



PEYTON MCKENZIE/CHRONICLE

# QU to offer discounted tuition for local city employees

By **KRYSTAL MILLER**  
 Associate News Editor

Quinnipiac University signed a three-year tuition agreement with the towns of Hamden and North Haven, which will allow full-time town employees and their families to get discounted tuition.

According to a March 29 university press release, all employees, as well as their spouses and any dependents under the age of 25, are eligible for the discount by applying through the regular admissions process.

Applicants qualify for 30% off a full-time, on-campus degree. A 10% discount can also be applied to online undergraduate and graduate programs as well as both virtual and on-campus high school summer academic programs. If the applicant qualifies for a more generous award or discount, it will override and replace the discount.

Bethany Zemba, vice president for strategy and community relations and chief of staff at Quinnipiac, said the Hamden Police Department reached out to university officials about the prospect of a tuition discount program.

Zemba said the department wanted to implement the program to increase the number of police officers with access to continuing education. Hamden and North Haven have a special connection to Quinnipiac because of the campuses in each town, Zemba said.

“When they reached out to me, I thought, ‘Well, this is a fantastic idea,’” Zemba said. “We should be doing this, and so we crafted an agreement, and then along the way I thought, ‘Well, maybe we should think about going beyond the police department and expanding it to the other town employees,’ and so that’s what we ended up doing.”

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# Hamden mayoral candidate promises improved relationship with QU

By **KATIE LANGLEY and CAT MURPHY**

A week after announcing his intention to run for mayor of Hamden, Democrat Walter Morton IV kickstarted his primary campaign with a fundraiser at the Playwright Irish Pub in Hamden on March 31.

In an interview with the Chronicle, Morton spoke about reforming the relationship between the town of Hamden and Quinnipiac University, his pride in being a lifelong Hamdenite and how he hopes to improve public safety and town finances if elected mayor.

Morton, who has served as the finance and personnel chair of the Hamden Public School Board of Education for almost seven years, said his current role has given him an appreciation for budgeting that will help him tackle the town’s debt crisis, if elected.

The 31-year-old newcomer will face incumbent Mayor Lauren Garrett in the upcoming 2023 Democratic primary this fall.

“I’ve got a vision for Hamden,” Morton said. “I know what I want Hamden to be in the next decade. I know the steps that we need to take and also I’m very good at bringing people to the table to set aside their petty differences or politics.”

Morton currently works as the director of government and community affairs at Connecticut Energy Marketers Association, in addition to serving on the Army National Guard and Hamden School Board.

Morton, who graduated from Hamden

High School in 2009 before attending Pennsylvania State University, drew on his Hamden background during the event.

“I can connect and relate with (Hamden’s) folks on a different level and get what their concerns are and their issues and let them know that when they reach out to the town, they’re heard, they’re understood,” Morton said. “Regardless of where they fall on the political spectrum, or things like gender, race, sexuality, there’s a place for them here.”

As part of his vision for the town, Morton said he hopes to lower Hamden property taxes, which are among the highest in the state of Connecticut.

Morton also plans to direct attention to economic development and public safety in Hamden, he said.

The Hamden Police Department reported five murders, 15 non-fatal shootings, nearly 240 motor vehicle thefts and more than 1,200 larcenies in 2022.

“At the end of the day, people, businesses, families — they want to live in a safe community,” Morton said of his goal to create a strong relationship with Hamden law enforcement.

Morton also discussed his aim to improve the relationship between the town of Hamden and the university. Notably, some residents publicly disapproved of Quinnipiac’s South Quad project over concerns that it would cause environmental damage and un-

wanted development.

“I look at a lot of other municipalities around the state that have a college within their boundaries, and they tend to have a much healthier relationship,” Morton said. “(Town residents) kind of look at QU as a place that doesn’t pay taxes ... but I know that Quinnipiac has a lot more value to offer than that.”

Morton added that he hopes to empower Hamden businesses to engage with Quinnipiac students and graduates seeking employment prior to or following graduation.

“I need a lot of good people around me, and I need young folks,” Morton said. “I need bright folks, hard-working folks looking to cut their teeth and tap into some of that intellectual capital that’s there.”

Some Quinnipiac students who attended the fundraiser said they were hopeful about Morton’s plans to foster a better relationship between the university and the town.

“The town is generally frowning on the university,” said Paul Cappuzzo, a senior economics and political science double major and the president of the Quinnipiac Democrats. “It’s vitally important that we finally have an advocate.”

Nick Fizzano, a first-year political science major and the president-elect of the Quinnipiac Democrats, said he was also eager to see “more communication and more cooperation” from Hamden officials.

“I think we should be more involved in the town,” Fizzano said, noting that Quinnipiac students often feel disconnected from the town of Hamden. “I think the town, on that same page, should be more involved in Quinnipiac.”

Fizzano also expressed his enthusiasm about the prospect of a competitive Democratic primary in Hamden.

“Anytime there’s a competitive primary, we should all be really excited about that,” Fizzano said. “The more that we can confront our elected officials, and really give them an opportunity to show why they’re still best for our town for a community, that’s going to be an incredible thing.”

The town of Hamden, which had more debt per capita than any other Connecticut town in 2019, retained more than \$1.2 billion in debt in fiscal year 2021-2022, per the town’s most recent financial audit report.

Although Hamden’s total debt decreased by nearly \$60 million between FY 2020-2021 and FY 2021-2022, the town’s total liabilities exceeded its assets by more than \$960 million last year, according to the audit report.

“(It) isn’t so much that we have a spending problem, but we have a revenue problem,” Morton said. “We’ve got to bring new people into town to live here and we’ve got to bring new businesses in.”

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# QU community sends men's hockey off to the Frozen Four

By **MICHAEL LAROCCA**  
Opinion Editor

Quinnipiac University held a pep rally on the steps of the Arnold Bernhard Library on Monday to bid the men's ice hockey team farewell as they travel to Tampa, Florida, to compete in the NCAA Men's Frozen Four.

Performances from the university's dance team preceded speeches from President Judy Olian, Student Government Association President Owenea Roberts, men's hockey head coach Rand Pecknold, Director of Athletics Greg Amodio and team captain Zach Metsa.

Once the event concluded, members of the team used T-shirt cannons to shower the hun-

dreds of fans in attendance with team apparel. Although some in attendance said they appreciated the spectacle, others felt the occasion also deserved more dramatics.

"Having pep rallies in high school — it's just different," said Paige Pezzella, a junior English and media studies double major. "It just felt like, 'Oh, we're gonna invite the hockey team and we're gonna send them off,' and then that's kind of it."

The well-attended event was nevertheless a respectful show of support for the team as it heads to Tampa to play its most important game since the 2016 National Championship.



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### TUITION from cover

The university took several months to plan the agreement and had the general counsel's office and the town halls review the documents, Zemba said. The agreement is for three years, but Quinnipiac officials will reevaluate the details and add any improvements if they decide to continue it.

"We are always looking for ways to connect with the local community, and to be a resource to that community, and the door is open for ideas and for collaboration," Zemba said.

Hamden Mayor Lauren Garrett said she worked with Zemba to finalize the details of the tuition discount program, adding that she was grateful that Quinnipiac allowed town employees to take advantage of the discount.

"I think that this will be really great for our employees if they would like to continue their education and it allows for them to be better employees, better teachers, better

engineers," Garrett said.

Garrett noted that she would support Quinnipiac if it expands the program beyond three years.

"I do think that this is a huge benefit for Hamden and North Haven and all the students that are able to attend Quinnipiac," Garrett said. "This really helps us to cultivate our employees and I think that with partnering with Quinnipiac we are really showing that the Hamden government as well as Quinnipiac are truly connected."

North Haven First Selectman Michael Freda said he worked directly with Zemba and President Judy Olian in embracing the idea of the agreement.

"I think it's going to be greatly appreciated and widely accepted by our employees who have children who are either entering college or in college," Freda said.

Freda said he anticipates being sent the finalized agreement by the university as soon as

next week, and will send it out immediately. The document will include the process of how to apply for the discounted tuition. There is no current estimate about how many people will apply to this form, Freda said.

"What we did was we provided the numbers of employees we have and this program will go out to all the employees and then at that point, we'll have a better idea," Freda said. "Once we see responses, as to how many may be interested."

Freda said Quinnipiac had reached out to him wanting a way to give back to the community in North Haven through this discounted tuition agreement.

"For as long as I've been in office, Quinnipiac continues to give back to our community in terms of funding for various projects, in terms of support for our seniors and helping our veterans and also now with this tuition discount program, and are very grateful for their efforts, the university's efforts," Freda said.

# Department of Cultural and Global Engagement hosts event to encourage female entrepreneurship

By LILY PHILIPCAK

Staff Writer

Quinnipiac University's Department of Cultural and Global Engagement held an inclusive conversation on women in entrepreneurship amid Women's History Month on March 29 to empower women with business ideas to step into the industry.

The conversation was facilitated by Patricia Luoma, director for the M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and professor of entrepreneurship and strategy, and Tuvana Rua, associate professor of management.

Luoma began by asking attendants to name an entrepreneur and a small business.

Very few attendants named entrepreneurs that were women, and those that did named well-known celebrities like Oprah Winfrey, Rihanna and Kim Kardashian. When asked why attendants listed mainly male entrepreneurs, some suggested it was because most entrepreneurs are men.

Luoma's presentation defined an entrepreneur as a person who organizes and operates a business taking on greater than normal financial risks to do so. A small business owner typically starts a business within their local community to provide a service to a specific target audience.

"A lot of male entrepreneurs go into entrepreneurship because they are individualistic and they want to shine and they become the center of attention as a result of that," Rua said. "Women choose entrepreneurship for different reasons. Women are more social beings and are about elevating the group. As a result of that, they might not shine in the public eye as much as their male counterparts."

Women entrepreneurs tend to rely on themselves as most are self-employed. Females make up 82.5% of lone entrepreneurs — compared to 69.8% of males — and they are almost half as likely as men to have a partner, according to Al Bees.

Emotional intelligence and the amount of funding for their businesses are distinct differences between male and female entrepreneurs. Women entrepreneurs tend to have higher emotional intelligence but less funding than their male counterparts.

"Women lead with more emotional intelligence and they create better bonding with their subordinates," Rua said. "They are very much into coaching and mentoring so they have a growth mindset."

Globally, one-third of businesses are owned by women, according to the World Bank. 44% of women-owned businesses are childcare, beauty salons and home healthcare.

There are various push and pull factors that affect women's entrepreneurship and play a significant role in if they choose to become entrepreneurs. Push factors for women entrepreneurs are long hours, lack of flexibility with work-life balance and the level of expectation for perfectionism. Pull factors include the desire to be challenged, independence, a positive work environment, a flexible work schedule, higher earnings and the ability to balance work and family responsibilities.

Hewlett-Packard, an American informational technology company, made a discovery as to why there were not as many women in top management positions. According to Forbes, "Men are confident about their ability at 60%, but women don't feel confident until

they've checked off each item on the list."

The women at HP only applied for a promotion when they believed they met the full qualifications for the job that was listed, compared to men, who applied when they thought they could meet at least 60% of the job requirements. This explains why push factors deter women from entrepreneurship.

One of the common challenges that most entrepreneurs face is getting people to listen to their ideas and being taken seriously.

"Support yourself with like-minded people who are supportive to build a network and here at Quinnipiac we have access to a network of people that will be supportive of your ideas," Luoma said.

Many attendants had businesses or business ideas of their own. The Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship provides opportunities for students to learn more to develop their innovative and entrepreneurial potential.

Similar to previous inclusive conversations, the majority of attendants were women. Many students noted a lack of male presence and were not surprised.

"I think that even though it is for women that doesn't necessarily mean that only women need to attend," said Emma Gacek, a first-year public relations major. "I think that everything should be geared toward everyone, not just a specific group."



MICHAEL LARROCCA/CHRONICLE

Presenters challenged those who attended the inclusive conversation on March 29 to think of female entrepreneurs.

# Indigenous educator spreads awareness on generational struggles at QU

By JACKLYN PELLEGRINO and CHARLISE LEBRON

Quinnipiac University's Indigenous Student Union and Latino Cultural Society hosted an event with Indigenous educator and advocate Cliff Matias in the Carl Hansen Student Center Piazza on March 27 to discuss decolonizing education and the challenges Indigenous people face.

Matias, the cultural director at Redhawk Native American Arts Council and international president of REDRUM Motorcycle Club discussed the significance behind holidays with Indigenous roots, acknowledging land rights and the impact of Indigenous mascots in professional sports leagues such as the NFL.

"A lot of times it's politically correcting people, on Halloween when people are putting warbonnets on and dressing up as Native Americans, you got to step up and say, 'It's just not cool.' And they're like, 'Why?' and then you have to break that down," Matias said.

As an Indigenous person, Matias said he is always educating people because he gets asked questions such as, "Do you guys still live in teepees?"

Amada Arroyo, a junior 3+1 biochemistry and molecular cell biology double major and ISU vice president, said that Matias was chosen to speak at the event because his work focuses on decolonizing education.

Especially at a school named Quinnipiac, Arroyo said it's important for students to know the origin of the name.

"It really affects many students of color when people are ignorant or they ask you ignorant questions," Arroyo said. "It makes it even more exhausting for students so I hope people learn about the work that (Matias) does and decoloniality."

According to IGI Global, decolonial theory is a "theoretical framework that takes into consideration the systemic nature in which oppressive policy affects the lives of formerly colonized people."

Matias discussed the idea of land acknowledgment and appreciating the land that people reside on but he explained that there's a lot more that can be done.

"A lot of universities, government agencies, corporations, companies, are now doing land acknowledgments as sort of what they can contribute to Indigenous people then they step back," Matias said.

Quinnipiac is in the process of getting a land acknowledgement to show that the land was once owned by the Quinnipiac tribe as a part of the university's Indigeneity Initiative, according to an April 2021 Chronicle article.

Matias said people should "give homage" and respect the land that exists today and to the Indigenous people of Connecticut such

as the Pequots, Mohegans, Schaghticoke and several other bands and tribes that no longer exist.

"We recognize that we are on their land and as Indigenous people, acknowledging the land and coming onto someone else's land in a good way and asking permission in that good way is what we do," Matias said.

Matias discussed the controversy surrounding the day historically acknowledged as Columbus Day and how in many areas it is now referred to as Indigenous People's Day. He said that in New York, Columbus Day and Indigenous People's Day will be celebrated together but other cities such as Los Angeles and Seattle have made this change permanently.

"Which is really utterly preposterous because the only reason we celebrate Indigenous People's Day on that Monday is to say despite Columbus, despite this creator of the Transatlantic Slave Trade ... our traditions have survived and we as Indigenous people are still here," Matias said.

The Indigenous educator said that the biggest issue Indigenous people have with NFL teams using Native Americans as mascots is that they feel like they don't have allies in the fight against this.

"We are the poorest people in America, the highest percentage of teenage alcoholics, drug abuse, unemployment, all the sta-

tistics and we are still used as mascots for America's fun and games," Matias said.

According to the Foundation for Economic Education, "the federal government has legislated Native Americans into perpetual poverty. The institutions that federal agencies designed limit opportunities to own homes, develop and invest in their property and discourage entrepreneurs from starting businesses."

Arielys Medina, a first-year health science studies major in the occupational therapy program attended the event and she said that she is Taíno, and has always wanted to explore her ancestry further.

"I was just curious to learn about my own culture, since I feel like I love being Puerto Rican and Dominican but I feel like I don't know a lot about my Indigeneity side," Medina said.

Kaylee Chmielecki, a sophomore marketing major, said she loves coming to events to learn about different cultures because she is not as exposed to them as she would like to be.

"I feel like it's not accentuated enough that we live on Indigenous land so when (Matias) asked how can we better emphasize that in our campus community, I thought that was a really good point because I feel like if you're going to go (to Quinnipiac) you need to know what it's about," Chmielecki said.

# Opinion

## Accelerated college programs dupe unassuming students

By **MELINA KHAN**  
Editor-in-Chief

For far too long, it's been acceptable to expect 18-year-olds to know exactly what they want to do with the rest of their lives. At Quinnipiac University, that expectation includes pressuring young students into pursuing graduate programs, too. It needs to stop.

In America, high school seniors must decide the next steps to take after graduation, whether that means to pursue higher education, enter the workforce or enlist in the armed forces. Most of these new graduates opt for college; in 2021, 61.8% of high school gradu-

ates ages 16-24 enrolled in college, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Despite more than half of recent high school graduates in this country choosing higher education — and in turn, selecting an academic program that will presumably set up the trajectory of the rest of their life — none of them have fully developed decision-making skills.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, the brain doesn't finish developing until at least age 25. The prefrontal cortex, which is the part of the brain that is responsible for skills like planning and decision-making, is one of the last parts of the brain to develop. This means that when 18-year-old high school graduates are setting out to decide what career path to pursue, they're doing it without having fully developed decision-making skills.

In general, this is OK; there's plenty of time to change your mind about decisions you made at 18, especially when it comes to decisions about college and your career. Plenty of students — up to 30%, according to the Department of Education — switch majors within a few years of enrollment. The same goes for students who transfer schools altogether.

At Quinnipiac, though, the normalization of accelerated dual-degree programs hinders the flexibility students have if they change their mind about what they want after a year or two.

Most often, these dual-degree paths consist of “three plus” programs, or academic programs that are completed on an acceler-

ated track so that students earn their bachelor's degree in three years. After completing their undergraduate studies, these students go on to complete their graduate level degree at Quinnipiac, typically in one additional year. According to QU.edu, there are currently 16 “three plus” accelerated dual-degree programs at Quinnipiac.

The appeal of the “three plus” program is often a selling point for prospective students. From participating in many admissions events, my own enrollment in the 3+1 communications program and the students I know on campus, I have found that accelerated programs are a leading factor for many people in their decision to come to Quinnipiac.

As someone who chose to enroll in a 3+1 program when I entered Quinnipiac, I understand the appeal of the program. The program has many benefits, including priority enrollment for classes and the undoubted value of completing two degrees in four years. However, there's another side of pursuing such a program that I find is seldom talked about — once you're in deep enough, you can't turn back.

I am currently in my third year at Quinnipiac, but I'm graduating in a month. I don't feel ready for everything that comes with that. Academically, I have definitely gotten the most out of my degree and feel prepared for the workforce. But mentally, I'm not ready.

When I began my first year, I thought I had plenty of time to figure out what I wanted to do with my career and lots of options to do so. At the same time, I had no idea what a graduate program consisted of or even the

specifics of the programs at Quinnipiac. I thought I understood what the 3+1 program meant for me, and the options of graduate programs to pursue. However, I only knew a small fraction of what goes into choosing a graduate program.

Being a graduate student brings about some changes: you don't have the same opportunities to participate in extracurriculars, most of your classes are at night and you have enough extra time to work full-time if you want to. Other factors are dependent on the specific program you choose to pursue — like class size and course offerings. I didn't know any of these things at 18, and why would I?

Now that I'm graduating, I'm realizing how much I wish I had another year to dive into student organizations, different course offerings and internships in different fields. More than that, I wish I had more time to experience being in college before I had to figure out what the next year of my life looks like. Also, many of my friends who aren't in the “three plus” programs are in a completely different stage of life than I am, because they have one more year to figure out what they want.

Of course, this is just my perspective. I have friends in 3+1 programs who entered college certain about their future, and the accelerated track offers them the opportunity to reach their goals sooner. But that's just the success story, and before I went through it myself, I didn't consider the other side of the coin.



ILLUSTRATION BY SHAVONNE CHIN

## Lawmakers have bigger things to worry about than my TikToks

By **CASEY WIEDERHOLD**  
Associate Photography Editor

I check my phone constantly, as most teenagers do. I typically go on Instagram, Snapchat, check my text messages from my family or see if I received anything about a new sale going on at a store that I frequent.

I never expect that when I open Instagram or any other social media platform, I am going to see a post from @impact that says, “Congress is trying to ban TikTok in the U.S.” I glance through the carousel post and continue on with my day, confused as to why lawmakers are once again trying to ban the social media app. There are more important issues than trying to ban others from using a popular app.

The first motion to ban TikTok in the U.S. was introduced in July 2020. This proposal did not pass, though there was still a TikTok ban placed on all government employees.

The bill goes into how the government can ban any apps that it believes are a threat to the national security of the United States. The government will have complete control over which apps individuals can use and can censor everything that we see and do.

This reminds me of Ray Bradbury's novel, “Fahrenheit 451,” where the government banned books to attempt to create a safer, happier society. We are heading into a similar dystopian direction where the government has complete control over U.S. citizens.

The government recently signed the Willow Project for approval, despite all of the protests and petitions for the project to not continue. While the two don't fully equate, if the same type of situation were to arise for the TikTok ban, I would not be surprised if the bill was passed, despite protesting from

across the country.

It would be more beneficial for the government and the rest of the government to focus on other matters, such as trying to fix the gun violence epidemic in the United States. That is a much larger issue that has become increasingly visible since the COVID-19 pandemic.

There has also been the conflict of individual states banning LGBTQ events such as drag, and Florida with the “Don't Say Gay” bill.

There have been ongoing hearings with the CEO of TikTok since March 24. According to sources such as CNN and The Los Angeles Times, the government currently has no evidence referring to any data being stolen from the Beijing company ByteDance. The purpose of the bill and hearings is to prevent American data from being stolen from the Beijing-based company.

If there is no evidence to prove that anything has been stolen, why are we trying to push for a ban? The government is attempting to protect us by censoring one of the country's most popular social media applications.

The bill also addresses the qualifications of the ban. If the services are deemed a threat to national security they are put into an information hold. The government withholds information it believes was stolen from the app. If found that there was an information breach, those involved are fined and put into jail for up to 20 years.

This could mean that any service could qualify for censorship or data exploration. The government would have access to cloud services and social media services. Even a Ring video doorbell camera could be consid-

ered a threat to national security.

What will happen to freedom of speech and privacy? Will all of that go out the window if this bill is pushed through Congress?

In a recent NBC News article, Sen. Rand Paul, a Republican from Kentucky, discusses the Bill of Rights and freedom of speech, stating that they are more important than a censorship ban on a social media app. He also compares the notion to China, relating the country's censorship to the new bill.

I agree with Sen. Paul. Taking away someone's right to post on a platform such as TikTok is a way to prohibit freedom of speech, something that the U.S. has previously supported. In the past there have been instances where citizens have freely exercised their first amendment, TikTok is no different.

Banning TikTok takes away the opportunity to be creative. Content creators and app users on TikTok start movements and use

the software to educate others. With the app teaching others about problems in the world, I consider a ban to be futile.

When I scroll through my TikTok feed I see edits of Pedro Pascal and Taylor Swift. I watch videos that are niche to my personal interests. The government should be making us feel safe, and quite frankly I wouldn't feel very safe if I knew the government was going to deem my favorite apps as threats and look into my personal data.

With the power that the government holds, it makes no sense to push for an alternative solution to a crisis of data stealing that it has found no evidence of. With the displays of growth in current issues such as gun violence, there are laws and bills that can be put into place to fix them. The watchfulness of my personal data creates the thought that I am living inside a dystopian novel with nothing that I can do to help fix it.



ILLUSTRATION BY EMMA KOGEL

# Opinion

## Career happiness is a choice, so choose to be happy

By **A.J. NEWTH**  
Associate Opinion Editor

My biggest fear is failure.

For a long time, my personal interpretation of failure was a letter grade below an A, not being chosen for a top-tier internship or missing out on an extracurricular opportunity. Recently, I've redefined my meaning of failure; being unhappy.

The scary thought is that my unhappiness could be sourced from my career. Roughly 60% of people reported feeling emotionally detached at work in 2022 and 19% reported feeling miserable, according to the State of the Global Workplace 2022 Report. As an undergraduate college student, the fear of becoming part of that statistic is crippling.

Coming into college, I knew exactly who I was and what I wanted to be, grateful that I had it all figured out, ahead of the average 465,000 students who enter university undeclared, per National Center for Education Statistics.

However, when it comes time to decide the physical next steps, like choosing an internship or a future workplace, the decision process becomes more challenging. How do I know whether this is what I really want? How do I know if this will make me happy?

I grew up around the concept of doing what you love, a phrase that has followed me throughout my constant adoration for the food service industry and learning the ins-and-outs of many businesses with my mom. Now that I have to pick something to do for the rest of my life, I'm not entirely sure where my passion lies.

Quinnipiac University has a job placement



ILLUSTRATION BY KAYA DONAH

rate of 96.1%, which broke records for the best college for getting a job in 2020, per the university's website through Zippia.com. But how do they measure whether those alumni are happy? We never see the statistics on how many of those placements hold or how many students leave the job the university prepared them for.

As a person with many passions, committing to one thing for the rest of my life is incredibly intimidating. I want to be a successful business woman, who breaks records and the glass ceiling while climbing the corporate ladder. But I also want to be a travel journalist working for National Geographic. In another life maybe I'd teach English to kids in underprivileged school

districts, or open my dream restaurant to chase a passion I had as a teenager.

Every adult has told me the world is full of possibilities, or that the world is my oyster, enter some cliché mantra here about how I can do anything I want. But no one prepared me for wanting to do everything.

The past few months I've searched for a sign that I was headed in the right direction. I've questioned my purpose in this world, not so much in an existential way, but more like trying to piece together what I'm meant to do for the rest of my life.

The reality is that I'm not as prepared as I thought I was. I know I would be successful in the field I study and that I am good at

what I do, but I have no way of knowing if it will make me happy. The idea of becoming the stereotypical adult who works a 9-to-5 job in a cubicle terrifies me, not just because of the fluorescent lighting and lack of physical activity, but because I crave something that gives me a reason to get out of bed every morning.

During my soul searching I found that Indeed has a simple seven steps to help individuals find a job they will love. Besides the monetary standpoint, the website advises people to consider their passions, identify their ideal work environment and research companies that seem interesting. The website fails to mention how painfully boring the job search is and gives no advice to those who struggle to commit to one passion only.

There's no sign to tell me if I'll be happy with my career choices. Career advice from professionals is generic and there's no way for counselors to know if you're truly fulfilled. I've made peace with knowing that if I was honestly satisfied with my choices, really genuinely happy, I would know. It's as simple as that.

The fear of ending up unhappy in life can weigh heavily on an individual, especially the typical college student. There's no shame in admitting that the unknown is daunting, but it is shameful to let the fear of the future control you.

For those in similar situations, the only guidance I can offer is if you're happy, you know. If you're unsure about your career choices, then change them.

Life is too short to live wondering if you could have been happier.

## The tragic nature of wondering 'what could have been?'

By **MICHAEL LAROCCA**  
Opinion Editor

Can we all agree that we all want to amount to something in life? What if you never get the chance?

I'll admit to all of you that I am a pretty emotional dude. There are plenty of things that get my gears turning, but nothing gets me more upset than thinking about the amount of potential in this world that gets lost or is wasted.

Having talent is a blessing. However, with talent comes the curse of living up to the potential.

In this world, everyone has potential, but it's not always fulfilled. Reaching your potential means only one thing — you achieved your goals. If you didn't, your potential was either lost or wasted — both are equally tragic.

Lost potential is understandable as it most commonly comes in the form of one's untimely demise, something usually out of one's control. Examples that immediately come to my mind include actor Chris Farley, NFL safety Sean Taylor, rapper Jarad Higgins, most well known as Juice WRLD and singer Jahseh Onfroy, commonly known as XXXTentacion.

These four men left this earth far too young in life. When they died, Farley was 33 years old, Taylor was 24, Higgins was 21 and Onfroy was 20. What makes these instances so tragic is that these four were all on track to become undisputed greats in their respective professions. Each of them received acclaim for their work in life, only to have their lives be cut short by murder or addiction.

What they left behind is now frozen in time. There is no new work to look forward to; what's left is all there is. We can sit down and

watch a Farley film or a highlight reel of Taylor, but the sense of finality that comes from the viewing is what makes them so tragic. They all had so much time to navigate the ebbs and flows of a career, to change with time and grow as people.

However, when an up-and-coming career is cut off so abruptly, there is one positive way to look at it: the individual never gets a chance to fail. If someone is loved at the time of their death, they will always be loved. They never need to fight to remain in the spotlight or stay liked by the public.

The immortal words of Harvey Dent in "The Dark Knight" have never rang more true: "You either die a hero or live long enough to see yourself become the villain."

Listening to Onfroy's work might just be the saddest of all. His music meant a lot to my generation, but going back through it now, all that can be said is that it's half finished. In this case, that's not entirely a bad thing. There was so much room for him to grow as an artist. He was just barely 20 years old when he was killed on June 18, 2018.

For a few years after his death, the rap community spoke about how great he could have been. But five years later, what's left to be said?

Onfroy and Higgins aren't the only ones to have suffered this fate. There were enough people in the music industry that died at the age of 21 or younger for it to receive the nickname "The 21 Club," which is a play off "The 27 Club," the latter meant to encapsulate all the artists who died at 27 years old or younger. Other members of this dubious club include Pop Smoke and Lil Peep, both artists who left us before they had a chance to leave a bigger

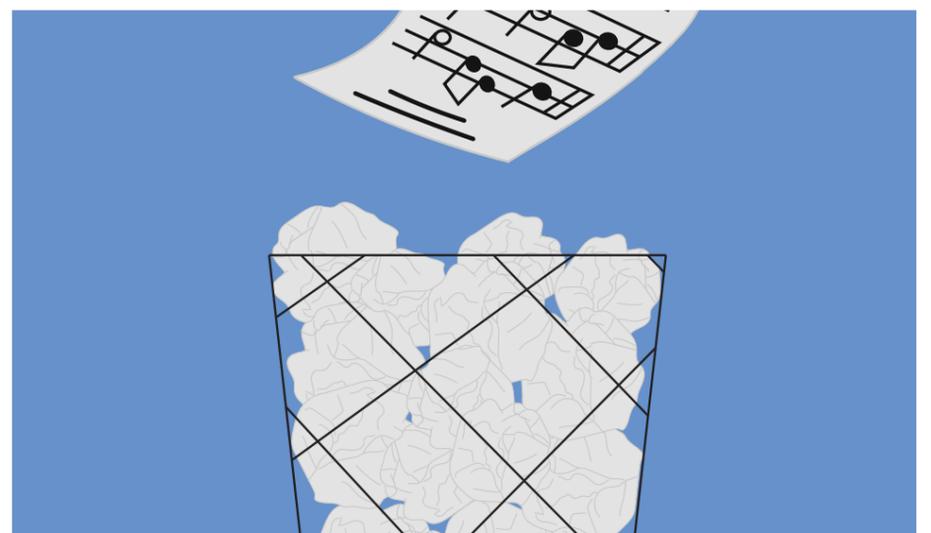


ILLUSTRATION BY KLARA DHANDILI

impact on the world.

When potential is lost, the individual is still remembered fondly for what they tried to offer the world. But when potential is wasted, memories of the individual are anything but fond.

If someone has potential and wastes it, it's a conscious decision. One can be on the path to greatness and then choose not to follow it. It's arguably worse. People with lost potential didn't have a choice.

Usually one can find examples of wasted potential within their hometown. I know a few, but one just feels sadder than the others.

When my youngest brother played middle school football, he had a teammate that my dad and I agreed was a step above the rest. I remember my dad telling me he thought this kid had the "second gear" when it comes to speed, something you see from professionals, not the average seventh grader. He was excit-

ing, something that could bring pride to my town when given a few years. Instead, it was all a flash in the pan.

We gave him a few years, and they were used up by going down the wrong path. He never played a down of football after eighth grade. Instead of being the star, he's the one kid my brother tells me stories about when I'm home, stories about criminal activities and causing trouble for others at school. My dad and I are now left thinking about where he should have been compared to where he is now.

Whether it gets lost or is wasted by its owner, unfulfilled potential makes me wholly upset. These people never get the chance to become as great as they're supposed to be, and in the case of lost potential, they never get the chance to fail. Destiny is fickle, yet it always leaves people wondering about what could have been instead of what is.

# Arts & Life



## Welcome to 'Almost, Maine'

KATIE LANGLEY/CHRONICLE

### Fourth Wall's spring production explores love and loss

By **KATIE LANGLEY**  
News Editor

In a small town in northern Maine, under the glow of the northern lights, figures of speech become literal and clichés become a reality. Quinnipiac University's student-run Fourth Wall Theater transported audiences to the town of "Almost, Maine" during its spring production.

In a series of short vignettes, the cast of "Almost, Maine" delivered performances about love and relationships. The March 31-April 2 run featured an eight-person ensemble cast who each played several separate roles.

The show opens with a short scene about a couple, Pete, played by senior theater major Alice Mahon, and Ginette, played by junior film, television and media arts major Kira Beckerman, stargazing on a snowy winter night.

Pete tells Ginette that though they appear close, sitting next to one another, they are further away than anyone on Earth as there is a whole planet's circumference between them, so you'd have to walk around the planet to truly be together.

Ginette takes the ridiculous assertion seriously, and though she appears to leave Pete lonely, she returns at the end of the play, having seemingly walked around the globe to prove her love.

Pete and Ginette's story sets the tone for "Almost, Maine," as each scene introduces us to new characters taking a cliché a little too literally.

Beckerman played the characters Ginette, Marvalyn and Suzette in "Almost, Maine," her first Fourth Wall production.

"Everyone had multiple characters, so it

was really fun to be able to build all different worlds with all different characters and just let out different sides of yourself through your characters," Beckerman said.

Mahon, who is also the president of Fourth Wall, played the characters Jimmy, a heartbroken bachelor, and Phil, an unhappy husband, in addition to Pete. Mahon said the cast formed their characters around their own personalities and theories about the characters.

"There's a lot of ways to put ('Almost, Maine') on," Mahon said. "It's very abstract. You can do whatever you want with it, really."

"Almost, Maine" is a short and sweet play staged simply, yet effectively by director Emma Bender, a junior theater major.

One of the show's best moments is when best friends Deena and Shelly fall for each other — literally.

Shelly, played by junior 3+1 film, television and media arts major Lauren Sweeney, falls flat on her face after confessing her love to Haley Ruccio's Deena. Ruccio, a sophomore 3+1 film, television and media arts major, delivers a convincing performance as a best friend hesitant to accept her friend's confession — that is, until she falls on her face herself.

"Almost, Maine" also explores the themes of broken hearts, failed marriages and moving on.

In an early scene, East, a lonesome repairman, and Glory, a hiker searching for the northern lights, collide when Glory decides to set up camp in East's backyard, claiming that the pamphlet she read about Maine said that the people would be welcoming and wouldn't mind a stray camper.

East, played by molecular and cell biology graduate student Khorbin Kern and

Glory, depicted by Jess Clark, a junior media studies major, appear fated for one another.

Soon, we find out that Glory took the long journey to Almost to honor a former partner. He left Glory, leaving her with a literal shattered heart that she carries around in a brown paper bag. When West returns begging for forgiveness, Glory breaks his heart, killing him.

In perhaps the most tender moment of the show, the repairman East tells Glory that he can fix her heart, representing new beginnings.

Kern, who also played Lendall and Danny in the production, said that this moment with East and Glory is among his favorites in the whole show.

"Seeing the different ways that love can be portrayed, because that's what this entire show is about, different metaphors about love, and some of them (are) happier, some of them sadder and overall, it's just about love," Kern said.

The Fourth Wall production of "Almost, Maine," has the potential to make audiences laugh and cry at the same time. However they feel, it's certain that audiences came out of the show wanting to know more about the interesting yet fleeting characters.

"It's okay to laugh," Mahon said. "('Almost, Maine' is) really silly (and) goofy. "I mean, it's okay to feel sad, but it's also just goofy."



KATIE LANGLEY/CHRONICLE

**A heartbroken Glory (right), played by Jess Clark, travels to the town of Almost, Maine, where she has a fated meeting with East (left), played by Khorbin Kern.**

# Melanie Martinez's album 'PORTALS' puts the fun in funeral

By **DAVID MATOS**  
Arts & Life Editor

The alt-pop singer-songwriter Melanie Martinez is “back from the dead” and has let us into her world one final time in her third full-length LP, “PORTALS,” which released on March 31.

Martinez debuted in the music industry with her monumental 2015 concept album “Cry Baby.” The album introduced Martinez’s alter ego Cry Baby, a fantasized version of the artist in her adolescence. Each track is named after words or phrases associated with childhood and every song carries a deeper meaning that is self-aware, adult and more complex than what’s on the surface.

Her 2019 LP “K-12” is the next chapter of Cry Baby’s story. An hour-and-a-half-feature film of the same name accompanied this album. The film shows Cry Baby’s journey through a dysfunctional school system outside her family and other relationships expressed in the “Cry Baby” album.

In February, Martinez shared a 30-second visual of a foggy, dream-like forest on Instagram with a close-up of “RIP Cry Baby” carved into a giant mushroom surrounded by candles, introducing what is seemingly Cry Baby’s final chapter in “PORTALS.”

In “PORTALS,” Martinez trades her baby doll aesthetic encompassed in “Cry Baby” and “K-12” with a pink-skinned, four-eyed creature with fairy wings stuck between earth and what meets her on the other side of death.

“I hope the weight of mortality that society has placed on people becomes lighter. I hope grief becomes easier for people while listening to this record,” Martinez wrote in an Instagram post. “That they can enjoy this life to the fullest knowing that we’re all just here to grow, create, feel, and have shared experiences with one another to help each-other evolve.”

Though the album is connected to her

previous two LPs, it strays from the signature indie-pop sound fans like me have grown accustomed to. She instead experiments with pop-rock and lively drum beats with each track. This move into a new genre for Martinez aligns perfectly with the theme of death and the album’s overarching messaging of rebirth and growth.

Death is a sensitive and taboo topic often avoided in mainstream pop music. Fans of pop are used to artists singing about straightforward subjects like love, relationship failures and sex. Still, Martinez takes a risk for the better, taking concepts about what is known of the afterlife and introducing it into Cry Baby’s complex world and version of reality.

The album’s first song, and my favorite, “DEATH,” speaks on the eternal cycle of life, death and rebirth. The song’s haunting melodies and thought-provoking lyrics allow listeners to think beyond what’s right before them and ponder their very existence, accepting that death isn’t the final chapter.

“DEATH” is significant for me because death admittedly is a scary concept for me to accept. However, the song puts a positive spin on the subject and provides a glimmer of hope that death may not be the end.

“I don’t wanna be carrying the weight on my shoulders/ Death has come to me, kissed me on my cheek, gave me closure/ Immortal by design, I’ll be meeting you here every time/ Back from the dead, back from the dead/ I’m back from the dead.”

I certainly hope I get to evolve into a pink fairy-like creature like Martinez after I die.

Another song that hits home is the 12th track, “EVIL.” The song takes a different approach to one of the themes of growth or rebirth. It speaks about how she is done with toxic relationships and is overjoyed to have left them but now has to deal with a narcissist



ILLUSTRATION BY EMMA KOGEL

who views Cry Baby as evil for seeing through their facade. This track relates to my experiences with toxic relationships and being seen as the bad guy for not accepting toxic behavior.

“If you bite my hand again/ I will never feed you/ You can call me evil/ Take it to the grave if you wanna play pretend/ I won’t be mistreated/ Please call me conceited/ Took me way too long to put this to bed/ Lovin’ you was lethal, guess that makes me evil.”

The album is full of Martinez communicating her messages in a symbolic and fun way, pushing you not only to enjoy each song for its unique sound, but to also ponder the deeper meaning that is intertwined within.

The upbeat song, complete with spine-tingling instrumentals, “SPIDER WEB,” is

about how society is merging with the internet, or “web.” Next, the blood-curdling “THE CONTORTIONIST” is about bending over backward for someone. Lastly, the harmonic “NYMPHOLOGY” is about embracing being feminine. These three tracks are standouts of the album because of their brilliantly quirky melody, and I can relate to their buried messages wholeheartedly.

After a four-year hiatus, the 13-track LP finishes with “WOMB,” a metaphor for her rebirth in the music industry. The album illustrates Martinez’s remarkable ability to use her storyteller and visual artist talent to tackle complex topics. Martinez has come a long way since her short time on “The Voice” in 2012, much to Christina Aguilera’s dismay, and I’m excited to learn of Martinez’s next chapter as a visual and music artist.

# Penn Badgley continues to shine, but ‘You’ stays stagnant for its fourth season

By **ETHAN HURWITZ**  
Sports Editor

For the past few years, Netflix’s “You” has taken the world by storm, following protagonist Joe Goldberg as he narrates his murderous lifestyle. The recent fourth season is split into two parts. It continues the storyline, while also highlighting the superb work of actor Penn Badgley.

Goldberg, now disguising himself as London professor Jonathan Moore, tries to shy away from his dark past by blending into the preppy rich snobs around him. Though the cast of characters are different from the previous three seasons, the plot stayed the same — stale and unoriginal.

The first two seasons, which were based on the books of the same name, seemed fresh and new. However, these last two seasons have just been recycled. The themes of Badgley’s character trying to protect a younger person, all while trying to forget his murderous tendencies, have just been reused over the last couple of episodes.

As Goldberg travels through Europe in search of Marianne (Tati Gabrielle), his former coworker at the suburban library, he eventually finds himself as a professor of literature at a prestigious university. The show does a great job at callbacks from the earlier seasons, including his need to follow people around in the same jacket and hat, his massive glass cage and his obsession with



ILLUSTRATION BY AMANDA RIHA

collecting ... let’s just say, keepsakes.

Badgley has been the one constant throughout the last few years of production. Though the shock value may have diminished, he continues leading the way with his now-iconic voiceovers. While the woman he idolizes constantly changes, Goldberg continues to be the creepy next-door neighbor, always watching.

Throughout the season, it is leaning toward the end of the show for good. With Goldberg/Moore trying to play detective on

a string of high-profile murders in his friend group, he tries to coax his neighbor Kate (Charlotte Ritchie) into another emotional relationship. This tumultuous attempt at love, mixed with the emotional downfall around him, the plotline is structured to end his story with a suicide.

But of course, it does not go in that direction and for yet another season, Joe seems to make it out alive and unscathed.

Instead of being the one who is being hunted by the authorities, Goldberg

switches roles. He becomes the detective, trying to find the one who keeps murdering his friends, whether it was his professor coworker, the eccentric painter or the prissy, rich influencer. He tries to utilize his knowledge of killing to try and make a rational verdict, all while making irrational decisions of his own.

The writing, while similar to the earlier installments, did have a major plot twist that did take me by surprise. Goldberg has always been an unreliable narrator and “You” did a good job at highlighting that aspect of his complex mind. I’ll just say that some of the friend group that Goldberg became entwined with is not all that it seems.

One of the most memorable moments of the later part of the series was the cameos of both Beck (Elizabeth Lail) and Love (Victoria Pedretti). Both love interests in the first two seasons came back to mentally toy with Joe as he suffers from a crazed manic attack.

As seen in the final moments of the finale, there will be a fifth season. But because of how these last 10 episodes went, it should be the last we see of Joe Goldberg. While I will miss the yearly binge session with my mom, the show deserves to take a bow and to neatly wrap up.

However, knowing Joe Goldberg and the last four endings of “You,” one will just never truly know what happens next. Except for the outcome.

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# It's time to make an appointment with 'Shrinking'

By ZOE LEONE

Associate Arts & Life Editor

For many people, their therapist is their closest confidant. Whether dealing with the good, the bad or the ugly, they're at the ready to help you deal with your wildest emotions. But what do you do if your therapist is just as unstable as you are?

"Shrinking," an Apple TV+ original, follows Jimmy (Jason Segel), a grief-stricken man who doubles as both a therapist and a recently widowed father of a teenage girl. As he spirals through poor personal and parental choices, Jimmy receives a brutal wake-up call in the form of his nosy neighbor, eccentric co-workers and a patient who reminds him just how precious humanity can be.

As he starts to rebuild his relationships with his daughter, co-workers and friends, Jimmy starts taking a radically new approach with his patients: complete and unfiltered honesty. While some of his new advice is relatively harmless, his candor leads him into fist-fights, bailing patients out of jail and a possible murder case that will likely unfold in the next season.

Although the storylines can be chaotic, "Shrinking" finds its heart in the relationships between the characters as they grow through some of life's hardest experiences. One of the particular highlights is between Jimmy and his daughter, Alice (Lukita Maxwell). Their reconnection blossoms as Jimmy puts aside his own grief and relearns how to become a dad again. While they don't grow in parallel lines, the comfort they rediscover in each

other brings a fierce love to the show.

Even though the characters span from 17 years old to their 60s, there's something about all of them that feel inherently familiar and relatable. Whether it's crying along to Phoebe Bridgers, accidentally taking too many edibles, eavesdropping on your neighbors or feeling like the future you had planned for yourself has gotten completely derailed, the quirks that make up each of the characters' personalities have a little something to resonate with anyone.

"Shrinking" was originally the brain-child of two talented creatives that met through one of TV's best shows: "Ted Lasso." Bill Lawrence co-created the soccer hit with Jason Sudeikis, Brendan Hunt and Joe Kelly, while Brett Goldstein initially joined the show as a writer before later taking on the role of the beloved Roy Kent.

The pair were both independently working on their own projects centered on grief, before ultimately deciding to "smush them together," Lawrence said in an interview with The Hollywood Reporter. Once the show's idea was fleshed out, Segel was brought on as both the star and a fellow co-creator.

One of the creators' biggest behind-the-camera obstacles turned out to be one of their biggest on-camera strengths: the casting of legendary actor Harrison Ford as the gruff, yet lovable Dr. Paul Rhodes. Rhodes is a veteran therapist who does an efficient job at helping everyone else around him, even as his own life starts to go off the rails. While he manages to offer advice to



ILLUSTRATION BY CONNOR YOUNGBERG

Jimmy, Alice and the rest of the characters, he grapples with a recent Parkinson's diagnosis and patching the relationship between him and his estranged daughter, Meg (Lily Rabe).

Ford's comedic talent stands out as the series progresses, but instead of overwhelming the rest of the cast, he fits seamlessly in. While the show may feature a mix of actors, they only serve to make each other's performances stronger. The main ensemble of Segel, Ford, Maxwell, Jessica Williams, Luke Tennie, Christa Miller and Ted McGinley effortlessly come together to form the perfectly imperfect found family that

lives at the heart of so many great sitcoms.

While drastically different in terms of storyline, the infectious joy that rocketed "Ted Lasso" to stardom serves to help "Shrinking" shine just as bright. So while the soccer show that could be wrapping this season, this therapized comedy is only just getting started.

While drastically different in terms of storyline, the infectious joy that rocketed "Ted Lasso" to stardom serves to help "Shrinking" shine just as bright. So while the soccer show may be wrapping this season, this therapized comedy is only just getting started.

# I am the Crumbl Cookies monster

By NICOLE MCISAAC

Managing Editor

I hold one simple joy near and dear to my heart — desserts. While some may argue that other sweets rank higher on their priority lists, my go-to craving is always cookies.

Just call me the cookie monster.

However, it wasn't until I stumbled across a company last year on TikTok that makes extravagant cookies that my lifelong love for the dessert deepened. Did you guess

Crumbl Cookies? Ding, ding, ding.

Launched back in 2017, the first Crumbl store opened its doors in Logan, Utah. From starting with two cousins who had a passion for baking, the business steadily began to grow and embed itself in areas across the United States — including six stores here in Connecticut.

While you might have heard of other companies in the business, such as Insomnia Cookies, Crumbl has one specific advantage over the rest: it switches its cookie flavor

lineup every week.

Announced every Sunday at 6 p.m. on the company's Instagram, Crumbl rotates through a wide range of six types of cookies — some chilled and others served warm out of the oven. The cookies listed for the week include a brief description of the flavor, a picture of the cookie and its nutritional value — which I normally ignore.

In addition to its alternating menu, Crumbl often offers a "Mystery Cookie," which differs depending on the store's location. If you're anything like myself, I immediately head to the company's mobile app that allows users to view what the mystery cookie is at a specific store while using its worldwide cookie map. I can't be the only one.

While I don't go to devour the sweets every week, I would be lying if I said I don't automatically send the menu to my friends on social media the minute I see it. The alternating menu builds a sense of excitement — similar to waiting for a huge announcement.

Although I have had my fair share of cookies from the company, the ultimate top three are the maple glaze, macadamia nut and cornbread flavors. While every time I go there are new options to try, I would be lying if I said I didn't pray those flavors landed on the weekly lineup.

However, the love for Crumbl doesn't end with me — I have also infected my roommates, friends and boyfriend.

Heading over to the nearest location roughly seven miles away from Quinnipiac

University's Mount Carmel Campus in North Haven, Connecticut, developed into a bonding experience — typically resulting in all of us getting different flavors so we can all try a bit of each.

Upon arriving at Crumbl every single time, I am greeted by employees with grins from ear to ear and, of course, the aromas of fresh cookies in the oven — also known as heaven.

However, what intrigues me the most is how fresh these cookies are. Before receiving the bright pink box of goodness, I often seek workers freshly pulling them off a tray and icing them right in front of me.

Despite my devotion to the oversized sweets, other people have voiced their thoughts differently.

While scrolling on social media, I have seen various complaints about the price of the desserts, which total up to \$4.68 for a single cookie. Regardless if I am a struggling college student, you will always catch me driving to the nearest location in North Haven to swipe my card.

I have also seen people drag this company into a negative light by saying the cookies are not fully cooked — like you don't eat the dough when you make homemade cookies yourself.

Stop the Crumbl slander, you know you are lying to yourself.

So, if you're thinking of trying Crumbl for the first time — this is your sign. Grab your roommates, friends, significant other or even just yourself and thank me later.



NICOLE MCISAAC/CHRONICLE

One of Crumbl Cookies' weekly cookie lineup flavors included snickerdoodle cheesecake and macadamia nut.

# Previewing the Frozen Four

## Blue blood meets new blood as Quinnipiac seeks first national title

By CAMERON LEVASSEUR  
Sports Editor

At a glance, the 2023 Frozen Four bracket looks like something 50 years into the past. Minnesota, Michigan, Boston University: three of college hockey's most historic programs renewing old rivalries on the sport's biggest stage.

But there's another team in the fray, one that did not exist for half of the other's national championships. Despite only being a Division I program since 1998, Quinnipiac's resume successfully rivals its opponents since the turn of the millenia.

The Bobcats' three Frozen Four berths since 2000 equal BU in that span, while their two national championship game appearances are trumped only by Minnesota, which has appeared in three, though only one in the past 15 years.

Quinnipiac has fully emerged onto the national scene in the last decade, but still lacks that elusive national championship, and the road to glory will not be easy.

Michigan stands in the Bobcats' way in the

semifinal round, looking for a repeat of last year's regional final in Allentown, Pennsylvania, where the Wolverines jumped out to an early 4-0 lead and hung on to win 7-4.

10 Michigan players turned pro following the 2022 season, but a young offense commanded by newly-named head coach Brandon Naurato has come back even more dangerous.

"I don't think they've changed a ton with this year's team, and in the end they still have what they're best at is high end players," Quinnipiac head coach Rand Pecknold said. "We know we need to defend in waves and ... we need to make them play defense."

The Wolverines are led by Hobey Baker hat-trick finalist and projected No. 2 overall draft pick in this year's NHL Draft Adam Fantilli. The freshman forward sits atop the nation with 64 points (29 goals, 35 assists) in 35 games this season.

Seven players on their roster have 30-plus points on the season, including sophomore defenseman Luke Hughes. The New Jersey Devils draft pick has proved his stature as

one of the world's top defensive prospects.

"As good of a player as he is, I think he's a better person," Pecknold said. "Just a phenomenal athlete, phenomenal person. He's got that elusiveness that you can't teach ... we're going to have to defend him in waves."

Michigan's third-leading scorer is Mackie Samoskevich (20-23-43), the twin brother of Quinnipiac women's ice hockey junior defender Maddy Samoskevich and the younger brother of Bobcats' director of player development and operations Melissa Samoskevich.

On paper, the matchup is between the nation's best offense — Michigan — and best defense — Quinnipiac — but the Bobcats need to be the team controlling the attack if they want to avoid a repeat of last year's regional final.

As high-powered as the Wolverines offense is, their defense struggles in comparison. They rank in the bottom 20 in the country in scoring defense, penalty-kill percentage

and shots allowed per game (eighth worst.) If Quinnipiac can come out strong and surge as it did in the latter half of the first period against Ohio State on March 26, it will put itself in prime position to build a lead.

No matter how hard your offensive pressure, a team as talented as Michigan will eventually break through and build attacking-zone pressure. The key for the Bobcats, as Pecknold alluded to, is to isolate the Wolverines' talent and support the initial defender with layers. Michigan will make plays, but the more defenders it has to go through the more likely it is to turn the puck over.

If Quinnipiac gets past the Wolverines, waiting on the other side will be one of Minnesota or BU.

Minnesota, the overall No. 1 seed in the tournament, returns to the Frozen Four for the second-straight season, looking to bring home its first national title since 2003.

The Golden Gophers are powered by the best forward line in the nation. Freshman Jimmy Snuggerud and sophomore Matthew Knies are centered by freshman Logan Cooley. The trio has 50, 41 and 57 points on the season, respectively, and the latter two were both named to the Hobey hat-trick.

"His skating ability is elite, his skill is elite and that alone sets him apart," Minnesota head coach Bob Motzko said of Cooley. "But the greatest skill factor in him is his compete level."

Hockey East champion BU heads to Tampa, Florida, on the back of wins over Western Michigan and Cornell in the regional round.

"One of our team goals at the beginning of the year was to get to Frozen Four and see what happens there," BU head coach Jay Pandolfo said. "I give our guys a ton of credit, it's been a ton of fun coaching these guys and like I said, I'm really proud of them."

One of the Terriers' standout is freshman defenseman Lane Hutson. The Montreal Canadiens' 2022 second-round pick has turned heads with his phenomenal puck movement and deceptive playmaking, leading the country in points by defenseman with 48 in 38 games.

Minnesota and BU will face off in Tampa at 5 p.m. on April 6, with Quinnipiac and Michigan following at 8:30. The winners of the two contests will meet at 8 p.m. on April 8 for the right to be crowned national champion.



PEYTON MCKENZIE/CHRONICLE

Quinnipiac and Michigan will face off in the NCAA semifinal of April 6, a rematch of last season's regional final in Allentown, Pennsylvania.

ACRO from 12

last season, the Bobcats scored the most points they had recorded in a meet since 2018 — a season that ended in a championship appearance — but they still lost. The Bears consistently play spoiler for Quinnipiac, even when the Bobcats have achieved accomplishments in the process.

Baylor is the No. 1 seed again this year, making it a potential obstacle for Quinnipiac on the road to a championship. However, this could still be the perfect time for the Bobcats to win it all.

An ongoing theme of this season with Powers has been when the team should be at its best. When you're performing a lot of the same skills at each meet, there's room for improvement every time, and the team shouldn't be hitting its ceiling at the home opener.

"If we are at our best right now, we've peaked way too early," Powers said on Feb. 5,

days before the team's first meet of the season.

When asked how she feels about the team's improvement throughout the season last Saturday, things seemed to be on the right track.

"We want to raise those scores so we can move up in the bracket," Powers said on April 1. "I don't know that it was enough today, but they're peaking at the right time."

At the beginning of the season, Powers mentioned that she was excited to see what some of the newer additions to the team would bring to the table, mentioning freshman top/tumbler Katherine Carter and base Abby Hamilton specifically.

Carter has had a stellar rookie campaign, scoring a 9.675 in her first-ever open tumbling round and helping the team to season-highs in the quad tumbling and five-element acro heats. She was named NCATA Freshman of the Week on March 8 as well.

Hamilton has also made a splash this sea-

son. She was selected as one of NCATA's honorable mentions for Freshman of the Week on Feb. 15 after participating in eight different heats in her collegiate debut vs. Kutztown on Feb. 11.

Top MiaRose King and base/tumbler Farrah Chernov, both juniors, have been the perfect veteran presence for the Bobcats this season.

King was chosen as NCATA Specialist of the Week after the home opener this year for her contributions in two heats against Kutztown. She has consistently brought new, unique skills to the table throughout the season with poise.

Chernov earned honorable mention honors for Specialist of the Week on March 8 after the team's win vs. Augustana. She helped the Bobcats to a season-high 9.25 in the quad tumbling heat and scored a season-high 9.825 in her solo aerial tumbling pass as well.

This base staying healthy for a poten-

tial Baylor matchup is imperative. She was named NCATA Specialist of the Week when the Bobcats faced Baylor on March 23, 2022, for her perfect score of 10 in the open pyramid heat.

It will be crucial for the Bobcats to build off the momentum that they have been working to create throughout the season. They are 4-1 overall, currently undefeated at home and in conference play.

Most wins this season have been by a large margin and the team shows no signs of slowing down as it approaches its final home meet vs. Caldwell on April 14. Powers thinks that her players have created the perfect environment to bring a championship home this spring.

"The cultural difference between this year's team and ones in the past has been amazing," Powers said on April 1. "They just take care of business ... they're a great bunch of leaders."

# 'The last time I was involved in a game there, I was holding the Stanley Cup after'



DANIEL PASSAPERA/CHRONICLE

Quinnipiac assistant equipment manager Rob Kennedy is returning to Tampa, Florida, where he worked for the Tampa Bay Lightning from 2007-2021, for the Frozen Four.

## Championship connections to Tampa back Quinnipiac men's hockey as it heads to Frozen Four

By CAMERON LEVASSEUR  
Sports Editor

On July 7, 2021, Rob "Bubba" Kennedy triumphantly lifted the Stanley Cup at Amalie Arena in Tampa, Florida. The Tampa Bay Lightning had just won their second consecutive Stanley Cup championship, making it the second trophy lift for Kennedy in a 16-year NHL career as an assistant equipment manager.

Alongside him stood Tom Mulligan, the Lightning's head athletic trainer. It was the third time Mulligan hoisted hockey's greatest prize since he joined the franchise in 2002.

As the Frozen Four returns to The Sunshine State this week, both are hoping to see a similar celebration. Only this time, the title would be in the hands of the Quinnipiac men's hockey team.

Kennedy, who is responsible for maintaining uniforms, sharpening skates and other day-to-day maintenance duties, joined the Bobcats' staff as the assistant equipment manager when his contract was not renewed following the 2021 cup run. Mulligan, who remains with the Lightning, is a 1997 graduate of Quinnipiac who served as a student athletic trainer for the men's hockey team when the school was still a college and the mascot was the Braves.

"Is it a coincidence that we're going to Tampa for the Frozen Four? I don't know," Kennedy said. "I'm a big believer that things happen for a reason. I ended up here for a reason. Maybe it was the experience to help this team get over the hump and win."

It was in Tampa where the Bobcats came up just short seven years ago, falling to North Dakota in the national championship game on the same ice that Kennedy and Mulligan have seen so much success.

Quinnipiac is once again on the cusp of its first national championship in program history

after falling on the big stage in 2013 and 2016. Both losses were crushing, but for the Bobcats to even reach that level is miles above what was thought possible less than two decades earlier.

"It was a little bit of a glorified high school feel," Mulligan said of his time with the program. "I'll be honest, I didn't foresee them being a team that would compete for national championships on a consistent basis."

Mulligan was with the team from 1994 to 1997, two years prior to its jump to the Division I level and 10 years before it moved into what is now M&T Bank Arena. His tenure also coincided with the arrival of head coach Rand Pecknold, who now nears the end of his 29th season at the helm.

"He's developed along with the program and is so well respected now," Mulligan said. "I know a couple of our coaches here in Tampa, recently and previously, have a ton of respect for Rand and have crossed paths with him through the college hockey circles ... When you think Quinnipiac hockey, you think (of) Rand Pecknold."

Pecknold and the Bobcats have come a long way from the mid-1990s, but still have yet to check that final box to cement their place as a national power. Doing so requires commitment at every level of the program. From players, to coaches, to staff, when everyone is on the same page, that's when teams win.

"Everything starts with us," Kennedy said. "So if we come in and we're calm and we're good and we're ready and we're prepared, our players will feel that and pick up our vibe and that'll carry through."

Kennedy hopes that his own championship experience will carry over into helping Quinnipiac succeed in the Frozen Four.

"There's not many Stanley Cup teams that

win a Stanley Cup without a previous Stanley Cup winner," Kennedy said. "(Experience) helps because things are going to go sideways. Things are going to be haywire at times ... you need people in different roles that have been there."

His knowledge becomes even more important for the Bobcats as they head back into Kennedy's old territory, an arena where he spent countless days working hundreds of games.

"I know exactly what to expect," Kennedy said. "I know what they have on hand there, so there's certain things I want to have access to that I've asked, and they're going to let me have it ... there's nothing I'm not familiar with."

It's up to him and the team's student managers: his son Quinn Kennedy, a first-year finance major, and Justin Horn, a junior applied business major, to prepare Quinnipiac for puck drop. "Setting the tone," as Rob Kennedy says, for a team looking to make history.

"Those guys that have been here for five years, it means the world to them," Kennedy said. "We were talking about patches on the jerseys and that was the exact comment out of Lombo (graduate student forward Michael Lombardi) 'I've waited a long time to be able to put that patch on my jersey.'"

But a patch on a jersey is far from Quinnipiac's ultimate goal. Two games remain between the Bobcats and one final trophy lift, a fact not lost on anyone.

"I think it's just staying focused on the task at hand and we haven't gotten to where we ultimately want to be," Kennedy said. "We're not at the top of the mountain yet. We're close, but we're not there yet."

One came from Tampa, the other left for it. Both are united in the hope that on April 8, Quinnipiac will be crowned champion in the city, just as they were before.



PHOTO BY SCOTT AUDETTE/NHLI VIA GETTY IMAGES

QU alum Tom Mulligan won the Stanley Cup with the Tampa Bay Lightning in 2004, 2020 and 2021.

# Sports

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## 'They're peaking at the right time'



JACK MUSCATELLO/CHRONICLE

## Assessing acrobatics and tumbling at the midseason point

By **JENNIFER MOGLIA**  
Staff Writer

Quinnipiac's basketball teams' seasons have ended, and the men's hockey team is headed to Tampa to play in the NCAA Frozen Four. However, the doors to M&T Bank Arena haven't shut just yet — the acrobatics and tumbling team has one more home meet left before its quest for a championship.

The golden question for the Bobcats is will they be able to take the leap necessary for a national championship win?

Quinnipiac's 2022 season ended when the team lost to Baylor by just over four points at the NCATA National Semifinals. The Bears have been the Bobcats' kryptonite for a while; Quinnipiac hasn't been able to win against them since 2014.

There have been 11 NCATA championship matchups and Baylor has won the last seven. The Bears' near-decade of dominance has had an impact on the Bobcats this season, being their lone loss of 2023.

The Bobcats earned their highest score of the season in the pyramid event, a 29.400 that almost edged out Baylor's 29.800. Quinnipiac also recorded its second-best tumbling event score of the season, a 56.900, but they couldn't measure up to the Bears' 58.025.

"I don't feel like we really lost last week at Baylor. They had their best performance (of the season), this is my highest-performing team ever," head coach Mary Ann Powers said after the win against Frostburg State on April 1.

When Quinnipiac faced Baylor at home

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## Yeargin's Yard: Sweeping off the rust

By **BENJAMIN YEARGIN**  
Associate Sports Editor

Flashes of high-energy, consistent approaches and resiliency showed when the Quinnipiac baseball team lost to Rhode Island on March 28. The Bobcats brought all three of those qualities with them when they swept the Marist Red Foxes this past weekend for their first conference sweep since 2019.

The two stars of the series were undoubtedly graduate student infielder Kyle Maves and junior outfielder Jared Zimbaro.

Maves is in the midst of a 12-game hitting streak and since March 22, has hit .417 at the plate. Head coach John Delaney moved him up to fourth in the order for the series against Marist, where he batted .500.

"He's got a little more confidence right now," Delaney said on April 2. "He's showing a little bit more discipline and he's on time with better pitches right now."

Zimbaro launched three home runs on the weekend, one to left field and two to right-center, showing off the pop he can have to all fields.

Junior catcher/outfielder Keegan O'Connor, redshirt junior first baseman/designated hitter Sean Swenson and senior outfielder Anthony Donofrio all went yard this weekend as well.

Zimbaro, O'Connor and Swenson all utilized the opposite field in game two of the doubleheader Sunday afternoon. Their timing against Marist sophomore left-handed pitcher Jack Bowery improved as the game went on; all three struggled the first time around the order but made the necessary change to get on time.

"He (Bowery) was quick from his leg lift to delivering the ball to the plate," Maves said on April 2. "As a unit we were late our first go around the order ... We were trying to be as early as possible and I think that made us on time and able to drive the ball more."

Even players who weren't necessarily get-

ting hits made their impact known throughout the series.

Take freshman outfielder John Heitzman for example. If you're looking at the box score for game one on Sunday, Heitzman went 0-3 with two strikeouts — not great. But if you dig a little deeper, you'll find Heitzman bunted over O'Connor in his first at-bat, and his next two at-bats, he saw eight or more pitches, forcing the Marist pitchers to throw more.

Another example is junior first baseman Sebastian Mueller in game one. Mueller went 1-3 with two walks, but Mueller stretched to the splits twice at first to get the runner out and was stellar defensively.

"We talk a lot with all our players (about) being able to make hits with your glove," Delaney said. "We might not be doing our job at the plate, but for every hit we might not have gotten at the plate, we're able to take away hits with our glove."

The lineup showed how good they can be when they're consistent, but they also showed how resilient they were.

O'Connor and Zimbaro's home runs on Friday tied the game and gave the Bobcats the lead, respectively. Donofrio's, Swenson's and Zimbaro's first long balls in Sunday's games were all go-ahead shots too.

Quinnipiac focused on winning the inning, and performing at its best no matter what the circumstances entailed.

"When they get on us and come out and put up a two or three spot, we can fire back when we come out on offense," Zimbaro said on April 2. "We're never uncomfortable when we go down."

For the most part, the Bobcats kept their composure under the pressure of the wind, varying umpire calls and jeering from the Red Foxes dugout. The three contests epitomized how con-



DANIEL PASSAPERERA/CHRONICLE

Junior outfielder Jared Zimbaro (right) hit three home runs this past weekend.

tentious conference games can be.

Turning to the mound, it took time for all three of the Bobcats starters to settle in but once they did, they cruised.

Senior right-handed pitchers Jimmy Hagan and Kevin Seitter and graduate student righty Tim Blaisdell allowed a combined five runs in the first inning, which nearly equaled how many runs all three gave up in total.

Hagan found his changeup and allowed only one more run in his start, Seitter regained his command and Blaisdell focused on getting more ground ball outs, with nearly half of his 18 outs coming off ground balls.

Conversely, the bullpen was volatile.

On Friday, graduate student righty Frank Craska, sophomore righty Ryan Hutchinson, freshmen left-handed pitcher Matt Alduino and righty Mike Poncini completed four no-hit innings. All four of them looked unstoppable against a Red Foxes lineup that couldn't muster any offense.

But Sunday was a different story.

Craska, who looked superb Friday, allowed three earned runs by giving up a homer to Marist senior outfielder Colin Mackle and walking senior infielder Dylan Hoy and freshman outfielder Ethan Conrad. Hutchinson was dealt a tough hand, coming in with two base runners and no outs and allowed only one earned run.

During game two, freshman righties Andrew Rubayo and Aaron Zenus allowed three runs each, a shakeup from both of their previous shut-out outings.

For the Bobcats to continue their success, consistent appearances from the bullpen are necessary. Hutchinson and Poncini have been fantastic, but guys like Craska, Rubayo and Zenus must be consistent.

The Bobcats will continue MAAC play as they face Niagara this weekend starting on Thursday at 3 p.m. and look to prove the conference wrong.

"We were picked (seventh) in the preseason MAAC poll," Maves said. "But we're here, we're coming and we're building."