



# THE SPECTRUM

SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY FAIRFIELD, CONN

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## Alzheimer's Awareness

BY MIA SANSANELLI  
Editor-in-Chief



Sacred Heart University, Photo by Mark F. Conrad

Participants at the Walk to End Alzheimer's event holding their flowers from the Promise Garden.

Did you know that 6 million people are currently living with Alzheimer's disease in the U.S.? 80,000 of those adults are Connecticut residents, and 11 million friends and family provide unpaid care for the victims of this degenerative cognitive disease which currently has no cure.

"Alzheimer's disease is the most common neurodegenerative disease among the older population. In fact, it is in the top five leading causes of death among older adults in the U.S. and the most common type of dementia," said Prof. Liu, an assistant professor in the College of Health Professions at Sacred Heart University.

Liu is in her second year of teaching at Sacred Heart following her Master's in public health (MPH), PhD in epidemiology and post-doctoral fellowship in aging and neuro-epidemiology. She has recently expanded her focus from Parkinson's disease to include Alzheimer's disease.

Liu invited a guest speaker from the Alzheimer's Association to speak to her class last year, which was met with great interest from the students, especially from those with friends and family who are living with Alzheimer's. Liu was then connected with Cheryl Podob, a developmental manager for the Alzheimer's Association, with the goal of pursuing a partnership outside of the classroom.

"Finding a cure for Alzheimer's is very important to me," said Podob. "My grandmother and sister passed away from Alzheimer's, my uncle passed from Lewy Body dementia and I currently have friends whose parents are suffering with Alzheimer's."

Liu and Podob partnered with the Office of Volunteer Programs and Service Learning (VPSL) to co-sponsor Sacred Heart's first Walk to End Alzheimer's this fall. Walks take place in more than 600 communities every year and are the world's largest fundraisers for Alzheimer's care.

"Every penny that we raised goes directly to the association to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's research, patient care and support," said Liu.

"This event not only allowed the SHU community to gather in memory of those who lost loved ones to this disease or who are currently struggling with it, but also share hope for a cure for the future," said Annie Wendel, director of VPSL.

The Walk to End Alzheimer's took place on Oct. 22 at 10 a.m. in front of the Chapel of the Holy Spirit. Athletic teams, clubs and organizations, faculty and members of the SHU community were able to register a team for the event and raise money leading up to the walk.

While the primary function of the event was to walk around the quad, there were several other parts to the event, starting with the Promise Garden.

"Participants are asked to choose a promise flower. [They] picked out a color that represented their reason for the walk," said Liu.

Blue represented someone who is currently living with Alzheimer's disease. Orange was for supporters or advocates for the disease. Purple meant you were walking for a loved one currently living with Alzheimer's. Yellow was representative of caregivers for those affected by Alzheimer's. And white was for children, symbolizing their hope for a future without Alzheimer's.

The team that raised the most money, "Family and Friends of David Leach," was invited up to cut the ribbon and commence the walk. Also in appearance were Big Red and the cheerleading team to cheer on participants as they did their laps, salsa instructors to keep the energy up and members from the student choir to sing the national anthem.

As participants completed a lap, they gained a bead to put on their purple string, purple being the designated color for Alzheimer's disease. At the time of registration, participants were given sidewalk chalk to write messages on the concrete in front of the Chapel as well.

Contributions were made even after the event, bringing the total to over \$8,000 from roughly 230 participants.

"Most importantly, though, we were able to support those faculty and staff on campus who are affected and touched by this disease," said Podob. "So many people came up to us after the walk and thanked us for being there and supporting them."

VPSL has already committed to supporting next year's event and hopes to involve even more alumni.

"This time around, we're thinking of planning it earlier and also looking to involve more students in the planning process," said Liu.

Although the walk for this semester has passed, anyone is still welcome to donate to the original fundraiser here: [https://act.alz.org/site/TR?company\\_id=234195&fr\\_id=15454&pg=company&pw\\_id=14568](https://act.alz.org/site/TR?company_id=234195&fr_id=15454&pg=company&pw_id=14568).

The Alzheimer's Association is the #1 non-profit organization in the U.S. which funds its own research. In addition to donating money towards the association, those interested can also register to see if they qualify to participate in a clinical trial that may advance Alzheimer's research. You can find out more by calling 800-272-3900, emailing [TrialMatch@alz.org](mailto:TrialMatch@alz.org), or visiting [https://www.alz.org/alzheimers-dementia/research\\_progress/clinical-trials/trialmatch](https://www.alz.org/alzheimers-dementia/research_progress/clinical-trials/trialmatch)

"There are many ways to get involved and to volunteer. You can join a planning committee, become a community educator or be an advocate," said Podob. "If you are interested in volunteering, there is something for everyone."

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SPECTRUM  
CONTENT!**

SCAN ME



### THE SHU BOX SCORE

#### MENS BASKETBALL

Nov. 30: W 66-61 at Univ. of New Hampshire  
Dec. 3: L 59-70 vs. UMass Lowell  
Overall Record: 5-4

#### WOMENS BASKETBALL

Dec. 1: L 48-50 at Army  
Overall Record: 1-7

#### WOMENS BOWLING

Dec. 3: Wins over St. Francis Brooklyn and Wagner College.  
Overall Record: 29-19  
Conference: 6-2

#### WOMENS WRESTLING

Dec. 4: Dual wins over Alvernia University, Elmira College, East Stroudsburg & Gannon University  
Overall Record: 6-2

### LOCATIONS NEWSPAPER RACKS

**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)

**63's**  
(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)

**Pio's Kitchen**  
(inside front doors)







# News



## Flu Season Affecting Millions

BY SAMANTHA DOLE  
Staff Writer

"I had the flu, and it was the sickest I have ever been. I have never felt worse, and I was unable to attend school for a full week," said sophomore Bella Cavallone.

Cavallone is not alone in her experience, as the U.S. is bracing for one of the worst flu seasons in over a decade. There are already 44 states that have reported high or very high flu activity last week.

According to The Associated Press, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that already in this flu season, there have been at least 6.2 million illnesses, 53,000 hospitalizations and 2,900 deaths from the flu. The hospitalization rate is at its highest this early since the 2010-2011 flu season.

"My friend had the flu a few weeks ago, and it was easily the sickest she has ever been," said junior Abby Wilk. "She was out of work and school for more than a week and was barely able to leave her bed."

Receiving the flu vaccine is one way to prevent catching the illness, but not all Americans choose to get it. The top three reasons people have decided not to take the flu shot this year are concerns about potential side effects, not thinking it is necessary and not being concerned about the flu virus.

Some Sacred Heart students choose to take the flu vaccination every year.

"I choose to get the flu vaccine every year," said Wilk. "I have heard terrible things

about getting the flu, and I would not want to be away from my classes or activities for that long."

This year, medical professionals are also concerned about the respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), in addition to the already existing influenza and Covid-19 viruses. RSV seems to be especially prevalent in children, even though adults can contract it too.

"I think the flu is coming back so strongly because of the variety of Covid regulations that have been in place over the past few years," said Cavallone. "We were wearing masks pretty much everywhere throughout the winter last year, and I think that prevented us from a bad flu season and other viruses."

Illnesses are not only spreading to humans this year, as the U.S. is also seeing a widespread Bird flu outbreak. While it does not usually spread to humans, it is greatly affecting birds with over 50 million deaths so far, a record number across 46 states.

These drastically high bird death numbers have resulted in meat shortages, particularly with turkeys, which affected the Thanksgiving holiday.

"I think with all of these outbreaks, it is more important than ever to take general precautions," said Wilk. "Everyone should make sure they are washing their hands and staying home when they are sick."

### WATCH THE PIONEERS IN ACTION OVER WINTER BREAK!

#### WEDNESDAY 12/7:

**WOMEN'S BASKETBALL VS. BRYANT AT THE PITT CENTER. TIPOFF AT 7 P.M.**

#### SUNDAY 12/11:

**WOMEN'S WRESTLING DUAL MEET VS. TIFFIN & WESTERN NEW ENGLAND. STARTS AT 11 A.M.**

#### FRIDAY 12/16:

**MEN'S WRESTLING VS. BUCKNELL AT THE PITT CENTER. THE ACTION STARTS AT 7 P.M.**

#### SUNDAY 12/18:

**WOMEN'S BASKETBALL VS. VERMONT AT 2 P.M. IN THE PITT CENTER.**

#### TUESDAY 12/20:

**WOMEN'S BASKETBALL VS. PROVIDENCE. TIPOFF AT 11 A.M. IN THE PITT CENTER.**

#### WEDNESDAY 12/21:

**MEN'S WRESTLING VS. AMERICAN UNIVERSITY AT THE PITT CENTER. THE GRAPPLING STARTS AT 1 P.M.**

#### THURSDAY 12/22:

**MEN'S BASKETBALL VS. HOLY CROSS AT 11 A.M. IN THE PITT CENTER.**

#### THURSDAY 12/29:

**MEN'S BASKETBALL VS. STONEHILL IN THE PITT CENTER. TIPOFF AT 2 P.M.**

**MEN'S ICE HOCKEY VS. MERCYHURST AT TOTAL MORTGAGE ARENA. PUCK DROP AT 7 P.M.**

#### FRIDAY 12/30:

**MEN'S ICE HOCKEY VS. MERCYHURST AT 4 P.M. IN THE TOTAL MORTGAGE ARENA**

#### SATURDAY 12/31:

**WOMEN'S BASKETBALL VS. MERCY IN THE PITT CENTER. TIPOFF AT 1 P.M.**

#### FRIDAY 1/6:

**MEN'S BASKETBALL VS. LIU AT THE PITT CENTER. TIPOFF AT 7 P.M.**

## See You Next Year!

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# Perspectives

## How Do You Celebrate?

BY ALEJANDRO RAMOS  
Assistant Perspectives Editor

"This upcoming Christmas, I will be going to Cleveland, Ohio to see my cousins and my grandmother," said freshman Maggie Brigioli. "My favorite part usually around this time of the year is seeing my relatives, since I do not get to see them very often."

Brigioli is one of many in the Sacred Heart University community who looks forward to celebrating the holidays during this time of year. With the fall semester coming to an end, heading back home, getting together with loved ones and taking part in yearly traditions will be some of the many ways students close out 2022.

On traditions, students around campus have unique experiences when it comes to spending the holiday season with their loved ones. Sophomore Jakob Sargent has the chance to celebrate a multitude of festivities at the end of December, something which he does every year.

"Usually, my family and I go out for dinner on the 23rd for my mom's birthday every year," said Sargent. "After that, Christmas Eve is spent at my father's grandparents' neighborhood. We like to go to our favorite diner called the Lakeside Diner in Stamford for brunch. I think my favorite part of the whole experience of the holidays is shopping when I get all my gift cards together!"

"Every year, my family and I like to go to New York City and visit the famous Christmas Tree at the Rockefeller Center," said sophomore Gianna Simmons. "I love it because I do not only get to enjoy time with my family, but I can see other people's reactions to the tree and see the amount of joy it gives them. It brings a sense of warmth to the atmosphere."

Aside from the festivities that come along with the holidays, having family at their sides is comforting to some. Freshman Roberto DeCosta, who is an athlete on the track and field team, most looks forward to Christmas so that he can see his family.

"Usually, my whole family comes up and we spend time with each other giving gifts," said DeCosta. "Being with each other just makes Christmas the best because I'm with the

people I love and I'm around people who care about everyone there and that makes Christmas the best, and we eat a huge meal--that's always fun."

As we end the semester, students tend to have high stress during finals season. The holiday season will be a stress reliever to some students. Activities range from high energy levels to hanging out and watching a movie.

"I usually spend Christmases with my family, our favorite tradition is watching 'Christmas Vacation' on Christmas Eve," said junior Cody Davis. "I'm very excited for the holidays this year."

Jordan Greene contributed to this article.



Grace Hand, Staff Photographer

Bella Fabbo (left) and Victoria Piacentino (right) '24 are getting into the holiday spirit by decorating their house.



## Is It Ever TOO Early for Christmas Tunes?

BY ISABELLA FABBO  
Staff Writer



Isabella Fabbo, Staff Photographer

Juniors Kaitlyn Luba and Victoria Piacentino listen to Michael Bublé, a favorite among many students.

When do you start listening to Christmas music?

For some students at Sacred Heart University, the Christmas season starts as early as Nov. 1.

"I start listening the second Halloween is over," said senior Sophia Kostiw. "I feel like the holidays don't feel as long as when I was a kid, so I have to drag it out so it's longer."

"Christmas music starts Nov. 1. Halloween is my favorite holiday but then it's Christmas time," said senior Allie Cimaglia. "Oct. 31 it's 'Monster Mash.' Nov. 1 it's Michael Bublé."

While some students like to get a head start on listening to Christmas music, others prefer to wait.

"I listen to Christmas music after Thanksgiving. I feel like if you listen to it before that, it takes away from Thanksgiving," said junior Kate Bell.

"I start listening to Christmas music right when Dec. 1 hits," said junior Mike Garofalo. "I don't do right after Thanksgiving because I feel like December is when Christmas really starts."

Some professors at the university also believe in waiting to listen.

"I'd love to see it begin a week after Thanksgiving. It's two separate holidays with two different things," said Prof. Joseph Alicastro, director of the graduate program in Journalism and Media Production at the School of Communication, Media, and the Arts. "I think it would help to not commercialize Christmas so much."

The debate over the appropriate time to start listening to Christmas music has left some students defending their stance.

"Christmas is my favorite holiday," said senior Nicole Capuano. "I don't understand why people wait to listen to Christmas music because it is such a happy feeling and brings so much joy. Why would you want to deprive yourself of that?"

Other students can understand the eagerness to get into the Christmas spirit, even if they choose to wait themselves.

"I think they're just very excited for the holidays and there's nothing wrong with that," said junior Mario Montuori. "I start listening to Christmas music in December, though, because that's when Christmas is."

When it comes to what kind of Christmas music students enjoy listening to, there is a variety.

"I love Michael Bublé's Christmas album, it's so good. And Taylor Swift's old Christmas album," said Bell. "I grew up listening to them, so it just reminds me of being young and believing in Santa."

"I love Michael Bublé, but the classics are my favorite," said Cimaglia. "They make me feel good and make me feel like I'm still a child. I'm almost 22 but it makes me feel young again."

While many students enjoy the more classic Christmas songs and artists, others appreciate the new music and covers that have been released in recent years.

"I like artists like Ariana Grande and Justin Bieber giving new spins on Christmas music," said Kostiw. "I think it brings recognition to the old artists too."

"I like to listen to the newer Christmas music from Ariana Grande or even Kelly Clarkson. I also think Pentatonix makes cool Christmas music," said freshman Nikki Luba.

If you like new Christmas music or new renditions of the classics, some pop artists have released songs and albums this year. According to Billboard, Lizzo recently recorded a cover of Stevie Wonder's "Someday at Christmas." Camila Cabello released her cover of "I'll Be Home for Christmas." Additionally, the Backstreet Boys released an entire album, featuring classic songs and three originals.

## Farewell to Perspectives

After this issue, Spectrum will no longer publish content for the Perspectives writing section. We want to thank every editor and writer who has contributed to this section over the years.

You can still view all the previous Perspectives articles on our website, shuspectrum.com.

Jillian Reis  
Perspectives Editor

It's hard for me to begin. Writing and editing for the perspectives section has been such a pleasure. I have been so lucky and glad to work with Mia, Robbie, Brendan, Alejandro and everyone else on the Spectrum board. I'm looking forward to writing for Audrey's Corner and continuing to work with everyone on the Board.







# Features



## Santa and His Firefighter Elves!

BY **CARISSA MUNOZ**  
Staff Writer

For the families of Fairfield, Santa Claus comes to town a little earlier than usual, thanks to the Fairfield Firefighter's Charitable Foundation and Fairfield's Firefighters Association.

On Dec. 9, 10 and 11, the 18th Annual Fairfield Firefighters Charitable Santa Express will travel across Fairfield to bring the Christmas spirit to many families. During this magical weekend, Santa Claus and his helpers visit houses with the Fairfield firefighters to take photos and deliver presents to the families involved.

"We started out 18 years ago with six families, one night," said Robert Smith, Fairfield Fire Lieutenant and the Charitable Foundation's president. "Now, we are up to over 200 stops that we are trying to schedule over the course of the weekend."

In addition to spreading Christmas cheer, the Santa Express was created to help fundraise money for charities, starting with the Muscular Dystrophy Association. After seeing the firefighters in Norwalk partaking in a similar event, the Fairfield Fire Department looked to bring Santa to the Fairfield community.

Today, the Fairfield Firefighter's Charitable Foundation collects a \$25 donation per child at each stop to raise money for The Tommy Fund for Childhood Cancer, a non-profit organization out of the Smilow Cancer Hospital, Yale-New Haven.



Contributed by Robert Smith

**The Fairfield Fire Department prepares for another jolly weekend of the Fairfield Firefighter's Charitable Foundation Santa Express.**

Created in 1986 to honor Tommy Mozdierz, a young boy who passed from acute leukemia in 1953, The Tommy Fund partnered with the New Haven firefighters to generate awareness and fundraise money to support the emotional and medical needs of children with cancer and their families.

"We try to do whatever we can based on the needs of the families during the most crucial time of their lives," said Rebecca Santoli, the Executive Director of the Tommy Fund.

"Our roots began with the fire department and to this day, we are back connecting with that community and a commendable group of fire people," she said. "It truly came full circle."

The Fairfield Firefighter's Charitable Foundation became associated with the Tommy Fund through Charlie Capalbo, a late friend of the firefighters who received treatment at the Smilow Cancer Hospital, Yale-New Haven. The firefighters met the Capalbos before Charlie's battle with cancer due to a house fire, sparking a friendship between the firehouse and the family.

When remembering Charlie, Smith spoke highly about his inspiring personality.

"No matter how he was feeling, no matter how beat his body was, he would always try to put on a good face for you," said Smith. "His never quit attitude was inspiring to us."

The Capalbo's relationship between the Fairfield Fire Department and The Tommy Fund has established a

connection for the two organizations to create bigger change for families in need.

Over the past six years, the Fairfield Firefighter's Charitable Foundation has raised around \$130,000 to \$140,000 for The Tommy Fund. In 2021, The Santa Express raised over \$32,500 for the Tommy Fund.

For the firefighters, this event allows them to give back to their community and creates a personal connection between themselves and various Fairfield families.

"As firefighters, we're not just a part of the community," said Jeff Pinckney, a Fire Lieutenant with the Fairfield Fire Department. "With so many families, we have become a part of their holiday traditions."

As the firefighters gear up for the weekend, Santoli expresses her gratitude for the department's impact on the Tommy Fund.

"It is a huge undertaking these dedicated firemen are doing for us; it does not just happen the day of," said Santoli. "Thank you to the firemen and Mr. Smith's leadership to this endeavor. We would not be where we are today and help as many families as we have without them."

For more information on The Tommy Fund for Childhood Cancer, refer to their website: <https://tommyfund.org/>.



Contributed by Rebecca Santoli

**Santa Claus spreads Christmas cheer from the Fairfield Fire Department fire truck.**

## The Best Way to Spread Holiday Cheer

BY **ALEANDRA CARRACINO**  
Staff Writer



Instagram, @kd\_shu

**The sisters of Kappa Delta are extremely passionate about philanthropy and working together to help others.**

As the holidays are approaching, the Volunteer Programs and Service Learning (VPSL) organization, along with Kappa Delta and Kappa Sigma, are showing their support for families in need by fundraising for food and gifts for families and children this holiday season through their annual Adopt-A-Family.

Every year, VPSL works with two churches in the Bridgeport community to fulfill holiday wish lists of families within the community who are in need. This year, the organization has adopted 50 families, which means they will be donating food and gifts to 50 families in need.

Arlete Perez, Assistant Director of Office of Volunteer Programs and Service Learning, said her goal is for all adopted families to be accounted for so that every member of every family can receive presents accompanied by a Christmas dinner.

"We are the neighbors. Bridgeport is five minutes away from our campus, and that's a community in a lot of need," said Perez.

Kappa Sigma and Kappa Delta joined VPSL's fundraising efforts by holding table times in the Main Academic building from Nov. 29 to Dec. 1 with members from both organizations collecting donations at the designated table. The Greek Life organizations adopted two families, each of which have three children.

Cara Grill, a senior at Sacred Heart and member of Kappa Delta Sorority who is assisting in Adopt-A-Family, said, "Throughout the year, we fundraise for our philanthropies and are very passionate about the missions of each of our philanthropies. It is important to take this passion for our philanthropy to other charities, especially local ones, because they are in our community."

Grill further mentioned that she hopes the members of Kappa Delta can understand how impactful and meaningful these community service efforts are, even if the philanthropic

efforts are not for their own organization's philanthropy.

"It is important to donate during the holiday season because some families are not able to focus on the holiday season when they are just trying to make ends meet. Everyone deserves to enjoy the holiday season and not have to stress about buying their children gifts when they are struggling to pay other bills," said Grill.

Anthony Matos, a junior at Sacred Heart and Recruitment Chair of Kappa Sigma Fraternity who is also an assisting member of Adopt-A-Family, said that on their second day of table times, they raised almost \$1,000. Matos mentioned that during this time of year he, along with others, has been fortunate enough to submit Christmas lists, and often gets more than what's on the list.

Matos hopes his fraternity members can gain a sense of gratitude and appreciation through this volunteer service program.

SHU junior Katie Hassel, President of Kappa Delta and assisting member of the fundraising table times, said that it is most rewarding to know that both organizations can give six children Christmas gifts, whose families could not afford to do so alone.

"At table times, I was able to see the passion both organizations had to raise this money. Knowing we left a mark and were able to change the outcome of two families' Christmases was truly special," said Hassel.

All Christmas wish lists for the 50 adopted families are due to be fulfilled by the adoptees by Dec. 9.



Instagram, @kappasigma\_shu

**Kappa Sigma Fraternity members worked together alongside Kappa Delta and VPSL to raise money for Adopt-A-Family.**





# Spotlight



## buildOn

BY HALEY ALVARADO  
Staff Writer

The global nonprofit organization buildOn operates youth outreach after-school activities in disadvantaged areas of America, helps communities in need and constructs schools in impoverished nations. To make a large-scale effect, buildOn collaborates with colleges to advance the local community through different chapters of school clubs.

“The buildOn club at SHU supports all kinds of educational and anti-poverty efforts in the local community, in keeping with SHU’s mission to promote the common good and develop students who actively address civic needs,” said Dr. Brian Stiltner, a professor of philosophy, theology, and religious studies and co-academic advisor of buildOn.

This semester alone, Sacred Heart University, through buildOn, has constructed desks for the Bridgeport school system, produced blankets for the local women’s shelter, crafted cards for the elderly and held a book drive for the community that received over 500 donations.

Through participation in the collection and final donation phases, the club helps students understand the difference they have made through volunteering.

“Going to the shelters and community centers to donate the books and seeing how grateful the people were to have access to literature shows how even doing something small like donating books to underprivileged people can have such a huge impact on their lives,” said sophomore James Moore.

The impact of buildOn expands past local communities into international ones.

According to the buildOn official site, the nonprofit built 2,215 schools in eight developing countries. Sacred Heart’s buildOn raised money to fund the development of three schools constructed by students.

“Volunteering through buildOn and similar organizations is a great way to give back to one’s community. All of us at SHU know the value of education, which is why we are here, and volunteering with buildOn helps bring the benefits of high-quality education to kids who are eager to improve their lives,” said Stiltner.

In January 2020, 18 members of buildOn went to Africa to build a school.

“I saw what the opportunity of education could do for peo-

ple, and I felt a draw to keep education at the forefront of my life. I actually switched my major to education because of my experiences with buildOn,” said senior club president Kaylee Bowman.

The club wants to build its fourth school in Africa in 2023, but they need to raise \$32,000 to achieve this goal.

At Sacred Heart, the buildOn chapter has given students an outlet to find a community in volunteering.

“I joined buildOn as a freshman during the second semester as I was looking for a way to get more involved in the community outside of SHU. I already have a big involvement on campus as a member of the D1 cross country and track team, but I was looking to be more involved in the outside community as I was very service oriented throughout my childhood and in high school,” said Moore.

To conclude the semester, the buildOn chapter is hosting a holiday toy drive for local underprivileged kids during the holiday, and it began on Dec. 1. The toy drive concludes with Christmas Karaoke, which begins at 5 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 9 in the NC Auditorium.

There is a \$5 entry fee or a \$5 fee with the addition of a toy, and the event provides patrons with on-site food and drink. One entry will enter students into a raffle to win a coffee maker.

“The educational hardships abroad are present here in the U.S. too, which is why I think this club is so important. I am excited for our toy drive and Christmas karaoke fundraiser because it is a great way to give back to our local community while spreading the powerful message of buildOn,” said Bowman.





# Arts & Entertainment

## Celebrations of Light

BY TAYLOR BARONE  
Staff Writer



Sacred Heart University held its Celebrations of Light Concert on Dec. 3.

Julie Dunn, Photo Editor

The stage in the Edgerton Center was decorated with Christmas trees when the red curtains opened up in time for an audience full of students and families to watch the Blended Hearts choral group sing "Candlelight Carol"—the first of many songs sung about Christmas and the holidays at Sacred Heart University's Performing Arts Choral Program's Celebrations of Light Holiday Concert.

This concert was put together under the direction of Irina Georgieva and held on Saturday, Dec. 3 at 8 p.m. It included performances by choral groups such as Blended Hearts, Concert Choir, 4 Heart Harmony, Liturgical Choir and Gospel Choir.

Junior Lauren Iacoviello, a member of SHU's Concert Choir, said, "We have had two rehearsals a week since the middle of October for this concert, so a lot of hard work has gone into making sure we put on a good show for our audience."

The show "explores familiar Christmas carols, as well as less familiar works from the traditions of Hannukah, Kwanzaa, Diwali and other beautiful celebrations of light from around the world," according to the Edgerton Center for Performing Arts

website.

"Irina often told us that the Christmas season isn't always a time for everyone," said Iacoviello. "So, our segment was more about incorporating how different people experience the season."

Between the songs "Morning Song" and "Moonlight," sung by Concert Choir, Georgieva read poems that included the lyrics in order for the audience to further understand what the songs were about.

"Personally, I feel like our songs go with the show's theme that with negativity can come some positivity," said sophomore Bianca Blasi, a member of SHU's Concert Choir. "Our first two songs, 'Two Moon Songs,' are very bleak and very alone, but then you get the third song, 'The Gift to Sing,' which is meant to make you happy."

Another choral group that performed was 4 Heart Harmony, conducted by Christopher Grundy. Their segment of the show included songs from different cultures and an interaction with the audience during their song "Ocho Kandelikas," where they were able to sing along with the performers.

Along with the audience interaction, 4 Heart Harmony's segment included a performance of the song "In the Bleak Midwinter" with guest singers from Cooperative Educational Services (CES) Regional Center for the Arts (RCA)—a part-time high school for students interested in performing arts.

"My favorite part of the show was definitely when the younger students from the RCA came out as guest singers," said junior audience member Kristina Tocio. "To me, it seemed like it really showed what the theme of the show was all about—inclusion and the celebration of different experiences."

At the end of the show, the Gospel Choir sang "We are the World." Once again, this involved an audience interaction because on the last refrain, the other choral groups that previously sang went out into the audience to get the audience involved in singing along.

Lastly, after the performance, a QR code was shown to give audience members an opportunity to donate to hurricane relief.

"The fact that the show was in support of hurricane relief also shows what the Celebrations of Light theme means to me," said Blasi. "It can mean that the holidays may not be a happy time for everybody, but there's always light at the end of the tunnel."

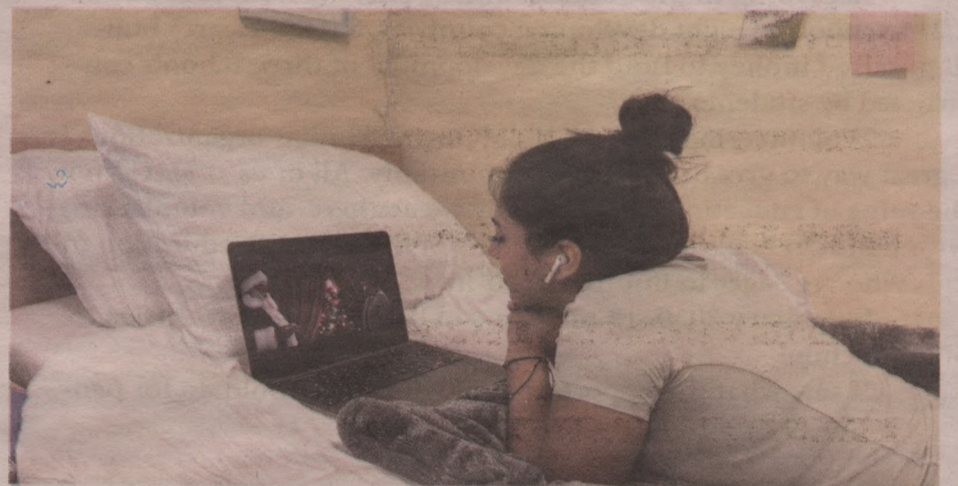
## Here Comes Santa Claus...Again!

BY ISABELLA GIARDINA  
Staff Writer



Scott Calvin in the new "The Santa Clauses" series streaming now on Disney plus.

Instagram, @disneyplus



Dannia Jadan, Staff Photographer

Sacred Heart student watching the new "The Santa Clauses" series before winter break.

"The Santa Clauses" is a mini-series starring Tim Allen as Scott Calvin, better known as Santa Claus. It can be streamed on Disney+ and was released on Nov. 16.

In the series, Calvin realizes that he can't be Santa forever, so he tries to find a new Santa while he also prepares his family for a new experience away from the North Pole.

Junior Zoie Sciascia said, "I loved Tim Allen in the original 'The Santa Clause' that this show is based on, so I knew I would enjoy the series!"

"The Santa Clause" is a film about the character Scott Calvin spending time with his son on Christmas Eve. After Scott accidentally kills Santa, he gets sent to the North Pole, where he learns to take Santa's place before the next Christmas.

In a recent interview with Allen on "The Tonight Show," he explained the reason he wanted to do the series was to make sure the holes in the plot from the original movie were explained.

"All the holes in the script - I never understood - so we came up with the script 'The Clauses,'" said Allen on "The Tonight Show."

In "The Santa Clause" released in 1994, Allen's character kills the original Santa. This former plot twist is said by Allen to be addressed in the new series.

One new addition to the series that is different from the original movie is that Allen's daughter ended up starring in the show as well.

"My kid was in it - I wanted her to be an elf as a surprise but she ended up reading the dialogue so well that she got the lead in it," said Allen.

Another new face to see in this series is football star Peyton Manning. Allen describes him as "engaging and funny" in the show.

In an interview with Comic Book, Jason Winter, the show's director, explained how it was difficult making the story of Santa Claus more modern, but they made it happen.

Winter said, "That's such a fun and modern jumping-off point for this story, watching Santa sort of rediscovering his connection to faith and magic is a cool way to connect it to now."

So far, five episodes have been released. Episodes 1 and 2 were released on Nov. 16, episode 3 on Nov. 23, episode 4 on Nov. 30 and episode 5 on Dec. 7.

Sciascia said, "What I liked about the first episode was how they incorporated modern things, like a VR headset, but still kept everything previously we knew about Santa alive."

Each episode has its own concept. For example, the first episode is about Scott struggling to keep up with Christmas demands, and the third episode revolves around Scott interviewing candidates to be the new Santa.

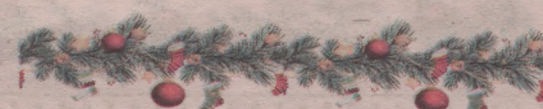
"I can't wait to watch this show with my family over Christmas break. I have watched 'The Santa Clause,' and it's such a feel-good movie," said junior Bridget Cronin.







# Sports



## Ny'Ceara Pryor a Dominant Force for the Pioneers

BY SOLON MIHAS  
Staff Writer

Most athletes will say they don't play for individual awards and that they play for team success instead. That doesn't exclude Sacred Heart University freshman point guard Ny'Ceara Pryor, who plays for the women's basketball team.



Contributed by John Greene  
Pryor is leading the Pioneers in scoring, rebounds and assists, and picked up her third Rookie of the Week award for her standout performances at the Florida Atlantic Thanksgiving Tournament.

Pryor has won three straight Northeast Conference (NEC) Rookie of the Week awards, becoming the first player in program history since 2019 to receive back-to-back weekly awards.

However, what is even more impressive is that Pryor is the first player in program history since 2011 to win back-to-back Rookie of the Week honors.

"I just go in there and play, that's what I've been doing," said Pryor. "My teammates and my coaches trust me, so when I have the ball, I just do what I have to do."

Pryor leads the Pioneers in scoring, averaging 14.8 points per game, which is why she's been able to rack up these awards. "There's definitely a change, different pace and height difference," Pryor said when asked about the adjustment from high school to college basketball. "Coming from high school to college is definitely an adjustment just because I'm small, so the biggest adjustment is that you have to work overtime."

Pryor's consistency and results come from hard work in the offseason. "The thing I worked on most was my pull-up jumper and being composed," said Pryor. "That's very important when you're at the point guard position."

Pryor had two 20-point games in a three-game span, posting a career-high 24 points

against Iona University. Two games later against Florida Atlantic University, she put up 23 points.

Along with her talented offensive abilities, Pryor was named a Defensive Player of the Year award winner before her Pioneer days.

"It was always defense first, then I worried about the offense," said Pryor. "Defense is a lot about pride, you don't want somebody to keep attacking you and you don't want to be the weakling on the team either. A lot of times the other team goes after the weakling and I don't want to be that just because I'm small," said Pryor.

"Family" was a word used more than once while Pryor was discussing her recruitment to SHU.

"The biggest thing for me was the education part and then feeling like a family," said Pryor. "I wanted something that would feel like a home away from home, and that's exactly what I felt and that's why I chose this school."

Although Pryor has had the hot hand on the team, the team as a whole has not been off to a hot start, having a 1-7 record through their first eight games. This has not changed Pryor's mentality toward the season.

"We are progressing every day," said Pryor when asked about the team's overall slow start.

Pryor's individual success takes a back seat to the goals she has for the team.

"I never really thought about my individual goals, because I can't do it by myself," said Pryor. "It's never been about individual success, if that comes it comes."

The Pioneers are looking to end a seven-game losing streak on Dec. 7 when they host Bryant University before traveling across town to play Fairfield University on Dec. 11.

Sacred Heart Athletics contributed to this article.



Contributed by John Greene  
With 34 steals on the year, Ny'Ceara Pryor is currently tied for first in the nation in total steals.

## 2022 College Football Title Up for Grabs

BY JAKE CARDINALE  
Senior Sports Writer

**NEW YEAR'S SIX SLATE**

**CAPITAL ONE ORANGE BOWL**  
 (#8) TENNESSEE T VS (#7) CLEMSON  
 DECEMBER 30 | 8 PM ET | ESPN

**ALLSTATE SUGAR BOWL**  
 (#5) ALABAMA A VS (#9) KANSAS STATE  
 DECEMBER 31 | 12 PM ET | ESPN

**VRBO FIESTA BOWL**  
 (#2) MICHIGAN M VS (#3) TCU  
 DECEMBER 31 | 4 PM ET | ESPN

**CHICK-FIL-A PEACH BOWL**  
 (#1) GEORGIA G VS (#4) OHIO STATE  
 DECEMBER 31 | 8 PM ET | ESPN

**GOODYEAR COTTON BOWL CLASSIC**  
 (#16) TULANE T VS (#10) USC  
 JANUARY 2 | 1 PM ET | ESPN

**ROSE BOWL GAME**  
 (#11) PENN STATE P VS (#8) UTAH  
 JANUARY 2 | 5 PM ET | ESPN

Instagram, @espnfb  
The College Football playoffs and major bowl games kick off on Dec. 30 with the Capital One Orange Bowl.

With the college football regular season ending, the College Football Playoff is right around the corner.

The playoff is determined by a committee that selects who they think are the best four teams in college football.

"Right now as it stands it will be Georgia, Michigan, Texas Christian University (TCU) and the University of Southern California (USC)," said junior Ethan Dubrovsky. "I think we could see both Michigan and Ohio State making it if USC loses this week since Ohio State only has one loss."

Georgia won the National Championship last year and have continued their dominance this season. They are 13-0 and are currently the top ranked team in college football.

"Georgia is the best team. They have played the best throughout the season," said freshman Domenic Vecchiarelli.

The number two ranked team in college football is Michigan. They also have a chance to win the national championship.

"Michigan has one of the best defenses in college football, which is huge because college football is very offensively oriented," said junior Justin Alter. "That is why I think Michigan should be favored to win the national championship."

With the season coming to an end, that also means that the Heisman Trophy presentation is approaching. The Heisman Trophy is given to the best player in college football each year.

"I think it will go to either [USC QB] Caleb Williams or [Ohio State QB] C.J. Stroud. If USC makes it to the college football playoffs, I think it goes to Williams," said Dubrovsky.

Every year in college football, there are a few teams that come out of nowhere and surprise everybody.

"Tennessee lost to Georgia, but overall they had a great season. Also, North Carolina was a surprise. They were 6-7 last year and they went 9-3 this year," said Vecchiarelli.

There are also teams every year that fall below expectations.

"Texas A&M had the highest ranked recruiting class of all time coming into this season and they finished 5-7. It's highly disappointing with how well Jimbo Fisher has recruited," said Dubrovsky.

One of the biggest story lines in college football right now is whether or not Jackson State Head Coach Deion Sanders will leave and accept a coaching job somewhere else.

"The top conferences in college football are the SEC and the Big Ten. I could see him going to one of those conferences to build up a legacy," said Alter.

Deion Sanders, who had a hall of fame career as a player in the NFL before becoming the head coach at Jackson State, is getting interest from several schools after leading Jackson State to a perfect 11-0 record this year.

On Dec. 2, Sanders took the head coaching position at the University of Colorado, a Pac-12 school coming off of a 1-11 season.

Georgia and Michigan are the number-one and -two seeds, respectively, with both having gone 13-0 and winning their conference.

TCU, despite an overtime loss in the Big-12 title game, found their way to number three, where they will play Michigan, and Ohio State ended up at number four thanks to USC's loss in the Pac-12 title game and will play Georgia.

The College Football Playoff will begin on Saturday, Dec. 31, with the playing of the Fiesta Bowl and the Peach Bowl. The winners of those two games will play in the National Championship, which will take place on Jan. 11.



Instagram, @georgiafootball  
The University of Georgia obtained the number-one seed in the College Football Playoff after a resounding 13-0 season.





# Editorial



## Thank you, Spectrum

JULIE DUNN

PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR



More than 40 Sunday Evenings, Monday Mornings, Tuesday Meetings and Issues.

The Spectrum Board has been made up of so many kind people during my time here. We found a way to laugh through the struggles and find solutions to problems we never knew existed. We have celebrated each other through new stages of our college careers and watched one another pursue our post-grad dreams! And while I am not graduating...yet... the day has come. My last Issue.

I can guarantee that I would have regretted it if I had listened to the little voice in my head that told me that I wasn't qualified enough to be the Photo Editor's Assistant in October of 2021. If Prof. Kabak and Maisy Carvalho '22 had accepted my decline to their offer of being the Photo Editor Assistant, I would have missed out on so many experiences to meet new people, take on new roles and grow my self-confidence.

I am grateful to have been a part of a program that gives such independence to a team of students. It provided me with a platform to learn and lead simultaneously. In my time, I have led four wonderful photo teams while reorganizing the way that the photo section runs. I hope that this small contribution to the paper provides fluidity and lasting simplicity for the Board.

Colin, when I decided to step down from this position, one of my priorities was to leave the Photo Section with someone I could trust. This has been my baby for the last two years and I am completely confident that you will do nothing but amazing, creative, and eye-catching things with it! Sam and Bella, you are both so

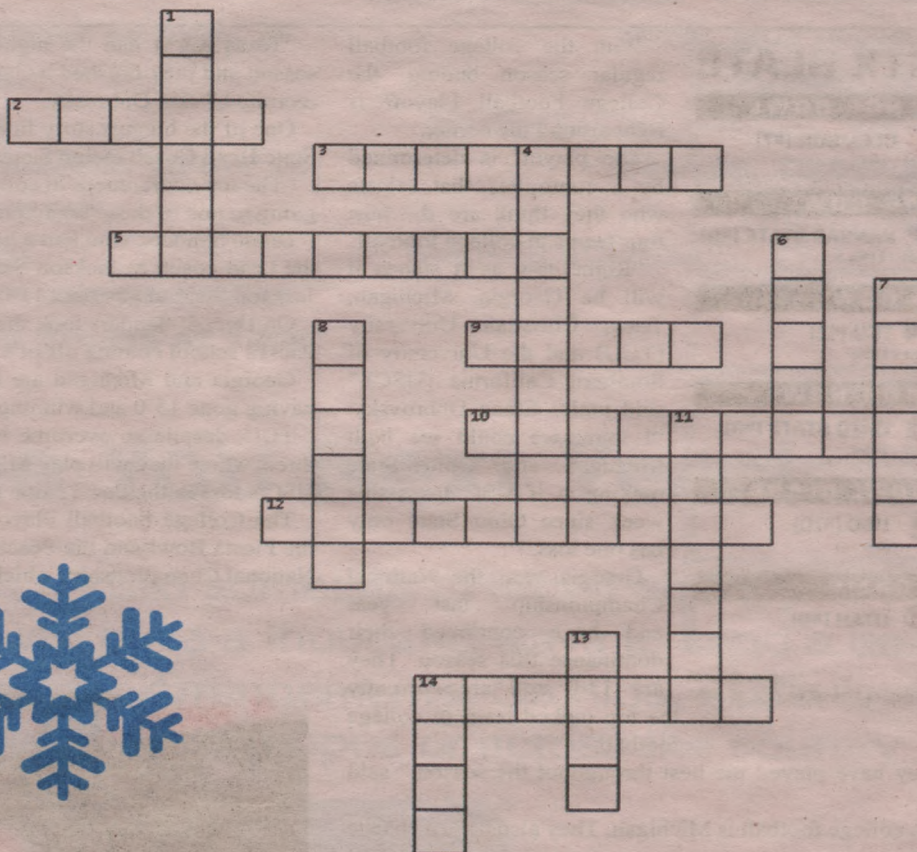
reliable and I am comforted to know that you will be there to help Colin as his assistants!

Mia, your endless dedication to everything that you do is truly inspiring and I will miss spending our Monday mornings together. Rob, I have never met someone with so much poise and genuine care for others. Brendan, you manage to make every situation feel more manageable and lighthearted. And to Prof. Kabak, thank you for not letting me sabotage myself from this position because I didn't think I was good enough for it and thank you for always making me feel like I was more than capable!

Best of luck to all of the board members and staff! Thank you for being you!

Julie Dunn, Photo Editor 2021-2022

## A Spectrum Holiday Crossword



**ACROSS**

- 2. He's left home alone for Christmas
- 3. The month of Christmas
- 5. They roast on an open fire
- 9. Santa's Helpers
- 10. Families hang these from the fireplace
- 12. Festive floral arrangement for the holidays
- 14. Entrance for Santa

**DOWN**

- 1. Charged with stealing Christmas
- 4. You kiss underneath it
- 6. The fourth Reindeer
- 7. His first words were "Happy Birthday"
- 8. Festive dairy drink for the holidays
- 11. Santa's real last name
- 13. Abbreviation for Christmas
- 14. A Christmas gift for the "naughty"

The editorial page is an open forum. Editorials are the opinions of the individual editors and do not represent the opinions of the whole editorial board. Letters to the editor are encouraged and are due by Sunday at noon for consideration for each Wednesday's issue. All submissions are subject to editing for spelling, punctuation, and length.

Letters to the editor should not exceed 600 words and should be emailed to [spectrum@sacredheart.edu](mailto: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.

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