

The new wrestling conference champions

By: John Syms, Part Time Staff Writer



Wrestling team holds the PAC trophy and banner
(SOURCE: @PAC_Athletics TWITTER)

On Friday, Feb. 16, the Saint Vincent College (SVC) men's wrestling team won their first ever Presidents' Athletic Conference (PAC) wrestling championship against Washington and Jefferson (W&J) in Washington, Pa.

SVC has not had a wrestling team since 1975. The college previously competed in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) for over 13 seasons. It was then announced in March 2022 that SVC would bring back men's wrestling as a varsity sport.

The team won the PAC title by scoring 103.5 points, outlasting the three other teams that were competing for gold. SVC had ten wrestlers that were named all-conference and three wrestlers who became individual champions.

One of those individuals, Chase Brandebura, freshman sports management major, was named the PAC Newcomer of the Year after

he won the 165-pound individual title. Charlie Mesich, freshman undeclared major, would win his own wrestling title at 157 pounds by defeating an opponent from W&J 7-6, in a first-place match. The last person to win an individual title for the Bearcats was Sean Cain, freshman engineering major, who was victorious in the 125-pound bracket.

"I could really feel our team chemistry building up throughout the year, and it finally seemed to click for us on Friday," Cain said.

Cain is glad that his team won the PAC and that he was able to be part of the school's first title.

"Being able to be SVC's first PAC championship individual and team is a wonderful opportunity, and I am so grateful for all that I have been given from this team."

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Entering the year of the dragon

By: Elizabeth Van Pilsum, Arts and Culture Editor

Every year, the Chinese New Year occurs based on the lunar calendar, with the first night falling the night of the second new moon of each calendar year and the celebrations lasting for the next fifteen days. In 2024, the Chinese New Year date was Feb.10, ushering in the Year of the Dragon. Saint Vincent College (SVC) celebrated the New Year with a campus-wide festival on Saturday, Feb. 17.

The evening was sponsored by The Loe Center for China Studies, the Multicultural Club, Campus Life, Parkhurst Dining Services, Department of Modern and Classical Languages, and the School of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. The festivities began with Chinese food in the Community Center for dinner, including egg fried rice, egg rolls, and fried tofu. Following dinner, the official celebration began in the Carrey Center Lounge with commencement speeches from community leaders at 7:30 p.m. Dr. Sophia Geng, Chair Professor of China Studies and Director of the Loe Center, is one such leader who shared her thoughts on the event.

"Thank you so much for being here together with us to celebrate the Chinese New Year," Geng said. "This is the beginning of the year of the dragon, which stands for strength, leadership, and prosperity. The Lunar New Year is really a time for families and communities to come together and to celebrate the renewing and growth."

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SPORTS

Bearcats win first ever PAC wrestling championship

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Liam Flanigan, freshman health science major, pins an opponent in a third-place match. (SOURCE: WATKINS)

Considering that this was the first season in almost 50 years for the Bearcats, Cain did not know how the 2023-24 season was going to play out. He still looks forward to what lies ahead next year.

“At first, I was nervous and didn’t know what to expect, but now I feel like I’ve found my groove and I’m gaining confidence by the day, and next season is going to be an even bigger season for the team and myself,” Cain said.

Head coach of the team, Dominic Nania, was named the PAC coach of the year, as a first-year head coach for the wrestling team.

Nania was named head coach of the wrestling team on May 24, 2022. He has over three years of collegiate coaching experience as the previous assistant wrestling coach at Seton Hill University.

He coached the Bearcats through 12 dual meets, and the team finished the regular season with a record of 5-7 before entering the conference championship.

On Wednesday, Jan. 17, the team lost to the preseason favorites, W&J, with a score of 20-29. That was the last loss of the season for the team, as they managed to win three straight before entering the PAC championship.

W&J would finish in second place at the conference meet with a score of 81 points, while Waynesburg University placed third with 75.5 points and Thiel College finished last place with 69.5 points.

The team will be competing in the NCAA Division III Southeast Regional Championship in Williamsport, Pa, at Lycoming College on March 1 and 2.

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Team Standings

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Team	W	L	Streak
W&J	23	3	L1
Chatham	23	3	W8
Bethany	15	12	L1
Allegheny	13	13	L3
Geneva	14	13	W3
Saint Vincent	13	13	L1
Westminster	12	12	L2
Grove City	11	14	L2
Waynesburg	6	19	W2
Franciscan	4	21	L7
Thiel	0	25	L25

END OF SEASON

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Team	W	L	Streak
Geneva	22	3	W3
Saint Vincent	23	3	W5
Chatham	18	9	L1
Waynesburg	14	12	L1
Grove City	14	13	L1
Westminster	10	14	L4
W&J	9	16	W1
Bethany	9	17	L1
Thiel	8	17	L1
Franciscan	8	16	L3
Allegheny	6	19	L2

SCHEDULE: END OF SEASON RESULTS PENDING

WOMEN'S SWIMMING

Team	W	L	Streak
Grove City	6	2	W4
Saint Vincent	8	2	W5
Franciscan	8	2	W1
Westminster	3	6	L3
W&J	3	7	W1
Allegheny	2	7	W1
Chatham	1	7	L6
Bethany	1	9	L8

END OF SEASON: 3RD PLACE OUT OF 8 @PAC

MEN'S SWIMMING

Team	W	L	Streak
Grove City	6	2	W4
Saint Vincent	5	4	W4
Westminster	3	6	L3
Chatham	1	6	L5
W&J	2	7	W1
Allegheny	1	7	W1
Bethany	0	7	L7

END OF SEASON: 3RD PLACE OUT OF 7 @PAC

MEN'S WRESTLING

Team	W	L	Streak
Thiel	4	2	L2
Saint Vincent	5	7	W3
W&J	5	10	W2
Waynesburg	2	17	W1

SCHEDULE: @REGIONALS 3/1 - 3/2

RESULTS: @PAC CHAMPIONSHIPS, 1ST OF 4

*Correct as of 2/24/24

ARTS AND CULTURE

SVC hosted a Chinese New Year festival

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The Chinese New Year festival featured performances from community members in the Carey Center Lounge. (SOURCE: GENG)



Craft tables, featuring activities such as Chinese calligraphy, were set up in the Lounge for attendees. (SOURCE: GENG)

Craft and activity tables were open in the Lounge, inviting attendees to participate in folding origami, writing Chinese calligraphy, and more. Parkhurst also set up a table with Chinese food in the back of the Lounge for guests to sample. At 7:40, performances began, emceed by David Collins, senior English and communication major. Collins became involved because he is taking a Chinese and Chinese American Folklore course with Geng.

“Doctor Geng has been so eagerly promoting cultural appreciation and celebration,” Collins said. “We’ve been learning a Chinese folk song in class that we performed at the event, and I was excited to be asked to emcee the rest of the night as well.”

Collins sang “Mo Li Hua” with his classmates as the first performance, and then he introduced the rest of the acts. The acts included singing, stand-up comedy, a cello performance, and a poetry reading. Geng emailed the SVC faculty in January searching for people willing to perform, including students, staff, and other community members, and she was successful in recruiting a variety of people to be involved.

“I was so pleased with the participation we got from various clubs on campus, from the multicultural club to the men’s rugby team to the beekeeping club,” Collins said. “We had a variety of cultures and cultural music represented which really epitomized the intention of the evening. I’m very glad I got to be a part of it.”

Stacie Ramos, junior marketing and digital art major, was a performer who sang a song popular in the Philippines with Dr.

Stephen Jodis, Boyer School Dean, and his wife Maria Jodis.

“I think the event was super fun and it was nice to see Asian culture here in Latrobe,” Ramos said. “Chinese New Year is really big in the Philippines, but I never celebrated it before.”

“I was fortunate to meet Doctor Jodis and his wife through my Learning Seminar professor, Doctor Breid, in my sophomore year,” Ramos said. “Mrs. Jodis is Filipino, and she asked me to perform “Dahil Sa Iyo” with them. We practiced once together in Luparello Hall before the event. This year Mrs. Jodis and Dr. Jodis chose the song, but I think I’ll request one of my favorites if we are invited again next year!”

After the scheduled performances were finished, there was an open mic for anyone else who wanted to be involved, welcoming more of the community onstage. Overall, the people involved were happy with how the event went. While it has not been confirmed that this festival will return annually, the community is looking ahead for another opportunity to celebrate one another and SVC’s cultural diversity.

NEWS

What's at the core of it?

By: Tanner Adomaitis, *Staff Writer*



Diagram of the core curriculum. (SOURCE: SVC Portal)

Almost three years ago, the graduating class of 2025 became the first class to be on a new core curriculum at Saint Vincent College (SVC). Over the years since its implementation, it has been evolving and settling. Dr. Jerome Foss, professor of political science and Director of the Core, offered insights into what is to come from the newest evolutions of the curriculum.

“One thing that we have to do is assess the core, so we are getting all our ducks in a row for assessment,” Foss said. “We have been assessing it but we’re making some really good strides in terms of approving our assessment of the core. Hopefully students will be seeing the results of the assessments every semester and every year.”

Foss works to smooth out the wrinkles of the process and is very appreciative for the students being patient as the core goes through updates and changes.

“I hope this year there will be less reason to worry about finding classes, and next year, even fewer reasons,” Foss said. “A lot of that is actually improving how we measure the core’s success so we can think about what is working and what’s not working.”

Foss also noted that a major change concerning students is that many classes will now be able to be double counted for their major and for the core. If students in the past took a course that didn’t count for both requirements, they can contact Foss to look at making it double count.

He explained that the goal of the core curriculum is to provide a rigorous, liberal arts education to all students, and to make that true across all majors. The core should maintain a good foundation pertinent to each student’s major.

“For example, in a few new majors like Nursing, we want to make sure that the core provides nursing students with a good liberal arts education,” Foss said.

He noted that a big challenge in updating the core and including more classes was common good intentions, but incentives that point in different

directions. He noted that one of his major tasks since becoming the Director of the Core was to change the incentives so that people can achieve their goals in cooperation with each other.

“It’s good to be at a school where we can support one another’s efforts and not have to feel like we are in competition with one another,” Foss said.

The next freshman class will be required to take classes in certain disciplines, which moves the core back into the direction of the old core. However, the Learning Outcomes will be the same as the current core. Students can also look forward to more classes from departments who previously did not offer classes in the core, such as math and natural science classes. There will also be new history courses and literature courses introduced to the core.

“In a way, we are finding a middle road between the new current core and the old core,” Foss said. “The advantage of the new core is that it has a clearer direction and clearer understanding of what a liberal education at Saint Vincent College should be. There is less room for equivocation in the new core. We are, as a faculty and as a college, are more on the same page under the new core.”

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Adult film star-turned pastor tells SVC his story

By: Lauren Campbell, *Staff Writer*



Joshua Broome, his wife, Hope Broome, and their 3 children
(SOURCE: www.joshuabroome.me)

On Monday, Feb. 19, Campus Ministry hosted Joshua Broome, a former adult film star who left the industry and became a pastor and anti-pornography advocate. Broome spoke about his experience in the porn industry and the dangers porn can have. The talk left students feeling mostly positive, with a few feeling skeptical.

In the talk, Broome spoke about his time as an adult film star, the experiences he went through, and how it nearly drove him to suicide before he left the industry. He then went on to tell the story of how he met the woman who is now his wife, crediting her and his mother for pulling him out of his former life and bringing him closer to God than ever.

In addition to his personal testimony, Broome warned audiences of the dangers porn can have on people, both the people in the videos and the people watching.

“It’s not what you think it is,” said Broome. “It’s a million miles

from intimacy. It’s two broken people operating their brokenness, causing more brokenness, and they desperately just want to be saved.”

Students who attended the talk had mostly positive takeaways from it, finding the testimony interesting and appreciative of Broome for telling his story. Some were more questioning about Broome’s claims but were still interested in the talk nonetheless.

Chris Baker, a seminarian who attended the talk, was grateful for Broome’s testimony, especially when he told the story of how he met his wife.

“I enjoyed it,” said Baker. “I was thankful that he talked about his relationship with his parents. I was really appreciative, and even to some degree surprised that the Lord put in his life a woman that was not going to judge him based on the things that he’s done in his life.”

Another student, who chooses to remain anonymous, said they thought the talk was interesting, but were skeptical about Broome’s claims about the amount of human trafficking in the industry.

“I thought the talk was interesting and very informative,” said the student. “I really liked how he connected his religion to all his points and explained how it helped him get out of that life. However, I disagreed with him when he said that everyone in the porn industry is being trafficked.”

Campus Ministry had said previously when they invited Kim Zember to speak on campus that they hoped to start conversations like this on campus, and it seems they have succeeded with Joshua Broome’s testimony.

OPINION

Serving the Sacraments of Salvation

By: Sarah Burger, *Contributor*

I wish I had held her hands or given her a hug when she told me the story of being hit by a car, but I was too nervous. The woman looked at me with sad brown eyes, her short hair clinging to her head in matted clumps. What could I say? I was used to receiving the hearts of my friends at school, I just had to try and apply those skills now.

"I'm so sorry" I said, "that sounds really scary."

"It was terrifying!" she lamented.

"You're so strong."

"No, I'm not..."

She told me that her mother had died, and that she had not been a very good person. She concluded by telling me that she never felt the need to enact vengeance, because she knew God would take vengeance for her. Her statement reminded me of the cursing psalms. "Happy is the one who seizes your infants and dashes them against the rocks" (Psalm 137:9).

No mincing of words, simply raw emotion.

I thought of telling her about God's mercy but prudently decided better of it. Instead, I offered her hot chocolate and said "Well, God does love you so much!"

"He loves you!" she replied.

"I know!" I exclaimed.

We both laughed.

I had never really served people experiencing homelessness like this before now. In high school I had done some service hours in a soup kitchen, but walking around the streets of Baltimore on a chilly November evening and handing out sandwiches and hot chocolate with the Sisters Poor of Jesus Christ was completely different.

It was different because of the reason for their service. As I spent the day with them praying, making bracelets to sell, and running errands, all before going out to serve people experiencing homelessness, they emphasized the fact that they were not a "social services" organization. They were not simply an institution, but brides of Christ who have given their whole lives to the poor in gratitude to God.

Over a lunch of spaghetti and baked chicken, the sisters told me that they used their service to console the Heart of Jesus by caring for those who have been rejected, as Jesus Himself was rejected by His friends during His passion. Sr. Samaritan told me about her work with prostitutes in El Salvador, and how she and the other sisters would share the Gospel with them whenever they were not working. They even worked with an organization that would help these women find different jobs so they could survive without having to sell their bodies. Sr. Samaritan explained how these women had been rejected, but most people had no idea what they had gone through to get them to the point of prostitution.

Sr. Giovanna told me how she had thought of leaving religious life when she had first joined the Poor of Jesus Christ in Brazil at the young age of sixteen. However, she had gone on a service mission and met a grumpy couple who were hesitant to speak with her and the brother and sister accompanying her. After speaking and praying with the couple, Sr. Giovanna took the woman's hands, and the woman, who had not said a word the entire time, told her that she had been planning on killing herself that day, but did not want to anymore. After that, Sr. Giovanna knew she wanted to spend the rest of her life loving and serving those rejected by others.

"[The poor] are the ones who teach us." A sister who was only twenty-one named Sr. Dalva explained.

But even more than that, the sisters told me how the poor are a "sacrament of salvation". The sisters revealed how the poor will be the ones who open the doors of Heaven for them. They did not have to tell me how much of a gift the poor were to them. I could see it. I could see it in the way Sr. Dalva clapped along as one woman we served sang a song she had written. I could see it in the way Sr. Mary Clare had quiet and familiar conversations with the people experiencing homelessness. I could see it in the way all of the sisters remembered people's names and invited them to a Thanksgiving lunch they were providing the next day.

"I really hope you can make it!" they would say, handing out cards with the time and address. The world may have seen these people as a burden, but the sisters saw them as a gift.

They also embraced the gift of one another. When asked what their favorite part of being a religious sister was (besides "being married to Jesus" as Sr. Samaritan laughingly answered when I asked. Well duh.) they all talked about community life. They discussed their complementary talents, and how they were able to build up and encourage one another. I could tell how much the sisters loved one another as I learned about each sister from the others. Sr. Mary Clare loved cats, Sr. Samaritan used to ride a motorcycle, Sr. Giovanna took all the other sisters to the inner harbor to ride electric scooters for her birthday...

They also talked about the stability and safety that comes from living in community. When one sister was experiencing spiritual difficulties, she knew the other sisters were praying for her. There is also the physical protection that comes from serving in numbers. In a 2023 study, Baltimore was ranked number four on a list of the most dangerous cities in the United States (World Population Review). This meant that the sisters had to constantly be checking their surroundings and looking out for one another.

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When I first told my parents I wanted to go help the sisters in Baltimore, they were extremely wary. I considered telling them that if I was killed, I would be a martyr, but I didn't think that would go over very well.

When the sisters and I went out into the city, I hovered around them like a timid puppy, waiting for them to ask me to hand them a sandwich or fill up a cup of hot chocolate. The sisters themselves, however, were fearless. Their brown habits and veils may as well have been invincible armor as they walked from person to person with large smiles on their faces. Sr. Giovanna told me laughingly that recently there had been comments on an EWTN video about the sisters expressing how dangerous their work is.

Sr. Giovanna understood why people would feel this way, saying "Without Jesus, my life doesn't make sense".

With Jesus however, giving up marriage, children, and material possessions and putting themselves in danger every day is a beautiful life. It is a life of consoling the Heart of Jesus who suffers because of the suffering of the ones He loves.

Sr. Giovanna shared the lyrics of a Brazilian song, "Who is the God who can be hurt when we hurt others?"

She told me that "when you give yourself to the Lord, everything is for Him."

This means that when she is doing less extreme work like vacuuming the house for instance, she is still serving God. In fact, such chores help her feel the wifehood and motherhood that are a part of her vocation.

Such a mindset also helps when her ministry work becomes difficult. She explained how it can be discouraging to see people entrenched in such need day after day and feel like the sisters' work of handing out food a few times a week isn't making much of a difference. For instance, in 2022, volunteers helping with homelessness in Baltimore counted 1,600 people living on the streets in the city (WYPR). However, she continues to trust that she is doing God's will, and He has placed her where she needs to be. We can never truly understand the mystery of how God uses us.

The sisters also emphasized the importance of prayer in their lives. They explained how all that we are given comes from God, and that without prayer, our work would be empty. When the sisters become tired or discouraged, they turn to prayer, relying on

love Himself, Jesus Christ. Each sister takes a Holy Hour in adoration every day as a part of her daily routine.

I joined Sr. Giovanna for her holy hour that afternoon. I watched as the beautiful young sister knelt on hard tile floor for the entire hour, gazing at her beloved spouse in the open tabernacle. These sisters had found the love that many people spend their entire lives seeking. I asked Jesus for aid in discovering my vocation too.

As we continued walking around Baltimore, I grew in confidence, encouraged by the sisters. I became comfortable enough to talk to people on my own, but I loved watching the sisters to see how they would respond to the people they served.

One man we served named Jamal was extremely surprised to see the sisters. He told us how impressed he was because the city could be so dangerous.

"What can I do for y'all in return?" he asked.

I looked at Sr. Dalva who stood beside me.

"You can pray for us!" Sr. Dalva replied.

Jamal agreed to pray for us, and also walked with us for a little while to make sure we stayed safe. When we were washing dishes after returning to the sisters' house, I told Sr. Dalva how impressed I was by the kindness of the people experiencing homelessness. She told me that the people experiencing homelessness were very polite and kind, they just didn't think that about themselves.

Shortly after returning to the sisters' house, my dad came to pick me up and as we drove through the city, he lamented its current state and told me how nice it used to be. I do not know know what Baltimore used to be like, or really how to fix its current problems, but I know that if one by one we could begin to love and serve like the Sisters Poor of Jesus Christ, many lives, and the world itself—would change.

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