

## HEY SENIORS!

### The Countdown Begins Now!

28 DAYS UNTIL GRADUATION CEREMONIES BEGIN



Remember to keep following the Pioneer Promise, both on and off campus!

## Sacred Heart to Dedicate Multiple Days at Vaccine Clinic for Undergraduate Students

BY JULIA HALLISEY  
Assistant News Editor

On Friday, April 16, the Coronavirus Planning Team announced that Sacred Heart University's vaccination site will open for two extra days. Dedicated to vaccinating undergraduate students, the site will offer the Pfizer vaccine in the new atrium in the East Building at West Campus during these days.

"We heard you when you told us through our recent survey that you wanted to be vaccinated on campus," said the Coronavirus Planning Team.

Appointments can be made through Hartford Healthcare MyChartPLUS.

The dates scheduled for students' first doses are Thursday, April 22 and Sunday, April 25. Students' second doses will be scheduled for Thursday, May 13 and Sunday, May 16.

The survey sent out by the Coronavirus Planning Team asking about interest regarding vaccination played a significant factor in getting vaccines for students.

"That allowed us to communicate with the state that there was an interest in getting vaccinated," said Gary MacNamara, director of public safety.

Sacred Heart has been working all semester to secure vaccines for students.

"I'm ecstatic about it because most colleges don't have that kind of commitment," said Dr. John Petillo, President of the university. "And of course, it helps that we have a vaccination site on campus."

These vaccines allocated for undergraduate students were made possible with the help of Hartford Healthcare, a medical site Sacred Heart has been working with for months.

"Hartford Healthcare has been phenomenal and very generous with us," said Petillo.

A total of 2,000 appointments were made available on Friday. Split between the two days, the university is giving an opportunity for a big percentage of students to be vaccinated.

"Our goal is to be as normal as possible next semester, which will be affected by the percentage of vaccinated students we have," said MacNamara.

Students who make appointments will be receiving their second dose before the end of the semester.

"We want to make sure especially those who are going home and leaving the state can get their first and second shot here," said MacNamara.

Along with vaccinating undergraduate students, Sacred Heart is hoping to create vaccination opportunities for graduate students and employees.

"This is not a one and done deal," said MacNamara. "We're going to make sure everybody on campus who wants a vaccine gets a vaccine."

Many students have already jumped on the opportunity to make appointments.

"I'm happy I got a vaccine appointment," said junior Abigail Wunderlich. "I feel like it's easier than getting a vaccine at home."

Sacred Heart will also provide shuttles to West Campus on the dedicated clinic days.

"I think it's especially beneficial for students who don't have their cars on campus," said Wunderlich.

Some students had already been vaccinated at Sacred Heart's vaccination site prior to the additional dates.

"Making the appointment was a little tricky, but once I showed up, it was an easy process," said senior Stephen Vaughan.

These upcoming dates are expected to be just as quick and easy.

"Block out a half hour," said Petillo. "Then you get your shot and have the waiting period and you're done and know you're safe."

Sacred Heart also introduced a raffle for prizes including iPads, iPhones and AirPods for students who receive their second vaccination and upload their information to the student health portal by the end of May.

While it is not currently required, Sacred Heart is strongly encouraging all students, faculty, and staff to receive a vaccine before the fall semester.

"We want to come back to a normal life and the best way to do that is if we're over 80% vaccinated," said Petillo. "Be smart, be wise, and be responsible to the larger community."

## Biden Requests \$1.5 Trillion Budget

BY CHARLOTTE GRENS  
Staff Writer

President Joe Biden requests his first federal budget at a whopping \$1.5 trillion, in hopes to enhance America's schools, healthcare and housing, as well as environmental protection.

"Major changes are coming, and students need to be informed," said Dr. Gary Rose, chair of the department of government.

According to the Associated Press, Biden seeks to increase the Department of Education's funds by 40.8%, Department of Health Services by 23.1%, housing and urban development by 15.1%, and a \$14 billion increase to address climate change.

In addition, the Biden administration will try to deal with incoming arrivals from the U.S. southern borders, including an \$861 million investment in Central America to address the issues driving people to migrate to the U.S.

"I feel as though this plan has all the right components to be in motion, but the amount of money and timing just doesn't seem fully right. We are still in a global pandemic, and right now many people are focused on short-term solutions, not long-term," said sophomore Lauren Kuhlmeier.

On the other hand, Senate Republicans didn't hold back to criticize Biden's proposal on a small increase for defense of 1.6%. As Republicans claim, America would "fail" in its constitutional responsibility to give protection if funds toward defense aren't prioritized to keep America "strong."

"I think it is reckless spending and a reflection of President Biden accommodating the far-left wing of his political party," said Rose. "I would certainly be in favor of fixing roads, bridges and rail lines as that is true infrastructure, but so much of his proposal has virtually nothing to do with infrastructure improvement."

However, the Biden administration and Democratic Party believe that the request would bring spending in line with the U.S. to historical average. The \$700 billion that is being put into non-defense funding is essentially comparable to a 30-year average.

The Biden administration believes the cap, imposed by the long-abandoned 2011 budget deal, is due to a decade of severe underinvestment in public services. Biden is now trying to turn around with a large increase that would mostly pass through the national security programs.

"Although I may have my own personal opinion on politics and our president, I would love to see positive change within our nation," said sophomore Maddison Jones. "Even if it's simply fixing things in the education department or helping with our health department

with things like the vaccine. Through and through, some proposals should be made for change."

The President's plan as written through Congress is typically a long shot to pass. As seen throughout history, conflicts with Republicans are likely to put a hold on these accounts, putting them on the back burner for months after the Sept. 30 expiration of the budget year.

For more information on the proposal and other developments, Biden will be addressing his first joint session of Congress on Wednesday, April 28.

"The best way for students to understand what is going on in our nation is by reading media reports from several different media outlets and perhaps even taking an informative course on American government," said Rose.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

PRESIDENT BIDEN REQUESTS \$1.5 TRILLION TO COVER THINGS LIKE IMPROVING SCHOOLS, HEALTHCARE AND HOUSING.

# News

## Derek Chauvin Trial Update

BY RYAN DOWNEY  
Staff Writer

Derek Chauvin, the police officer charged in the death of George Floyd, is currently on trial. Chauvin was seen in a video kneeling on Floyd's neck for a total of nine minutes and 29 seconds. Chauvin's trial has now completed its third week of testimony in a courtroom in Minnesota and is expected to go into the week of April 20.

After the death of Floyd, the Black Lives Matter Movement reignited, forming protests throughout the U.S. and around the world. This movement calls for racial equality and that all the men and women on the police force who have unlawfully taken the lives of Black individuals be held accountable.

"The Black Lives Matter Movement is a testament to how badly things need to change in this country," said sophomore Christopher Bocola. "There is no reason a black man should be killed for a petty crime on noncompliance."

Chauvin and the other officers who were at the scene of the crime lost their jobs shortly after Floyd's death.

On March 29, Chauvin sat for the first time in front of a jury as his trial began.

The trial began with showing the video that was blasted all over social media with Floyd yelling "I can't breathe" as Chauvin held his knee on the neck of Floyd.

According to the Associated Press, this was followed by the testimony of Darnella Frazier, the teenager who shot the video. In the emotional testimony, Frazier explained how Chauvin ignored the pleas of bystanders to get off of Floyd's neck.

"A medical examiner concluded last year that Floyd's heart stopped, complicated by how police restrained him and compressed his neck," said an AP report.

On the death certificate was listed high blood pressure and fentanyl intoxication, as well as previous use of methamphetamine. Those in the courtroom have debated whether the narcotics in Floyd's system played a part in his death.

Chauvin's defense attorney, Eric Nelson, has raised many questions regarding Floyd's death. Nelson questioned Floyd's partner, Courtney Ross, about previous drug use and questioned a bystander who was a paramedic about responding to overdose cases, attempting to raise the narrative that the cause of death may have been a drug overdose.

Professor James McCabe, an Associate Professor of Government at Sacred Heart University with previous police officer experience, said, "It appears that his (Chauvin's) defense, that drugs and Floyd's heart condition as the cause of death, does not seem to be holding up against the medical testimony presented so far."

The drugs that were discovered in Floyd's autopsy seem to be the main act of defense from Chauvin and Nelson and probably will continue to be as the trial proceeds.

Chauvin's defense attorney tried to show that the video of Floyd's death shows him yelling "I ATE TOO MANY DRUGS" while being pinned down by the police. According to the Associated Press, when asked about this, prosecution witness Jody Stiger said, "I can't seem to make that out," furthering the idea that drugs did not play a larger role in

the death.

The coroner who performed the autopsy deemed it a lack of oxygen and his heart stopping, but the defense attorney's content says otherwise.

"People put in that position experience positional asphyxia... meaning just the position alone can cause suffocation," said McCabe. "Adding the extra pressure of putting a knee to the head or neck makes the actions even more dangerous."



**DEREK CHAUVIN, THE POLICE OFFICER WHO KNELT ON GEORGE FLOYD'S KNECK FOR NINE MINUTES, IS CURRENTLY ON TRIAL FOR FLOYD'S DEATH.** NBC NEWS

## LG Energy and SK Innovation

BY MARIO PEDERNA  
Staff Writer

On April 11, LG Energy Solution and SK Innovation, two South Korean electric vehicle battery makers, came to an agreement that ended a trade dispute and will now allow one of the companies to start manufacturing their batteries in Georgia.

President Joe Biden plans to increase the number of electric vehicles to help with climate change as part of his clean energy agenda. As written in an article by the Associated Press, "The companies pledged to work together to strengthen the EV battery supply chain in the U.S. and support the Biden administration's efforts to advance clean energy policies, including electric vehicles."

There has been a recent push to change to using more electric-based vehicles due to their effects on the environment.

"It will allow greener production of energy at source or possibly even carbon capture (it will be difficult to move away from oil/methane anytime soon)," said Dr. Frank Robinson, assistant professor of physics and director of the engineering 3+2 program at Sacred Heart University. "We have a better chance of controlling CO2 emission if it all comes out at a few locations, rather than being spat out all over the planet."

The Associated Press added that in addition to the deal made between LG Energy and SK Innovation, "The commission said SK could supply batteries to Ford Motor Co. for four years and to Volkswagen AG for two years. The decision had jeopardized a \$2.6 billion battery factory that SK is building in Commerce, Georgia."

"Batteries still have very low energy density (energy per kg) compared to gasoline, so they need to be very heavy and take up a lot of the car. They still take much longer to charge than fill up a tank of gas," said Robinson.

"I think we're definitely headed towards electric cars becoming common, but with time," said sophomore Chris Gallagher. "I don't see an issue with it because it has been proven to be a lot more beneficial to the environment, and I think it's a positive thing that steps are being taken to produce more vehicles like this to be used."

Information provided by the Associated Press shows the need for a settlement like this to meet the demand for electric vehicle batteries the country will soon have.

"Switching the U.S. fleet of roughly 279 million largely gas-powered cars and trucks to electric vehicles is a focus of Biden's infrastructure plan, with \$174 billion allocated for EV incentives, a half-million charging stations and development of a domestic supply chain," wrote the Associated Press. "Experts say it's possible the U.S. will run short of electric vehicle batteries if it doesn't set up its own network of parts suppliers."

With alternative forms of power and fuel constantly being searched for, it seems that rechargeable batteries are the method getting the most attention right now.

"While the world tries to move away from fossil fuels, there needs to be a way of storing and transporting energy produced by renewables such as sun and wind, as it is not always sunny or windy," said Robinson. "Other possible energy sources such as methane clathrates, nuclear fusion or fracking all need a way of transporting and storing energy.

Improvements in battery technology seems the best way forward."



**TWO SOUTH KOREAN CAR COMPANIES CAME TO AN AGREEMENT ON APRIL 11 TO HAVE THEIR BATTERIES MANUFACTURED IN GEORGIA.** NEW YORK TIMES

# Perspectives

## On-Campus Housing Selection

BY **FRANCESCA MCCAFFREY**  
Staff Writer

On March 31, Sacred Heart University students who plan to live on campus next year were constantly refreshing their Outlook emails with the hopes that a low number would appear for housing selection along with their housing selection date.

According to Sacred Heart’s website, on that date, housing selections lottery numbers were posted for rising sophomores. In this process, a low lottery number allows you to choose your dorm earlier in the selection.

Starting on April 7, lottery numbers 1-150 chose their housing, followed by 151-275 selecting on April 9, and finally 275 and above selecting on April 13.

For many students, the housing selection process can be a stressful time depending on their given lottery number and not quite knowing what to expect being a first-year student.

“Since it is my first time working with housing, I did not know what to expect, but with a low lottery number, it made it much easier,” said rising sophomore Maggie Gillespie.

Many students go into the process with the hopes of getting a certain dorm, but their lottery number can derail this.

“My housing selection was not what I expected,” said Gillespie. “Considering I received a high lottery number, I did not think I would be placed in the Upper Quad; however, one of my roommates had a low number, which granted us the ideal dorm we wanted.”

There are certain features that draw some students toward a certain dorm over others. “I chose the dorm Wiesel since it had much to offer. While the outside structure of the building is beautifully built, the inside of the dorms offers much more than appearance,” said Gillespie. “The idea of having a kitchen, individual shower, and bathroom were compelling features that made me choose Wiesel as well as the space it provided that would make living easier.”

Furthermore, the housing process helps students who need accommodations due to health conditions. These students get an earlier pick than others as long as their accommodation request makes the deadline.

Some students say the deadline is not flexible and can be somewhat strict. Gillespie said, “I think that if you miss the accommodations deadline and you reach out to them to make a request, you should still be considered for it instead of being told no automatically.”

On the other hand, some rising upperclassmen avoid the whole process of housing selection by choosing to live off campus their junior and senior years.

Rising junior Juliana Beaton said, “I chose to move off campus because I wanted to pick out something that I really liked, and it is much cheaper than living on campus.”

According to students, moving off campus comes with benefits for some upperclassmen as they transition into their junior and senior year.

“I truly enjoyed the two years I lived on campus, but moving off would benefit myself and my housemates, giving us more room and helping us financially,” said rising junior Adriana Bracco.

Some students say that the process becomes more stressful when their first plan does not work out, and they do not have a backup plan ready.

Rising sophomore Emma Seidman said, “I got pushed out of my original housing plans with my friends and had to find someone who needed one more roommate to help them out, so now I am living in Christian Witness Commons with people I do not know.”

Some students say there can be room for improvement with the housing selection process in the future.

“If I were to change the process, I wish that there was a more equal opportunity to get into your top dorm, which does not seem totally reasonable but would definitely be more fair,” said Gillespie.

Additionally, some students say there should be more information given about the buildings and speed of the process as well.

“I wish we had a tad more information about the buildings and which ones might have been taken first,” said Seidman.



CHARLOTTE GRENS / SHU SPECTRUM  
SHU STUDENTS REACT TO THE HOUSING SELECTION PROCESS THAT TOOK PLACE A COUPLE WEEKS AGO AND HOW STRESSFUL AND EXCITING IT CAN BE.

## Student’s Internship Experiences

BY **IANNA HANKINSON**  
Staff Writer

Have you ever thought about taking steps to benefit your future career path? “I plan on going to law school after undergraduate school,” said sophomore Edije Frangu, intern for the Connecticut General Assembly.

Many students say they have decided to take on internships to further their experience in their designated career fields.

“I know how much internships can help get your foot in the door for your future and how much experience you can gain from doing one,” said sophomore Nina Manganello, who will be interning at Broadridge Financial Solutions.

Additionally, students say their internship experience has had an impact on the organizations they are working for.

“I’m an intern for one of the legislators in Connecticut, so I pretty much gained direct experience within the legislative process,” said Frangu. “Especially because my designated legislator really allowed me to be involved in his work.”

Other students have had the opportunity of getting an internship through the help of Sacred Heart University’s academic instructors.

“I had the amazing opportunity to get an internship from Sacred Heart with Prof. Congdon to work with the organization of Sister Cities,” said first year graduate student Leslie Giraldo. “I was able to help Professor Congdon’s undergraduate class with their end of the year campaign and help with the edits of campaign proposals.”

Despite the experience that many students say they have obtained from their internships, others say it is difficult balancing their internship with their school workload.

“It’s honestly been really hard balancing my internship and classes because it almost feels like I never get a break,” said Frangu. “I’ll have class three days a week and then when I don’t have class I have my internship, so it’s hard to find that moment to stop and take a break.”

On the other hand, some students say they have not had difficulty in managing an internship and schoolwork.

“I never felt that it was difficult to juggle my internship and my schoolwork because I would only work during breaks or when I had days off in between my class schedule,” said senior Jayson Sementilli, who was a previous intern for William Pitt Sotheby’s International Realty.

Many students say they have utilized the university’s career center to their full advantage in order to help prepare and strengthen their applications for internships.

“The career center has been a huge help with fixing my resume, cover letters, and preparing and offering internship opportunities that align with the career path that I’ve

chosen,” said Sementilli. According to Sacred Heart’s website, the Center for Career and Personal Development offers “assistance finding internships for which students may be able to earn academic credit, resume writing, cover letter writing, interviewing, and job skills development,” as well as other support to help students work toward pursuing their career path.

Many students say they have gained substantial opportunities from their internships. “The opportunities that have come from my internship were to build my resume in leadership experience and to be able to use the skills I used in my graduate classes to help an undergraduate class create a wonderful learning opportunity for themselves and for Sacred Heart University,” said Giraldo.

Other students say they hope to obtain experience and opportunities from their upcoming internships.

“I’m hoping to gain a better understanding of the marketing industry itself, as well as skills I will use throughout my career,” said sophomore Nicole Capuano, who will be interning at Gameday Tailgate Experience during the summer.



TOP RESUME  
STUDENTS EXPLAIN WHAT UPCOMING INTERNSHIPS THEY HAVE AND OTHERS TALK ABOUT INTERNSHIPS THEY HOPE TO OBTAIN.

# Features

## The 2020 Tokyo Olympics in 2021

BY MAI TAKAISHI  
Staff Writer

The Tokyo Olympics will be held from July 23 to Aug. 8. Japan had planned to hold the Olympic games in the summer of 2020, but the government decided to delay the games one year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The government recently decided to hold the Tokyo Olympics without allowing overseas spectators, saying they want to make it a safe environment for sports athletes and audiences in Japan.

“I cannot wait for the Olympic games. We have been waiting since summer 2020. I am proud of the government and the IOC’s (International Olympic Committee) decision,” said senior Ulala Murasawa, who is a student at Sacred Heart University in Japan.

According to a press release from ESPN, the Japanese government is spending a lot of money to establish the Olympic Games. It is reported that the games cost \$15.4 billion.

“\$6.7 billion is public money, and a University of Oxford study says these are the most expensive Olympics on record,” according to an ESPN press release.

The public money includes 4.45 million tickets, which were sold to residents of Japan. However, the Japanese government has not yet decided how many spectators will be able to attend the games.

“They have promised refunds, but this will be determined by so-called authorized ticket resellers that handle sales outside Japan,” according to the ESPN press release.

The refunds are for everyone who has already purchased the tickets.

Japanese media coverage has been focused on the cost of preparing for the Olympics. Sakai Masato reported in an article of the President, “The cancellation of the Tokyo Olympics will have negative effects on Japan’s business.”

On the other hand, other broadcasts in different countries tend to focus on the health and safety of athletes and spectators. Some people disagree with the Japanese government’s decision to hold the games this summer.

“The organizers say that they will be enforcing regular testing, social distancing, perhaps not having full capacity of spectators in the stadium to prevent the spread of the virus,” reported Alastair Gale in *The Wall Street Journal*.

According to the discussion between the Japanese government and IOC, they will allow foreign Olympic athletes to participate in the Olympics. However, families of those athletes will not be able to go to Japan to watch in person.

During COVID-19, many athletes have continued to train for the Olympics and find ways to maintain their skills while in quarantine. In addition to their physical skills, many athletes had to work on their mental health and had to come to terms with not competing last summer.

Senior sports psychologist with the U.S. Olympics and Paralympic Committee Dr. Karen Cogan said in an Oklahoma News interview, “We’re already being physically isolated from each other, and then to struggle with a difficult emotional issue alone, that’s just a double whammy I would say.”

Many athletes have been stressed with pressures to keep their mental health for the Tokyo Olympics because they cannot assume how the Tokyo Olympics is going to be organized.

Another aspect of mental strain on athletes, in addition to being pressured to perform well, is the added stress of COVID-19.

“As long as there are safety precautions and the people attending are either vaccinated or have a negative test, then it should be okay,” said junior Amanda Meza.

According to the Olympic official website, the IOC said, “We will make every effort so that the fans from around the world will be able to experience the Olympics spirit. The Olympics and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 will be the light at the end of the tunnel and a safe manifestation of peace.”



ASSOCIATED PRESS  
THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE AND THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT ARE MOVING ALONG AS SCHEDULED TO HOST THE TOKYO OLYMPICS THIS SUMMER.

## Academic Mentoring Program

BY RYAN MCHALLAM  
Staff Writer

Have you ever wondered what it’s like to be a mentor for a student in middle school?

“The Academic Mentor Program (AMP) is a mentoring program between 21 Sacred Heart University undergraduate students and 28 John Winthrop Middle School students, grades six to eight. This mentor program provides both academic support and social support for middle school youth,” said program coordinator Jillian Rigby.

Founded in 2001 by the Jones Zimmermann Foundation, the AMP allows college students to become mentors to middle school students down the street in Bridgeport, Conn., according to the Academic Mentoring Program page on the Sacred Heart website.

Sacred Heart students are to provide these young students with exposure to the possibilities within learning and higher levels of education. The program is not all student-run, however; it’s also supported by faculty and administration at Sacred Heart.

“My position includes managing the undergraduate mentors, middle school mentees, being a liaison between SHU, John Winthrop teachers, and mentee’s parents,” said Rigby. “I create and implement enrichment (social activities after tutoring) for mentees and monthly mentor training.”

As for the program’s mentors, they are expected to make a minimum of a full year commitment but are strongly encouraged to mentor for two years in order to strengthen the mentee and mentor relationship. They are also expected to dedicate around four hours or (two hrs. x two days) per week working with two students after school from 2:30-4:30 p.m. normally. Mentors should be very academically stable in their college career by having at least a 3.0 GPA and also should have at least some experience working with children prior to participating in the AMP.

“SHU students can get involved by applying to be an AMP mentor. This position has a requirement of attending AMP twice a week for the academic year. Students can reach out to the Office of Volunteer Programs and Service Learning for more information,” said Rigby.

Once mentors are selected, they are paid \$10 every AMP session attended with their students. They also attend a training session in the beginning of the semester and participate in AMP activities the program has planned out for them and their students.

An average AMP day is around two hours long. It is usually broken down by four major activities: homework assistance, which normally lasts an hour, a 10-minute snack time, some sort of recreation for 20 minutes, and finally, a customized learning activity for about a half hour.

According to the Academic Mentoring Program page on the Sacred Heart website,

the program also offers some field trips each semester free of charge. Some local places include the Jones Family Farm, SkyZone, Sacred Heart basketball games and an annual 8th grade New York City Broadway trip. Since COVID-19 hit last year, it has changed plans for a lot of the program and has made it more difficult to take the students on some of these trips.

“SHU students can first apply for this mentoring position in the spring of their freshman year, to begin mentoring in the fall of the following year,” said Rigby. “This is a year-long commitment and students can renew their mentoring position annually for a total of three years of being an AMP Mentor. Students are also welcome to apply even if they are not a current freshman.”



SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY  
THE ACADEMIC MENTORING PROGRAM ALLOWS FOR SHU STUDENTS TO MENTOR MIDDLE SCHOOLERS ATTENDING JOHN WINTHROP MIDDLE SCHOOL IN BRIDGEPORT.

# Audrey's Corner

## Spring Photos

Spring is a time of renewal and life and is often an uplifting season. To celebrate the warm weather and blooming flowers, we invite you to take time to appreciate the beauty of spring. Below are photographs from several talented Sacred Heart University students which capture just some of the beauty and wonder of spring.



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**Patrick Coyne**  
Midland Park

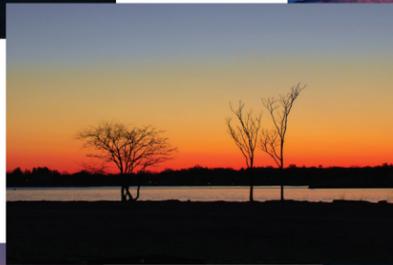
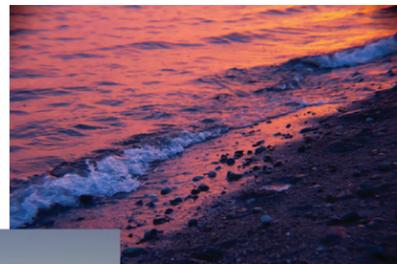
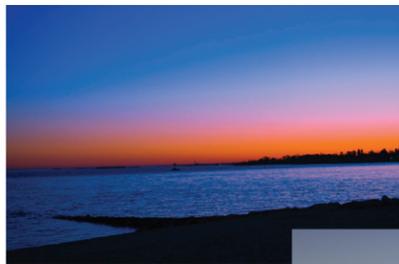


**Mario Pedernera**  
Sacred Heart University

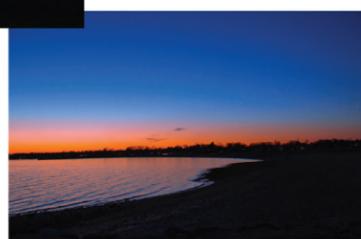


**Maria Zegarelli**  
Fairfield, CT

**Amber Harrison**  
Hamden, CT



**Jessica Fontaine**  
Sasco Hill Beach



# Arts & Entertainment

## Sacred Heart's Theatre Arts Program Presents "Once"

BY ELIZABETH COYNE  
Assistant A&E Editor

A story of music, love and friendship all told from center stage.

On April 15-18, Sacred Heart University's Theatre Arts Program (TAP) presented "Once," the Tony Award-winner for Best Musical, in the Edgerton Theatre. Tickets were available for Sacred Heart students at a cost of \$5 and free to all Sacred Heart faculty and staff with their SHU ID.

The musical starred seniors Rebecca Radisic and Charlie Fusari, who, along with singing and acting throughout the show, played the guitar and piano respectively with almost every musical number.

"Once" is one of those shows that can make you laugh, smile and cry all at the same time. Throughout the whole show, I was in awe. It was truly amazing," said sophomore MacKenzie DeVries. "The leads Charlie and Rebecca played their characters perfectly and their voices were incredible. I had goosebumps the entire time. When the show ended, all I wanted to do was watch it again."

"Two of my friends are the two lead roles, and it has been so inspiring watching them find their characters and developing the story with them. I've always been impressed with the production quality of our shows, but this one in particular has been such a joy to create," said TAP vice president Emma Trimmings.

According to a TAP Instagram post, both lead actors, along with the entire ensemble, were vaccinated for COVID-19 prior to the performance. The accompanists wore masks on stage, seated behind the actors. The musical also featured social distancing within the audience's seating selection.

"This year has been super rough with trying to perform during a pandemic. However, we have been so lucky that administrators at this school are working with us. For this show, we were all able to get vaccinated through the school if we had not gotten it ourselves, and it has been so weird performing mask-less, but it has been so great because I can almost see the light at the end of all this," said Trimmings.

"Once" has been an incredible experience for the entire company because of the simple fact of being able to put the show up. COVID-19 has seriously limited theatre, and being able to perform a show as great as this makes the experience all the more special," said TAP president Erica Allocca.

The musical "Once" is based on the major motion picture of the same name, released in theatres in 2007. The film was directed by John Carney.

Edna Walsh wrote the adapted book written for the musical. The music and lyrics were done by Glen Hansard and Marketa Irglova.

According to IMDB, "Once" is "a modern-day musical about a busker and an immigrant and their eventful week in Dublin, as they write, rehearse and record songs that tell their love story."

According to materials provided by TAP, "This emotionally captivating musical is the only show to have music that won an Academy Award, a Grammy Award, an Olivier Award and a Tony Award."

Additionally, according to materials provided by TAP, the performance featured "all of the magical songs from the critically acclaimed film, including the Oscar-winning 'Falling Slowly.'"

"The production brings everyone together, and we incorporate members from other departments from performing arts, like the dance ensemble," said Allocca. "Everyone is just overjoyed to come back from this pandemic stronger than ever."

"I just want to say thank you to all the people at Sacred Heart who continue to support the Theatre Arts Program. We are so grateful to everyone that has come to the shows this year," said Trimmings.



SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY  
SACRED HEART'S THEATRE ARTS PROGRAM PRESENTS "ONCE" AS THEIR SPRING MUSICAL AND WITHOUT MASKS.

## Taylor Swift Releases "Fearless (Taylor's Version)"

BY MADISON PELUSO  
Staff Writer

Taylor Swift wanted to have an act of reclamation that would get everyone to talk about her and her music.

On April 9, Taylor Swift re-released her second studio album "Fearless." Entitled "Fearless (Taylor's Version)," Swift's re-release solves her recent struggles regarding the lack of control over her first six albums. As a result, Swift put out a collection of 26 songs, including six new tracks from the "vault."

"The fact that she seems to be making a concerted effort to keep the songs almost exactly the same adds to the defiant tone of this project, showing that these songs, as she originally conceived them, belong to her and no one else," said music adjunct instructor Darren Litzie.

According to The Washington Post, Swift left her label, Big Machine, in 2018. Her master recordings fell into the hands of American media entrepreneur Scooter Braun. Subsequently, Swift vowed to re-record her first six albums in an effort to re-own her music.

This album includes many well-known classics such as "Love Story," "You Belong With Me," "Fearless" and "Today Was A Fairytale." There are only slight differences with the new versions compared to the older versions.

"The two subtle differences that I noticed are that Swift's voice sounds a bit more seasoned and matured, as one would expect, and the recordings sound more crisp and clear, thanks to recording technology that is constantly improving," said Litzie.

Along with the originals on the album, the six new songs from the "vault" include "You All Over Me" featuring Marren Morris, "Mr. Perfectly Fine," "We Were Happy," "That's When" featuring Keith Urban, "Don't You" and "Bye Bye Baby."

"I have listened to the album," said sophomore Ellie Kiernan. "I like it a lot."

According to The Washington Post, "None of the tweaks seem like artistic necessities, more like Easter eggs proffered to the legions of Swifties who know these songs by heart."

According to Vulture, "Fans even pointed out that Miss Swift says 'Mr.' 27 times, matching the infamous story of when Joe broke up with Taylor in a 27-second phone call."

Swift created a lot of buzz with "Fearless (Taylor's Version)" and many of her loyal fans have been all over social media talking about the re-recording.

"Now she really owns her whole story," said Kiernan.

According to Billboard, "'Fearless' was Swift's first album to top the Billboard 200 chart, spending 11 nonconsecutive weeks at No. 1. The album also earned Swift her first Grammy Awards, including album of the year."

Achieving stardom at the young age of 18, the original "Fearless" paved the way for

Swift in the music industry.

Swift took to Instagram and Twitter on Feb. 11 writing a lengthy note about the release of "Fearless (Taylor's Version)."

"When I think back on the Fearless album and all that you turned it into, a completely involuntary smile creeps across my face," wrote Swift.

"I think what she's doing is actually pretty admirable," said Litzie. "The message she's sending is one of a true artist who has a tremendous amount of pride in her work, and she's willing to spend a lot of time and money to ensure that she has full ownership of it."



THE FOREST SCOUT  
TAYLOR SWIFT RE-RELEASES HER ALBUM "FEARLESS" THIS TIME TITLED "TAYLOR'S VERSION" ON APRIL 9.

# Sports

## NEC Football Championship Recap

BY **GIANNI OCCHIPINTI**  
Staff Writer

The Sacred Heart University Pioneers football team returned to Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pa., on Sunday, April 11 to decide the Northeastern Conference (NEC) champion. After a 30-27 loss to Duquesne in week one, the Pioneers came away with a 34-27 overtime victory to secure the NEC trophy.

“It feels amazing to be champions,” said Pioneers junior quarterback Marquez McCray. “A lot of hard work behind the scenes went into this, and it feels good to be recognized.”

Since the loss to Duquesne in week one, the Pioneers, along with McCray, rebounded and finished the regular season on a two-game winning streak.

“I’ve always had a lot of confidence in Marquez,” said Pioneers offensive coordinator and quarterback coach Matt Gardner. “I think he has a chance to be one of the best quarterbacks to ever play here.”

McCray had only started three college football games prior to this season.

“In the offseason I was just kind of trying to figure out my role on the team. Just coming in everyday and working, my teammates’ confidence in me really boosted me,” said McCray.

According to Sacred Heart Athletics, McCray finished the championship game 15 of 23, for 180 yards and two touchdowns.

The other impact performer for the Pioneers was junior running back Julius Chestnut. Chestnut finished the game with 173 rushing yards and a touchdown.

“Anytime you give Julius Chestnut the ball, he can take it the distance,” said Gardner.

After this performance and another record-setting season, Chestnut was named NEC Offensive Player of the Year.

“I’m the second person in Sacred Heart history to win this award, so it means something special to me to bring something back to the school,” said Chestnut.

Sacred Heart held a two touchdown lead in the second half, but Duquesne was able to level the score and send the NEC championship into overtime.

Sacred Heart got the ball first in overtime. The Pioneers put themselves in a long 4th & 14 scenario, in which if they weren’t able to find the end zone, Duquesne would be able to kick a field goal for the win.

“4th and 14 there’s not a lot of plays to call in that situation, and Coach Gardner called the perfect play,” said Pioneers senior offensive tackle J.D. DiRenzo.

McCray dropped back and fired a strike down the seam to junior receiver Naseim Brantley, who was able to fall into the endzone for what turned out to be the game-winning score.

“It was a play we have repped in practice, and when it came up, we were like, alright let’s call it, and Nas [Naseim] popped open and Marquez made a great throw,” said Gardner.

McCray was looking for his biggest players when the game was on the line.

“It was 4th down, we needed a big play, and Nas has been making plays all year. I knew it was going to him,” said McCray. “When I saw him come open, I just let it go and I knew he was gonna catch it.”

According to Sacred Heart Athletics, Brantley finished the game with four receptions, for 75 yards, and one touchdown.

“We found one of our best players on a mismatch, Quez [Marquez] made an unbelievable throw and Nas made an unbelievable catch,” said DiRenzo. “It was a perfect all-around play call, throw, catch, to win a championship, you can’t draw it up any better than that.”

Team success triumphs individual success for the Pioneers.

“We’re playing a lot smarter, and a lot more together. It was win or go home, and everyone sacrificed and we came together,” said Chestnut.

The Pioneers will enter the pool for the NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision playoffs and are scheduled to play the University of Delaware on Sunday, April 24 at 7 p.m.



THE SACRED HEART PIONEERS DEFEATED DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY IN THE NEC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME, WINNING 34-27 IN OVERTIME.

NEC SPORTS

## Softball Achieves Four-Game Win Streak

BY **ALEX MARCINIAK**  
Staff Writer

On April 10, the Sacred Heart University softball team defeated Wagner College in a doubleheader series played at the opposing team’s home field in Staten Island, N.Y. These two victories have extended the Pioneers’ winning streak to four games. Sacred Heart won the first game by a score of 1-0 and the second by 7-5.

However, the four-game win streak ended on April 13, when the Pioneers lost to the Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) Blue Devils 4-3. Sacred Heart went on to lose the next three games to CCSU all by one run except the last encounter, which resulted in a 15-1 victory for the Blue Devils.

Sacred Heart has a current record of 8-14 and a conference record of 6-8. This lands the Pioneers within the top four teams of their conference, according to the 2021 Northeast Conference (NEC) softball standings.

The top four teams in the NEC will qualify for the conference tournament and fight for a chance to earn a bid to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) tournament. The only way to gain that bid is to win the NEC tournament.

“I’ve won the tournament twice as the fourth seed,” said head coach Pam London. “If you are the hot team going into that weekend, you can absolutely take it.”

Leaders on the team such as junior Amy Petrovich and senior Colleen Walsh may be crucial to the Pioneers in their attempt at qualifying and winning the NEC tournament.

Petrovich plays left-field and is one of the main hitters for the Sacred Heart squad, being third in the line-up.

According to Sacred Heart Athletics, in 2019, Petrovich was selected to be on the NEC All-Rookie Team, All-NEC Second Team, and NEC All-Tournament Team. That year, she had a batting average of .317. This year she holds an average of .231 for Sacred Heart.

In the second game against Wagner, Petrovich landed a three-run home run, helping secure their four-game win streak. However, this was not the first homer of the game since her teammate Alyssa Gonzalez also hit a three-run home run to help the Pioneers.

“I was most definitely more excited about Alyssa’s home run,” said Petrovich. “It was a really great feeling, and mine [home run] kind of just added onto that spark in the game.”

Sacred Heart pitcher Colleen Walsh helped the team in their winning streak by throwing a shutout victory in their first game against Wagner, striking out a total of four batters.

According to Sacred Heart Athletics, Walsh currently has a 3.18 ERA (earned run average) and has struck out 56 batters during the current season.

Walsh came through in the following game against Wagner by holding the opposing team at five runs for the last two innings. This allowed the Pioneers to keep their two-run lead and secure a victory.

“It honestly was a really good feeling [throwing a shutout game], and I knew we had to buckle down and get that win,” said Walsh.

A new face to the team, first-baseman freshman Emily Carroll, was able to help in the

first game against Wagner by hitting a single, which brought in the winning run.

“It wasn’t a great hit,” said Carroll. “But it was something motivating for me... that I can do this and I’m here for a reason.”

The Pioneers played Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU) in a series of four games at home April 17-18. On April 17, the Pioneers lost both games against FDU with scores of 11-6 and 5-4. On April 18, the first game went into extra innings, and Sacred Heart fell 5-4 in 10 innings. The second game, the Pioneers won with a score of 2-1.



SACRED HEART’S SOFTBALL TEAM WAS ON A FOUR-GAME WINNING STREAK UNTIL THEY FELL TO CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY 4-3 ON APRIL 13.

THOMAS KOUREBANAS / THE SPECTRUM

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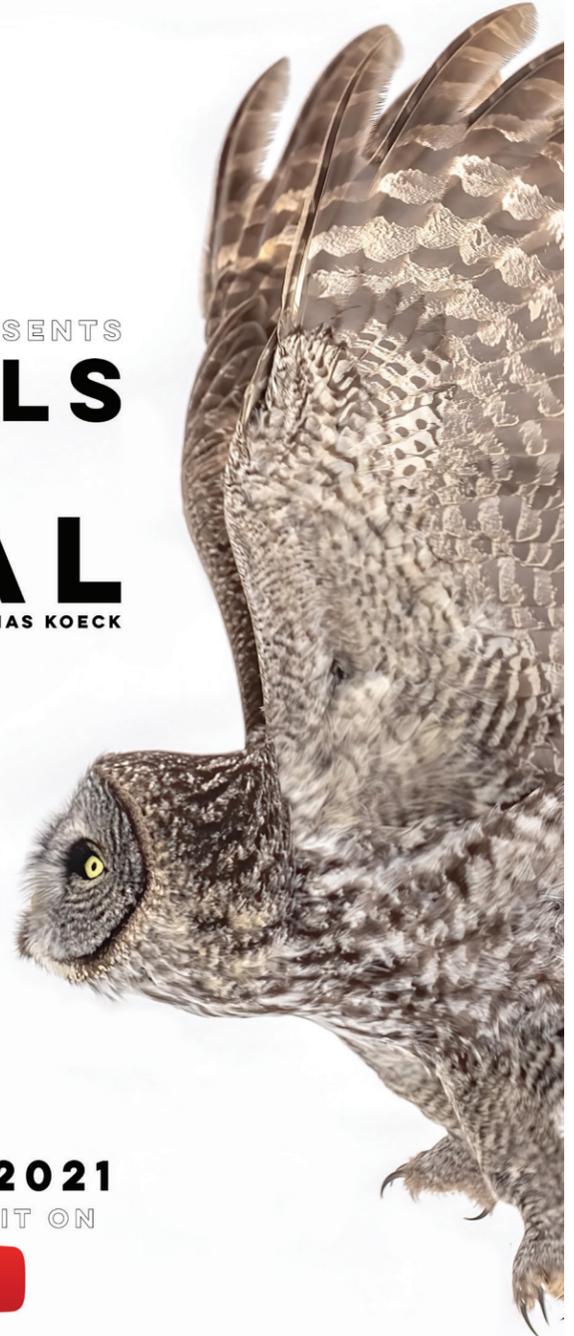
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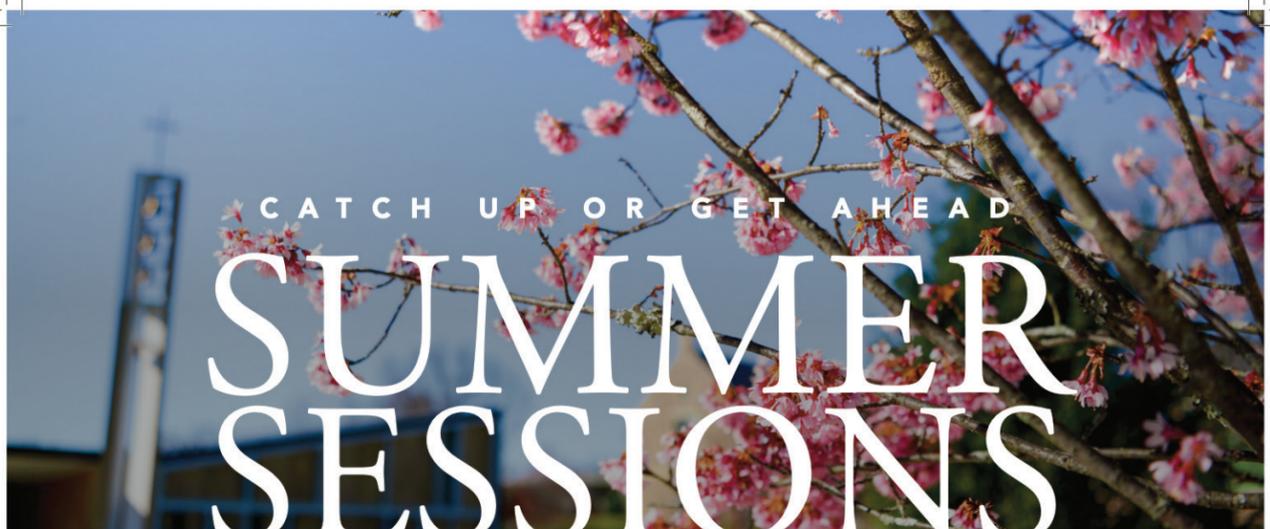
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