There they were, in a place where not many recognized them and those that did were surprised to see them. Instead of waiting for ESPN to flash the score on the bottom of the screen, seniors Ted Lombardi and Ryan Hayward found themselves courtside on press row at the Women's NCAA tournament last year; some may argue the culmination of all their hard work and dedication. But backup. Three years ago, neither of these two could have imagined that they would be broadcasting the Lady Crusaders over the radio, much less on location during March Madness, with a full staff and state of the art equipment.

Fall back to 1997. Both Lombardi and Hayward, never once having met each other, checked their email one afternoon and found a letter asking people to join Holy Cross' own WCHC Sports Department. What they were unaware of was that they would be the two only ones left to run the department; however, they wisely accepted the long task ahead of them. "We had to basically take over the department after the director quit," said Hayward. "We had hoped to begin this and ease our way into it, but instead four months later we were thrown into it."

With the little experience they brought to the table, the broadcasters were forced to battle extremely old and unreliable equipment. "I think our old equipment dated back to 1956," commented Hayward. "We had to do one game where everything just failed. Ted and I ended up grabbing two of the tan Holy Cross phones and doing the game through them with a splitter from the press box." A low budget and little experience when we have to be, when we can afford to be. "We had to basically learn as we went along," said Hayward. They struggled on to gaining access to new equipment. Understaffed, underappreciated, Lombardi and Hayward crawled into their sophomore year. "Ending our first year, there was a huge hole where it felt like nothing was getting done, but we hoped to change that our second year," said Hayward. They plugged on and the once limited schedule of games covered began to evolve. "We took on the whole Football and Women's Basketball slate, a few of the Men's Basketball games, and began adding hockey games," added Lombardi. An expansion in coverage called for an expansion in staff and saw the addition of six experienced people to the once depleted task force. The end of the year culminated in championship broadcasts away from the home base of Holy Cross. These matches included the Hockey MAAC Championship at Canisius, as well as the Patriot League Tournament over a web link.

As Sports Directors of WCHC, Lombardi and Hayward brought their team to an entirely different level, essentially building from the ground up. WCHC hired a full staff, covered the full schedules of the Men and Women's Basketball teams, the football season in its entirety as well as numerous Hockey games. As the road to success continued, Hayward and Lombardi's relationship grew tighter as well. "We began covering more and more road games which was great because our budget was growing. It also bonded us closer together," said Lombardi. "We're basically at the point where we can finish each other's sentences and make any situation fit." "We work well together," added Hayward. "We are serious when we have to be, when games get big, but we also loosen up and have fun when they get out of hand. It's kind of difficult to work with anyone else now."

With the fattened schedule and addition of road trips, it was only inevitable that their budget would eventually grow. "I promised me that we would make things plenty easier, between teams were playing well which has been a great way to bring our listeners to tune in and see we were down two at the half. It was incredible to see us growing from a pop to our department to a respectable organization." "Rutgers was a huge boost for the station," added Lombardi. "We knew we had arrived at that game. It was our first taste of the big time. It was great to look around and see ESPN, The Boston Globe, and people that I had interned for surprised to see us there."

As seniors, they have created a legacy. They now boast not only an extensive home schedule, but also one that now includes road games as well. Beginning in the Fall, working closely with the Athletic Department, WCHC took to the road with the football team, basketball team, and more importantly both NCAA Tournaments. "This has been a great way to bring our listeners to tune in and see us there."

The two will leave behind a fully flourishing and functional radio station that not only broadcasts games, but also holds time slots each night for sports talk shows. They have inspired many, including Crusader Sports Co-Editor Kate Barker who will assume the Sports Director position after this year with fellow Crusader Sports Co-Editor Matt Chmura.

"I met Teddy my freshman year at Holy Cross," said Barker. "When I told him that I was interested in sports journalism, he promised me that we would make something out of WCHC sports. He was right. I just can't believe how far it has come. From announcing a few home basketball games to this year being in New York broadcasting the NCAA tournament. It will be almost impossible to follow in their footsteps."

Leaving Holy Cross, Ryan is headed to Cornell for law school while Ted is in the process of applying for both TV and radio station positions. Both hope to continue their participation in the broadcasting industry. Both Ted and Ryan would like to thank the athletic department and staff that has worked with them so closely and helped build WCHC up to what it is today.

"This has been a memorable experience," concluded the two. "We feel that we have left potential for the further development and support of the station with the staff we are leaving behind."

WCHC has evolved from a once almost lost cause heard at the sites of a few home football games, to a professional broadcasting network sitting courtside at the largest of college tournaments.