Beloved Sister, mentor retires

Lauren Kalil
Staff Reporter

After four years as a consultant to the president at Sacred Heart University, Sister Marie-Julianne Farrington has retired. “She was hired to work with the presidential seminar which is a high level group that explores the Catholic intellectual traditions,” said Michael Higgins, vice president for mission and Catholic identity.

On April 8, the university had a liturgy at 12:20 p.m. in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit that celebrated her contributions to the school. "There was a reception and a short tribute to Farrington by myself just before mass ended," said Higgins.

Along with Higgins and many other members of the university, Father Jerry Ryle was present at the liturgy. "The ceremony celebrated her 4 years of being a consultant to the president," said Ryle. "She was especially involved in the presidential seminars and helped arrange the speakers giving them hospitality to make them feel a part of our community."

According to Higgins, the seminars consist of a high level group that is restricted to about 10 or 12 faculty members. Farrington was a major facilitator and organizer of these events. "She helped organize the speakers, presentations, and scheduling for the seminars. She was also active in a quiet way where she was able to be there for our students and attended as many events as she could in the course of a year," said Higgins.

Higgins worked very closely together with Farrington when he arrived at Sacred Heart. However, the structure then changed in which he was her boss in the last few months she was here. "I'm personally sad to see her go because she was not only a great helper but a great friend," said Higgins.

Although Higgins worked very closely with her, Ryle knew her before she came to Sacred Heart. "I met her in 1980 at St. Johns Collegeville in Minnesota. She was active in the North American Forum on the Catechumenate which does projects all over the world," said Ryle.

Sending seniors off on road to success

Mike Peterson
Staff Reporter

Sacred Heart University's undergraduate commencement will be held on Sunday, May 15 at 11 a.m. on the Campus Field behind the William H. Pitt Health and Recreation Center. In addition to the awarding of degrees, the ceremony will include the presentation of honorary degrees, as well as an address from President John J. Petillo, Ph.D.

The graduation ceremony will be preceded by senior week activities and the undergraduate commencement mass, which will take place in the Pitt Center on Saturday, May 14.

Senior Matt Plucker is looking forward to commencement. "I can’t wait for graduation," said Plucker. "Getting a degree with all my friends is going to be such a great experience." Many seniors, including Jamie Suris, will be experiencing different emotions during the ceremony. "It's going to be bittersweet," said Suris. "I'm excited to move on from college and begin making something of myself by starting a career. But I'm also sad to leave all my friends and the environment I'm used to."

The current economic state is a concern for many graduating seniors. In April 2010, the National Association of Colleges and Employers reported that 24 percent of college seniors had a job waiting for them after graduation. In 2007, the number of seniors who had accepted jobs stood at over 50 percent.

See SENIORS on page 4...

See FARRINGTON on page 2...
FORGET STEPS DOWN
VP to stay until successor is hired
Erin Murtagh
Assistant News Editor

In an email announcement made Wednesday, April 20, Dr. Thomas V. Forget resigned as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Sacred Heart University.

Forget explained that he would remain at his post until the hire of a successor, but would ultimately step down effective January 1, 2012.

"My experience here has been a great gift of life," said Forget. "To be engaged in the formation and preparation of such wonderful students, and to be doing it with dedicated and talented colleagues has been a privilege."

But his resignation does not mark the end of his career at Sacred Heart. Forget intends to remain at the university as a full-time education professor.

"Education is the discipline in which I achieved my Ph.D., and I have 18 years of experience as a high school teacher and elementary principal before I came to Sacred Heart," he said.

In the time since Forget joined the Senior Administration in 1996, he has overseen the institution of "The Human Journey" core curriculum for undergraduate students.

Other notable accomplishments as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs include the establishment of the university's doctoral programs, beginning with the nationally ranked Doctor of Physical Therapy.

The second, the DNP, was established to admit students in the fall of 2010. According to the school's website, it is a Doctoral Leadership in Health Care Track which infuses executive nursing management with clinical practice.

His tenure is also championed by the introduction of graduate programs in Criminal Justice, Human Nutrition and Exercise Science, Applied Psychology, and Environmental Systems Analysis and Management and undergraduate programs in Human Movement and Sports Science, Sports Marketing, and Health Sciences.

Regardless of the success he met in his former position, Forget is excited to embark on a new path.

"The Bible reminds us in the Book of Ecclesiastes, "To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven," he said. "It is time for me to complete my service to the University and its students as the chief academic officer and to join the faculty."

And some students are just as excited as he is.

"Dr. Forget was a great teacher," said junior Samantha Stokes, who took his course, Education in the U.S. "He makes you look beyond the textbook with a very experience oriented curriculum. I am so excited he is going to be a full time professor, he will make an even greater contribution to the education program."


Farrington reached out to Africa during genocide...

CONTINUED from page 1.

Farrington also helped out with the International Federation of Catholic Universities and was the head of her order called "Soeurs de Notre Dame de Nawur" in Belgium.

"She was stationed in Belgium for about 12 years. I think that the most impressive thing that Sister Marie-Julianne brought to us was the integrity of her quiet witness. She was a person that wasn't loud or rancorous, she was there in her gentleness," said Higgins.

Along with Farrington's contributions to the university and Belgium, she also was helpful to people in Africa during the Rwanda Genocide.

"Her order made a foundation where they served in Africa during the genocide. She flew down alone and found someone to drive her across the country. I asked her if she was afraid and she simply said no, it was what she had to do," said Ryle.

According to Higgins, Farrington and her sisters were right in the heart of the massacre. Even though people told her not to go, she still went because she wanted to stand by her sisters.

"She's an amazing person. Sister Marie-Julianne is open, well read, gracious in accepting people, and is an exemplary Christian. She really is quite amazing," said Ryle.
Kappa Sigma brothers whack away stress

Annual Car Smash event invites students to take out end-of-year frustrations on used cars

Andrew Aleman
Contributing Writer

It's that time again. Students are trying to cram in the extra study time for final exams on top of existing homework, projects and papers can compound the stress on anyone. The brothers of Kappa Sigma "understand that pressures that finals can put on some of us and the brothers of Kappa Sigma came up with the idea of taking the stress out on smashing a car," said Carrington Gerli.

The Brothers of Kappa Sigma host an Annual Car Smash in which all members of the Sacred Heart University community are invited to relieve stress by smashing a car with plastic composite handheld sledgehammers. To prevent injury, safety glasses were provided for the students with Public Safety officers stationed around the area and any fluids in the car were removed.

The brothers of Kappa Sigma will donate 40 percent of their earnings from the event to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. The car that was smashed by students on Wednesday, April 27 was "donated by Kramer’s Used Auto Parts with the help of Sacred Heart Public Safety officer Ben Benson" said Carrington Gerli.

Students across Sacred Heart have different methods of releasing stress other than smashing cars at the annual Stress from finals.

Senior James Gaffney said his solution to not stressing over finals "is to stick to my normal routine that involves a well balanced diet, commitment to a fitness regime, and to make sure that I don’t make social sacrifices by stressing for finals," said Gaffney.

"I listen to music mostly or do deep breathing as a way to reduce stress and to maintain a stress free environment," said sophomore Ariel David.

"I work out, play sports and go to Martial Arts club to relieve stress. The Car Smash event is a great idea to relieve stress as every big college has their own event similar to it," said freshman Daniel Devlin. "The Car Smash catches everyone’s attention as everyone in our school gets bored as there is not that much stuff to do." Some students remember the event from last year in anticipation for it to come to campus again.

Junior Shushana Tracey said, "Even though I was unable to attend the event last year, my friends said they had a fun and the pictures from the event looked like they had a blast. I have been looking forward to this event as it’s a healthy and fun way to relieve stress.”

Others don’t think the event promoted the release of stress.

"You don’t need to destroy a car to release stress. Participating in a Car Smash event builds up stress. You are feeding the negative energy of stress and surrounding yourself with others that are just as stressed as yourself," said junior Georgina Cordello. "The best solution is to remove yourself from the stressful environment and take a walk to places such as Veterans Park, to clear your lungs and thoughts.”

Different ways of eliminating stress is something that some students feel is important.

"With finals coming up there is nothing better for destressing than taking out all that energy in a manner that is both entertaining and physically challenging. The brothers Kappa Sigma getting Kramer’s Used Auto Parts will reset some of the sanity of the students after getting a good few whacks on the vehicle," said senior Jay Stavros.

Stavros also touched upon the donation aspect of the fraternity’s car smash event.

"This type of donation is beneficial as no one is donating their own property in frustration. The part of the Kappa Sigma donating part of their funds to Juvenile diabetes is a good cause to contribute to as when I was growing up, I had a lot of friends with the disease and it is a constant struggle," said Stavros.

---

**CASH IN YOUR TEXTBOOKS**

Visit [www.sacredheart.blkstr.com](http://www.sacredheart.blkstr.com) for additional buyback hours and locations.

---

**CHECK IN YOUR RENTALS**

Rented textbooks are due back by May 10, 2011

S.H.U. Bookstore
Academic Building
Plucker is hopeful about his prospects. “I hope that after I graduate, I can get a good job that allows me to live comfortably and support my family,” said Plucker. “I know there aren’t a lot of jobs out there, but I’m hopeful that I can end up somewhere worthwhile.”

Suris echoes this sentiment. “With this economy it’s definitely scary to graduate,” said Suris. “But I feel confident I will be successful.”

For Petillo, presiding over commencement for the first time is inspiring. “I’ve gotten to know a good number of students and their families over the last six months,” said Petillo. “It’s going to be exciting to take part in it with them.”

According to Petillo, the ongoing construction of the Student Commons will have no effect on the ceremony.

Senior Morgan Blanchard appreciates the magnitude of the event. “Graduating college means that all my hard work has paid off. I’ve been working toward this moment my whole life, and now that it’s here, I think I’m ready.”

Plucker’s college experience has gone by quickly. “I really can’t believe I’m graduating,” said Plucker. “College has gone by so fast, but that’s only because I’ve had such a great time. When I think about all the friends I’ve made, the great teachers I’ve had, and the activities I’ve been a part of, it kind of makes me sad to be leaving.”

The United States once led the world in college graduation rates, but it lost that distinction about a decade ago. According to the Christian Science Monitor, America is behind 11 countries in percentage of workers with an associate’s degree or higher.

U.S. President Barack Obama has emphasized America’s need for higher graduation rates. In 2010, the U.S. Congress expanded federal financial aid to college students.

Petillo understands the concerns of graduating students, but also urges them to be confident in the experience they have gained at Sacred Heart.

His advice to graduates is simple: “Be calm, be patient. And never give up.”
Finding jobs difficult despite hiring increase

Amanda Rivera
Staff Reporter

The Internet makes everything easier — even ruining a relationship?

For senior Peter Swink, finding any type of relationship online — was happen?

“I think that it’s bizarre. It ruins the fun of dating and meeting people,” said Swink.

While being online can affect your real life relationship? Sacred Heart students have their say.

“ gatherings become more easy to do.”

“I don’t believe this is a good move for us,” said Patterson’s situation seems to contra,

Whatever the projected hiring rate is over the next couple years, students seem to acknowledge the fact that getting a job takes effort regardless of what the numbers tell us.

“I don’t think finding a job is ever actually that easy,” said Coppola. “In order to find a job that you will really be happy with and enjoy doing, you have to be ambitious and not get discouraged when things don’t happen for you automatically.”

Others seem to share Coppola’s enthusiasm during their job search.

“Right now I’m working at Ruby Tuesday’s on Tuesday while I continue to interview at different places,” said Patterson. “I can get frustrating when you don’t hear back from people or when you find out something isn’t available but you just have to keep grading.”

Whether students currently have jobs or are still looking for something for after they graduate, for most, the rise in hiring can only mean good things for their futures.

“I enjoy working at Enterprise but I would definitely be open to something else,” said Underwood. “I am trying to keep an eye out for a job that will catch my interest and if there’s an improve-

mean that are a huge number of jobs that are available and I don’t see that.”

Nevertheless, students at Sacred Heart are excited to see that a raise in hiring can be expected now matter how large it is.

“I’m just excited to hear that there might be an improvement in searching for a job,” said Patterson. “It has been so hard to find a job for so long. It’s good to hear that things might finally be turning around. I don’t know if it’s true or not but any raise in hiring is good.”

Whatever the projected hiring rate is over the next couple years, students seem to acknowledge the fact that getting a job takes effort regardless of what the numbers tell us.

“I don’t think finding a job is ever actually that easy,” said Coppola. “In order to find a job that you will really be happy with and enjoy doing, you have to be ambitious and not get discouraged when things don’t happen for you automatically.”

Others seem to share Coppola’s enthusiasm during their job search.

“Right now I’m working at Ruby Tuesday’s on Tuesday while I continue to interview at different places,” said Patterson. “I can get frustrating when you don’t hear back from people or when you find out something isn’t available but you just have to keep grading.”

Whether students currently have jobs or are still looking for something for after they graduate, for most, the rise in hiring can only mean good things for their futures.

“I enjoy working at Enterprise but I would definitely be open to something else,” said Underwood. “I am trying to keep an eye out for a job that will catch my interest and if there’s an improvement in job openings, it can only help my chances.”

It is Tuesday afternoon at 3:30 and recent Sacred Heart University graduate, Tony Patterson is getting ready for work at Ruby Tuesday’s in the Townhall Mall.

“I graduated last fall with a degree in criminal justice,” said Patterson. “My options were pretty limited coming out of school so I eventually decided to get a job at Ruby Tuesday’s while I still try to find interviews and stuff like that.”

Patterson’s situation seems to contrast a recent survey by the National Association of Colleges and Employees (NACE). According to the NACE, hiring is expected to be up 21 percent from last year for jobs and internships across all majors.

“ I think it depends on what kind of a job you are looking for,” said Patterson. “I know some people get a job right after they graduate because there are more jobs available in their field, but for other people, like me, it might take a little longer to find something available you want to do.”

One of Patterson’s classmates, Faar Coppola agrees that finding a job can be harder for students with certain major.

“I think that the job market is improving for students studying in more modern fields,” said Coppola. “Things like Facebook and Twitter are taking over the world so I think anyone that works in media or social media will benefit from that.”

However, even some students that have jobs do not feel all that encouraged by the 21 percent rise in job hiring.

“I recently got a job at Enterprise Rent-A-Car,” said senior Rashad Underwood. “But I still have a tough time believing that hiring can go up by that much. That is a really high number. That would say that hiring is going to go up by that much.”

Finding jobs difficult despite hiring increase

Tyler McKeon
Staff Reporter

Finding jobs difficult despite hiring increase

Amanda Rivera
Staff Reporter

The Internet makes everything easier — even ruining a relationship?

For senior Peter Swink, finding any type of relationship online — was happen?

“I think that it’s bizarre. It ruins the fun of dating and meeting people,” said Swink.

While being online can affect your real life relationship? Sacred Heart students have their say.

“ gatherings become more easy to do.”

“I don’t believe this is a good move for us,” said Patterson’s situation seems to contra,

Whatever the projected hiring rate is over the next couple years, students seem to acknowledge the fact that getting a job takes effort regardless of what the numbers tell us.

“I don’t think finding a job is ever actually that easy,” said Coppola. “In order to find a job that you will really be happy with and enjoy doing, you have to be ambitious and not get discouraged when things don’t happen for you automatically.”

Others seem to share Coppola’s enthusiasm during their job search.

“Right now I’m working at Ruby Tuesday’s on Tuesday while I continue to interview at different places,” said Patterson. “I can get frustrating when you don’t hear back from people or when you find out something isn’t available but you just have to keep grading.”

Whether students currently have jobs or are still looking for something for after they graduate, for most, the rise in hiring can only mean good things for their futures.

“I enjoy working at Enterprise but I would definitely be open to something else,” said Underwood. “I am trying to keep an eye out for a job that will catch my interest and if there’s an improvement in job openings, it can only help my chances.”

It is Tuesday afternoon at 3:30 and recent Sacred Heart University graduate, Tony Patterson is getting ready for work at Ruby Tuesday’s in the Townhall Mall.

“I graduated last fall with a degree in criminal justice,” said Patterson. “My options were pretty limited coming out of school so I eventually decided to get a job at Ruby Tuesday’s while I still try to find interviews and stuff like that.”

Patterson’s situation seems to contrast a recent survey by the National Association of Colleges and Employees (NACE). According to the NACE, hiring is expected to be up 21 percent from last year for jobs and internships across all majors.

“ I think it depends on what kind of a job you are looking for,” said Patterson. “I know some people get a job right after they graduate because there are more jobs available in their field, but for other people, like me, it might take a little longer to find something available you want to do.”

One of Patterson’s classmates, Faar Coppola agrees that finding a job can be harder for students with certain major.

“I think that the job market is improving for students studying in more modern fields,” said Coppola. “Things like Facebook and Twitter are taking over the world so I think anyone that works in media or social media will benefit from that.”

However, even some students that have jobs do not feel all that encouraged by the 21 percent rise in job hiring.

“I recently got a job at Enterprise Rent-A-Car,” said senior Rashad Underwood. “But I still have a tough time believing that hiring can go up by that much. That is a really high number. That would
I don’t think you should judge any­ one who has been in many different relationships, don’t think you are going to be “the one.” Actually, you’d be the seventh.

Regardless of the outcome, any rela­ tionship costs a piece of your heart, emo­ tionally and spiritually. In the times we are living in, chances are if you have been in a serious relationship, you were physi­ cal, mental and spiritual. It is impos­ sible to be physically with someone without involving emotions, and it is im­ possible not to carry that baggage into the next relationship.

If you are dating a girl who has been through that process numerous times, how much of her heart does she have left to give you? It’s like she has been given away slices of her heart like a birthday cake at an office party, and you got a text from a co-worker (who probably dated her... I mean, had a piece of cake) just in time to have the last slice, and you only got a corner piece with no frosting letters.

There are those who say that girl who has dated a few jerks in her day, but she respected her own heart enough not to be sexually active with them and broke up with them before the length of their rela­ tionship turned into blind emotion, keep­ ing her from making the right decision. Not all guys choose the girls they date based on pure physical attraction, so when an attractive girl who has been in many relationships comes around, he will know better.

Those cases seem to be few and far between. The majority of women who have been involved with many different men tend to be the most moral of us all, and apparently are not very picky about who they get into a relationship with. It also means they are not secure with themselves enough to be single.

They need to be in a relationship with someone in order to define themselves, rather than just thinking they are fine on their own, then wanting to be in a relationship with the one person they long to express their love to. It’s been said before that you can’t respect someone who doesn’t respect him or herself. I think it is impossible to love someone if you don’t love yourself first. Honestly, in this day and age, many are in single relationships simply because they shouldn’t be in a relationship with anyone.

You don’t know yourself, and if you judge someone you are incorrect to judge. Does he still have feelings for anyone? We blame him but what if the real­ ity is he just wants a girlfriend, but picked all wrong ones.

Judgment will also arise if we find out a boy has not had a serious girlfriend. Does this mean he is a player and can­ not judge? Does he have skeletons in the closet? Does he still have feelings for anyone? We blame him but what if the real­ ity is he just wants a girlfriend, but picked all wrong ones.

There is one part about a guy’s past a girl should be aware of and have the right to judge. That is his reputation.

A relationship is not fair to judge be­ cause you were not in it so if you think about it, no one really knows the truth be­ hind it. Finding out the guy you are inter­ ested in has cheated on his past girlfriends or tends to say the same thing every time girls preach about how it is a bad thing to judge. That is his reputation.

How did he move on so quickly? Does he still have feelings for anyone? We blame him but what if the reality is he just wants a girlfriend, but picked all wrong ones.

Judging people is wrong no matter what the circumstance is. When we judge we’re just assuming and these assump­ tions can sometimes be wrong, leaving us looking foolish. It is unfortunately human nature to judge, and this need comes up most in most when it comes to looking into a new love interests past. The question of should you judge them based on what you find out about their past is tricky and messy.

Of course as a girl, we want to know everything we can before we jump into a relationship with this person. Since we are hesitant to trust at first, asking the guy about his past relationships isn’t enough. So we dig a little deeper by ask­ ing his friends and with technology being so top on its game these days, we can find the girls of his past on Facebook. If we aren’t going to judge before, we are most likely judging now.

With all this hard truth, I do not think you should judge a boy based on the number of people he has dated in the past. Even though this seems nearly impos­ sible, you shouldn’t do it.

For instance, let’s say you find out he has had five serious relationships in the past. Five in a lot for a male today and even though girls preach about how it is a bad thing to judge. That is his reputation. He will still find a way to pick apart his rela­ tionships.

How did he move on so quickly? Does he still have feelings for anyone? We blame him but what if the reality is he just wants a girlfriend, but picked all wrong ones.

Judgment will also arise if we find out a boy has not had a serious girlfriend. Does this mean he is a player and can­ not judge? Does he have skeletons in the closet? Does he still have feelings for anyone? We blame him but what if the real­ ity is he just wants a girlfriend, but picked all wrong ones.

There is one part about a guy’s past a girl should be aware of and have the right to judge. That is his reputation.

A relationship is not fair to judge be­ cause you were not in it so if you think about it, no one really knows the truth be­ hind it. Finding out the guy you are inter­ ested in has cheated on his past girlfriends or tends to say the same thing every time girls preach about how it is a bad thing to judge. That is his reputation.

How did he move on so quickly? Does he still have feelings for anyone? We blame him but what if the reality is he just wants a girlfriend, but picked all wrong ones.

Judging people is wrong no matter what the circumstance is. When we judge we’re just assuming and these assump­ tions can sometimes be wrong, leaving us looking foolish. It is unfortunately human nature to judge, and this need comes up most in most when it comes to looking into a new love interests past. The question of should you judge them based on what you find out about their past is tricky and messy.

Of course as a girl, we want to know everything we can before we jump into a relationship with this person. Since we are hesitant to trust at first, asking the guy about his past relationships isn’t enough. So we dig a little deeper by ask­ ing his friends and with technology being so top on its game these days, we can find the girls of his past on Facebook. If we aren’t going to judge before, we are most likely judging now.

With all this hard truth, I do not think you should judge a boy based on the number of people he has dated in the past. Even though this seems nearly impos­ sible, you shouldn’t do it.

For instance, let’s say you find out he has had five serious relationships in the past. Five in a lot for a male today and even though girls preach about how it is a bad thing to judge. That is his reputation. He will still find a way to pick apart his rela­ tionships.

How did he move on so quickly? Does he still have feelings for anyone? We blame him but what if the reality is he just wants a girlfriend, but picked all wrong ones.

Judgment will also arise if we find out a boy has not had a serious girlfriend. Does this mean he is a player and can­ not judge? Does he have skeletons in the closet? Does he still have feelings for anyone? We blame him but what if the reality is he just wants a girlfriend, but picked all wrong ones.

There is one part about a guy’s past a girl should be aware of and have the right to judge. That is his reputation.

A relationship is not fair to judge be­ cause you were not in it so if you think about it, no one really knows the truth be­ hind it. Finding out the guy you are inter­ ested in has cheated on his past girlfriends or tends to say the same thing every time girls preach about how it is a bad thing to judge. That is his reputation.

How did he move on so quickly? Does he still have feelings for anyone? We blame him but what if the reality is he just wants a girlfriend, but picked all wrong ones.

Judging people is wrong no matter what the circumstance is. When we judge we’re just assuming and these assump­ tions can sometimes be wrong, leaving us looking foolish. It is unfortunately human nature to judge, and this need comes up most in most when it comes to looking into a new love interests past. The question of should you judge them based on what you find out about their past is tricky and messy.

Of course as a girl, we want to know everything we can before we jump into a relationship with this person. Since we are hesitant to trust at first, asking the guy about his past relationships isn’t enough. So we dig a little deeper by ask­ ing his friends and with technology being so top on its game these days, we can find the girls of his past on Facebook. If we aren’t going to judge before, we are most likely judging now.

With all this hard truth, I do not think you should judge a boy based on the number of people he has dated in the past. Even though this seems nearly impos­ sible, you shouldn’t do it.

For instance, let’s say you find out he has had five serious relationships in the past. Five in a lot for a male today and even though girls preach about how it is a bad thing to judge. That is his reputation.
Editorials

Signing off from SHU, staying up on the news

So much history has passed before our very eyes this semester. From the disaster that transpired in Japan to the ongoing crisis in Libya, from non-stop snowstorms that lasted until April to accusations that President Obama is an unemployed one, most likely an unemployed one... I have simply made it my business to keep my eyes open on and around campus all year, so that you, our readers, can stay informed along with me.

The Voice Behind the Photographs

Zack Lane
Photography Editor

Who knew that I would become the Photography Editor for The Spectrum simply by asking a few questions at a photography seminar on campus? When I started this job three years ago, I was a sophomore, studying business, and had no idea what I was getting myself into.

Now that I am a senior (which is apparently the time to reflect on life) I would say that I have successfully transformed the “photography department” into a well-respected part of this newspaper. Three years later I have acquired nearly $10,000 worth of photography equipment, worked on almost 70 issues totaling over 1,600 photographs, collaborated with 40 different editors and trained close to 50 photographers.

I have seen many things come and go in this paper and university. Such things include “SHU Voices” and “Where in SHU” (which are no longer with us, thank goodness) or the sports Photo of the Week. One interesting thing that I have noticed is that there was always an article written about campus renovations since 2008. I suppose that is a testament to this school constantly improving.

What has been the best part so far? Definitely being called the “Grand Poohbah” of The Spectrum. Looking back, I would say that some of the best times have included meeting and photographing such high profile people as Rudy Giuliani, Maroon 5, The Fray, The Goo Goo Dolls, Lee DeWyze, Bobby Valentine, Bernie Williams, John Chamberlain and Jon Lester, just to name a few.

One of the best parts about shooting photography for a college newspaper is that there is always something going on. The only way to get better is by constantly shooting and working for this newspaper.

The only way to get better is by constant efforts are remembered. The editorial pages are open forums. Letters to the editor are encouraged and are due by Monday at noon for consideration for each Thursday's issue. All submissions are subject to editing for spelling, punctuation, and length. Letters to the editor should not exceed 400 words and should be e-mailed to spectrum@sacredheart.edu.

The Spectrum does not assume copyright for any published material. We are not responsible for the opinions of the writers voiced in this forum.
Superheroes, sequels tackle big screen this summer

Bill Haug
Staff Reporter

What do Captain Jack Sparrow, the X-Men, Kung Fu Panda 2 and "The Hangover's" infamous wolf pack have in common? They are all returning to the big screen in new adventures this summer.

Starting May 6 with the release of the comic book adaptation of "Thor" starring Chris Hemsworth and Oscar winner Natalie Portman, the God of Thunder's movie debut only sets the stage for a summer full of superheroes and sequels set to reign over the box office.

With "Thor" kicking off "summer movie season" essentially, Sacred Heart University students are marking the calendars for all youth-oriented variety of releases set to hit the silver screen in the coming months.

"The Hangover: Part II" looks like it's going to be another smash hit that rocks the box office during this summer's blockbusters.

Starting May 27 release.

The long-time "60 Minutes" journalist, as well as the former CEO of NBCUniversal and former "CBS Evening News" anchor, (responsible for pairing the two anchors with CBS that ends in June, and is looking forward to possibly starting her own show, according to the New York Times.

Many rumors, including those on the morning news show for nearly the past 15 years, have remained high, some say that "Today" show with former co-host Matt Lauer and former executive producer of "Today" Jeff Zucker, (responsible for pairing the two anchors in the first place on "Today").

Many anchors, including those on the New York Post, have named Scott Pelley, the long-time "60 Minutes" journalist, as Couric's replacement for "CBS Evening News.

As Couric plans to leave CBS behind, Lauer and co-host Vieira have confirmed plans to depart from their positions with NBC.

Lauer, who has been an anchor on the "Today" show for nearly 13 years, has told the Daily Mail that ends in June, and is looking forward to starting her own show, according to the New York Times.

Matt Lauer and Meredith Vieira are set to leave "Today" after their current contracts expire.

"We talk a lot and, yes, we've been discussing the possibilities. That's true," said Couric during an interview with the New York Times regarding a new talk show with former co-host Matt Lauer and former CEO of NBCUniversal and former executive producer of "Today" Jeff Zuck­er, (responsible for pairing the two anchors in the first place on "Today").

Many rumers, including those on the New York Post, have named Scott Pelley, the long-time "60 Minutes" journalist, as Couric's replacement for "CBS Evening News."

"Today" show with former co-host Matt Lauer and former executive producer of "Today" Jeff Zucker, (responsible for pairing the two anchors in the first place on "Today").

"I am looking forward to Captain America because I love America," said freshman Allen Tedaldi. "Also we see his background and what he can do."

"I think more than any other movie, the one I am looking forward to the most is the second part of 'Harry Potter,'" said Francini. "The last one left me on such a cliffhanger. Even though I have read the book and know how the story will end, I can't wait to see how they portray the details in the movie."
Simon Cowell brings 'X-Factor' to America

Lisa Manente
Staff Reporter

He was the judge that kept the country talking about "American Idol," and soon, America will be buzzing about Simon Cowell soon again. This time, however, the competition is bigger and the stakes are much higher.

A well-known singing sensation as a judge on "Idol," Cowell is bringing the British singing reality competition, "The X-Factor," to the states starting this fall. The mega-hit overseas averages 12 million viewers per episode, as Fox announces they plan to air Cowell's No. 1 hit show in the states, which is getting comparisons to "American Idol." Cowell will be promoting the Sharon Osbourne-fronted version of "Idol" in Europe before jetting off to The States to promote his "X-Factor." As with "Idol," Cowell will be searching for the new "American Idol." The New York Daily News speculates that several artists named to the list include Eminem, Arcade Fire, The Strokes, Wiz Khalifa, and it's definitely worth how expensive tickets are.

"I'm going to see Taylor Swift July 19 at the Prudential Center in Newark, N.J. It's her birthday and I was so excited, said freshman Benito Tapaj. I think we'll be seeing many of the big names as well as the smaller, relatively unknowns.

"I think it's great that the festival has such big names from so many different genres of music. But I think my favorite part is seeing the smaller artists who you may never have heard of if you didn't go to Bonnaroo. The people and environment are my favorite parts of the trip," said Bathe.
When it comes to media studies at Sacred Heart University, Juliana Britts has crossed the full spectrum.

Britts, an alumna of Sacred Heart, will be receiving her master’s degree in media studies, plus a certificate in media management, in 2012 from the New School in New York City.

Following graduation, she will be returning to Sacred Heart as a faculty member where she will instruct the magazine publication course and oversee Pioneer magazine.

"One of my career goals is to teach at a college upon obtaining my PhD," said Britts. "It feels amazing to have been given an opportunity to start this so early." Pioneer magazine is a student run publication at Sacred Heart that publishes a new issue each semester. Britts is confident her time working for both Spectrum and Pioneer will be an asset to her new position.

"So many Sacred Heart experiences have helped me to prepare for this role," said Britts. "But my time with Spectrum and Pioneer has helped me the most." Britts first got involved with The Spectrum during her sophomore year as a contributing writer.

"As a writer, I learned so much about taking criticisms and commands," she said. "I really struggled." This did not deter her from her interest in the paper.

"As the end of the semester I decided to apply for assistant features editor," said Britts. "I got the position." Her roles in campus media outlets only continued to advance.

"From there, I moved up to features editor during my senior year and associate editor of Pioneer magazine," she said.

"The whole point of a cover letter is to prove it," said Delvecchio. "You can say all the different things you want to say, but if you can give examples to illustrate the skills then you have the back up to prove it." The career development office suggests tailoring each cover letter to the individual position you apply for. Students should use this time to tell the employer that they are an investment the company should make. Although this may take extra time, career development reassures students that it could pay off.

"A company would much rather hear what you can do for them, like increasing sales, great organization or increasing productivity rather than what the job will do for you," said Britts.

Delvecchio advised that simple mistakes could keep you from getting picked over the next person, so it is important to stay organized.

"When uploading or sending your application materials be sure to name them properly," said Delvecchio. "Use your last name then label the document the appropriate title." Make certain to send the correct materials to the correct people. Failing to do so will also have consequences.

"You don’t want to send the cover letter you made for GE to IBM because that will get you thrown out of the job pool faster than anything," said Delvecchio.

The cover letter is really the first impression an employer gets about you, said senior Kristen Buchholz.

"Through my internship experience I’ve found that if your cover letter isn’t convincing they won’t even waste their time looking at your resume." At Sacred Heart, students have the opportunity to use the career development office for assistance while preparing their application materials.

"The first tip I can give is that a cover letter should never be more than one page," said Rick Delvecchio, director of career placement at career development. "The second is that it should always be customized to the job in which you are applying for." The third would be to match the key skills for the position to the key skills you possess in your cover letter," he said.

Delvecchio suggested bringing new information to the cover letter. He said that students should use it to further explain why they held the positions they did and how they have received valuable experiences.

"You should be expanding your resume, not repeating it," said Delvecchio.

Most companies list the skills necessary to fulfill the requirements.

"Cover letters are crucial because often times recruiters do word searches through hundreds of cover letters and resumes to find terms that fit their position," said Buchholz.

It is important to provide quality examples that will not only impress an employer but also show a student’s qualifications.

"The whole point of a cover letter is to prove it," said Delvecchio. "You can say all the different things you want to say, but if you can give examples to illustrate the skills then you have the back up to prove it."

The career development office suggests tailoring each cover letter to the individual position you apply for. Students should use this time to tell the employer that they are an investment the company should make. Although this may take extra time, career development reassures students that it could pay off.

"A company would much rather hear what you can do for them, like increasing sales, great organization or increasing productivity rather than what the job will do for you," said Buchholz.

Delvecchio advised that simple mistakes could keep you from getting picked over the next person, so it is important to stay organized.

"When uploading or sending your application materials be sure to name them properly," said Delvecchio. "Use your last name then label the document the appropriate title." Make certain to send the correct materials to the correct people. Failing to do so will also have consequences.

"You don’t want to send the cover letter you made for GE to IBM because that will get you thrown out of the job pool faster than anything," said Delvecchio.

The cover letter should also bring a piece of your personality. In the job market it is difficult to find ways to stand out and make an impression. This is a tool you can use to do just that.

"My best advice is don’t play it cool when writing a cover letter. If you are excited and passionate about the job, let it show," said Buchholz. "Employers want someone who is as excited about their company as they are!"
Seniors are also encouraged to attend, and many Hi-Hat members enjoy attending the events of Project Play, including their own members.

"I really like attending their events," said senior Amanda Smith. "It's nice to see them have fun and enjoy themselves."
MEN'S TENNIS BACKHANDS NEC
Strong performances propel Pioneers to conference title

Sean Elliott
Asst. Photo Editor

The Sacred Heart men's tennis team started off the month of April with a record of 8-6 overall, 2-2 in the NEC and was looking to start a run to the Northeast Tournament. They did just that with a 5-1 record this month and entered the NEC Tournament on fire.

Senior, Kirill Kasyanov went into the tournament with a match winning streak of 18 in a row. By Sunday, April 17th he had winning streak of 21 in a row and the Pioneers earned another NEC Tournament Championship.

"The experience at the tournament was fun and we're just happy that we get to go to NCAA's again and win another conference championship for Sacred Heart," said Kasyanov.

They beat rival Quinnipiac 4-1 in a rematch of last year's championship to earn their second NEC title in the last three years. This was their third straight year in the championship match. Now, the Pioneers will advance to the NCAA Tournament on May 13th.

The road to the championship match was not easy.

"Our semifinal against Monmouth was a real test," said senior Chris Ujkic.

The match against Monmouth was a nail biting finish. Taking a whopping three hours and forty-three minutes with the score tied up 5-5 at the end of three sets and needing just one more match win to clinch the title.

Kasyanov grabbed one win, but Kirill Kasyanov dominated Andrew Weeden and served out the match to win, 6-3, 6-4. "I was able to close it out which felt great as a senior to do," said Kasyanov.

With six seniors on the team this year, winning another NEC title and going to the NCAA tournament is exactly how every one of them would love to end their last season of tennis.

"It feels great to win and go out on top. There's six seniors on the team so we really wanted to win it this year and we knew we'd have to work hard for it," said Kasyanov.

"Everyone really pulled through during the tournament and we really came together as a team." Up next for the Pioneers is the NCAA tournament on May 13th and according to Chris Ujkic, a few school records to shatter. Tuesday, May 3rd is the selection show at 5:30 p.m. when they will find out their opponent for the tournament.

"For NCAA's we are all really pumped and are excited to find out this Tuesday who we play. As a team I think we've shatted some SHU records, but I think we may try to pull off a few more at NCAA's with this squad," said Ujkic.

The Pioneers won their first ever NEC tournament back in 2009 where they lost to the powerful Texas Longhorns in the NCAA tournament. This year they are hoping to earn their first NCAA tournament victory.

Cheering, dancing on national scene
Kelly Welsh
Staff Reporter

The Pioneers Cheerleading and Dance teams performed their choreographed routines and competed against some of the most talented colleges and universities in the country at the National Collegiate Cheer and Dance Championships in Daytona Beach, Florida on April 6-10.

There were 15 different dance divisions at the competition this year. The dance divisions consisted of three open, two hip-hop, large teams, small teams, mascot, partner stunt, group stunt and an open stunt divisions.

"In our team dance performance 12 teams competed, and in our hip-hop division 15 teams," said senior Liza Hanson.

In the hip-hop dance division, there is only a final round: In the division one dance category, there is a preliminary round, where only the top seven teams make back to finals.

"As of last year, we finished in 10th place. This year we came in eighth for team dance, and seventh for hip hop," said Hanson.

The women on the dance team must try out for the national's team in order to compete in this competition.

"We definitely performed at our best. That is what a competition is definitely about," said Hanson.

With the Pioneers moving up two spots since last year in the division one-dance category all their hard work and dedication to this competition really paid off.

The women competed against the defending national champions, Towson University, who have taken first place in this category the past two years.

"If it was not for hard competition no one would challenge themselves to be better," said Hanson.

The Pioneer's cheerleading squad's routine was over three minutes long, consisted of a combination of both cheers and dancing. Their choreographed routine was filled with jumps, tosses, tumbling and pyramids.

It was different from the dance teams, because they were able to use signs that further added to their performance.

The cheerleading team competed in the intermediate-all girl one division. There are 16 different total cheerleading divisions at this national competition.

Other divisions at the competition include small and large coed divisions, intermediate divisions, a junior college division and four all girl divisions.

The judges base each cheerleading squads final scores on their partner stunts, tumbling, pyramids, basket tosses and jumps.

Out of all the teams competing in the preliminary round of the intermediate-all girl division one category, only nine of those squads were lucky enough to make it back to the finals.

While the routine they performed included all the criteria the judges were looking for, it did not earn the Pioneers a spot in the final round.

The National Collegiate Dance and Cheerleading competition was the last competition for both teams 2010-2011 season.

The Pioneers can now reflect on the good and the bad, in order to better prepare themselves for another fierce competition back in Daytona in April 2012.
Who are ‘SHU’ rooting for: NBA playoffs

Ryan Urso
Staff Reporter

With March Madness in the rear view mirror, the NBA playoffs takes a front seat to the basketball world.

This is an exciting time of year for every sports fan. It does not matter if you follow basketball all year round, if you have a hometown team is in the playoffs, you find yourself cheering them on.

The NBA playoffs is made up of 16 teams, eight from the Eastern Conference and eight from the Western Conference.

Morgan Mireski
Staff Reporter

Every hockey players dream is to make it to the NHL and win the Stanley Cup. With every practice and game, every player pushes themselves to the limit.

So far the NHL playoffs have kept us all on the edge of our seats. The games have been exciting and definitely suspenseful, on the edge of our seats. The games have been exciting and definitely suspenseful.

The NHL season skating toward Stanley Cup

The Vancouver Canucks defeated the defending Stanley Cup Champions, the Chicago Blackhawks in game seven.

Not only were Rangers a top choice of the students and whom they were rooting for. The Bruins were also right up there with them.

"I am a Rangers fan," said junior Ryan Palazzo, the junior captain of the women’s hockey team. "I’m not sure if they will win the whole thing though," said Palazzo.

The Western Conference saw the number one seeded Vancouver Canucks.

"The series between Montreal and Boston was really exciting," said junior Rock Tate. "Especially because I was cheering for the Bruins.

The Bruins defeated the Canadians in seven games.

Other teams that students have been rooting for are Montreal and Philadelphia.

Another match up was Philadelphia versus Buffalo. The Flyers ended up by winning in seven games.

The other series in the Eastern conference pinned the Penguins and the Lightning together. Tampa Bay won the decisive game seven and advanced to round two.

The Western Conference saw the defending Stanley Cup Champion Blackhawaekd get eliminated in round one by the number one seeded Vancouver Canucks.

The other series is the Capitals taking on the surging Lightning.

In the Eastern Conference the number one seeded Caps took on the surging Predators, and the other match up has the San Jose Sharks taking on the Detroit Red Wings.

Playoff hockey is a special time of the year for hockey fans. They level of play and intensity rises to a whole new level and fans go all out for their hometown teams.

All the teams share one goal of winning the Stanley Cup, but only one team can do that. It will all be decided on the ice in the upcoming weeks. Who will you be rooting for?

GAME OF THE WEEK

Weekend of May 6
Sacred Heart Pioneers at Central Connecticut Blue Devils
Four Game Series

Chris Bosh looks to make a move to the net. The Miami Heat beat the 76ers to advance to the Eastern Conference Finals.

The Lakers went head to head against the Thunder in first round play.

The other teams in the NHL playoffs are sure to not disappoint.

Each and every game will with out a doubt be entertaining and exciting for any sports fan to watch.
Former SHU runner shows resilience in battle with cancer

The Spectrum sits down with former track athlete Ashley Stearns

Blake Campbell
Staff Reporter

For Ashley Stearns, running, has always been a part of her life. She realized her calling when she began running at the age of 13 and she hasn’t looked back since. Her way of life changed, however, when she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer last year.

In true runner-like fashion, she’s continued to move forward, despite the adversity she’s been faced with, as she continues to look straight ahead with a positive outlook on life.

Stearns went to John Jay-Cross River High School in New York where she excelled in both crew and track. She was a member of the Sacred Heart crew team for a year before joining the track team as a sophomore.

Track was more my thing so I decided to go to track. I’ve done it since 7th grade and I just enjoyed doing it a lot more. That was my true calling,” said Stearns.

Stearns ran the 400m and became a key component of the 4x400 team. She was a member of the 2007-2008 NEC champion team and in her senior year, Stearns was appointed team captain.

“It was an honor to be appointed captain. I was a two-year captain for my high school team and I really enjoyed that responsibility and the role that comes along with it. I was looking forward to being able to demonstrate those responsibilities at the college level within a competitive program,” said Stearns.

Stearns majored in English and Sacred Heart with a minor in media studies. After graduating in 2009, Stearns began working as an assistant cross-country coach at her alma mater John Jay-Cross River. Although her collegiate career was over, Stearns continued training herself.

“You still have that ‘runner’ instilled in you. I’ve been working out a lot, doing spin classes and taking up different forms of cardio through the gym I’ve been going to,” said Stearns.

Her whole life changed last year when a football-sized tumor was discovered in her stomach. Stearns was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. She needed surgery to have the mass removed and had to undergo chemotherapy.

“The tumor turned out to be an immuno tolerance that had been stage two and three out of four in terms of aggressiveness. When I realized how severe the diagnosis was, I was completely shocked,” said Stearns.

Though the news caught her off guard, Stearns maintained her optimism throughout the situation.

“If you’re a person who’s got a very upbeat, positive outlook on life like Ashley does, you’re going to be able to handle a challenge like this,” said Christian Morton, head coach of the Sacred Heart track team.

Being the competitor that she is, Stearns was able to take on a mindset that she would ultimately beat cancer.

“I was ready for the challenge. I was nervous, but I was definitely mentally prepared for it. You just learn to live in the moment and toughen up. There’s no other option,” said Stearns.

Stearns went through nine weeks of treatment. Now that she is getting better, she must undergo monthly check-ups at Sloan-Kettering in New York City.

She has already put her focus on eating well and getting back in shape. Stearns plans to run in a 5k race in Austin, Texas later this year. She also hopes to give back to the cancer community much like her idol Lance Armstrong.

“Lance Armstrong is the biggest influence for this whole experience because I did the same chemos protocol as him. Having his books and his inspiration was a big push for me to know I can do this. Now I want to raise money for Livestrong,” said Stearns.

Livestrong is an organization founded by Lance Armstrong to raise money and awareness for the cancer community while offering free support for anyone whose life has been affected by Cancer.

Stearns attributes her resilience during treatment to the lessons she’s learned running track.

“I kept saying thank God for track. Track has always made me mentally tough. What you put into it is what you get out of it,” said Stearns. “That was my mindset when I was in treatment. I just knew that eventually the pain would subside and I was going to be okay.”

Stearns uses the lessons learned during chemotherapy to motivate herself during the post-treatment recovery process.

“I’ve taken from this experience that you can’t take for granted your good health,” she said. “I think it sticks with me when I’m out running because I always think back to how sick and weak I was. I’m so much stronger now.”

It comes as no surprise to her teammates and coaches that Stearns has rebounded in such a way.

“Ashley had a great, positive outlook on her diagnosis. There was never any self-pity involved; she just wanted to beat the cancer and go forward with the rest of her life. She is truly an inspiration on how to be positive and stay happy even when going through hard times,” said Justine Amey, a former teammate of Stearns.

Stearns maintains that positive outlook as she moves forward with a new appreciation for life.

“A lot of this whole experience was putting aside my fear and knowing that I was in the best hands possible and I was ultimately going to be okay,” she said. “I met a lot of good people along the way, from a great support group from family and friends, to the doctors and medical professionals I’m working with. My life is richer because of this situation.”

The Counseling Center is here for you during finals week!

Announcing walk-in hours
Tuesday, May 3 - Tuesday, May 10
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
No appointment necessary!

Park Avenue House
(Above the Health Center)
An alarm buzzes on an analog clock that reads 6 a.m. A young boy rushes to the closet and pulls out his favorite football jersey, #28 Adrian Peterson. He quickly pulls the jersey over his head and rushes up the stairs. He bursts into his parent’s room and shakes his father awake. It’s the first Saturday of Spring and little Joey Everyboy is excited to have a catch with his old man.

Joey dreams to one day be a Sooner, playing for the University of Oklahoma just like Peterson. He understands that it takes hard work and dedication to be successful.

With a successful middle and high school playing career behind him, Joey is one of the nations top recruiters. After signing with one of the nations top programs Joey continues to find success both on and off the field.

However, little does Joey know that each hit is slowly killing his brain, and he is not alone. Each year thousands of professional and amateur athletes alike suffer from head concussions, which can cause physical, cognitive, and emotional damage.

Common causes for a concussion include sports injuries, bicycle accidents, car accidents, and falls; the latter two are the most frequent causes among adults.

However, this article will be examining brain injuries from contact sports, mainly America’s most popular—football.

“We forget about our brain a lot of the times and we forget how important it is and all the controls. We really do need to go out of our way to protect it,” said Dr. Rachel Bowman, an associate psychology professor at Sacred Heart University.

The numbers do not lie, thirty-five percent of all Americans tuned into watch this year’s Super Bowl, a whopping 111 million individuals. According to the USDA the Super Bowl is also the second largest day for food consumption in the United States preceded only by Thanksgiving. The Super Bowl is the second most watched annual event in the world behind Europe’s UEFA Champions League.

The game is so popular that the five most watched events in United States history are the four last Super Bowls and the season finale of the hit show M.A.S.H., which ranks in at a respectable third place.

If you have read a blog, newspaper, or any website in the past few months then you should be well aware of the very public NFL Players Association drama.

The main issue is a better pension system that will take more care of players after they retire. Many players are leaving the league with injuries, some as small as chronic back pain while others are suffering from permanent and unbreakable brain injuries.

With players leaving college early, or focusing solely on football a lot of these players leave the league with few skills that can be used outside of football.

While the players with million dollar contracts can invest their money and be set for life. The players who are on the team’s practice squads or even the ones fighting to stay on the roster are the ones in financial trouble and find themselves with huge medical expenses after their time with the NFL.

The NFLPA would like to see the owner’s set-aside money to cover retired player pensions and medical coverage.

Over the past three years Boston University School of Medicine has been studying chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) in relation to contact sports.

CTE is a progressive degenerative disease found in individuals who have been subjected to multiple concussions and other forms of head injury. Individuals with CTE may show symptoms of dementia, aggression, confusion and depression, which could lead to suicide.

It was believed that CTE affected only professional athletes however an autopsy conducted in 2010 on the brain of Owen Thomas, a 21-year-old lineman at the University of Pennsylvania who committed suicide by hanging himself, showed early stages of CTE, making him the youngest person — and the second amateur player — to be diagnosed with the condition.

Thomas was known as a gentle giant off the field but as a player “loved to hit people,” he may have played through numerous concussions without even knowing it or leaving some of his issues unreported due to potential missed playtime.

“Td a player who even if they have a headache stemming from a football game, they will have to go through the concussion process,” said graduate student Steve Tedesco, a former member of Sacred Heart’s football team, the Pioneers.

“Therefore, players are very hesitant to report their concussions

Concussions are always going to be under-reported,” said Tedesco. “Especially in football, headaches are a daily occurrence. But there’s a difference between headaches and concussions.”

With the popularity of football at all time high the game is being played at earlier ages each year, which leave many questions unanswered.

“I think it is more dangerous from a couple prospective, one because of the timing aspect of it, you set yourself up and now had your first one [at a young age],” said Bowman. “Also the fact that you are in this vulnerable developmental period where you have prefrontal cortex structures which are not fully developed yet that are now sustaining damage.”

Bowman, who has kids of her own, doesn’t recommend avoiding contact sports all together.

“There is some really valuable things to learn from being on a team and it’s good for societal emotional development, team leadership and responsibility,” said Bowman. “However, it is critical that they are wearing the right kind of protective gear and the teams are adopting the new tackling guidelines, where you tackle with your head up and not your helmet.”

Colleges and high schools across the nation are taking action to better train and prepare their athletes from the dangers of head injuries.

Sacred Heart is one university that is taking notice.

The athletic trainers do a great job paying attention to head injuries,” said Tedesco. “When they notice someone showing symptoms of a concussion, they immediately pull them out of the game and give them a concussion test.”

If an athlete is unresponsive or having trouble answering a series of questions the athlete will remove the player and begin further testing.

“If it is deemed that you can’t go back on the field, the next day you have to go into the athletic training office and take an impact test,” said Tedesco. “These impact tests usually take 25 minutes to complete and are really challenging. The time frame for being out is different for everyone, but I’d say the average is between 1-2 weeks.”

The ImPACT test, which stands for immediate post-concussion assessment and cognitive testing, is a tool that computerizes neurocognitive assessment of the brain. It is the first, most widely used, and most scientifically validated computerized concussion evaluation system on the planet.

Along with these computerized programs athletes must also go through a wide range of neuropsychological tests to ensure they safe to return to practice.

“I think its naive that you can get people to stop playing contact sports because there are a lot of advantages to them. I think that the better way to approach it is to continue research and continue developing top notch protective gear that is accessible to everyone and being worn properly,” said Bowman. “And since younger kids are playing contact sports I think we should bring things that they have at college levels down to younger levels. Base line cognitive function test should be made available and accessible to everyone.”

Somewhere down the road companies like Nike and Adidas will create gear that will enhance the safety of contact sports.

However, living in the present there are still clear and present dangers associated with contact sports such as football.

A child knows he wants to play football, and he know’s he has to tackle another kid to stop him. What he does not know is the proper way to tackle or the dangerous associated with tackling some one improperly.

The hit EA Sports video game, Madden 2012 will have a new realistic concussion feature, which requires players to sit out after receiving a concussive blow.

In years prior the game allowed you to keep players in the game who suffered concussions with the only side effect being a slight reduction of their stats. The change has stirred up some controversy however, it is proven that children learn things from both video games and television.

Educating kids, whether it be through coaching or even video games, will move us one step forward to a safer game.
The Sacred Heart will take on the Central Connecticut Blue Devils this weekend in an NEC match up. The Pioneers close out their season the following week in a four-game series with the Wagner Seahawks.