

## Celebrating Black History Month at SHU

BY SOPHIE CAMIZZI  
News Editor

Why is Black History Month important to you?  
“Black History Month is important to me because it is an opportunity to learn more about African American culture and acknowledge the achievements of successful African Americans,” said freshman Jensie Nicholas. “It is also a great way to celebrate diversity and show appreciation for Black contributions to our lives.”

As the spring semester enters into February, Sacred Heart has been celebrating Black History Month in a variety of ways, such as Black History Month themed Wisdom Wednesdays and the School of Social Work featuring influential Black figures throughout the month, including Aisha Bowe.

According to an email sent out by the School of Social Work on Feb. 11, “Aisha Bowe is a former NASA rocket scientist and the Founder and CEO of STEMBoard, an engineering company that ranked in the top half of the 2020 Inc. 5000 fastest growing companies in America.

She is on a mission to help youth break stereotypes, stop internalizing false narratives, and believe in themselves, enough to pursue careers in STEM.”

Some students have felt that these emails have been an effective way to communicate important information, as well as to promote diversity at Sacred Heart.

“I think the school has done a good job this year when it comes to promoting the influential contributions of Black people,” said junior Chelsea Thakkar. “I think now more than ever, it is important to realize that people from diverse backgrounds bring a lot to the table.”

“Everything is digitalized, which means everyone from around the world can now work together which could not have been possible earlier, so personally, I think Black History Month is a great way of educating the current generation and young minds about the impressive contributions made by Black people and other sectors of society,” said Thakkar.

While these emails provide some insight into influential Black figures both past and present, there are also many other ways that students can celebrate Black History Month.

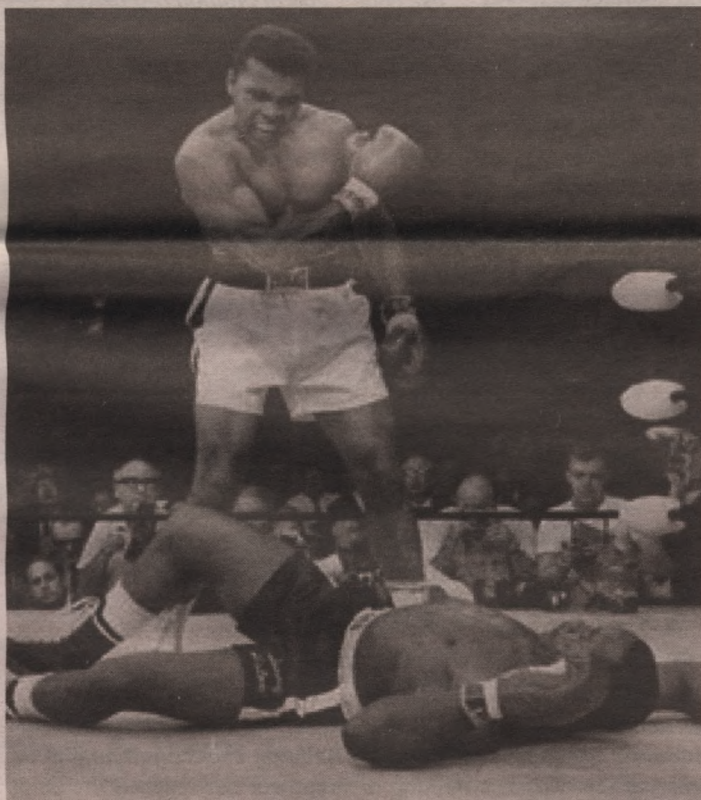
“Everyone at Sacred Heart would benefit from their understanding by attending the ‘Untitled Othello Project.’ Everyone is welcome,” said Julie Lawrence, Chief Diversity Officer. “They should also visit the Multicultural Center to meet new people and make new friends. Finally, we have Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training for students to learn in a private, yet interactive manner that can be found on Blackboard under ‘Organizations.’”

According to the Sacred Heart website, “The



Martin Luther King Jr. was a preacher, activist, and lead spokesperson in the American Civil Rights Movement.

AP News



Muhammed Ali was an American boxer known for his message of black

AP News

Untitled Othello Project will encourage difficult reflections and conversation about racial identity and structural racism. While scholars have long studied the racist tropes and stereotypes in Shakespeare’s ‘Othello,’ Untitled Othello will consider the concept of race in premodern literature and ways to view it in modern times.”

For students who are interested, the discussion and viewing of a section of the Untitled Othello Project will be held on Feb. 16 at 2 p.m. in the Martire Theater E145 and will be free and available to the public.

While some students are celebrating Black History Month at Sacred Heart, for other students, some of the festivities bring up mixed feelings for Black students who feel that Black history and culture should be celebrated beyond the month of February.

“I like the month, but hate it because it’s like America telling us when we can praise ourselves,” said sophomore Julia Martin. “Why give us one month when we should be doing it all year?”

This article was contributed to by Chantal El Chaib.

## How You Can Help the Blood Crisis

BY AIDAN DALY  
Staff Writer

Sacred Heart will be hosting a blood drive in the Edgerton Center from 10:30 a.m. until 7 p.m. on Feb. 16, Feb. 23, and March 2 in partnership with Hartford Healthcare St Vincent’s Medical Center and the Connecticut Blood Center to help aid with the national blood crisis.

According to the Associated Press, in Jan. 2022, the American Red Cross declared the worst national blood shortage in the past decade due to multiple causes, including a 62% drop on both high school and college campuses since the start of the pandemic.

Because the American Red Cross has been urging more people to donate blood, Sacred Heart has taken the initiative of organizing their own drives.

“The Student Nurses’ Association (SNA) decided to host two upcoming blood drives in conjunction with the Red Cross of Connecticut as the service aligns with our organization’s mission statement,” said Lisa Jacobsen, president of the Student Nursing Association.

Continued. on Page 2...

## NEWSPAPER RACK LOCATIONS

**Hawley Lounge**  
(next to stairs)

**Student Life**  
(across from office between doors)

**Library**  
(inside front doors)

**West Campus (West Building)**  
(first floor lobby)

**West Campus (East Building)**  
(outside East Cafe)

**Thea’s Abbey**  
(lobby)

**Melady Hall**  
(inside front doors)

**Martire**  
(first floor by the main staircase)

**Spectrum Office**  
(in the SCMA Wing)

**Curtis Hall**  
(inside the front doors)

**Linda’s**  
(first floor)

**Pitt Center**  
(inside front doors)

**SC Wing**  
(first floor near 63’s and Edgerton)

**NC Wing**  
(first floor near couches)



# News

## It's the Final Countdown

BY EMILEE CAMODEO AND JONATHAN PITCHER  
Assistant News Editor & Staff Writer

On Feb. 3, Red's hosted Senior Toast, an event to celebrate 100 days until senior graduation on Saturday, May 14.

"The mood was incredibly vibrant," said senior Benjamin Bello, a worker at Red's. "Lots of people were there greeting each other and it reminded me of all the special events and pub nights the Student Union hosted prior to the 100-day countdown. The mood was beyond proactive. Lots of seniors enjoyed dinner and the new menu items."

With seniors graduating in just a couple months, many are beginning to make plans for post-grad life, including entering the job market or going to graduate school. Some students have even chosen to return to Sacred

Heart with seven master's degree programs to choose from.

"After graduation, I'm going into the Education Master's Program and will student-teach in the fall," said senior Rachel Holley.

For those who are pursuing their graduate degrees at Sacred Heart, the relationships that they have developed throughout their undergraduate years with the faculty and staff have been a major factor in their decision-making process.

"The reason I am most likely choosing to come back to SHU for a master's degree is because of the opportunities presented from the outstanding professors that have guided me through since I first declared being a Marketing

major in the fall of 2020," said Bello.

In contrast, other students feel content with just earning their bachelor's degrees and will not be coming back to pursue any other form of higher graduation.

"I applied for a summer fellowship in the city at a PR Company," said senior Anna Pirkel, former staff writer for The Spectrum. "I am excited for my new journey to begin, but I am also afraid to leave my college experience behind."

"As I entered Sacred Heart as a freshman, I had no idea what I wanted to do with my future, but now that my time here is almost over, I am excited to explore my career path as a future public relations officer (PRO)," said Pirkel.

As graduating seniors look back on their journey through Sacred Heart, many offer advice for underclassmen.

"Always use your time wisely and set personal goals for yourself because graduation will be here before you know it," said senior Evan Parker. "Although leaving my friends after graduation is sad and I will truly miss the times I had with them here at Sacred Heart, I am ready for the experiences coming my way."



Senior Alexandra Bonanno enjoying one of her last cookies from 63's.

Sara Anastasi

## How You Can Help the Blood Crisis

Continued from Page 1...

BY AIDAN DALY  
Staff Writer

"In the hospital setting, we have seen patients receive only half unit doses of blood to preserve a dwindling supply," said Jacobson. "Ultimately, this blood drive will be a rewarding event that provides our students with many volunteer and leadership opportunities while promoting a lifesaving cause."

The blood drive will be open to all students and an appointment can be made on the Connecticut Blood Center website. While the drives taking place on Feb. 16 and Feb. 23 are both fully booked, appointments for March 2 are still available, but filling up quickly.

In response to this, Sacred Heart sent out an email on Feb. 10 with new available blood drive dates in Feb., March, and April.

"I did not get a chance to sign up for one of the upcoming blood drives on-campus, which is why I'm so happy Sacred Heart has decided to hold more drives," said sophomore Michael Paiva. "I've never donated blood before because I never realized how important it was, but after hearing about the blood shortage and how many people can be affected by it I am very excited to help the cause."

Due to the popularity and large scale of the event, many students within the Davis and Henley College of Nursing were asked to volunteer their time.

"This event called upon the need for many student volunteers," said Jacobson. "Students were asked to sign-up to fill positions ranging from donating blood to assisting with setup and breakdown, greeting donors and even assisting donors within the refreshment area."

Additionally, in compliance with the American Red Cross rules and regulations, anyone

who wishes to donate must adhere to the guidelines exactly.

"The university Covid-19 regulations prohibit anyone outside our SHU community from signing up to donate or attend," said Jacobson. "The majority of donors for our first blood drive on Feb. 22 are undergraduate student names with several faculty donors. Anyone who meets the criteria for eligibility can donate. Donors must be feeling well and in good health, weigh at least 110 lbs., and at least 16 years of age."

Despite the somewhat strict criteria that blood donors must meet, students are still willing to donate their blood to help others and have called upon others to do the same.

"I'm proud to say that I attend a school that's willing to take action during a national crisis like this," said freshman Sean Garafol. "I understand how dangerous a blood shortage can be and I think anybody who can donate has an obligation to help out."

To register for upcoming blood drives, use code C008 at [ctblood.org/drives](http://ctblood.org/drives).

PIONEERS HAVE  
**HEART**

ONE DONATION SAVES THREE LIVES

FEBRUARY 16  
FEBRUARY 23  
MARCH 2

10:30AM - 7PM  
Edgerton Center Atrium

Sacred Heart University Facebook

A flyer with just a few of the many dates that SHU will be holding opportunities to donate blood.

## What to Know About the Fear of War in Ukraine

BY ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tensions are high between the U.S. and its North American Treaty Organization (NATO) allies against Russia, as Russian troops continue to occupy the Ukrainian border.

Russia wants the U.S. and their allies to keep Ukraine and other former Soviet nations from joining NATO, refrain from putting any weapons near Russia, as well as roll back alliance forces from Eastern Europe.

However, they have rejected these demands as "nonstarters," but have offered to discuss possible limitations on missile deployments, a greater transparency of military drills and other confidence-building measures.

Putin has yet to deliver a formal response to this proposal, but he has already described them as "secondary" and has warned that he will not take "no" for an answer. He counters NATO's open-door policy by arguing that it threatens Russia and violates the principle of the "indivisibility of security" that is often enshrined in international agreements.

According to the White House, in a phone call on Feb. 12, President Joe Biden told Russia's President Vladimir Putin that invading Ukraine would cause "widespread human suffering" and that the West was committed to diplomacy to end the crisis but is "equally prepared for other scenarios."

Biden also said the U.S. and its allies would respond "decisively and impose swift and severe costs" if the Kremlin attacked its neighbor.

The two presidents spoke a day after Biden's national security advisor, Jake Sullivan, warned that U.S. intelligence had shown that a Russian invasion could possibly begin within days or before the Winter Olympics end on Feb. 20.



Ukrainian soldier showing off the "V" for "Victory" sign upon receiving aid from the U.S.

AP News

Russia has denied the intention to invade but has still massed well over 100,000 troops near the Ukrainian border and has even sent troops to Belarus, encircling Ukraine on three sides. U.S. officials say that Russia's buildup of firepower has reached the point where they could possibly invade on short notice.

In response, the U.S. and their allies are raising the prospect of unprecedented sanctions in the event of an invasion, including a possible ban on dollar transactions, draconian restrictions on key technology imports like microchips and the shutdown of a newly built Russian gas pipeline to Germany.

The U.S. and its allies have also since delivered plane loads of weapons and munitions to Ukraine and the U.S. has deployed additional troops to Poland, Romania and Germany to protect NATO's eastern flank.

As of Feb. 12, the U.S. has evacuated almost all of its staff from the embassy in Kyiv, but will maintain a small consular presence in Lviv, a city in Ukraine near the border of Poland, a NATO ally, in order to handle emergencies.

Currently, there is a public warning for all American citizens in Ukraine to leave the country as soon as possible. Sullivan says that Russian President Vladimir Putin could give the order to launch an invasion of Ukraine any day now.

Brendan Williams contributed to this article.



Ukrainian soldier standing at attention and armed to enforce security.

AP News



# Perspectives

## TikTok's Impact on the Winter Olympics

BY ASHLIN HALEY & SAMANTHA INGRAM  
Perspectives Editor & Staff Writer

The Beijing Winter Olympics coverage this year has differed from other Olympics regarding the level of exposure in the media. Athletes have taken ahold of social media platforms, especially TikTok, to give viewers and fans an inside look into their everyday routines at the Olympics. According to NBC, over 18 billion views have been generated on TikTok through users engaging with behind-the-scenes content of the Olympics through posts from athletes and coaches.

Athletes and coaches have been posting content such as unboxing videos of their gear, their outfit details of the day, filming themselves at events, showing what life is like in the Olympic village, training routines and more. According to The New York Times, competitors like snowboarder Maddie Mastro have also posted videos documenting life in Beijing, trips to the grocery store and the mandatory testing practices to ensure health amongst the athletes.

As these types of videos saturate TikTok, many students have engaged with Olympic content on social media.

"It makes the younger generation of athletes more interested and makes them want to be more involved in physical activity and their sport," said sophomore Julia Palermo.

Some students comment on the impact of viewing these videos online, even if they do not typically tune into the Olympics.

"I wasn't that interested in Olympians on TikTok, but when I do see videos, I often find it interesting especially all the different sports they play," said sophomore Isabella Popoli.

For instance, snowboarder Shaun White of Team USA gave his followers on TikTok an inside look of his room at the Beijing Olympics. His video gained 4.8 million views and received positive feedback from fans in the comment section.

According to News12, "Donning his Team USA gear, the four-time Olympian walked around the spacious room, showcasing the various spots around



Instagram, @jessiediggins  
Olympian Jessie Diggins posted a selfie from the slopes.

the room. From his work area to his bedroom, most of his room was covered in Olympic gear and memorabilia."

Many students say that viewing these athletes off the big screen adds a unique point of view.

"I personally do enjoy watching the level of interaction of Olympians on TikTok because I get to see what they do in their everyday routine rather than just their Olympic culture," said Palermo.

Others say that the variety of athletes that are involved in this TikTok phenomenon adds diversity of thought to the Olympics overall.

"I think that people are learning more from other athletes through social media because the view on others is so much more expanded. We are able to watch highlight videos or just posts about other athletes as easy as a click of a button, which helps people learn," said junior Adriana Franchino.

Some say these posts give Olympians a sense of normalcy.

"I think the TikTok videos the Olympians post show behind the scenes of what they are like when they are not on TV. It was very enjoyable to watch the videos. I feel that the TikToks build up the excitement for the 2022 Olympics," said junior Francesca Compagno.



AP News  
The Opening Ceremony of the Olympics

## This Year I Will...

BY FIONA YOUNGS  
Staff Writer

For some, the creation of New Year's Resolutions is a common practice. If not a specific goal for themselves, some people have plans to follow through with during a new year in their life.

For many students, setting a goal is something they enjoy to do for themselves in the new year.

"I always make at least a few small, realistic goals that sets myself up for success for the coming year," said senior Mary Austin. "I plan to follow through with my resolutions this year by holding myself accountable."

Other students have made plans to better their physical health.

"This year I set a goal to have a consistent gym routine. I have been following through with it so far and I really enjoy working out," said junior Hannah Shablon.

Some students have aimed to better their mental health in the new year.

"My one goal this year is to take more time for myself, and to make it a priority to take breaks to do selfcare," said junior Haley Sullivan.

On the other hand, some students did not make new year's resolutions.

"Often times, I make New Year's resolutions and never end up going through with them, so this year I decided not to set any unrealistic New Year's resolutions," said junior Myllena Silva.

Some students said that resolutions don't make it past the first few weeks of the year.

"I think many individuals fail to keep their resolutions because they lack accountability," said graduate student Ryan Corbett.

For some, motivation for following goals is found through watching others follow their resolutions.

"Personally, I see viewing other people's goals as a motivation to set and stick with mine," said Austin.

Some students said they feel disappointed when

they are unable to follow through with the goals that they set for themselves.

"I usually get upset with myself when I don't continue with my goals," said Silva.

Still, several students said they have plans for making improvements in the new year.

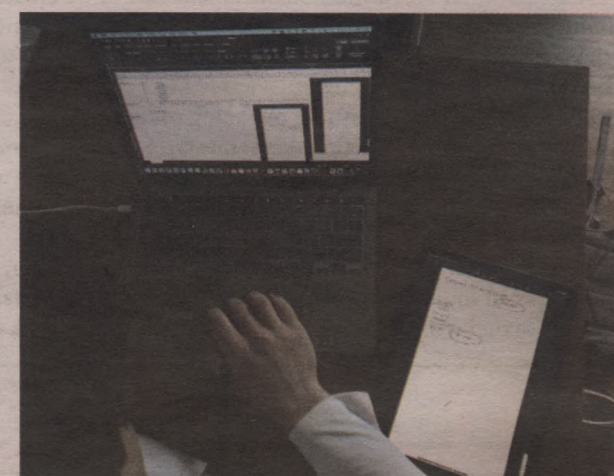
"I haven't made a specific New Year's resolution, but I'm trying to eat healthier, incorporating more greens into my diet," said senior Savannah Palas.

Many students hope to strive towards a healthier diet in the new year.

"I plan on consuming more vegetables and Vitamin D," said Corbett.

Senior Alana Proudian has a plan for maintaining her goals.

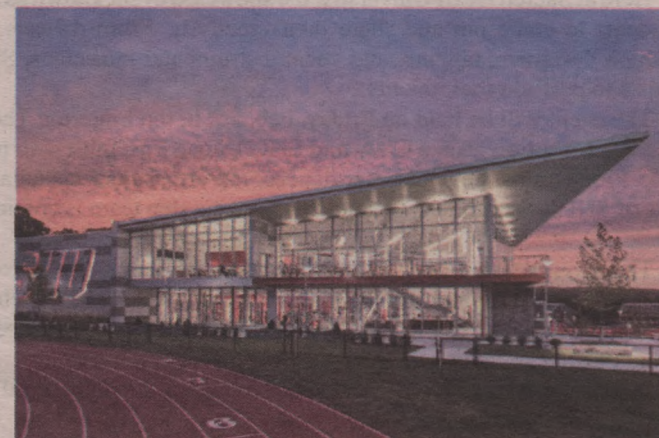
"A lot of my friends have had the same New Year's resolution, so their presence in these activities definitely makes it more motivational and fun to complete."



Staff Photographer, Isabel Haglund  
Sacred Heart Sophomore, Aaron Martino, holding himself accountable by working through his Financial Management homework.



Staff Photographer, Isabel Haglund  
SHU views are unbeatable and make that mental health walk even more rewarding.



Campus  
Many students utilize the Bobby Valentine Recreation Center, pictured above, to fulfill their resolutions.



# Features

## Club Spotlight: Black Student Union

BY SARA ANASTASI  
Staff Writer

The Black Student Union, one of Sacred Heart University's clubs on campus, presents students with the opportunity to immerse themselves into a community of diversity.

The BSU serves as a liaison between students of African descent as well as other minority groups and staff within Sacred Heart.

"The Black Student Union is a place to gather and exchange ideas and experiences that students can use to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of how to best serve the community they represent," said junior Jaylah Bryant, president of the BSU.

The BSU promotes diversity and inclusion within Sacred Heart's community.

"Having students with different ethnic backgrounds and life experiences ultimately creates a more socially aware environment," said Bryant.



Staff Photographer, Jess Fontaine  
One of the many inclusive posters in the Multicultural Center.

The BSU was formed in 2018 and has grown immensely since. It began as a small collection of Black students that saw the need to create a safe environment for Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) students on campus.

"With the addition of the Multicultural Center, BSU has turned a physical space into a home for Black students on campus," said Bryant.

Also, with support from faculty, they have successfully been able to promote the club and hold events.

"We strive to create a welcoming, fun environment for individuals to share their experiences and connect with fellow members that may have the same or different experiences," said Bryant.

Regardless of one's ethnic background, BSU welcomes anyone with an interest in diversity on campus.

"I am not in the club myself; however, I have heard many wonderful things about it," said sophomore Sydni Carroll. "They are a very inclusive group and welcome anybody that has a passion for social justice and equality."



Instagram, @shu\_bsu  
Jaylah Bryant, the President of the Black Student Union.

The club holds biweekly meetings on Wednesdays. They are held in the Multicultural Center from 8 to 9 p.m. They select a different topic to discuss at each meeting.

"The topics range from more fun and uplifting things, such as 'Guess that Black Anthem', to more serious topics, such as Colorism," said Bryant.

The BSU is hosting the Black Love Gala, which will be their biggest event this semester. This event is open to all SHU students.

"The purpose of this event is to celebrate Black Love Day to promote love and peace within the Black community," said Bryant.

In addition to this event, they will also be holding multiple exciting fundraisers to engage with students.

"The easiest way to join BSU is to follow us on social media @shu\_bsu to know when there's a meeting or event," said Bryant.

Bryant also encourages students to stop by the Multicultural Center to meet BSU members and learn about the other Multicultural Clubs on campus.

Bryant is confident that the BSU will flourish as it continues to grow.

"I can't wait to witness the heights it'll rise to in the coming years," said Bryant.

## It's Time to StandUp

BY JILLIAN REIS  
Staff Writer

A new club at Sacred Heart University, SHU StandUp, works to educate the SHU community on prevalent topics, such as sexual assault awareness and bystander intervention. The club was started in November by senior club president Simona Bruno, who was inspired to make a change during RSA training.

"This past summer was my last training," said Bruno. "When we went through the session about dating violence and sexual abuse, I kind of sat back and thought about how we actually don't have a club that promotes awareness about these hard topics."

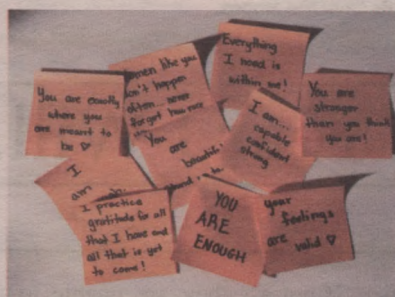
The session about dating violence that Bruno mentioned is run by Kristen Eschwie, the Project Coordinator for Sacred Heart. Together, they worked to bring the StandUp club to Sacred Heart.

"A constitution and a mission statement had to be created, a certain number of people needed to agree to join/hold positions in the organization, and they needed someone who would agree to be the advisor," said Eschwie. "I agreed to be the advisor and worked with Simona on hashing out some of the details."

At their most recent meeting this semester, Stand Up members all responded to the prompt "Love Is..." Members got to write their answers on small pink slips of paper that were given out to students during the club's table time the following afternoon.

The club is planning on doing more table times to encourage people to join the club as well as spread important information on sexual assault. StandUp is also planning a big event for sexual assault awareness month called Take Back the Night.

"Take Back the Night is kind of like taking back the night that the victim was victimized and kind of having a memorial for them and standing up for them and advocating for them," said Bruno. "I'm really excited because we're planning big things for that."



Contributed by, Simona Bruno  
The SHU StandUp Club wrote positive affirmations for themselves on sticky notes.

In addition to Take Back the Night, StandUp plans on helping others outside of the Sacred Heart community. The club plans on doing fundraising events for the Center of Family Justice in Bridgeport which provides free services for all victims of abuse.

"I think it's really important to start something like this and to spread awareness and resources," said senior club member Tara Keating. "The fact that we're talking to places in our own community and bringing not only awareness and aid to people in the Sacred Heart community, but also in the area around us, which is super important."

Other club members are just as excited and passionate about the club and its goals to spread positivity and awareness about such important topics.

"This club has a lot of important things that it talks about and stuff that hits close to home for me," said junior club member Victoria Mondelo.

"I know when I was going through stuff in high school, I would have loved to have a club like this to go to."

StandUp club meets Wednesdays at 9:30 p.m. in room NC104. For more information about the club, email President Simona Bruno at brunos82@mail.sacredheart.edu or follow their Instagram @shu.standup.

## Calling All Artists

BY SAMANTHA MARANO  
Staff Writer

Here at Sacred Heart University, the showcase event known as SHU Slam, has allowed students to come out and share their creativity. From dancers, poets, and painters to fashion designers, rappers, and vocal/instrumental musicians, SHU Slam welcomes all artists to perform their talents.

The event will be held on Friday, Feb. 25, in the Edgerton Theatre at 8 p.m.

SHU Inception Dance Crew and SHU Dance Ensemble will perform, as well as Hip-Hop Productions. Several other dances, rap artists, and visual artists will perform, and one of SHU's fraternities, Omega Phi Kappa's step team is coming out to showcase their work.

This event started back in 2017 by Kari Williams, the Director of Dance at SHU. The staff who plan and put together this event has faced the challenge of students not knowing what SHU Slam is or what to expect due to the event being put on hold for two years due to Covid-19.

In addition to the talent shown throughout the night, a DJ will host the event and get the crowd pumped up.

Anthony Mellow-Valle will be rapping a song that he wrote during this event. Mellow spent his undergraduate at Sacred Heart and is now in the graduate program.

"I went to SHU Slam during undergrad; I never performed. I was asked to perform

one year, but I just wasn't ready for it," said Mellow. "I now have the confidence to go out there and perform my songs to all these people."

This event is free for all SHU students with their SHU ID cards. Others who would like to come to the event can purchase General Admission tickets at the box office for \$10.

SHU Slam is happily accepting students who want to participate in the upcoming event and are encouraged to reach out to Williams via email.

"We would love to get more talent involved," said Williams. "Maybe even be in the audience and come up for an open mic."

Since the event has been on pause, many will experience this event for the first time, even if they are not first-year students.

"What's a better opportunity than to have something like SHU Slam at the university you've been attending? It's here, you have friends that go here, you're going to have people showing up and you're going to be comfortable," said Mellow.

Above all, this event is meant to captivate and inspire the audience.

"The event is a great time for all to support and enjoy the arts on campus and leave feeling inspired," said Williams. "This is a community-driven event more-so than a 'show.'"



# Spotlight

**AUDREY'S  
CORNER**  
a place for kindness & reflection

## Flashes

BY KAILEY BLOUNT  
Audrey's Corner Manager

Flash fiction is short, sharp, and memorable. They are stories allowed only to be a few hundred words. Below are three flash fiction pieces written by Sacred Heart students who have used their passion for writing to craft memorable works exploring internal struggles. Audrey's Corner prides itself upon being a home for writers and readers to find hope. "The Corner Shelves," "A Paper Promise," and "My Unfinished Symphony" convey this message.

*The Corner Shelves*  
By: Haley Alvarado

Stained more than a smoker's teeth lay books older than you or me. Compromised spines broken from love now are embarrassed by pieces of tape as they slowly break. Their tears contribute to the story they have to tell. Those are the books hidden on the corner shelves of the library. Not all of them are beaten or old, but those ones hold a sanctioned personality guaranteed. Leaving you undressed to find something that provokes tenderness. Till you're left to disentangle the words to fill the spiraling void of want. To understand a page and the reverence that it made.

*A Paper Promise*  
By: Kailey Blount

The stairwell told me a secret.

In all the years I'd made a home of his landing, he never once spoke a word. Wooden and wild, my blankets made a roof of his railing. A bed of his floors.

I never questioned our wordless ways. My company came in the form of spaces on a written page. Paper cuts and paper people. For memories and friends. I made them all on a stairwell who would never hear their ends.

Except, he did. He knew my stories. He knew my name. And he knew why I slept on his hollow steps, a tattered pillow under a nest of knots too busy to upset. My imaginings stayed awake, waiting for the familiar creak who'd tuck them in drawers and rock them to sleep.

I always assumed it would be the creak who'd forget. He'd stay silent one night, too worn out to warn me of distant dreams. He'd never return to pick up my seams.

I never thought it would be me. Who'd keep the tattered pillow on a mattress, letting cobwebs fill the corners of where blankets used to sleep. Who'd keep the stories tucked in drawers, letting the paper people blow dust on the pages where I used to write words. Who'd yank a comb through the wild knots, letting the girl who I was drift into a woman who had forgot.

Now, with my soul stuck in the spaces of these paper pages, I remember the secret the stairwell told me all those years ago.

I creak on purpose to let you know you aren't alone.

When my blanket left his corners, he shivered every night. His splinters missed my stories. My paper people. My wild knots. The way my toes felt on the banister when my mother would yell at me to stop.

And now, I can recall, a distant creak who never forgot the friend who'd filled his hollow heart with paper promises to never grow up.

*My Unfinished Symphony*  
By: Jillian Reis

There is a Symphony in my head.

It's loud and terrible and soft and beautiful. Sometimes it's in a major chord, sometimes minor. For a long time, I thought it was ADHD or anxiety or something wrong with me. This unending melody fills my brain so relentlessly it must mean something is wrong with me.

One day I picked up an instrument and played part of the melody. People clapped and cheered, but it was only one instrument. It was only one part of the symphony. I tried to play it all at once, but it never works. I am one person, not an orchestra so only I can hear its tune.

Even if I played the symphony for all to hear, would they like it? Would they call me insane? Would they see it as a joke? Would it fall on deaf ears?

In the end, I am one person. I can't play all the instruments at once and the melody is relentless.

My Unfinished Symphony, Forever Unfinished.

Check your emails for form to submit questions! OR follow The Spectrum Newspaper (@shuspectrum) on Instagram and click the link in the bio!

JOIN US

**A CONVERSATION WITH PROVOST ROBIN CAUTIN**

Thursday, February 24, 2022  
5:00 pm  
Martire Forum  
Event is free of charge!

Join The Spectrum and Student Government for a Q&A style conversation with Provost Robin Cautin. Find out what her vision is for the university, learn her background, and get your questions answered.



# Arts & Entertainment

## Using and Abusing Your Platform

BY JESSICA FONTAINE  
Staff Writer

Podcaster Joe Rogan is facing public backlash following a recent episode of his show, "The Joe Rogan Experience." The Dec. 31 episode of the Spotify podcast featured an interview with Robert Malone, an anti-vax physician who referred to the American vaccination efforts as "mass formation psychosis."

"Spotify has a lot of younger listeners, so many of them will see Joe Rogan's podcast and want to listen to it, even though he is spreading misinformation because he is not a scientist," said junior Jenna Lee.

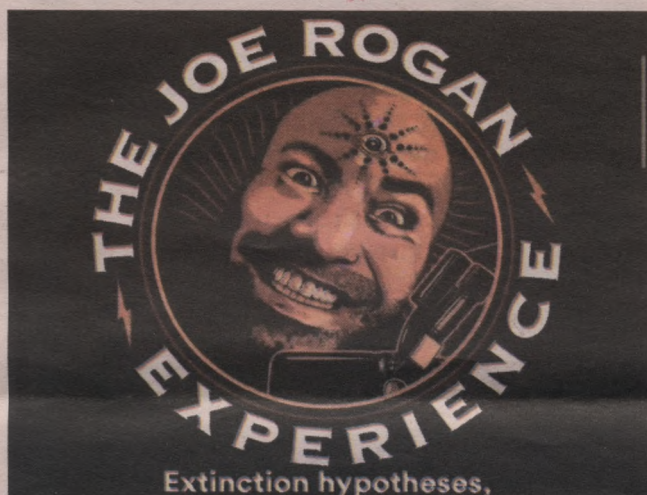
According to Rolling Stone, infectious disease epidemiologist Jessica Malaty Rivera and over 270 medical professionals signed an open letter to Spotify, demanding the platform assess the spread of Covid-19 misinformation.

CBS News reported that Spotify CEO Daniel Ek released a message to employees on Feb. 6, saying that he is "deeply sorry" for the controversy. However, he said, "I do not believe that silencing Joe is the answer."

"People who support Joe Rogan are putting their likeness in a celebrity over the scientific facts," said Lee.

Despite Ek's statement, Vulture reported that Spotify removed over 20,000 episodes from creators who spread Covid-19 misinformation since the start of the pandemic.

"People should have the freedom to post whatever they want within reason. Even though we have freedom of speech, there are still certain things we can't say," said junior Courtney Blount. "I believe in free speech, but social media compromises that in the fact that everyone has a platform. People have platforms who shouldn't have platforms."



Joe Rogan Experience Logo.

Instagram, @joeroganexperience

"I think that celebrities are certainly entitled to their opinion... Having said that, we're talking about issues that affect the public at large, and Joe Rogan is no longer a comedian in a comedy club," said Communications Prof. Joseph Alicastro.

Rogan is believed to have invited Malone as a guest on his podcast because of the similar beliefs that they shared.

"Covid has become so political that people are trying to find information about Covid that supports

their beliefs. That's dangerous because we aren't listening to all perspectives," said Blount.

Malone was banned from Twitter for spreading Covid-19 misinformation, a recurrent issue within the world of social media amidst the pandemic.

Many Sacred Heart students and staff were pleased to see action being taken against Rogan.

"I agree with Twitter for the reason that some misinformation can be dangerous," Blount said. "The only way we can combat that is with science and facts and people doing their own research."

"I think it was absolutely justified that he was banned from Twitter," said Alicastro. "Facts are facts. Facts are what lead us to the truth, so I think that spreading misinformation can be very very dangerous... especially during these times."

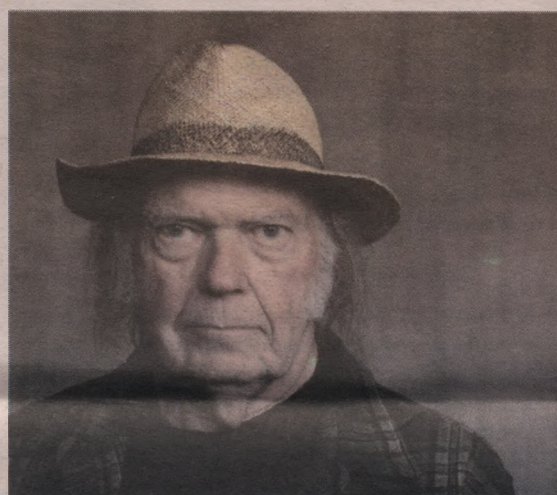


AP News

Joe Rogan speaking at an event.

The controversy didn't come as a shock to many considering Rogan's past incidents that resulted in public outcry.

"He's been an anti-vaxxer. He's been a climate change denier. And as we know, even more recently than this incident with Dr. Malone, they have just pulled 71 of his archived shows out of Spotify because of the n-word being used," said Alicastro. "He's now reaching millions of people on a podcast and with that comes a much greater responsibility."



AP News

Joni Mitchell is one of the many artists removing music from Spotify in response to the incident.

## Curtains Go Up on "The Mad Ones"

BY SARA COSTA  
Staff Writer

From Feb. 10 through Feb. 20, Sacred Heart University's Theater Arts Program (TAP) will premiere "The Mad Ones," originally written by Kait Kerrigan and Brian Lowdermilk. The production will take place in the Little Theater.

"The Mad Ones' is a dramatic coming of age story with a deep emotional twist accompanied by some extremely beautiful music," said sophomore Nick Rubano.

Rubano played the role of Adam. He has been involved in TAP since his first semester at Sacred Heart.

"When I heard they would be producing 'The Mad Ones,' I was super excited because I already knew and loved some of the music of the show," said Rubano.

The show consists of only four cast members. The cast said they worked relentlessly during rehearsals to fully understand the story and channel their characters.

"I worked with my director Gerry Goehring and researched different mothers' roles on television that were overbearing," said junior Allie Cimaglia.

Cimaglia took inspiration from the two mothers featured in the popular television series, "The Big Bang Theory," for her role as Beverly.

"One is very uptight and smart, which Beverly is, and one is kind of the more embarrassing mom," said Cimaglia. "I took a little bit of both and used that."

Freshman Grace Peknic played the lead role of Sam. She was previously in Sacred Heart's production of "The Other Josh Cohen."

Before participating in "The Mad Ones," Peknic had a history of performing mostly in comedic roles.

"I would always just smile on stage and do the motions, but in this show I really learned how to tap into my character and all the loss and the grief she's dealing with," said Peknic. "That was really big because I've never had that challenge as an actress before."

There is a lot of work that goes into creating the production by not only the cast, but also the entire crew. There are many jobs that go on behind the scenes.

"As producers, we are in charge of money for the show. If any of the designers need to buy something for the show, they come to us. We also head the marketing and advertising for the show," said sophomore Danielle Savino.

Junior Grace Curley is the production stage manager. The stage manager creates the schedule for rehearsals and creates a rehearsal report. Reports include recording the details of the rehearsal. During the live performance, Curley is also in charge of calling the show and cueing the lights and sound.

Curley got into contact with actress Emma Hunton, who played Kelly in the original Off-Broadway production of "The Mad Ones."

"The Mad Ones was such a pivotal moment in my life and changed who I am as a human. I hope it brings everyone involved so much magic and spontaneity into your lives as much as Kelly gave to Sam and mine," said Hunton.

Junior Kimmy Johnson plays the role of Kelly in Sacred Heart's adaptation.

"Going through this process, the cast and I have grown so much and have such an appreciation for all of the characters and the story. We have made such great connections to the show, and I am excited to see how much the audience loves it," said Johnson.

"The Mad Ones" will have performances on Feb. 17 - Feb. 19 at 8 p.m. in the Little Theater, as well as Feb. 20 at 3 p.m. Tickets can be purchased at the box office in Edgerton.

"I would encourage everyone to see the show because I think everyone can take a lesson out of it and everyone can see themselves as a character," said Peknic. "Parents can see themselves as the mother and teenagers can relate to that moment, graduating high school, going to college and experiencing all the fear, but all the freedom you have."



Instagram, @shutheaterarts

The program cover for The Mad Ones production.



# Sports

## Softball Swingin' for the Fences

BY ARLINGTON COOKE  
Staff Writer

Sacred Heart softball enters their season as the fourth ranked team in the Northeast Conference (NEC) preseason polls. The teams sitting in front of them are Long Island University (LIU), Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) and the reigning NEC champions, Saint Francis University (SFU).

Junior pitcher Olivia Vadas and senior catcher Alyssa Gonzales are two of the over 20 athletes that the Pioneers return for the 2022 season. Vadas is a Fairfield native and put together a team leading earned run average (ERA) of four as well as 56 strikeouts in 21 outings.

Despite her success, a new season means a new opportunity to out-do her 2021 performance.

"Individually, it's been a lot of working on technique during practice to make sure my mechanics are sound to carry me through the season," said Vadas.

Gonzales is the reigning NEC Player of the Year. Her historic season culminated in setting a new Sacred Heart record for homeruns in a season with 17.



Sacred Heart Athletics  
Sacred Heart Softball welcomes the newest addition to their coaching staff, Kaysee Talcik, as the new pitching coach.

The program also brings in five new first-years, as well as the new pitching coach, Kaysee Talcik. This is Talcik's first career coaching job after a four-year career as a starting pitcher for the University of Massachusetts Lowell.

"She brings her recent experience pitching at the DI level and a fresh enthusiasm for coaching," said head coach Pam London.

Vadas believes that Talcik will be a beneficial factor in her abilities this season.

"I think it's always good to get a fresh set of eyes on things like mechanics and game plan," said Vadas. "She's been helping all of us a lot with getting our mindset game ready."

Although the Pioneers finished fourth in the NEC last season, they were unable to make it past the first round of the NEC tournament after a 7-0 loss to SFU. They look to make a deeper run in the playoffs this season as they begin their campaign with a doubleheader on Feb. 18 against the University of Virginia and Charleston Southern University in the Charleston Southern Softball Tournament in Charleston, S.C.

Sacred Heart Athletics contributed to this article.



Instagram, @sacredheart\_softball  
Kylee Harvey getting some live at-bats to prepare for the season.

## Women's Wrestling Enters Championship Season

BY KENDALL VERSFELD  
Staff Writer

The Sacred Heart women's wrestling team continued their inaugural season with two dual meet wins against Limestone University and Bridge the Gap on Feb. 5.

Led by head coach Paulina Biega in her first year and freshmen Ashley Reed and Madison

the squad with words of wisdom.

"If you wrestle until the whistle blows and leave your heart on the mat, things will go well," said Biega.

With a program built on the foundation of many first-year collegiate athletes, Biega believes these dividends will pay off in the coming seasons as a veteran core will soon develop.

"The only way from here is up," said Biega. "I expect them to be even better students, athletes and people in future years."

Despite Sacred Heart being one of only three Division I women's wrestling programs, Biega has an optimistic view on the future of the sport.

"Women's wrestling is already one of the fastest growing sports in the country," said Biega. "I think if we keep on doing what we are doing, the growth will get even better."

The Pioneers look to finish out their season at the Northeast Regional Championships on Feb. 20, where any wrestler who places in the top five spots of their weight class can advance to the Cliff Keen National Collegiate Women's Wrestling Championships which takes place on March 5, according to teamusa.org.

Sacred Heart Athletics contributed to this article.



Instagram, @sacredheartwomenswrestling  
The Women's Wrestling gathered in their warm-up gear.

Sanquist, the Pioneers sit at number 14 in the national poll, according to the National Wrestling Coaches Association.

"There are always many ups and downs along the way but overall, I am really happy with how things have been going," said Biega.

Reed, who is the 6th-ranked wrestler at her 191 pound weight class, pinned freshman Journey Land to secure the victory for the Pioneers over the St. Bernards of Limestone University.

"I'm very proud of that win," said Reed. "I wrestled her twice that night and the second time I was finally able to hit a move that I have been working on with the coaches."

Reed has a chance to qualify for the regional tournament and she has been pleased with her success.

"This season has been very successful," Reed said. "There have been a lot of obstacles with Covid, but we have persevered through them."

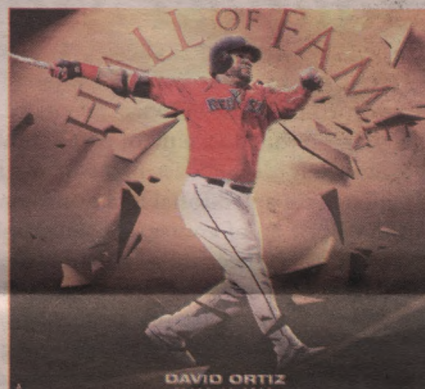
When asked to give some advice to her team and those individuals competing in the regional tournament, Biega left



Instagram, @sacredheartwomenswrestling  
A team photo of the women and their coaches at a media shoot.

## David Ortiz Makes Hall of Fame and MLB still in Lockout

BY JORDAN GREENE  
Contributing Writer



Instagram, @mlb  
David Ortiz will be inducted into the MLB Hall of Fame this year.

As Major League Baseball (MLB) continues its offseason, the league has grabbed headlines on many issues that stray far from the baseball diamond. The voting results for the 2022 Hall of Fame class were revealed on Jan. 25 and were met with much controversy. The members of the Baseball Writers' Association of America (BBWAA) are in charge of voting athletes into the Hall of Fame. It was revealed that only one player had received the 75% of the vote necessary to be deemed worthy of induction into the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown.

Former Boston Red Sox first baseman and designated hitter David Ortiz, also known as "Big Papi," was the sole player chosen to be honored in the 2022 Hall of Fame. Over the span of his 20-year career, Ortiz was a three-time World Series champion, a World Series Most Valuable Player (MVP), a seven-time Silver Slugger award winner and a 10-time All-Star. He accumulated 541 career home runs, which is 17th most all time, according to mlb.com.

Notable omissions from the Hall of Fame selection include Barry Bonds, the MLB all time leader in home runs with 762, and Roger Clemens, the seven-time Cy Young Award winner and holder of the third most strikeouts in MLB history with 4,672, according to MLB.com. Despite their success in the league, Bonds and Clemens have both been vilified by the media largely because of their presumed use of performance enhancing drugs (PEDs) during their careers.

On another note, the Major League Baseball Players Association (MLBPA)

and the MLB owners have yet to come to an agreement on a new Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), which has forced the MLB into a lockout since Dec. 1. The last lockout to take place in the league was back in 1994, a player strike that lasted over a year and led to the cancellation of an entire season, according to cbssports.com

One of the main causes of the lockout appears to be that owners across the league want an expanded playoffs system for the league, but the players are rebuking this and instead demand an expansion on free agency rights, a larger percentage of the amount of revenue they will receive, and an agreement for players to protect themselves from being held back in the minors for financial reasons, according to nbcsports.com.

With spring training set to begin at the end of February, there is cause for concern if the 2022 season will be put on delay until these issues between the league and players are sorted out. The players will be at stake to lose out on proper preparation time for the



Instagram, @rogerclemens  
Roger Clemens was not inducted into the MLB Hall of Fame despite being so talented.

long season, as well as take the risk of being more injury prone due to lack of training. Sacred Heart freshman Ryan Breihof showed frustration with MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred.

"My stance on the lockout is that Rob Manfred needs to adapt to a new generation and understand where these players are coming from," Breihof said. "As a fan, I understand that it's a business and money revolves around everything, but Rob Manfred needs to open his eyes to the issues that the players are expressing."



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## Hang Up the Cleats and Pick Up the Running Shoes

JULIE DUNN

PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

If my 12-year-old self found out that I run almost every day for fun, she would laugh hysterically. That Julie HATED running. Not just disliked, this was a burning hatred that came from deep inside her.

Running was often used as a punishment in sports so any psychologist would tell you that I was conditioned to hate conditioning with every fiber in my being. Fast forward to 2020, I was a senior preparing for my last season of Softball. That hatred for running had not changed at all, in fact in may have worsened due to the PTSD of the whistle followed by "on the line" if we were making mistakes during practice.

The infamous Covid-19 took away many lasts including my last softball game. As I sat in my house and waited for some sort of guidance about whether or not we would have a season, I had to stay in shape. Against everything I believed in, I decided that a little jog wouldn't be so bad.

Days became weeks and weeks became months. Random jogs turned into daily morning runs. It got to the point that I was running almost 2 miles daily. This may not seem like a lot to some, but to the girl who only associated running with punishment, this was huge.

As I embark on my second year of committing to running, I

often find myself missing softball more than I talk about. I think because it just ended out of nowhere, I have no recollection for how much I miss it, but there will be times on campus when I'm on a run and pass the softball field and the team is practicing... those days are hard. I used to be one of those girls and now I am simply a woman on a run.

I have to believe that everything happens for good and while losing my last season of softball was incredibly difficult; I gained a love for a sport that I hated. In a way, I am grateful for the way that I lost my season because I was able to fall in love with another sport.



## An In-Depth Look at the Saddest Night of My Life

BRYAN SMITH

ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

Yes, that headline is real. I want to go into further detail on what happened on January 23rd, 2022, a night that I think is legitimately the saddest night of my life. No one said an editorial had to be happy! The culprit is, of course, the Bills-Chiefs playoff game, because why wouldn't the saddest night of my life revolve around a game I have no impact on and players I have no connection to? I'm going to give a timeline of the events of that day, because part of the tragicness of the night is how quickly everything happened and how quickly my emotions got completely flipped upside down.

10:30 AM: I woke up, although I didn't sleep all that well. After all, how could I possibly sleep with all of the anxiety that was rapidly building up and getting progressively more incapacitating as it got closer to game time?

11:15 AM: I go to a Stop and Shop to buy a bagel. The Long Island in me can't help it. I'm a sucker for bagels and the Connecticut bagel stores are NOT it. Stop and Shop is the closest I can get to Long Island.

Noon: The editorial board meeting for The Spectrum. Yay! This is easily the most important part of the day, for sure. :) It was also the first one I took part in, so this was a pretty big deal.

2:15 PM: I'm off to the gym. The grind never stops! The gym usually does a good job of calming me down because it gives me something else to focus on, and I guess it did a decent job of that again on this day. I leave the gym and I feel confident. I've talked myself into a Bills victory. This was probably the beginning of the end looking back on it. This was just setting me up for total heartbreak.

6 PM: I go to Panera Bread to get dinner for the game, as I usually do. I LOVE Panera Bread, it's a phenomenal establishment. I'd say I go at least twice a week, sometimes more depending on the situation. So, I went to Panera and the whole time my nerves were almost completely gone. Part of it was blissful ignorance on my part,

but part of it was also the music. The last song played before my nightmare began was "Woah" by Lil Baby. I love that song almost more than I love Panera Bread, and it never fails to hype me up.

6:40 PM: Kickoff in Kansas City! I was most definitely not prepared for the ride I was about to go on. The Bills were getting the ball first, which already made me mad. I don't like it when they get the ball first to start the game.

6:50 PM: The Bills march right down the field on their first drive and score a touchdown. This only served to boost my confidence even higher, which set me up for an even greater fall later on.

8 PM: The game reaches halftime tied at 14 after the Chiefs miss a field goal off the upright. All things considered, it could've been worse so I was accepting of that score.

8:36 PM: Mecole Hardman somehow is completely missed by the Buffalo defense and the Chiefs go up 23-14. My vision is starting to slip away.

8:41 PM: One play later and the Bills are right back in it with a 75-yard touchdown from Josh Allen to Gabe Davis, and it is 23-21. The vision is coming back into focus!

9:27 PM: The Bills, down 26-21 with 2 minutes left in the game, face a 4th and 13. If they don't convert, their season is likely over. I had already begun to shut it down mentally, so when Allen hit Davis again for the go-ahead touchdown, I had to quickly start it back up again. After the 2-point conversion, the Bills went up 29-26. In some games, that may be enough to win. On that night, it was not enough. Not even close.

9:32 PM: Tyreek Hill literally runs past the entire Bills defense and scores a touchdown with 1:02 left to put the Chiefs up 33-29. A text message sent from me reads, "I'M SO NERVOUS." I had no idea.

9:40 PM: Allen to Davis again!! The Bills take the lead again!! They go up 36-33 with only 13 seconds left! I knew Mahomes was great, but I didn't think there was any way he could come back from a deficit like that with just 13 seconds left. My immediate

reaction was to parade around my house yelling any and all sounds. No coherent words. Just sounds.

9:48 PM: Following a series of mental and defensive errors that even the most novice of Madden players wouldn't make, the game miraculously heads to overtime tied at 36 after the Chiefs go 50 yards in 13 seconds to kick a field goal and tie the game. My only text message reads, "Can't believe it." I had just fallen from the highest of highs to the absolute lowest of lows in 13 seconds.

It's okay, though, there was still overtime, and if the Bills won the toss they'd probably win the game! It's a 50/50 chance on the coin flip!

Pain.

9:58 PM: The Chiefs win the toss and proceed to march down the field and score the game-winning and season-ending touchdown for Buffalo. Final score: 42-36.

Fun fact, I didn't watch that touchdown. I had already turned the TV off and accepted my fate. As Kansas City was marching down the field I knew that it was hopeless and I turned it off. I've never seen that touchdown and I most likely never will. As far as I'm concerned, the game ends with 13 seconds left.

10:00 p.m.- I lay on my floor and turn the lights off. I literally just lay there. I swear to you, I literally never do that but I felt compelled in that moment to do absolutely nothing, so I did. I did nothing and laid in the darkness for a good 45 minutes. I've quite literally never done that before, but I have never felt that way before. Never before had I been so sad and so disappointed, so I didn't know how to cope and react. I didn't even say anything to anyone, all I did was lay in darkness for 45 minutes. It is the single saddest night of my life, it is the saddest I have ever felt, legitimately ever, and it's one of those nights that will be forever scarred in my mind no matter how hard I try and forget about it.

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