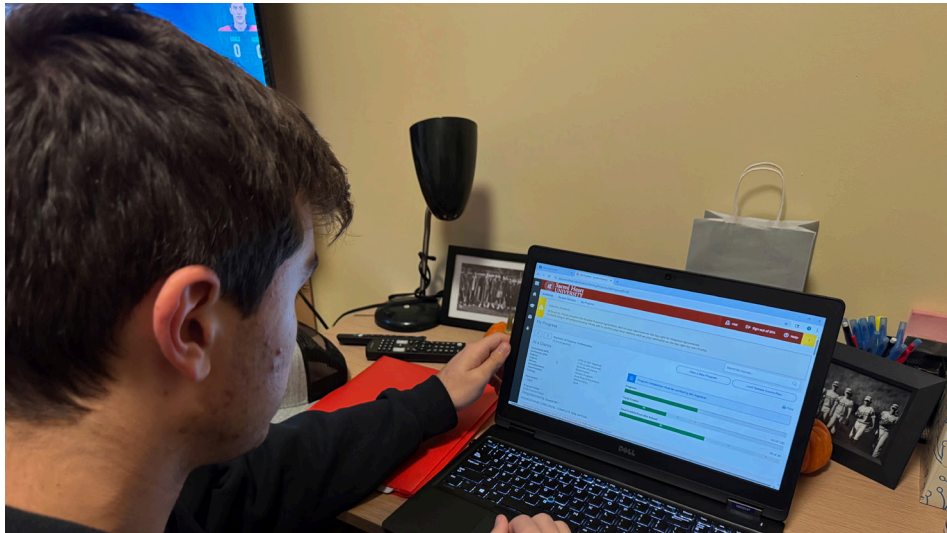
BY INGRID KLIER  
Staff Writer

Spring registration can be stressful for new students at Sacred Heart University. Between picking classes, meeting with advisors and logging in early on registration day, the process can be confusing. With some preparation and support, freshmen can register smoothly and start the semester feeling confident.

Cooper Rothman, director of the Welch Experience, said that the best thing students can do is start early.

"Planning out your classes as soon as they are uploaded to Student Planning and Advising for the new semester is the best idea," said Rothman. "This gives you time to look through what's offered, meet with your academic advisor before registration starts and feel ready for the big day."

Each student gets a specific registration date and time, which depends on their academic status. Student athletes, honors students and other students all register at different times, and the dates vary each semester. The University Registrar sends this information by email.



Nicholas Maisano, Staff Writer and Photographer

Students can check their course credits and progress using Student Planning and Advising (SPA).

"Check your email for a letter from Angela Pitcher," said Rothman. "She sends every student their day and time to register, usually starting at 7 a.m. on a day in late October or early November. Mark it on your calendar and set an alarm. Just like buying concert tickets, you want to log in right when your time starts."

Senior McLean Signora, first year experience (FYE) classroom assistant, said meeting with an advisor early helps avoid last minute stress.

"The earlier you meet with your advisor and look over your degree plan, the smoother registration will be," said Signora. "Many students wait until the night before, and that's when the panic begins. Give yourself time to review your options and make sure your choices fit your goals."

Signora added that freshmen should use all the help available to them.

"Your advisor is there to guide you, but your FYE mentor, professors and older students can help too," said Signora. "Ask which classes fill up quickly or are best to take first."

Rothman said students should rely on their academic resources.

"Some classes are only offered in the spring, some only in the fall," said Rothman. "Make sure you're taking your prerequisites on time by using your major check sheets. You can find them on the Sacred Heart website to see everything you need for your degree."

Signora also reminded students to keep balance in mind.

"Try not to take too many difficult classes in one semester," said Signora. "Mix major courses with core classes so your workload stays manageable."

Registration usually begins early in the morning. Rothman said students should be logged in and ready a few minutes before their assigned time.

"At about 6:57 a.m. or 6:58 a.m., be at your computer with your schedule ready, when 7 a.m. hits, refresh once. Do not refresh again, or you could lose your place. Click the big blue 'Register for Classes' button in your course plan for spring 2026 and let it load," said Rothman.

He also suggested finding a strong internet connection.

"We sometimes recommend leaving your residence hall since the Wi-Fi might be slow with so many students registering," said Rothman. "I've always had good luck at Linda's and the Main Academic Building with Wi-Fi connection."

Freshman Lizzy Hagstrom said she feels nervous, but prepared for her first registration.

"I'm definitely worried about not getting my first choices, but I'll have backups ready," said Hagstrom. "I already met with my advisor and asked for her recommendations."

She said her friends have also been helpful.

"They have guided me through the process and given me suggestions for good courses and teachers," said Hagstrom.

Signora said that even if registration does not go perfectly, students should not worry.

"If you don't get the classes you want right away, contact your advisor," said Signora. "Spots can open later, or there may be other classes that still keep you on track for graduation."

**UPCOMING  
EVENTS ON  
CAMPUS**

**WEDNESDAY 10/29:  
STUFF A BEAR  
7 P.M. LINDA'S  
FIREPLACE**

**FRIDAY 10/31:  
PSYCHICS AND SIPS  
5 P.M. LINDA'S  
FIREPLACE**

**SATURDAY 11/1:  
FOOTBALL VS NEW  
HAVEN  
12 P.M. CAMPUS  
FIELD**

# Audrey's Corner

## Effect of Social Media on Mental Health

BY INGRID KLIER  
Staff Writer

Scrolling through endless posts might feel harmless, but experts say it could be quietly reshaping the way we think, feel and focus.

From shortened attention spans to rising anxiety, experts, professors and students have noticed social media's isolating effects and control over user's mental well-being.

James Geisler, director of Wellness Services, felt similarly about how social media affects mental health. His perspective insists that social media's effects are dependent on personal choices.

"Social media has the potential to impact mental health in many ways and to varying degrees," said Geisler. "That is why boundaries are so important when it comes to social media; how much we choose to absorb and what we absorb play a critical role for well-being."

Geisler's idea that abundant media consumption without proper limits shows that it is not social media itself that can be damaging to users' mental health but rather the way and frequency in which it's used.

Geisler also correlates social media and mobile devices to recently elevated shortened attention spans.

"It's hard to argue that social media isn't distracting, when we consume content at a rapid pace, our brains crave that fast paced environment, making it harder to concentrate and sustain attention," said Geisler.

"Social media has ruined attention spans. People are having a lot of issues being able to focus or critically think. I can even say I used to be a better speller before I relied so much on autocorrect," said senior McLean Signora.

SHU Counselor Ashley Myers also associates loss of focus to overwhelming time online.

"The nature of social media inherently provides instant gratification and dopamine release through the constant stream of new videos, likes, comments and content," said Myers.

She compared social media to a gambling addiction because users keep scrolling for the next reward, even when it causes stress or loneliness. The more time they devote online, the more they feel insecure and less present in daily life.

"The time spent scrolling on social media can be spent sometimes in other wellness areas," said Signora. "It also creates this constant need to compare yourself to what others have or what they look like, and it takes away from being yourself."

Kenta Minamitani, Stanford Masters of Law (LLM) 2024 graduate, said that these damaging effects of social media are linked to rising mental health complications.

"Mental health problems have become a major public health issue in the United States," said Minamitani.

Higher rates of depression and anxiety among young people are connected to heavy screen use. Minamitani said that government leaders are starting to respond.

"New York City has taken the unprecedented step of classifying social networking sites as a public health threat," said Minamitani, in reference to the city's lawsuit against TikTok, Meta and YouTube.

With experts' actions against a damaging online world and responsible user awareness for balance, understanding how social media affects mental health can make a major difference in overall well-being.

"The best way to know is to be aware of your own relationship with it, notice how you feel, and be able to tell when you need to log off," said Myers.

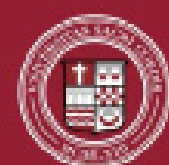
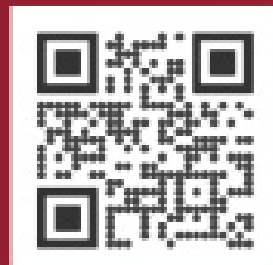


Nicholas Maisano, Staff Writer and Photographer

The Maureen Hamilton Wellness Center located at 4980 Park Ave, Bridgeport, CT, provides free counseling services and other mental health resources for students.

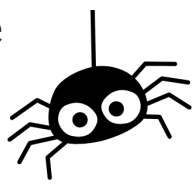
ONCE A **PIONEER**, ALWAYS A **PIONEER**

Earn your graduate degree at  
SHU for a seamless transition and  
unmatched experience.

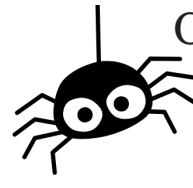


Sacred Heart  
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# CampusLife



## Students Get in the Halloween Spirit

BY ANDREW RABER  
Staff Writer

Halloween is a catalyst of nostalgia for many, with the holiday evoking memories of trick or treating as a kid, going door to door, discussing with friends about which house is giving out king sized candy bars, or what houses don't even answer the door at all.

However, the days of trick or treating are gone for college students, but that does not mean that Halloween loses its attraction to students as a holiday, especially this year, considering that Halloween is on a Friday night. The date provides students a great opportunity to have a great time without the pressure of walking into their 8 a.m. class the next day.

"I'm going out with a group of people, just going out with a bunch of friends. I haven't figured out what we're going to do just yet, but I'm looking forward to it," said sophomore Blake Mattessich.

What about the commuters? After all, they get into Halloween just as much as everyone else.

"I'm going to Miami from Oct. 31 to Nov. 2, and I'm wearing three costumes," said sophomore Leslye Velez, "Friday I'm going to be an archangel, and then Saturday I'm going to be a bunny, and the third day, I'm going to be Velma from Scooby-Doo."

What about those who do have events on the Saturday after Halloween? The men's Division 1 soccer team has a match the next day, which prohibits them from going out.

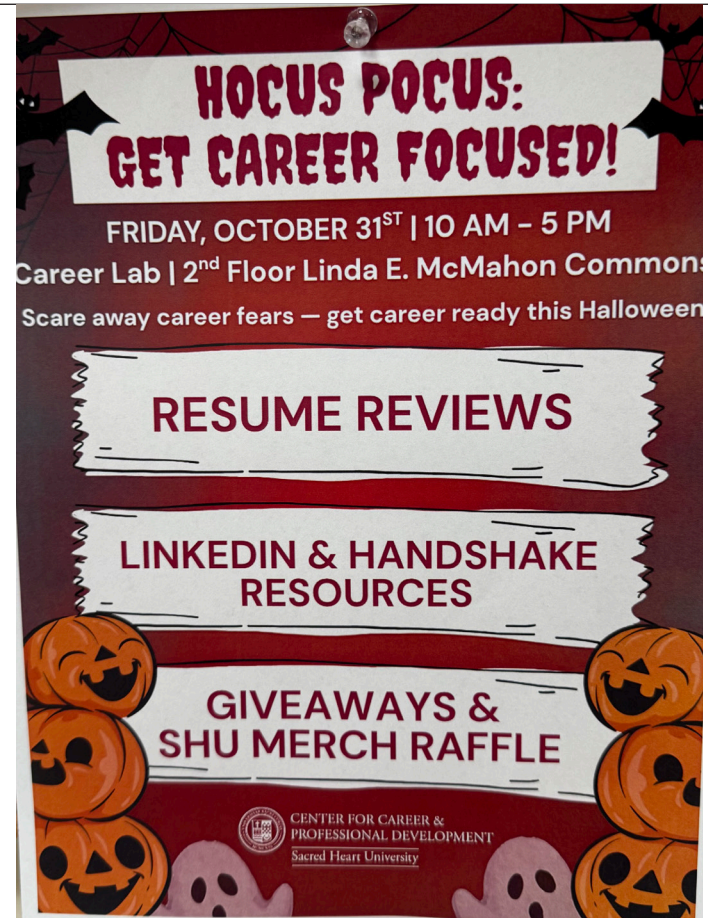
"For Halloween, I'm going to hang out with some of my teammates and watch horror movies, and maybe eat some candy," said senior forward Sam McCann.

Of course, one of the most intriguing aspects of Halloween: horror movies. Whether it is suspenseful films like "The Shining" and "Silence of the Lambs," slasher films like "Friday the 13th" and "Terrifier," or paranormal films like "Sinister" and "Hereditary," the amount of options for those looking to spend their Halloween night screaming and clutching a blanket in fear are endless.

"My favorite scary movie is probably 'Halloween [1978]'. I watched it with my mom for the first time back in third grade, and that was her favorite movie growing up," said Mattessich.

"I don't watch too many horror movies, but I watch stuff like 'The Conjuring' where there's paranormal activity. And the main reason I watch them and why I like them is that I believe in ghosts, so when I watch these movies I'm really into them," said Velez.

Whether it is watching a thriller, going out with friends, or even going to Miami for their party scene, Sacred Heart students all have their own ways of enjoying their Halloween night.



Katelyn Toth, Staff Writer and Photographer

Upcoming Halloween events are promoted on campus through flyers posted in the academic buildings.

## Trick or Treat! Halloween Candy Preferences

BY NICHOLAS DILAPI  
Staff Writer

Trick-or-treating is, to some, the highlight and most memorable part of Halloween. But of course, the prize that comes with the experience is just as exciting.

People sometimes have leftover candy to snack on for weeks after the holiday. But that raises the question, how do people rank them?

After surveying 50 different students, KitKat and Reese's Peanut Butter Cups were the two most liked by students, each receiving 16 votes. Coming in second was Twix, with nine votes, followed by Hershey's Kisses with four votes. The others listed were Sour Patch Kids, Jolly Ranchers, Smarties, and Swedish Fish, which received two votes each.

"Finding houses that had big candy bars was always worth keeping track of, then getting there early every year to make sure you got one," said sophomore Luca DiLello. This may be the reason his favorite candy is KitKats.

However, wherever there are favorites, there are also least favorites. Out of the 50 students, candy corn received the most votes, with 14. Some other popular choices were Snickers with 10 votes, York with eight votes, and both Skittles and Dots with five votes each.

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Theo Weismann, Campus Life Editor

A tier list of Halloween candy based on 50 SHU student opinions

Candy corn is often viewed as an iconic Halloween candy; however, Sacred Heart University students are not thrilled with it. Despite this distaste, some will eat it regardless of their appetite for it.

"Candy corn may not taste good, but I always took some for that Halloween vibe," said DiLello. "Even now, whenever I eat them, it gets me into the spirit."

In a similar situation, Tootsie Rolls were liked by some people when they were younger but grew out of the taste as they grew older. However, students may eat it from time to time to feel that nostalgia and to feel young again.

"Eating a Tootsie Roll may not taste great, but it will always take me back to when I was a child and dressing up as whatever costume I picked that year," said sophomore Luke Hoffman.

If you plan on handing out candy this year to trick-or-treaters, it could be a good idea to purchase some of the candies listed as favorites, or maybe you want to buy your favorite and keep some for yourself. Either way, Halloween is a coveted holiday to many children and adults, especially from all the memories made receiving candy door to door.



Danielle Grillo, Staff Writer and Photographer

A collection of Halloween candy reflecting seasonal favorites among SHU students.

# Arts & Entertainment

## Say Yes to the Dress: SHU Students at NYC BFW

BY MIA COPPOLA

Staff Writer and Asst. Arts & Entertainment Editor

Your dreams of working behind the scenes at New York Fashion Week may be closer than you think.

From Oct. 14-16, fashion marketing students from Sacred Heart University took part in New York City's Bridal Fashion Week (NYCBFW), gaining hands-on experience inside luxury bridal showrooms with iconic designers, models and buyers.

NYCBFW is a semi-annual trade event featuring bridal designers unveiling their latest collections to industry press, buyers and professionals.

The group prepared models and showrooms for buying meetings, making sure each room was set up exactly how designers wanted using visual merchandising skills learned in the classroom.

"Our first year, we had two interns, and now there are eight of us," said Prof. David Bloom, Fashion Marketing and Merchandising Program Director. "Sacred Heart is really taking over in a great way. If our students didn't perform, we wouldn't be invited back."

Senior Erika Khater worked with several major designers including Savannah Miller, Viktor & Rolf and Justin Alexander Signature.

"It has been offered almost every year that I have been in the fashion program by Professor Bloom," said Khater. "I never really had the guts to go for it because I am not from New York, but I wanted to take the risk and try something completely out of my comfort zone."

Viktor & Rolf, known for their "Flowerbomb" fragrance, impressed buyers with their bold designs.

"They were the biggest and had huge detailing," said Khater. "They probably weighed ten pounds each."

British-American designer Savannah Miller showcased lace-detailed gowns with removable skirts and sleeves for a day-to-night look.

"Her collection was so simple yet so beautiful," said senior Angelina Montana. "I also worked under her sector, which made me appreciate her design process even more."

Throughout the week, students noted clear bridal trends emerging.

"Lace is huge in bridal right now, and it's what most buyers were most attracted to," Khater said. "Every designer had the classic strapless corset with huge ruffle skirt, Viktor & Rolf was huge on flowers. The gowns were more sophisticated overall this season."

Bloom said programs like these are giving students a wider understanding of the fashion industry beyond the styling.

"Before this program, our students felt they didn't get the broader view of the business aspect of fashion," said Bloom. "With this program and offering more courses, our students' view is much broader than it was years ago."

Khater said she drew directly from classroom lessons while handling gowns.

"I learned a lot during textiles because I was able to tell which fabric we were dealing with when trying to zip dresses or handling the weight of the fabric," said Khater.

"FMN 360, Textiles, covers how to handle different fabrics," said Bloom. "This course is the liberal arts of fashion."

From large department stores like Bergdorf and Neiman Marcus to smaller boutiques, showrooms varied with classic styles to niche gowns.

"For bigger appointments, we would pull more dresses," said Khater. "We had buyers coming from England, so it was important to ask ourselves, 'What do we want to show a different country?'"

"The hustle for me was the biggest thing I noticed between local fashion and New York

Fashion," said Khater. "I feel like I was on an adrenaline rush all day because there was always something going on."

Montana, who dressed models backstage, said the experience was both intense and inspiring. "Everyone was so kind and passionate about bridal couture," said Montana. "It was inspiring to be surrounded by professionals who really love what they do."

Bloom noted the fast-paced environment and the professional growth it provides students.

"The tension to get everyone out there on that runway, it's a lot of pressure. In just four days, you get an unbelievable experience," said Bloom. "I look at every single report, and the reviews are really strong for our students. I am so pleased with what we are doing here."

"I didn't know freshman year that we had a program like this. I wish I knew. I came in as a business undecided, and I always liked fashion, so I tried it, and it became everything," said Khater.



Contributed by Angelina Montana, '26

Intern group dressed for showroom work at the New York Bridal Fashion Week.

## TAP Presents "Bare"

BY ALEXIS BARADA

Staff Writer and Asst. Arts & Entertainment Editor



Instagram, @shutheatrearts  
David Irizarry, one of the leading cast members in "Bare" performing.

The Theatre Arts Program (TAP) brings "Bare" to life from Oct. 23-Nov. 2, adding another production to this year's lineup.

Known for its raw emotion and powerful storytelling, "Bare" features students exploring love, faith and identity in a Catholic school.

"The story is really special and

it's good at challenging the social norms," said senior David Irizarry, leading cast member of "Bare." "It questions the systems that help the students."

The musical highlights the struggles of the students and the challenges of accepting who they are. Its bold theme makes it a standout production, one that isn't seen on stage often.

"Bare" is such an underground show in the grand scheme of musical theatre," said junior Camryn Trant, leading cast member of "Bare." "The fact that we are even performing this is truly a gift."

Along with its emotional depth and theme, "Bare" was also very demanding for the cast to learn.

"The rehearsal process was pretty intense, but the cast was also committed," said senior Tori Cutalo, leading cast member of "Bare."

The intensity was partly due to the music heavy storyline, as the play is performed entirely through song.

"The show itself is over two hours of straight music, making it very demanding both vocally and emotionally," said Cutalo.

The cast spent long hours rehearsing the challenging soundtrack, making vocals and stamina just as demanding as learning the music itself.

"I tried to limit how much I speak each day, drinking a lot of water and tea," said Irizarry. "It's very regimented in some ways with how much I have to give myself to sustain vocals."

In addition to rehearsing vocals, the cast also faced the difficulty of preparing for the whole production with a short timeframe.

"It's been very rigorous, but also fun," said Trant. "We had a little under a month to put production together."

Their dedication was evident in rehearsals, making sure to prioritize every detail of the production. The cast worked tirelessly to bring the storyline and its emotional themes to life.

"The story is very unique and it's not afraid to be brash and harsh and make statements," said Irizarry. "What makes it beautiful is that it's so raw with deep feelings of emotion throughout the whole show."

The musical doesn't avoid exploring difficult emotions and complex relationships. The bold storytelling allows for the audience to connect deeply with the characters and their struggles.

Its fearless approach to sensitive themes is what sets it apart from other productions.

"Most shows I've been a part of would never dare touch the topics 'Bare' does," said Trant.

The show encourages its audience to think about the complex experiences and emotions of the characters. Its portrayal of identity and relationships inspires the audience to consider perspectives they may have never encountered before.

"I hope audiences leave thinking about how important it is to listen and love without judgement," said Cutalo. "To see beyond the surface as you never know what battles someone may be fighting."

The production highlights themes of love, identity and personal struggle. Its storytelling emphasizes the emotional journey that the characters experience throughout the show.

"It's a really bold story about love and identity and how love can persist despite the challenges of life," said Irizarry. "The reason it's called 'Bare' is because of the feeling of baring your soul and being yourself."

# Sports

## Pioneers' Rebound After Stonehill Setback

BY ALEXA PISCINO  
Staff Writer

Despite a 3–2 loss in their home opener against Stonehill on Oct. 18 at Martire Family Arena, the men's ice hockey team is off to a promising start to the season.

After opening the year with back-to-back road wins in Atlantic Hockey America (AHA) play against Rochester Institute of Technology, the Pioneers returned home looking to build on their early momentum. However, Stonehill capitalized on key scoring chances, handing SHU its first loss of the season in front of a strong home crowd.

"It's always nice to start with two league wins on the road," said head coach C.J. Marottolo. "We were disappointed with the result against Stonehill, not taking anything away from them; they deserved to win that game. But we've had three really good days of practice since then, and the guys have responded well."

According to Marottolo, the loss served as an important early-season reminder.

"When we play connected and stick to our structure, we're a very good hockey team," said Marottolo. "But in this game, you get what you deserve, and we didn't play hard enough for long enough. That's something we've addressed."

The Pioneers' opening weekend featured the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) debut of junior forward Stephane Huard, who transferred from McGill University. Huard made an immediate impact with three points in his first two games, earning him AHA Forward of the Week honors.

"It felt great, for sure," said Huard. "Coming into a new team and new environment, I just wanted to make an impact right away. I'm happy with how it went and just want to keep getting better every game."

Huard, a Quebec native, said the adjustment to a new program and language has been smooth thanks to his teammates.

"We live together, practice together, and we're really close off the ice," said Huard. "That chemistry shows up when we play."

The team's veteran core continues to provide consistency and leadership. Senior forward Reid Pabich reached a career milestone with his 30th goal as a Pioneer during the Stonehill matchup.

"Honestly, I didn't even know until after the game," Pabich said. "The credit goes to my coaches for trusting me and my linemates for putting me in good spots. Hopefully, there's a lot more to come this season."

Senior forward Felix Trudeau has also been a steady presence, recording a point in each of the team's first three contests.

"I think it starts with keeping things simple," said Trudeau. "Our line's been working well together. We're creating chances, and we've just got to keep building on that."

Trudeau and Pabich's long-standing chemistry dates back to their days at the University of Maine and continues to drive the Pioneers' offense.



Contributed by Emily George, '28.

Junior forward Stephane Huard skating in warm ups ahead of a game against Stonehill College at Martire Family Arena on Oct. 18, 2025.

"We've known each other for years, and that helps," said Trudeau. "We're best friends off the ice, and that carries over to how we play."

Following the Stonehill loss, Sacred Heart traveled to Columbus for a two-game non-conference series at #14/15 The Ohio State University.

"They're a highly skilled team," said Marottolo before the trip. "We have to manage the puck well and make them earn everything they get. It's a great opportunity for us to measure where we're at."

The Pioneers split the weekend, taking home Friday night's opener with a 2–1 overtime win, with a pair of goals from Trudeau. On Saturday, the Pioneers were scoreless and fell 3–0 to the Buckeyes.

Despite the early setback, the Pioneers remain confident in their potential as they head into a challenging stretch of the schedule.

"We know what kind of team we can be," said Pabich. "It's a long season, and we're just getting started."

The Pioneers continue their conference play on Oct. 30–31 when they head to the Hart Center in Worcester, Mass., where they'll face off against the College of the Holy Cross.

*Athletic Communications contributed to this article.*

## Bovardi Breaks Record as Playoffs Near

BY JAMES SCHINDLER  
Staff Writer

"It feels amazing and is a moment I'll never forget. I'm really proud of it, but I couldn't have done it without my teammates and coaches who have supported me these past four years," said senior Morgan Bovardi.

On Oct. 8, during a 2-0 victory over Merrimack College, Bovardi broke the record for most goals in Sacred Heart women's soccer history. In the 80th minute, Bovardi netted her 27th career goal, breaking a record that was held for over 20 years.

The Merrimack win was number four out of a five game winning streak for the Pioneers. During this stretch, the team had wins over Rider University, Canisius College, Mount St. Mary's University, Merrimack College and Niagara University.

In the five games, the women scored 12 goals and only let up one. Five of those 12 goals were scored by Bovardi, who has 10 total goals in the season.



Jack Cavicchi, Senior Photo Editor and Assistant Sports Editor

Sacred Heart University forward Morgan Bovardi dribbles during a game against Merrimack College at Park Avenue Field on Oct. 8, 2025.

Junior goaltender Kyran Thievon also took home her third Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) Defensive Player of the Week award of the season.

"It feels great to win three MAAC Defensive Player of the Week awards, but it is honestly just a reflection of the entire team's efforts," said Thievon. "From the defense to the midfielders and forwards, everyone is always giving 110% effort and defending as one unit."

Thievon has only allowed 13 goals in 16 games this season, along with a .840 save percentage. In the five-game win streak, Thievon had 14 saves while only letting up one goal.

"Our 5-game winning streak was amazing to be a part of; the consistency we played at, regardless if we were home or away, was such a great reward for all of our hard work," said Thievon.

Currently sitting with a 9-7-1 record with one game left in regular season, head coach Matt Micros is leading the team to a good position for the playoffs. In his eighth season as head coach, Micros has a 44-58-17 overall record and a 30-25-11 record in conference play. He is hoping to lead the team to a sixth consecutive playoff appearance.

"Coach Micros has helped us stay focused on taking everything one game at a time, and just making sure we leave everything we have out on the field when the game or practice is over," said Thievon. "Nothing has changed too much compared to how we've been preparing all season, we are just looking to play our game and bring our best efforts every single day."

The Pioneers will travel down to New Jersey for their final game of the season against St. Peter's University. The Peacocks are 5-8-3, and their playoff hopes are dashed. A win for the Pioneers would secure the number three seed and home-field advantage for round one.

"We are preparing for Saint Peter's just like we do for every other game," said Thievon. "We are looking to head down there and get three points on the road."

"It's an important game for us, and we want to finish the regular season strong," said Bovardi.

If the Pioneers secure the three seed for the MAAC playoffs, they could face either Marist University, Manhattan College, or Canisius University in the first round.

*Athletic Communications contributed to this article.*

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## *Pride and Roots: How Hispanic Students Celebrate Their Culture at SHU*

BY **FERNANDA GUEVARA**  
*Circulation Manager and Asst. Features Editor*

Entre risas, música latina y platos típicos, los estudiantes hispanos de Sacred Heart University celebran algo más que una fecha en el calendario: celebran sus raíces, su identidad y el orgullo de pertenecer a una comunidad diversa que cada año crece más dentro del campus.

Durante la Semana de la Herencia Hispana, el campus se llena de color con bailes, exposiciones y degustaciones gastronómicas que buscan conectar a los estudiantes con sus países de origen. Para muchos, estas actividades representan una oportunidad de compartir su cultura y sentirse más cerca de casa.

“Mantengo mis tradiciones y mi cultura hispana cocinando comidas típicas en casa e invitando a mi familia a compartirlas conmigo,” dijo la estudiante de último año, Yillyan Contreras, “Es una forma de mantener viva mi herencia y sentirme cerca de mis raíces, incluso mientras estudio lejos.”

El Club La Hispanidad, uno de los grupos estudiantiles más activos durante estas celebraciones, organiza presentaciones culturales, talleres de baile y charlas sobre identidad. Su meta, según sus miembros, es crear un ambiente de inclusión y orgullo cultural para todos los estudiantes.

“Ser parte de La Hispanidad significa mantenerme conectada con mis raíces a través de amigos y comunidad en Sacred Heart,” dijo la estudiante de primer año, Ingrid Lazo, “Me di cuenta de que extrañaba mi cultura cuando estaba lejos, y este club me ha permitido reconectarme. He hecho muchos amigos y me he sentido parte de una familia que comparte mis tradiciones.”

Durante el Mes de la Herencia Hispana, el club organiza su evento más esperado: la Salsa Night, una noche en la que la comunidad universitaria disfruta de clases de salsa, música, comida y la creación de banderas de los países latinoamericanos.

“Es mi evento favorito del año,” añadió Lazo, “No hay mejor manera de celebrar que con comida, música y baile junto a tus amigos.”

Más allá de las festividades, la música también juega un papel esencial en la vida universitaria de los jóvenes latinos. Sonidos de salsa, reggaetón y bachata acompañan los eventos multiculturales y las reuniones entre amigos, generando un ambiente donde la cultura se expresa de manera natural y alegre.

De acuerdo con la Oficina de Diversidad e Inclusión de SHU, la población hispana ha crecido significativamente en los últimos años, y su presencia ha impulsado una mayor oferta de actividades culturales, incluyendo ferias gastronómicas y paneles sobre liderazgo latino.



Instagram, @shulahispanidad

Members of the SHU La Hispanidad Club gathered at the club's Salsa Night on Sept. 19, 2025.

Entre tacos, empanadas y ritmos tropicales, los estudiantes hispanos de SHU continúan fortaleciendo el sentido de comunidad que los une, demostrando que la diversidad no solo se celebra, sino que también se vive día a día.

“Un mensaje que me gustaría compartir con otros estudiantes hispanos que intentan abrazar y celebrar sus raíces en SHU es que participen en actividades y eventos que celebren nuestra cultura y encuentren amigos que compartan ese interés,” concluyó Lazo. “Encontrar tu comunidad y gente en la universidad puede llevar tiempo, pero es importante hacer amigos que celebren tu cultura y disfruten de tus tradiciones y raíces. Una excelente manera de abrazar tus raíces es unirse a una comunidad que ya lo hace, como La Hispanidad. Mantenerte cerca y conectar con quienes ya abrazan su cultura puede inspirarte a hacer lo mismo.”

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