

Sports fight to return amid pandemic

BY LUKE ALTIER
SPORTS EDITOR

Remember when we could simply walk into the football stadium and see a packed crowd on a Friday night, or go buy a hot dog from the concession stand at intermission in a soccer game? Today, everywhere we go, we are temperature-checked and asked about our contact with other people.

A question a lot of people have asked recently has been, “how are sports going to do it?” We can look at professional sports, which have taken the bubble approach like the NBA and the NHL, or the higher risk option of just resuming play like MLB.

The nice thing about high school sports is that the players don’t need to be kept in a bubble, but it is also scary that they aren’t. So, heading into the fall season, Saint Louis U. High’s four fall sports teams—soccer, football, cross country, and swimming and diving—are adjusting to meet the requirements needed to mitigate risk of exposure for the season(s) that lie ahead (we hope).

In response to the pandemic, a Saint Louis-specific group called the Sports Medicine Task Force, composed of health experts from BJC Healthcare, Mercy Health Systems, and SSM Health, has worked to compose a set of regulations that will allow for the return of both youth and high school sports this fall. This group, while heavily influential in the decision to start competition, does not have jurisdiction over the permissions needed to move towards a season; those permissions will be granted by the Department of Health.

The Sports Medicine Task Force started by categorizing the four major fall sports by their risk level, with sports like football and soccer being classified as “high frequency” because of their high

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We’re Back!

Students and faculty return to synchronous learning



Mr. Mohr leads procession into the Mass of the Holy Spirit for Xavier group.

photo | Mrs. Kathy Chott

BY NATHAN RICH
CORE STAFF

On Thursday, Aug. 20, Jr. Bills throughout the city dragged themselves pre-

turely from bed, placed two feet firmly on the ground, and stood to greet the day—only to sit right back down again to log in to Zoom.

For the first time in the

history of St. Louis U. High, school started not with a bell but with a click, as students began the first day by slowly populating the 9 by 9 squares of a Zoom call. The common

theme of the day seemed to be “different.” Different types of teaching styles, different schedules, different teachers, even a different dress code.

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Gibbons reflects on his 25 year journey with Jesuits, his final vows

BY NOAH APPRILL-SOKOL
NEWS EDITOR

As a boy, Saint Louis U. High principal Ian Gibbons, S.J. never thought that he would be a Jesuit priest. He definitely didn’t plan to be the principal and a social studies teacher at an all boys’ high school less than an hour away from his home town of Edwardsville, Ill. Yet, Gibbons has now been a part of the Jesuit order for 25 years, and in a one-of-a-kind beginning to the school year, he received his final vows at the first all-school Mass of 2020, officially completing his Jesuit formation process.

“Each year we celebrate the Mass of the Holy Spirit as a way to begin our school year, but it is also the end of what came before,” said Gib

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90% of students polled feel safe returning to school

BY JACOB SPROCK
NEWS EDITOR

The *Prep News* sent out a survey last Friday, Aug. 28 asking students about their satisfaction with distance learning and confidence in Saint Louis U. High’s safety programs as we return to school in person on Sept. 10.

Two hundred fifty-five people responded to the survey: 69 freshmen, 53 sophomores, 49 juniors, 52 seniors, and 32 faculty/staff.

Each respondee was asked how they would rate their satisfaction with the current distance learning schedule, how they would compare the current system with last year’s system, and how safe they feel coming back to SLUH in the coming

weeks. In addition to the required multiple-choice questions, those who filled out the survey had the opportunity to indicate if they were willing to answer follow-up questions.

It is important to note that the results of the poll may not reflect the views of the school as a whole. Despite nearly a quarter of the school responding, there is an inherent bias that comes with emailing a poll because people with stronger opinions may be more inclined to respond to the email.

The official numbers will be posted at the bottom of the article, but they can only be used to reflect the views of the 255 people who responded, not the school population.

Just over three quar

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Direction Day sets precedent for major events

BY JACOB SPROCK AND
SAM TARTER
NEWS EDITOR, FEATURES EDITOR

With the nation engulfed in a deadly pandemic, Saint Louis U. High has had to rethink its annual traditions in order to keep the community safe. One of those traditions was Direction

Days, an event that serves as an introduction to SLUH for incoming freshmen.

As soon as the virus, now infamous for being the cause of countless canceled events, first reared its head in March, questions started to come up about the security of summer activities. Director of the

Learning Center Tim Curdt and campus minister Stephen Deves were in charge of planning Direction Days, so they got to work in the fourth quarter, meeting with doctors and other teachers to decide if it would be a part of SLUH this year. Ultimately, they decided to postpone the event instead of cancel it.

On top of the scheduling of Direction Days, Deves and Curdt also had the problem of deciding what to do with all the senior advisors. They had not yet decided who would be chosen for the program out of the 96 applicants, so they used that to their advantage.

“(Mr. Curdt) felt like this was not the year to (cut people). There’s already enough disappointment this year. Now that there’s so much

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Freshman play “Target Practice.”

photo | Mrs. Kathy Chott

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Devoti brings two decades of Human Resources experience to SLUH’s Advancement program.

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HVAC upgrades to pathogen killing, ionized air filtration system; ensures safer classes

BY CARTER J. FORTMAN
EDITOR IN CHIEF

To ensure the safest possible learning environment when students return to a hybrid schedule on Sept. 10, St. Louis U. High decided to upgrade the current HVAC system with state of the art equipment to provide both students and faculty with the best air quality the school has ever seen. The installation timeline for these upgrades is the reason the start of the hybrid in-person learning schedule was delayed.

The new upgrades add the same Needlepoint Bipolar Ionization (NPBI) filtration technology that is used to clean air in hospitals around the country, top universities, Boeing jets, and even the White House.

"A lot of medical facilities have this type of technology for a reason," said Director of Facilities Joe Rankin, '83. "It works, and they know it works."

The NPBI technology is manufactured by Global Plasma Solutions (GPS). According to their website, "This patented technology (NPBI) uses an electronic charge to create a plasma field filled with a high concentration of + and - ions. As these ions travel with the air stream they attach to particles, pathogens and gases. The ions help to agglomerate fine sub-micron

particles, making them filterable. The ions kill pathogens by robbing them of life-sustaining hydrogen. The ions breakdown harmful VOCs into harmless compounds like Oxygen, Carbon Dioxide, Nitrogen, and Water."

Essentially, the technology kills pathogens like viruses, mold, and bacteria and clumps together particles like dust, smoke and pollen to make them big enough to filter out. The system also works to neutralize odors.

This system is one significant part of the school's safety measures.

"Under research lab conditions it can destroy up to 99.9 percent of viruses and bacteria," said President Alan Carruthers. "The challenge with that is that we are a school and these are not lab conditions. . . This is an extra insurance policy on top of those other CDC recommended pieces like social distancing of six feet and mask wearing."

In addition to cleaning the air, the system also makes the building's HVAC units more sustainable and saves the school money by reducing the amount of outside air that is taken in and in turn reducing the amount of electricity it uses.

Rankin and Director of Maintenance Rick Figge first discussed the idea of these up-

grades around late April.

"Well I had conversations with Rick Figge about what kind of changes and what kind of improvements we could make here at St. Louis University High School to improve our HVAC, knowing that aerosolized pathogens are what are getting people sick," said Rankin.

Both men have a background in the hospital setting working with similar technology and were considering ways to upgrade the system with either the NPBI technology or an older ultraviolet technology. After finding a few red flags with the UV technology, both men got in contact with distributors of the NPBI technology.

"Years past I have installed UV devices in different systems that did a fair job, so I started digging deeper into that and did not like what I read about what it did to the equipment after time," said Figge.

After a meeting with representatives from Global Plasma Solutions where they learned about the system, Rankin and Figge decided the NPBI was right for SLUH. They also discovered that Figge and his maintenance team could install this system themselves, reducing costs.

"No one has all the answers but in any type of situation, pandemic or not, you have to

look and see what you can do to make better," said Rankin. "We're working with people around here who are very positive about the things we can do and the things we can take on like this particular project."

The federal CARES Act, intended to help schools adapt to the threat of COVID transmission, will pay for the system. After submitting an application to the St. Louis Public Schools—who were distributing the money—the school was approved for funding.

"CARES Act money is for purchasing of PPE and pandemic related technology," said Carruthers. "In our case we applied for dollars for this particular system which is exactly what the Act is for."

After finding the funding, Figge and Rankin worked tirelessly to ensure the system was delivered as soon as possible.

"Number one, we had to get it purchased and number two, get it here as soon as possible," said Rankin. "We also knew the supply chain is just something that is just going to be inundated with everyone else asking for the same type of equipment. We aren't the only type of people that are jumping for this type of equipment."

The unit was set to be delivered this past week and is projected to be finished by Sept.

8. The systems themselves are going to be installed in between the blower and the evaporator coil (which cools the air).

"The installation is not too bad, just a little time consuming," said Figge. "Worst part is pulling new wire from the electric compartment to the blower compartment. After we have landed the wires in correct spots the job is done, cleaning and purifying the air 24/7."

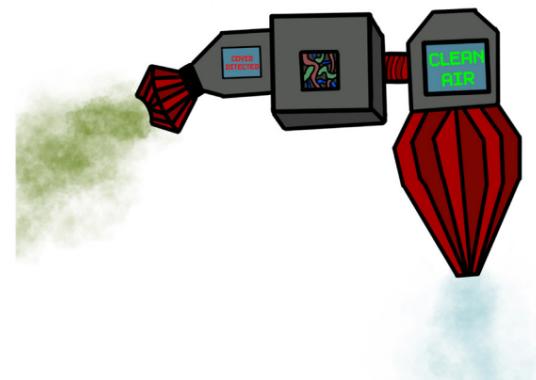
"There are 130 units that we have to retro fit across campus and that is what is taking us time," said Carruthers. "With the delay in the supply of equipment, that is why the first three cycles of classes went fully online."

In addition to adding this new high-tech filtration system, the maintenance team has also shortened time in between the

basic physical filtration changes. These steps have been taken to ensure the highest possible safety for students.

"Many schools that are back don't have these systems, but we are making this investment to have an extra level of confidence along with an extra level of protection," said Carruthers. "We could still be back without it, but we wanted to make sure we were doing all we could do for the safety of our students."

"I am very proud of the amount of work that has been done and to see where we're at now," said Rankin. "It is different than the way we were going to school years ago, but we are all gonna be able to make it through this stuff. There is light at the end of the tunnel."



art | Jack Janson

A stamp of approval: SLUH closes out its year-long accreditation process at Mass of the Holy Spirit

BY JACK FIGGE
CORE STAFF

The Jesuit Central-Southern provincial, Fr. Tom Greene, S.J., along with SLUH President Alan Carruthers and SLUH Principal Ian Gibbons, S.J. signed the Jesuit sponsorship agreement at the Mass of the Holy Spirit on Aug. 18. The signing formally ended a year-long process that involved a thorough examination of SLUH to review its focus on the Jesuit tradition and mission.

In January 2019, SLUH began its Jesuit Sponsorship review process, something that every Jesuit high school undergoes every six or seven years, to ensure that the high school is fulfilling the Jesuit mission. After the review is completed, the school and the province will sign an agreement that allows the school to call itself an official Jesuit school and a part of the local province.

In the first phase of the accreditation, the school undergoes a self-evaluation led by a committee made up of faculty and staff. This committee, led by English teacher Steve Missey, looked at all aspects of the school to assess where they think the school is succeeding in fulfilling the Jesuit mission and where it has room to grow.

"It is good to be able to step back and see these issues from a 30,000-foot view," said Missey. "Because in our day-to-day life, these issues often get jumbled up

and it is good to do some deliberate planning on how to address them."

After the committee completed its internal review of SLUH, a team from the provincial's office, made up of two provincial staff members and three administrators from other Jesuit high schools, traveled to SLUH to conduct its own assessment.

"To receive feedback from people I very much trust, that are colleagues in Jesuit education, and to hear what they were doing well is great," said Gibbons. "You can't improve if your blind spots are preventing you from seeing those things."

Upon finalizing its review, the visiting team submitted its own report that outlined three areas of the school that they saw needed improvement, which were: technology, student mental health, and spiritual development for teachers. Then, in order to complete the Sponsorship Agreement process, SLUH had three months to articulate a plan for each of the three areas of growth.

For Gibbons, SLUH's technology policy represents an area where a significant amount of work and revision need to be done in order to make it more effective.

"I inherited a school that had a 1-to-1 technology program that basically evolved into what it was without a whole lot of discernment, without a whole

lot of clear objective thinking," said Gibbons. "It basically has been frozen in that state and it is high time that we think of a stronger way that we look at technology."

SLUH's current technology policy requires freshmen and sophomores to have their own iPad, but allows juniors and seniors to bring the device of their choice. The committee realized that this current plan made it both confusing and complicated for teachers and students alike, who have to adapt to new devices and teach students who have a variety of different devices.

"In some ways, it is the worst of all worlds as a system," said Gibbons. "All the good things you create with an iPad you then lose when everybody is doing something different, but you also limit yourself with the iPad. So by the time a freshman is a junior or senior they are kind of locked into this system where not everybody is using the same thing."

In response, SLUH was planning on conducting a comprehensive overview and revision of the current 1:1 technology policy for the 2020-2021 school year, but the COVID-19 pandemic halted that study early on and forced the faculty and staff to quickly adapt to an online learning program.

"We were at a disadvantage than other schools going in because we didn't have one platform, we didn't have a culture where there is

a strong emphasis on online learning," said Gibbons.

Facing the challenge of having to use only technology to deliver a high-quality Jesuit education to students in an online format, the faculty had to come face to face with the technology issues that the Sponsorship Review had noted just months before.

"We have not solved all of our problems by any stretch, but because of the pandemic, we are in a very different place as a school in terms of seeing and appreciating and harnessing some of that power that technology offers," said Missey. "Life basically said, 'you figure this out or school doesn't happen.'"

Another issue caused by the pandemic, and one that the Sponsorship Review also highlighted as an area for growth, was helping students with their mental and emotional well-being. Even before the lockdown, the administration realized that they needed to place a stronger emphasis on caring for students' emotional health. The lockdown and forced isolation, forced the school to come up with a proactive and deliberate plan to reach students most likely to face anxiety and stress issues.

"You are locking people up, you are isolating them, you're not allowing them that human contact, and there is massive stress of this whole pandemic and the unknown, and the question of

how are we going to survive this," said Gibbons. "All of these pieces mean that we couldn't have picked a better area to focus on and we have done a lot of great work in this area of student well-being."

Finally, the team and committee noted that there was room to grow programs for the spiritual development of the teachers and staff at SLUH, specifically in regards to the Spiritual Exercises. The Spiritual Exercises is one of three foundational documents of the Society of Jesus, which outlines a four-week program that helps to guide the retreatant in discerning God's will in his or her life. The Spiritual Exercises are already a big part in the development of students' spiritual lives, with many of the SLUH retreats containing different elements of the Spiritual Exercises.

"The Spiritual Exercises are huge for the Jesuits," said Gibbons. "A lot of our retreat models, and of the things we do are aligned with the Spiritual Exercises. So the question that the group came to us with is why aren't you delivering the Spiritual Exercises to the teachers, the administrators, and even the students in some regard."

In an effort to provide teachers with a chance to develop their spiritual lives, the administration has formed a group of spiritual directors that are well-versed in the Spiritual Exercises. The administration is also making

time in the schedule so that the faculty can partake in retreats and other formation experiences.

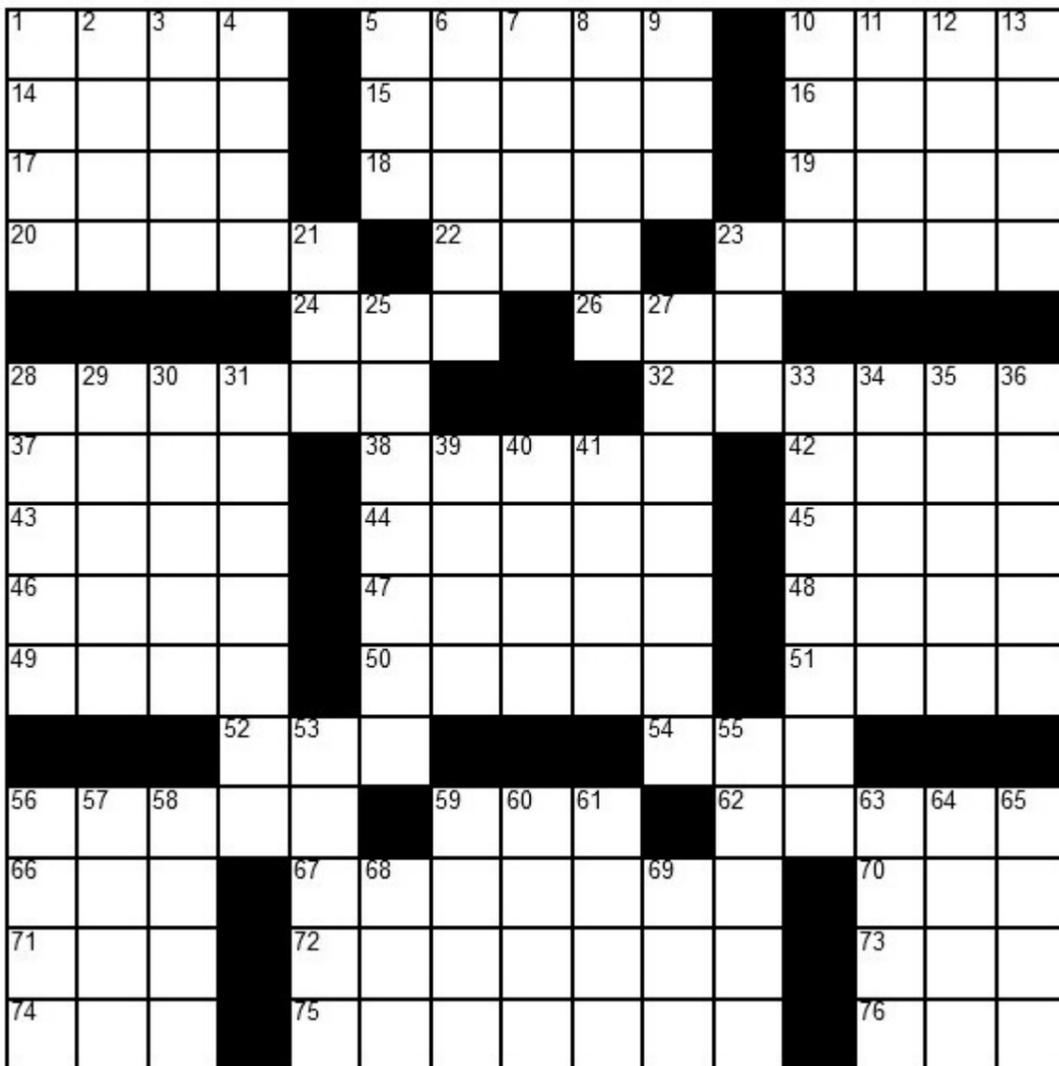
"If we have directors and great programs but we don't release the faculty from the things that they need to be doing—to teach—it is never going to happen," said Gibbons. "You will have the pieces but it will never actualize so that's a failure."

More formal, systematic work on these areas for growth has been postponed while the faculty and staff have been working on establishing a new hybrid school format.

"Since March, everybody has been all hands on deck with getting students back to school in some form," said Missey.

The effects of the Sponsorship Review are still affecting every single way that the school operates and runs because without the Jesuit Sponsorship Review, SLUH would lose its Jesuit identity.

"SLUH is a very famous, recognized school," said Gibbons. "A huge part of that is our Jesuit tradition, our Jesuit philosophy, our Jesuit mission, and to give that up would be a huge loss. What is SLUH High without the Jesuits? Now that is a tough question."



Prep News Puzzle
Crossword Number 1:
"Noon Lazy"

CROSSWORD BY MR. PAUL BAUD

A CROSS

- 1. Having two parts, such as citizenships
- 5. *"One if by land, _____"
- 10. Shrek, e.g.
- 14. *With 17-Across, start of most fairy tales
- 15. Mr. _____, extremely nearsighted cartoon character
- 16. *With 19-Across, winter garment
- 17. *see 14-Across
- 18. Ain't Too _____ to Beg
- 19. *see 16-Across
- 20. Radio host Howard is not this, untrue to his name

- 22. *Road sign related to a Brit
- 23. Maker of aromatherapy shower kits
- 24. Beautiful _____, song John Lennon wrote for his son
- 26. Chips counterpart
- 28. *Southpaw
- 32. Payment to kidnappers
- 37. Teen trouble caused by clogged hair follicles
- 38. Zebra giraffe
- 42. Re-sound
- 43. Ben Folds Five or Blink 182, in number
- 44. Abbr. in case citations
- 45. *"... now and ever shall be, a _____. Amen."
- 46. Go bad, or just go, to

- 47. Time period marked by layers of rock
- 48. *Secondary entrance to a house
- 49. *Fluffy yellow breakfast staple
- 50. What skim milk has
- 51. _____-bitty
- 52. Christopher who played Saruman and Dooku
- 54. What God told Moses His name was
- 56. *Crime committed by an employee
- 59. He works at the Kwik-E-Mart
- 62. *What one can't see for the trees
- 66. *With 70-Across,

- what can not stand, according to Abe Lincoln and Jesus
- 67. *A few more tests to grade, repressed emotions, or a relationship without closure
- 70. *see 66-Across
- 71. *With 73-Across, ice cream dish including a halved fruit
- 72. Lesotho, San Marino, and Vatican City are the only three sovereign ones
- 73. *see 71-Across
- 74. _____ Genevieve, county south of St. Louis
- 75. *Tennis format with two players of each gender
- 76. Ending for many ideologies

DOWN

- 1. Dippin' _____, the ice cream of the future since 1988
- 2. Hand or foot, but not arm or leg
- 3. Manufacturer of products used by Wile E. Coyote
- 4. King Lear does this, true to his name
- 5. Mischievous little devil
- 6. How some St. Louisans refer to Interstate 64
- 7. Character who does not appear in the original, Mary Shelley's Frankenstein
- 8. Lost counterpart
- 9. Northeastern Cape named for an abundance of fish
- 10. Athletes from Rice and Temple
- 11. General Motors's Metro, Prizm, and Spectrum
- 12. Wife of a raja
- 13. Therefore (and a reflection of 10-Across)
- 21. A league on hiatus due to COVID-19
- 23. Federal agency overseeing sustainability and water quality, among other things
- 25. *Ace, to a golfer
- 27. *Where jarring news hits
- 28. Proposed Nazi super-tank that would have weighed 1000 tons!
- 29. Light beige colors
- 30. *Pulverize, as with a mortar and pestle
- 31. A redundant bright

color

- 33. Solution to bent spokes or broken glasses
- 34. *Slide over while remaining seated
- 35. British expression of disapproval
- 36. Some cheeses, but not cheese itself
- 39. _____ and the Age of Wonderbeasts, 2020 Netflix show
- 40. Range for grades
- 41. Disorder to eat non-foods, or an order of 10 characters per inch of typing
- 53. Receded, as a tide
- 55. Donkeys, or donkey-brains
- 56. Quick punches
- 57. Iconic item for Abe Lincoln, but not Jesus
- 58. Agatha Christie's And Then There Were _____
- 59. U.S. organization devoted to studying "the fundamental unit of life"
- 60. A caplet, or Lord Capulet
- 61. Two-toed sloth
- 63. City in East Timor infamous for a 1999 Church massacre
- 64. 9-digit ID's
- 65. Blues, Browns, or Reds
- 68. Draw two cards if you forget to say this
- 69. Undoubtedly the first of her name

Prep News 85 Policy

The Volume 85 *Prep News* opinion section serves the purpose of being the vehicle of the personal opinions of students, faculty, or others. All topics discussed in the section will be related to St. Louis University High School.

Noting published either as an editorial or as a letter to an editor should be considered the opinion of the school, the administration, or anyone other than its author or authors.

A *Prep News* editorial is the opinion of all five editors on a particular topic.

A commentary or column is an opinion of one member of the *Prep News* staff, not of the *Prep News* itself.

A perspective or notebook, like a commentary, is the opinion of one person, often a *Prep News* staff member.

Unlike a commentary, such a piece is often intended primarily to convey a personal experience rather than to provide a viewpoint on an issue. Unlike a letter, such pieces are usually developed at the request of, and sometimes under the guidance of, the *Prep News* editors.

Every member of the SLUH community is wel-

comed and encouraged to submit a letter to the editors. Every letter received by the editors will be read and given consideration. All letters must be signed, but the author's name may be withheld from publication by request and at the discretion of the editors.

The *Prep News* editors reserve the right to edit any submissions for publication in order to meet grammatical standards, but they will not skew the author's original intent. Also, the editors reserve the right to withhold from publication any submission if it is deemed vulgar, tasteless, or otherwise inappropriate. Authors should be available for the editor to contact them before publication to address matters of concern.

All authors wishing to have letters published must submit them by 4:00 p.m. the Wednesday before the letter is to be published.

Letters should be emailed to prepnews@sluh.org, and, if possible, a signed copy should be given to a *Prep News* editor or moderator or mailed to the *Prep News* courtesy of St. Louis University High School, 4970 Oakland, St. Louis, MO 63110.

The Prep News Volume 85 Platform

As the student-run newspaper of St. Louis University High School, the *Prep News* is a weekly publication that strives to inform the SLUH community about events and people, with its focus on those pertaining to the school, primarily through the written word.

The *Prep News* is neither the voice of the administration nor the students. Rather, the newspaper serves to gather and distribute information for the entire school. The *Prep News* editors and staff members make every effort to be objective in their news coverage and editing.

The members of the editorial staff are co-workers and share equally the duties of writing, copy-editing, lay-

out, and staff management. All of the editors share responsibility and leadership of the paper. The editors are supported by a core staff of regular reporters as well as artists and photographers.

It is the role of the editors to seek out and facilitate the reporting of all significant news at SLUH. While any faculty member or student is welcome to submit suggestions to the editors for potential articles, the *Prep News* is never obligated to publish any article idea.

Our primary emphasis as editors of the *Prep News* is upon clear and accurate writing and careful editing. We also attempt to include visual expression—photography, drawing, technical aids, etc.—in every issue

and on our web site. Despite our desire to make the paper visually appealing, we commit ourselves not to allow form to supersede substance.

The editorial staff will use social media to communicate with the paper's readership and to update students about SLUH events and highlight the paper's content. The editors will not allow their goal of speed and accessibility online to weaken their commitment to accuracy and depth.

The *Prep News* strongly encourages underclassman involvement, and our office on the second floor of the Jesuit Wing, room J220, is always open for involvement, criticism, praise, or suggestions. Contributed student

opinions are also welcome under the *Prep News* Editorial Policy. Without student reaction and feedback, the *Prep News* could not function.

If the *Prep News* is inaccurate, we will correct any significant error in the following issue and on our web site as soon as possible.

Furthermore, the editors assume sole responsibility for the text of news and sports articles, features, and editorials. We ask faculty or students who take issue with the manner in which the news was reported or find an error to bring it to the attention of the editors, not the individual reporters.

This is the platform of the editors of Volume 85 of the *Prep News*.

**Interest in writing? Artistry? Photography? Research?
The Prep News is for you.**

Any writers, artists, and/or photographers who are interested in participating in the Prep News are encouraged to email prepnews@sluh.org

For Gibbons, looking back provides new clarity to challenges to come

(continued from page 1)

bons. "It is all an eternal cycle in ways. There is a real beauty and a real synchronicity with taking my final vows at a moment like that."

Gibbons first encountered the Jesuits through his Jesuit pastor at his hometown church, and began to think about being a priest during high school. It was at the University of Southern Illinois—Edwardsville where Gibbons really began to envision himself as a Jesuit economist.

"I was in a finance class, just speaking to the professor and doing some review before the final exam, and we just started talking about life," said Gibbons. "He spoke a little bit about his faith journey, which brought up inside of me a lot of those questions that I had been thinking about in high school. It is amazing to see how quickly that moment started the ball rolling."

Gibbons entered the novitiate in St. Paul, Min. in 1995. The novitiate is a two-year program for new Jesuits to give them a better understanding of the Jesuit tradition and experience, and it ends with first vows. In particular, the Jesuit candidates—or novices, as they are called—have

the 30-day Spiritual Exercises retreat, serve in the novitiate's local community, and go on the Pilgrimage: a six-week journey where they are stranded in a city with little money and are expected to depend on others' generosity.

For Gibbons, his pilgrimage to Montreal, Canada challenged him in new and strange ways, but left him feeling more spiritually rejuvenated.

"It was an amazing experience. They gave me 30 dollars, a one-way bus ticket, and a phone card, and I just went where I felt God wanted me to be," said Gibbons. "For a part of the journey, I was at this drop-in center and basically fixing things. About two days later after I began working there, their cook quit, and I, who worked in a French restaurant as an undergraduate, stepped in as the cook."

After leaving the novitiate, Gibbons spent nine years before his ordination with six of those years at university, earning a master's degree in history (St. Louis University) and divinity (Boston College). He also spent three years at Regis Jesuit High School in Denver, Colo. teaching social studies and running stu-

dent activities. It was at Regis where Gibbons realized his love for teaching and working with young people.

"Teaching was a new experience for me. I had never wanted to be a teacher growing up, but I was excited to teach in a Jesuit context," said Gibbons. "I really loved it, and when I left to resume my studies, I missed teaching."

Gibbons was ordained a priest in June 2006 at St. Francis Xavier at SLU and was sent to work at Rockhurst High School in Kansas City as Director of Campus Ministry for six years, his longest job. After receiving a degree in education leadership at the University of San Francisco, he then became special assistant to the president at Strake Jesuit in Houston, where he assisted in a capital campaign for a STEM learning center. He was later sent to be assistant principal at Regis High School in New York before coming to SLUH.

"I was really prepared well for time at SLUH during my time as assistant principal," said Gibbons. "Think of my job there as being Dr. Kesterson's, Mr. Becvar's, and Mr. Linhares's job all rolled into one."

Gibbons arrived at SLUH in 2018 for his first ever head principal position and has done a lot for the school since then, including helping spearhead SLUH's recently completed accreditation process. Even as a principal, he has also kept his love of teaching alive. He has been teaching economics class for seniors, and this year, in addition to his economics course, he has decided to teach freshmen human geography.

However, the work has never been easy, especially this year with the COVID-19 pandemic. Each year comes with its challenges, but this year, for Gibbons, has been the most difficult with the summer time being almost a continuation of the workload during the school year.

"What summer? In some ways, it felt like a continuity, and we just had so much to prepare for," said Gibbons. "We couldn't predict what would be necessary. We just had to come up with a plan for everything."

Despite the challenge of the pandemic, one of Gibbons' highlights was his final vows, which was especially meaningful for him, as he did it in front of the freshmen in the Si-

Commons.

"It is a little ironic but beautiful in a way that I was surrounded by freshmen who are new to my life and the school," said Gibbons. "They are a great source of hope, and this is a moment that we can share with them as a part of their journey."

For Gibbons, the memories that have stuck with him the most throughout his 25-year spiritual odyssey are of the people that he has met along the way.

"I get asked a lot what my favorite place or city or moment is, but for me it all comes down to people and the relationships," said Gibbons. "Jesuit schools just have a lot of great people, and it is very

edifying to be a part of that. To look back and allow that to wash over you, you realize that all of these people have led me to where I am today."

Reflecting on his life as a Jesuit, Gibbons for the wide range of his experiences so far.

"It has been a tremendous 25 years. I have loved every place that I have been," said Gibbons. "I have learned some incredible things at each place. It really is amazing how different things build and you acquire skills and experiences that you could imagine having or even needing, but then a year later, those experiences provide the entire context on how to get through what is coming ahead."



Gibbons kneels to take his vows.

photo | Mrs. Kathy Chott

Safe Direction Day paves way for socially distanced SLUH

(continued from page 4)

ambiguity and uncertainty this year, we might need a lot more help than we think and we have ever had before. We both decided that, if a senior was willing and ready to put in the effort and wanted to mentor the freshmen, we'll find a role for him."

To serve as a mediator between the end of school and Direction Days and as a safe way to welcome the freshmen, Deves and English teacher Adam Cruz drove around the St. Louis area setting up signs in the yards of the new Jr. Bills.

Some senior advisors pitched in virtually near the end of the fourth quarter by sharing video interviews of themselves giving advice, welcoming the freshmen to SLUH, and expressing excitement for the coming school year.

On June 5, even more advisors showed up to greet the freshmen in person at the turnaround, offering t-shirts, pretzels, and pictures with the signature Jr. Billiken, and celebrating the freshmen with enthusiastic cheers and upbeat songs.

All that was left after June 5 was to wait. Direction Days turned into a single Direction Day and was rescheduled for Aug. 17. Curdt and Deves kept tabs on coronavirus updates as the day approached, ready to cancel the day entirely if anything happened that was too big to handle.

"All summer long was hardcore, like, 'How do we actually make this happen,'" Deves said. "(There were)

lots of conversations with Mr. Curdt, and as it was getting closer, we were like, 'Is this still happening?'"

In the days leading up to the event, Curdt, Deves, and theology teacher Mike Lally met with the senior advisors to train them—teaching them how to properly sanitize, what they should expect the day to look like, and how to keep everyone safe during the day. The seniors got to participate in the various games the



Senior Owen Cooney with his Freshmen. photo | Mrs. Kathy Chott

freshmen would be enjoying, including Group Juggle, Peek-A-Who, Radioactive Carry, and Over / Under.

In order to properly follow social distancing guidelines, some of the usual events featured in Direction Days had to be cut. The three-hour time allotted this year was filled with team-building games played outside, freshman photos, tours of the school, a pep rally, and one-on-one interaction with senior advisors in classrooms.

Deves and Curdt also decided that, similar to the learning schedule for this year, the freshman class

would have to be split into a morning and afternoon group based on last name. The first group would show up at 8:00 a.m. and stay until 11:00 a.m. while the second group would be scheduled from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

"My group felt especially inclusive. Everybody was in good spirits, with a smile on their face, having a good time and being engaged in all of the activities," said senior advisor Zak Stevenson. "Nobody

would have to be split into a morning and afternoon group based on last name. The first group would show up at 8:00 a.m. and stay until 11:00 a.m. while the second group would be scheduled from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

"I was fortunate enough to have two little brothers of some of my fellow seniors in my group, but for my other three freshman, it was really hard to remember who is who when you can't see their entire face. I feel like that will be something we will all struggle with this year when getting to know someone," said Stevenson.

At the end of it all, the freshmen went home and the senior advisors stayed to help clean up. According to Deves, it went just about as well as it could have. "I remember walking over to Mr. Curdt, and I'm like 'This is going smooth, almost too smooth,'" said Deves. "Mr. Curdt and I are definitely used to going with the flow because every year things come up and it's crazy, but I really can-

not think of anything that was either disastrous or overwhelming to deal with"

To Deves's enjoyment, the senior advisors stepped up and did a good job of making sure this year's Direction Day was a memorable one.

"I was very impressed when Monday rolled around to see all of the senior advisors just put themselves into it," said Deves. "They did a good job of getting to know the freshmen and helping them feel welcome, and they did a good job of enforcing our new safety rules. They took it seriously. They were flexible, and they were patient. This helped to make that a really meaningful three hours."

While the teachers in charge were definitely impressed by the hard work of the senior advisors, Stevenson felt that the appreciation went both ways.

"I want to give a big shout out to Mr. Deves, Mr. Cruz, and Mr. Curdt," said Stevenson. "They all had to put in a lot of long hours and efforts into both the senior advisor training days and the direction days. They all put a lot of thought into it to make it both safe, fun, and to feel normal for the freshman. Mr. Curdt especially for a great job on the Canvas page and all the directions, and Mr. Cruz for keeping the energy alive like always. Those three were on the front lines making everything fun and to keep it going smoothly."

Despite the event being shorter and having fewer activities, it was a good experience for the freshmen and the

senior advisors that led them through the day.

"Even though you couldn't do everything they probably wanted you to do and even with COVID and all the restrictions, they still made it fun," said Cade.

"It was all really active and very entertaining," said Thornberry. "It was good all around."

"I was glad we could still do most everything from my freshman year Direction Days, we just had to be a bit more cautious than normal," said Stevenson. "Besides the spacing out, extra precautions, and more division of the class, it was very much how I remembered my Direction Days and this was how I wanted it to go for the freshmen. At the end of the day their class left with smiles on their faces, and that really cemented that what we were doing was important."

Despite the face masks and social distancing, everyone involved had a fun time, and remembered the true purpose of Direction Days.

"When we initially decided that this was going to be a short, one-day thing, it forced me to reflect on what it is about Direction Days that's essential," said Deves. "To have a fun encounter with your classmates and to get to know a senior advisor who cares for you and is looking after you—that's what Direction Days is all about. In the future, things might change, but we will always keep those same elements."

Despite the event being shorter and having fewer activities, it was a good experience for the freshmen and the

Distance learning poll highlights satisfaction with COVID-19 plan

(continued from page 5)

ters of the respondents reported that they were at least moderately satisfied with the way distance learning is being handled at SLUH, 58.8 percent saying that the current system is better than last year's with an additional 24.3 percent stating that it's on par with last year's system.

"The student to teacher relationship is given the needed elements to flourish, as much as one can during this time," said senior Bernie Kilcullen in a follow-up interview. "Although we cannot hear the antebellum music blaring from Mr. McCarthy's room as we leave the chapel on a Wednesday morning, we the students are still able to foster the relationships with our teachers over Zoom."

"By having students attend class at a specific time, whilst also having us show our faces via camera, students are much more attentive to the classes they take," said Sam Zychinski.

Both social studies teacher Tim O'Neil and foreign language teacher Magdalena Alvarado agree that more time is needed in order to effectively assess the current schedule, citing it as a generally good experience so far.

"This will only get better as time goes on with virtual learning because we have to remember that we have only been doing this for a week," said O'Neil. "As teachers gain more experience with the tools we have in virtual learning, our creativity and personalities will begin to come through stronger. Keep in mind that we are still at the beginning of the year, where most teachers are introducing a lot of basics to their courses right now and this leads to a higher percentage of direct instruction and less student interaction."

"It's too early to say whether the current system of distance learning is working or not," said Alvarado. "The way I see it, we are in the process of reinventing education, of creating new styles of teaching and learning for the 21st century. This is a work in progress and it will require a lot of trial and error before we get it right. Although this is a huge challenge, it is an even greater opportunity. We just need to be patient, keep an open mind, and help one another."

Even though he's satisfied with the way distance learning is being handled, senior Ruben Sharp does not approve of how the school is approaching in-person learning.

"I think that it's redundant to send us to school for three days and then distance for two," said Ruben. "If we want to place socializing and comfort above health, then fine, let's go back to school five days a week. You can't have one or the other. This compromise in our current setup is just a waste. I appreciate the option to stay home full time if we want to, but in my opinion it ought to be mandatory

until our rates drop beneath 5 percent."

In regards to safety, over 90 percent of respondents answered that they at least feel moderately safe returning to school for in-person classes, with 48.6 percent saying they feel completely safe.

"I think having masks will make everybody feel a lot more comfortable, and having only a certain amount of students on campus I think will make it easy to spread out and distance," said junior George Henken.

"I feel safe returning to SLUH because they are installing the new ventilation system, and they will take many precautions such as wearing masks, social distancing, hand sanitizing, and temperature taking," said freshman Drew Kapsak.

Despite the precautions SLUH is taking, Alvarado, O'Neil, and Sharp feel that it is unsafe to be returning to school when there are so many people in the St. Louis area who have contracted the virus.

"I feel unsafe because of the lack of testing in this country," said Alvarado. "I live in a zip code where cases have been high and could be an asymptomatic carrier of the virus, but there is no way of knowing. No amount of leadership at the school level can make up for the lack of leadership at the state and federal levels."

"I feel unsafe about returning to SLUH because it is unsafe, but I am not fearful of going to school because I think I can maintain the protocols necessary," said O'Neil. "Over the past six months, we understand clearly that indoor spaces with larger groups of people are unsafe. We also know that virus cases have been going up with high school students even before school started. I don't think there is much more the school could do to make the building more secure, except keep everyone at home. That is the only truly safe way for school to happen until a vaccine."

"I feel unsafe because I've been watching my classmates violate most state guidelines to hang out with each other all summer long," said Sharp. "I do not trust the student body to uphold the basic standards we need to set in order to keep the virus from spreading. Until there is a real end in sight to the pandemic I don't feel that it's worth going back to school."

Both Alvarado and O'Neil expressed concern in how the school is handling things and in teaching students in-person despite the risk of catching COVID.

"What worries me is teaching in a hybrid environment as it will increase both the amount of multitasking I must do and the risk of catching the virus," said Alvarado. "My hope is that being 'in person' with my students (masks and social distancing notwithstanding) will make it all worthwhile."

"The unfortunate reality throughout this pandemic is that SLUH, like all schools, have been given very poor options because of behaviors by the community," said O'Neil. "As much as we would like to have school be safe for everyone, we cannot guarantee this no matter what changes SLUH makes because we have no evidence that our community (locally or regionally)

can maintain the vigilance of health care professionals to wear masks, hand wash frequently, and maintain social distance."

For now, SLUH will be continuing with its current plan for both distance learning and in-person learning with possible changes to come as the administration observes the effectiveness of the system over time.

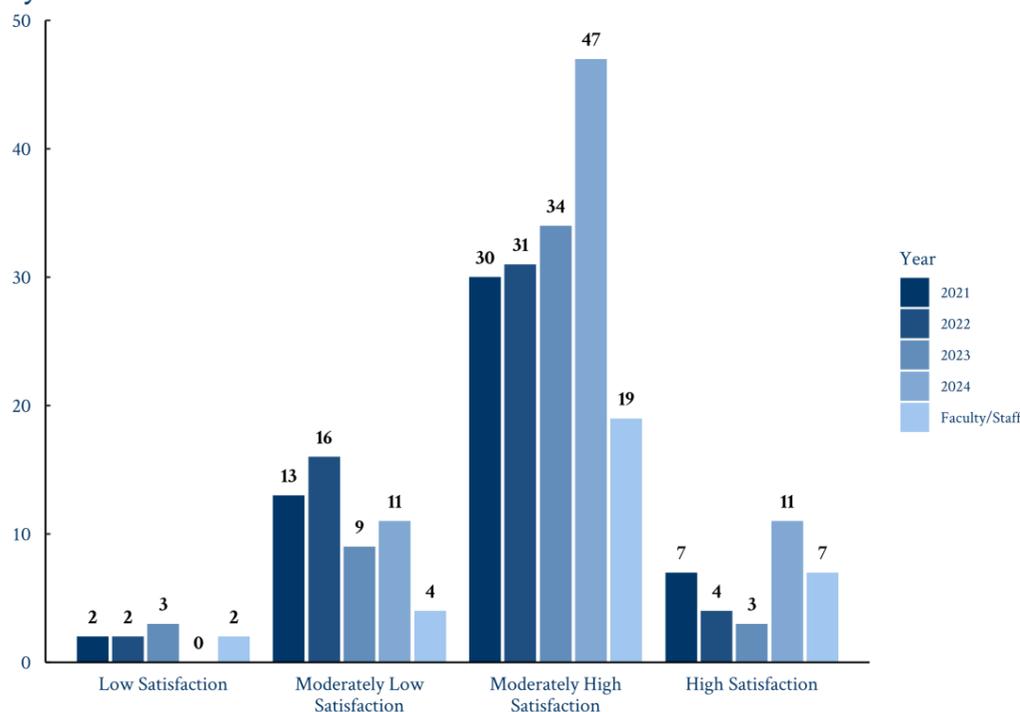
The official numbers from the poll are as follows:

-Concerning satisfaction with distance-learning: 9 people reported low satisfaction, 53 people reported moderately low satisfaction, 161 reported moderately high satisfaction, 23 reported high satisfaction;
-Concerning satisfaction in comparison to last year:

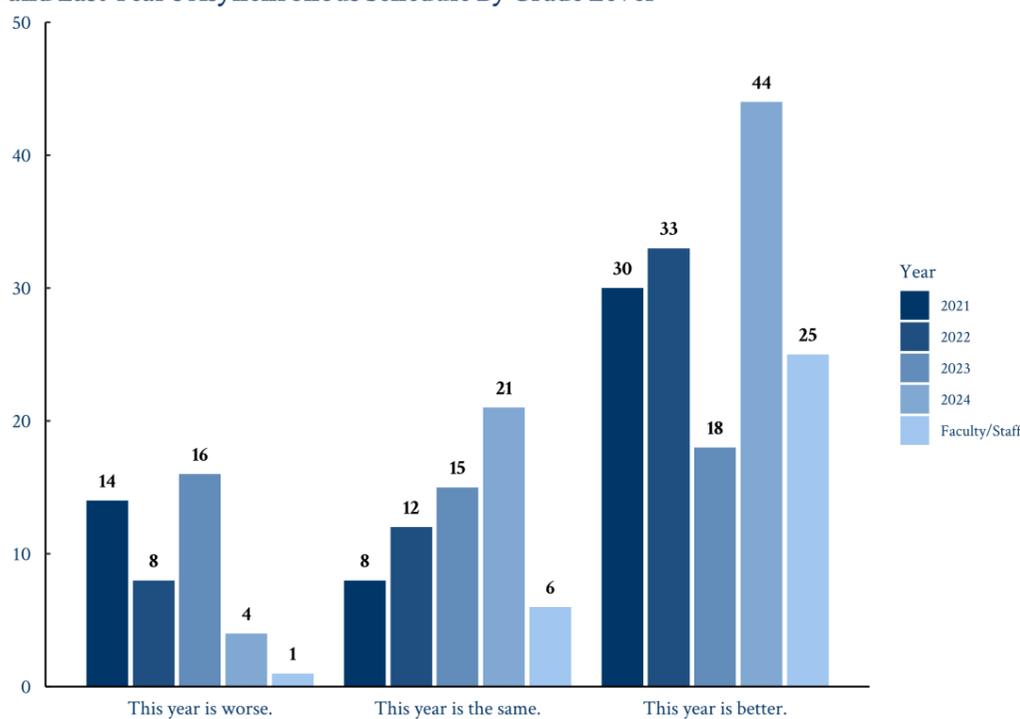
43 reported this year being worse, 62 reported this year being the same, 150 reported this year being better;

-Concerning student safety in regards to in-person learning: 5 reported feeling completely unsafe, 19 reported feeling moderately unsafe, 107 reported feeling moderately safe, and 124 reported feeling completely safe.

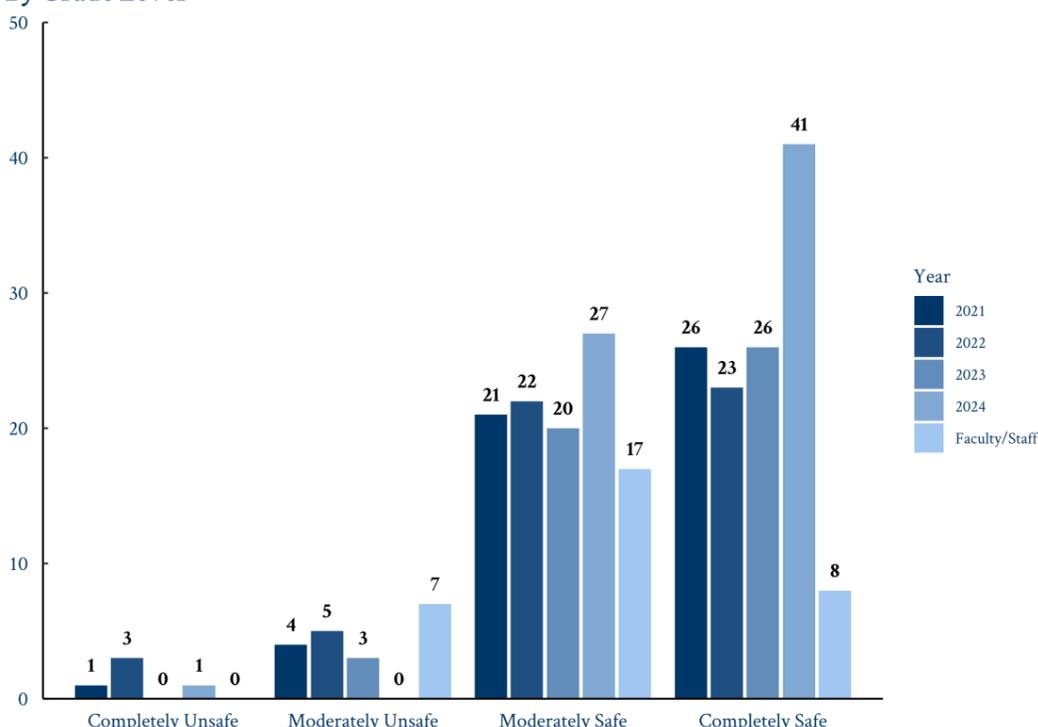
Satisfaction with the Completely Virtual Synchronous/Block/Faber Day Schedule By Grade Level



Comparing This Year's Completely Virtual Synchronous/Block/Faber Day Schedule and Last Year's Asynchronous Schedule By Grade Level



Level of Safety Regarding SLUH's Social-distance Policies and Hybrid Structure By Grade Level



—Graphs courtesy of Kate Hannick

Julie Devoti, Advancement Project Assistant



photo | Kathy Chott

BY JACKSON COOPER
REPORTER

Although perhaps originally motivated by them, it is far more than family ties that brings new Advancement Project Assistant Julie Devoti to St. Louis U. High.

Devoti's resume consists of over two decades of experience in Human Resources, a field that allowed her to work with many different groups of people. In addition, she has also been involved in numerous volunteer opportunities, such as organizing the St. Gabriel's school auc-

tion.

"In many ways it was my extracurricular activities that qualified me more (for the job)," said Devoti.

Devoti's first experience with SLUH was during the application and admissions process of her son, sophomore Nick Devoti. In her first year as a SLUH parent, she spared no time in involving herself in Cashbah, where she was on the team that helped raise \$1.2 million during the virtual event last May.

It was Devoti's role in Cashbah that caught the attention of

Director of Advancement Sean Agniel, '96.

"We are so grateful that she contributed so generously last year (to Cashbah)," Agniel said.

When looking for someone to fill an assistant role in the Advancement Department, Agniel looked to Devoti. Devoti's history of volunteer work made her a prime candidate for a job in Advancement, which organizes events such as reunions, golf tournaments, and, of course, the ever-important Cashbah. Devoti herself will be responsible for supporting and

helping organize those events, as well as processing donations to the school.

Agniel hopes Devoti can bring some organization to the department, along with her strong passion for the department's mission. In preparation for her new role, Devoti has also taken a closer look at Jesuit philosophy, which has only further piqued her interest.

"The Jesuit philosophy was very similar to a management philosophy that I had consulted on as an H.R. person," said Devoti.

Ryan Doyle, Digital Media Specialist



photo | Kathy Chott

BY NOAH APRILL-SOKOL AND
MICHAEL ROBINSON
NEWS EDITOR, REPORTER

St. Louis U. High welcomes Ryan Doyle to the community as he works as the Digital Media Specialist, a new position that was created to further with SLUH's goal of having a stronger media presence.

Doyle grew up in St. Louis

and attended another Jesuit high school in the area: De Smet. He graduated from there in 2011, and then attended University of Missouri in Columbia where he studied a variety of things.

"I double majored in English and Film," said Doyle. "Creative writing was my emphasis for English, and then I studied literature as well. Film produc-

tion was also my emphasis along with general film studies."

Doyle never thought that he was going to be a teacher or work at a school, but after graduating a semester early in the fall of 2014, he began substituting at a Catholic school in Columbia called Father Tolton High School. He decided to enroll in a teacher training program, and then spent a year with the Alum Service Corps where he taught at Regis High School, in Colorado.

"I never knew that I was going to be a teacher," said Doyle. "It just kind of fell into place.

Doyle returned to St. Louis in the Fall of 2016 to teach English at Villa Duchesne High School, where he spent four years. He also tapped into his skills in film and media to help moderate Villa's film and media club.

"Duchesne's club was a lot more narrative film oriented,"

said Doyle. "Each spring, we did a film production, which is sort of like a play. The students would come up with an idea and write a script. They would cast it, and then after school we would film it and edit it."

Doyle was drawn to SLUH because of the Jesuit ideals that were introduced to him during his high school years and later reasserted into his life when he was a ASC.

"(De Smet) instilled me with that initial Jesuit identity. Much of my identity is tied to that (the Jesuit philosophy)," said Doyle. "Then, when at Regis, it further grew upon those beliefs from high school. I also appreciated the rigor at Jesuit institutions, where there are students who are driven to excel and grow in the things that they are interested in."

Doyle's role at SLUH is multifaceted. He plans to be involved with the school's administration, working with Di-

rector of Communication Ben DuMont and with SLUH's admissions team. He will also be engaged with the student body doing media and film work.

"I work in the communications department, and so I have three main domains of responsibility," said Doyle. "One is working on the SLUH website and doing stuff with social media, such as updating the pages or posting something on Facebook or Instagram. I am also going to be doing video production for the school and helping with advancement campaigns, which is largely for the admissions and advancement departments. SLUH student media is going to be my third responsibility."

For Doyle, he is really excited about moderating SLUH's student media club.

"There are a lot of things that I am really excited about, especially working with SLUH student media," said Doyle. "I am really looking forward to

working with them and to see what projects they are interested in and what they want to know and want to learn."

Doyle hopes that he will be a strong mentor to his students in SLUH student media, helping them thrive and grow. He also hopes to start another club focused on narrative film production, where he plans to have the students produce short films.

"In regards to SLUH student media, my goal is to really just be an advisor for the students and embrace the student-centric approach that the school is trying to promote," said Doyle. "I would also like to see if any students would like to be interested in starting a new club to make narrative films."

Doyle is excited for the year ahead.

"I just am really grateful to be here at SLUH, and I'm really looking forward to continuing working with all the students, and faculty, and staff on a lot of

Giuseppe Vitellaro, Media and Communications



photo | Kathy Chott

BY CARTER J. FORTMAN AND
JACK JANSON
EDITOR IN CHIEF,
REPORTER

As the school year gets underway, St. Louis U. High welcomes back Giuseppe Vitellaro, '15 as a part of the Alum

Service Corps (ASC) who will be joining the newly expanded communications department. Vitellaro hopes to use this year to immerse himself in campus ministry, help the *Prep News*, and potentially help moderate the SLUH Media Group, all

while he discerns his next steps in life.

Over the course of his student career at SLUH, Vitellaro's fascination with film manifested into a passion.

"I was really interested in film," said Vitellaro. "I knew I wanted to do movies."

After a year at Missouri S&T, he felt engineering was not the right fit for him, so he transferred to UMSL, where he majored in Media Studies.

When Vitellaro was a junior at SLUH, Tim Moore, then in his first stint, helped him generate a passion for theatre tech, and when Moore moved to Chaminate for a bit, Vitellaro followed. It was then Vitellaro got his foot in the door of the industry.

"I met a whole bunch of people who work in St Louis and

who were established," said Vitellaro.

Vitellaro has worked all around the city, including venues like the Kranzberg Arts Foundation, the Grandel Theater, and STL TV, the city government's public access station. He also worked as an audio engineer and stagehand at these various venues.

After receiving a letter suggesting he consider the ASC program, Vitellaro kept the idea of a year of service to a Jesuit school in the back of his head as he worked the entertainment scene around the city. And after about a year of work, Vitellaro realized what he was doing didn't feel right, so he decided to apply for the position.

"SLUH High was very important in my formation, and I

believe in the mission of SLUH," said Vitellaro. "I want to give back to SLUH, and ASC was one way to do it."

While much of Vitellaro's job will be in communications, he is looking forward to student interactions via clubs and his heavy involvement in Campus Ministry. However, he is also hoping this year will provide him with the time he needs to discern what he wants to do with the rest of his career.

"Selfishly, I see it as a chance to take a year and just think about what I want to do next and have a good time."

Vitellaro's supervisor, Director of Communication Ben DuMont, is excited to have Vitellaro as one of his two new staffers.

"This is the first year we're

gonna have more than one person in that department. It consists of Giuseppe as well as a new digital media specialist: Ryan Doyle," said DuMont. "It's really exciting to have a full team to work with."

Vitellaro is bringing a unique skill set to the communications department. Because of his interest in podcasts, Vitellaro will be helping Assistant Principal for Mission Jim Linhares on his podcast, *Insignis*, among other media- and theatre-related activities.

"Giuseppe brings valuable experience to communications," said DuMont. "He's really passionate about what he does and we're just really grateful to have him as part of our communications team at SLUH."

Sam Glass, Athletics



photo | Kathy Chott

BY LUKE DUFFY AND
DECLAN RICHARDS
STAFF REPORTER

Like many Americans, Sam Glass had to adjust his career plans during the COVID-19 pandemic. He made

his way to St. Louis U. High through the Alum Service Corps and will be helping the Athletics Department this year.

While most ASC volunteers teach academic classes, Glass's position will be some-

what different. Thanks to his background working at Vetta Sports for four years and studying Sports Business in college, Glass is doing his service in the Athletics Department rather than the classroom.

Glass's journey toward athletics management actually started during his high school years at De Smet. When a knee injury prohibited him from playing sports junior year, he started doing sports broadcasting, which turned into a passion.

"If I hadn't done sports broadcasting, I probably would've just played sports, and then called it at college and gone on to study something else," Glass said.

He continued to do sports broadcasting throughout col-

lege, where he majored in Communications and minored in Sports Business and Management. Along with his studies, he also worked at Vetta Sports as a camp counselor and a coach. When he was no longer needed there due to COVID-19, Glass turned to the ASC program.

"My twin brother had already been accepted into the Alum Service Corps, and it was something that I was thinking about for the future," Glass said. "I ended up just applying because my brother told me they were still accepting applications."

He was accepted into the Alum Service Corps and found out there was a position open at SLUH. He met with Athletic Director Chris Muskopf and

realized it was the perfect fit.

During his time at SLUH, Glass will be helping with administrative programs including the Captains Leadership Program and the Student Athlete Chaplains Program. In terms of his day-to-day responsibilities, he'll be doing a variety of tasks for the administration.

"He's going to be put in places where he's needed, and it could be different on Monday than it is on Tuesday than it is on Thursday or Friday," Muskopf said.

While it's unlikely that Glass will spend much time in the classroom this year, freshmen will get to work with him in their P.E. classes.

"I am not in a classroom per se, but I am assisting Mr.

Zarrick with some of his P.E. classes, so we kind of joined those together because they needed some help with that," said Glass.

Apart from the duties Glass is taking on at SLUH, his main focus is to connect his faith to his passion for athletics. With the COVID-19 pandemic causing a lot of confusion and stress in the SLUH community, it will be beneficial to have an ASC to work towards this idea.

"With Mr. Glass here, and his strongly rooted faith, he's interested in helping build that bridge of faith-based activity being part of athletics as well, which as a school we obviously feel is very important," Muskopf said.

Online start to year not normal, but hopeful

(continued from page 1)

Yet even through all the differences, SLUH students were enthusiastic.

"I was a little apprehensive at first because they had taken away so many parts of school that me and my classmates really enjoyed, but I was overall pretty excited," said Student Body President John Browdy. "There were a lot of classes I was looking forward to."

Prior to the momentous first day, students were welcomed back to campus in limited numbers for freshman Direction Days and class orientations. Both events featured a heavy emphasis on health, safety, and the overall excitement to be back in the building. For the first time since March, students got to interact with their classmates, an opportunity which Junior Class President AJ Thompson cherished.

"It was incredible, I was

lucky enough to walk around and talk to a lot of people," said Thompson. "I realized how much I missed everybody."

After months of relative isolation from the SLUH community, though, students were not the only ones desperate for a return. Campus Minister Stephen Deves watched the empty hallways from his office for the entire fourth quarter, so naturally, when they buzzed with energy again, he was excited.

"It was so much fun," said Deves. "It was so lifegiving to see students on campus. I think any teacher who was here would say that (Direction Days) was such an energizing day."

Principal Ian Gibbons, S.J., who worked diligently over the summer with faculty members to create the procedure for the start of school, agreed.

"It was tremendous to be able to see and hear students being back in the building," Gibbons said. "We're very ex-

cited."

For students and faculty members alike, these beginning of the year events, which normally are taken for granted, held much more weight this year. They represented a renewal of the SLUH community, which had been out of the building since March, and created hope that things may eventually return to the way they were with students and teachers collaborating back on campus.

For Gibbons, this hope and optimism will be crucial during these next months.

"There is so much confusion and anxiety and things we just don't know. We can get very much caught up in these cycles of despair," said Gibbons. "For us to recover a community of brotherhood, (optimism) is a huge step for that."

As far as hopeful thoughts go, the idea of being back on Oakland Avenue on Sept. 10 is an especially enticing one, perhaps even more so now

than in years past.

"As humans, and as Jr. Bills, we need connection," said Browdy. "I think being back on campus will be therapeutic for so many students."

However, new safety procedures, like masks and single-direction hallways, will also accompany the Sept. 10 start, procedures that are unfamiliar to freshmen and seniors alike.

"(The new procedures are not) normal, but it's a step towards normalization," said SLUH president Alan Carruthers. "All of these things help move us towards a healthier, more holistic experience of each other and of our community and that is hugely valuable."

Until the in-person start, though, students will have to settle for synchronous learning on Zoom, which, for Carruthers, will be an essential part of maintaining the SLUH community.

"Our community needs connectedness, that real time experience ... and a sense of

collaborative effort," said Carruthers. "I think that synchronous learning doesn't give us normalcy, but it does give us more sense of ... social and emotional connectivity."

Overall, the Aug. 20 start and the class orientations that preceded it showed much more than just an excitement to return to school. It showed the resilience of the 200-year strong SLUH community and proved that even a global pandemic can't stop the passion that students, alumni, faculty, teachers, and families all feel for St. Louis University High.

"Community is essential to our school," said Gibbons. "People are voluntarily and very enthusiastically wanting to be a part of the SLUH experience and it shows with the very high numbers of students and families that want to be back on campus again."

"I think it shows how tight we are, that we were able to come back (to school) and pick up where we left off," said Thompson. "Yeah we had

masks on, yeah we had to stay six feet apart ... but we still had a good time."

"This community is still living and still vibrant," reflected Carruthers. "We're still able to pursue our mission of forming young men."

This year will be different, that much is clear. Both Deves and Carruthers encouraged people to return in a spirit of gratitude.

"The best way to realize the blessings you have and the things you take for granted are to not have those things," said Deves. "One thing I hope we walk away with, when all of this is over, is just remembering how blessed we are to be surrounded by the people that we are. God is at work every single day in this community of people, this community of brothers."

"As Christians, we seek ... hope filled moments because that's the energy that's going to build the kingdom of God," said Carruthers.

NEW SLUH PHOTO SPREAD



Athletic Director Chris Muskopf (left) checks the temperatures of incoming athletes.



ASC Sam Glass (right) surveys a student-athlete prior to practice.



Mr. Tom Wilson (left) has the hand sanitizer.



All faculty / staff measure their temperature at this station before entering the building.



Tech team Jeremy Griggs (left) and Jonathan Dickmann (right) install a microphone.



New stickers direct hallway traffic in passing periods.



Si Commons: socially distanced edition.



Art teacher Joan Bugnitz teaches freshmen Drawing I.

Compiled by Mr. Giuseppe Vitellaro

Around the Hallways

Dress Code Changes

The administration will allow students to wear hoodies and tennis shoes this year. This is one of the many changes being implemented this school year due to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since masks are required to be worn by students at all times, the school wanted students to feel a little more comfortable in the new situation. Hoodies will have to be St. Louis U. High merch or be

a plain color, and tennis shoes will not be allowed on formal dress days.

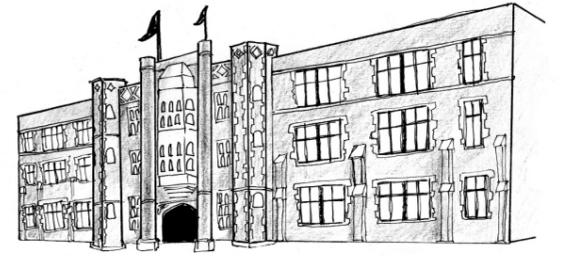
Sophomore Service

Previously being centered around presence to those in need, Sophomore Service this year will be a bit different to accommodate COVID-19 social distancing regulations. Instead of labeling the service experience "Service of Presence," as it had been in previous years,

Campus Ministry is calling it "Good Deeds or Acts of Service." The hour requirement is the same this year: 10 hours required, 18 for National Honors Society. Pre-approved sites this year include virtual tutoring, Team Activities for Special Kids (TASK), and Habitat for Humanity. There are also many new options, including mowing a neighbor's lawn, planting and tending to a backyard garden, and going grocery shopping for a neighbor. Any sophomores who are seeking further information can contact Campus Minister Simonie Anzalone at sanzalone@sluh.org.

AMDG Spirituality

SLUH's Ignatian Spirituality for Parents is back, but virtual! The AMDG Spirituality gatherings are a series of speaker-led discussions with the purpose of educating parents in Ignatian Spirituality and deepening their faith lives. SLUH Director of Advancement Sean Agniel, '96 will lead the first virtual gathering for parents this Thursday, Sept 3. The theme of this first meeting is "Sharing in the Mission of Christ." Agniel will talk about St. Ignatius' Call of



the King meditation, as well as provide the parents with a meditation to help center themselves during this hectic time. He also hopes that this will be a way for SLUH parents to meet other parents in

the SLUH community. Parents can contact Agniel with questions at amdg@sluh.org.

—Compiled by
Luke Duffy and
Noah Apprill-Sokol

Sports enter phase two: teams continue with hopes of competitions

(continued from page 1)

Cross country, along with swimming and diving have been classified as "low frequency" sports.

Every sport, regardless of their classifications, all have required phases that they have to complete before local competition can begin again. For each classification, there are six phases. The first phase allows for just 10 coaches and athletes in total to meet, and masks have to be worn at all times with the exception being the occurrence of "vigorous physical contact."

The second phase allows for 20 athletes and coaches (in total) to be present at practice. For high frequency sports like football and soccer, phase two enables limited practices that can include contact-heavy drills. For low frequency sports, Phase 2 enables full practices, scrimmages, and competitions against other teams located in the St. Louis region.

Phase 3 will enable the low frequency sports to resume competition, but the high frequency sports will have to wait until they've completed their fifth phase. The only difference between the changes that will take place between the high frequency and low frequency sports in the progression through the phases is that the low frequency sports will be progressing at a much faster rate, with each new phase allowing for a rapid return. For high frequency sports, the changes will be much slower and more cautious.

As of today, all four of SLUH's fall sports programs have initiated (but not completed) the second phase assigned by the Sports Medicine Task Force. Seeing that the low

frequency sports like cross country and swimming and diving only have one phase left to complete, it isn't unreasonable to assume that cross country and swimming might resume local competition prior to football and soccer.

Initially, the implementation of Phase 1 dealt some of the most restrictive regulations specifically to soccer because they weren't able to use a ball in practice for the first week. The team has trainers on site for every practice, and three coaches are generally present at varsity practices. The first week of practice consisted of conditioning drills for the team; players worked on long distance, agility, and full body drills.

"Practicing without a ball was frustrating for me and many others," said senior Tilahun Murphy. "We just put in any kind of work that we were allowed to."

The team is not allowed to participate in any kind of scrimmage or game according to Phase 2 rules for high frequency sports. Although scrimmages aren't possible right now, the implementation of Phase 2 for the soccer team allowed the return of soccer balls to practice, which is a major victory for the players.

Murphy is optimistic about the progress that the team has made so far. "Slowly, we are getting there, and I'm looking forward to every new step towards our season," he said.

O'Connell is still very uncertain about the team's future. "We have no idea when the environment will be appropriate for a tryout at the very least," he said.

The new practice style has been challenging for the players, but they've tried to

make the most of the extra time they have received.

"It's been tough," said senior Jack Rudder. "We mostly run and do core work, but the guys have worked hard through it all."

There has been speculation that soccer will start in October if all goes according to plan, but that is by no means set in stone.

The other high frequency fall sport is football. SLUH's football is currently practicing under strict rules, but began practicing with less restrictive rules than those that the soccer team has to abide by.

The biggest difference between the two sports is that the football team was allowed to practice with footballs for the first week on a play-to-play basis, and the team has had to be meticulous about sanitation. After a ball is touched or used, it has to be sanitized before it can be reused. The same goes for any equipment that is used.

Also, the football team has spatially distanced out its practice setup, placing the different units that make up the team in different corners of the field (the offensive line is practicing in one corner while the linebackers and the defensive backs do drills in another corner, for example). The football team, like soccer, has members of the training staff on site at all times, and hasn't had any scares yet.

When asked about the adjusted practice routines, varsity head coach Mike Jones said, "I think we have been doing a pretty good job of making sure our kids are safe and keeping our social distancing and making sure that we can keep playing."

"Coach Jones and the coaching staff have done a great job of keeping the spirit

of the team high through this adversity," said senior wide receiver Jack McClelland. "They have continuously said that the team that takes the most advantage of the time they have together during the quarantine is the team that will come out on top in the end."

The coaching staff is speculating that the football start date will also be in October, though nothing is certain.

Next on the list for fall sports is cross country, which is classified as a low risk sport because long-distance running doesn't involve as much physical contact as sports like football or soccer. However, the team is still operating without competing in meets or intrasquad scrimmages, per Phase 2 rules.

When asked about adjusting to COVID-19, varsity head coach Joe Porter said, "We're actually doing more than the restrictions that have been put in place for us. Cross Country is listed as a low contact sport so that doesn't have as many restrictions as soccer or football, where there's more contact."

Even though there isn't as much physical contact in cross country, Porter is still taking heavy precautions to make sure that the team isn't going to go out as a whole if one runner catches the virus. "We're still limiting ourselves to groups of less than 20 at any given time," said Porter. "This will make it easier for contact tracing, so should someone test positive in one of our training groups, we would shut down the specific group and not the entire team."

The impacts of the regulations aren't strictly physical.

"There's definitely a social aspect of practice that guys used to enjoy but that isn't

going to happen here," noted Porter. "We are trying to be as smart as we can with keeping our groups separate, and encourage the usage of masks when they're not being active."

This social distancing quite literally has produced a different feel for the team so far.

"Group training has taken a bit of adjustment," said senior Hayden Zenor. "In years past, the whole team would warm up, do drills, and stretch together. Now, we hardly interact with other groups of runners."

Since it is considered a low risk sport, cross country will be aiming to start competition in September.

The last fall sport, swimming and diving, is also considered low risk. The team is, like the other three fall sports programs, in Phase 2. The team is allowed to host full practices, and can have intrasquad scrimmages. The only thing they cannot do is enter local competition, which will begin when Phase 3 is initiated. The team officially started practicing on Aug. 24, and, like cross country, is hoping to begin competition in September.

Despite swimming and diving being considered a low frequency sport, varsity head coach Lindsey Ehret has had to adapt to a lot of changes that COVID has caused that aren't within the bounds of the regulations. The obstacles that COVID has brought to the swimming team outside of the regulations have been abundant.

"We were told that we would not be able to use the Forest Park Community College pool, which is tough on our freshman and sophomores who can't drive," said Ehret. "We now have to practice at

Villa and Chaminade. Villa's pool is only a four-lane 20-yard pool, as compared to the six-lane 25-yard pool we're used to practicing in. It has been particularly challenging because we don't have our own facility. We have four different practices to accommodate the size of our team."

When asked about the changes in practice, Ehret mentioned, "Normally, everyone stays at one end, but now we have to spread our swimmers out within each lane. This makes it really hard to communicate because they can't hear or see me that well and the fact that pools are loud in general only escalates that challenge," said Ehret. "There's a lot of policing that goes on from an adult perspective because the kids have to come in wearing masks and have to put them back on after getting out of the water, which just isn't natural." There are speculations that swimming hopes to start competing in September, but as with every other sport, these speculations are by no means certain or concrete.

The world of sports is ever changing, and there are still a ton of uncertainties about the season that lies ahead for each of SLUH's fall sports programs. Sports are a huge part of the student community, and it is amazing that there is even a chance that they will be back.

As Kerri Walsh Jennings, a three-time Olympic Gold Medalist for beach volleyball once said, "It's going to be a journey. It's not a sprint to get in shape." SLUH's sports world is full of uncertainties, but one thing we can be certain about is that coexisting with COVID-19 is going to take time and endurance from our sporting programs.

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