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PEYTON MCKENZIE/CHRONICLE

## QU Law joins other institutions in U.S. News and World Report rankings exodus

By **KATIE LANGLEY**  
News Editor

When deciding what college or graduate school to attend, prospective students may turn to college rankings websites, such as U.S. News and World Report. However, higher education institutions, including the Harvard University and Yale University law schools, have recently refused to submit school data to U.S. News and World Report, citing a distrust in its methodology.

Jennifer Gerarda Brown, Dean of Quinnipiac University’s School of Law, announced the school will also stop participating in January.

“We believe that we are doing something special at Quinnipiac, but devoting precious administrative resources and sometimes catering to US News ranking methodology distracts and detracts from our efforts,” Brown wrote in a Jan. 23, letter on Quinnipiac’s website.

Brown wrote that she informed U.S. News and World Report in mid-January that the law school would no longer provide data to the publication.

Heather Gerken, dean of the Yale Law School, announced in November 2022 that the school will no longer participate in the U.S. News and World Report, though it has scored first among law schools every year for thirty years. Gerken wrote in a statement on Yale’s website that LSAT/GRE scores and grade point averages account for much of a law school’s score, which does not “capture the full measure of an applicant.”

A number of medical and law schools fol-

lowed suit in pulling out of the rankings, including the Stanford and Columbia medical schools and the Harvard Law School.

To be considered in the U.S. News and World Report law school rankings, schools must submit data about test scores, grades, employment rates, bar passage rates and resources like librarians and financial aid.

However, the publication weighs traditional academic indicators above resources for students, such as financial aid.

For example, selectivity factors – median LSAT/GRE test scores, median GPA and acceptance rate – account for 21% of any given law school’s ranking, according to the methodology. Faculty, law school and library resources are only weighted at 13%, including expenditures, financial aid, student-to-faculty ratio and library resources and operations, according to U.S. News and World Report.

The remainder of a school’s score is determined by a quality assessment done by other schools, lawyers and judges, worth 40%, and placement success, such as employment rates for graduates, bar-passage rates and average debt incurred by students, worth 26% of the total score.

Brown expressed in her letter that this disparity between scores and support may provide advantages to wealthier students and discourage diversity in law schools, as well as negatively impact students’ mental health.

“Indeed, because US News methodology emphasizes incoming LSAT scores so heavily, it has sometimes undermined our efforts to assess prospective students holistically,” Brown wrote.

Quinnipiac is currently ranked between 147-192 in the Best Law Schools ranking among 192 institutions nationwide. U.S. News and World Report only individually ranks the top three-quarters of law schools. The law school is displayed on the publication’s website alphabetically rather than according to its rank because it is in the bottom quartile.

R.J. Schroeder, senior psychology major and president of the Pre-Law Society, wrote in a statement to the Chronicle that he supports the law school’s decision.

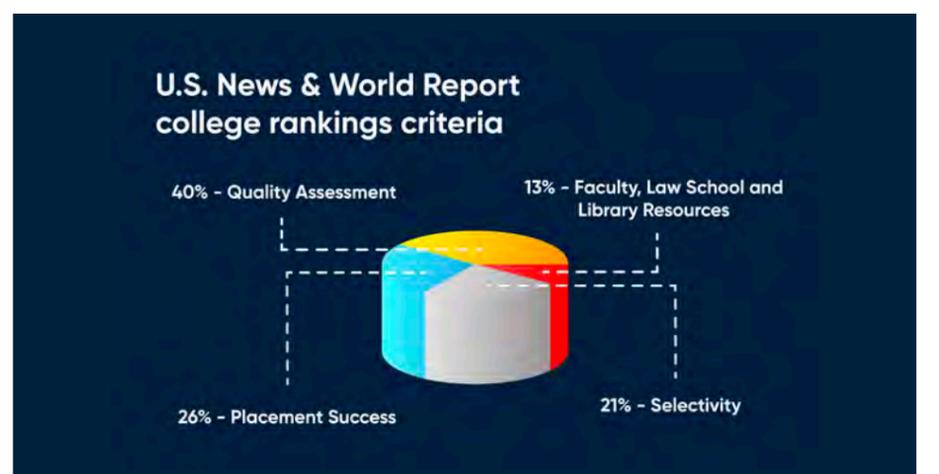
“(Schools that participate in the U.S. News Ranking) go to events, devoting time and money to promote themselves to peer institutions so they can attempt to rank higher,” Schroeder wrote. “Quinnipiac Law chooses to devote their resources inward toward their stu-

dents and their success instead of campaigning to other schools.”

Although Quinnipiac Law pulled out of the rankings, Associate Vice President for Public Relations John Morgan told the Chronicle that the university’s medical and undergraduate schools will continue supplying data to U.S. News and World Report. Morgan did not make any university or law school administrators available for comment.

Schroeder wrote that he thinks that bar passage rates are a better indicator of student success than other metrics. Quinnipiac Law currently lists a 77% Connecticut bar passage rate on its website.

Morgan declined on Jan. 23, to make Brown available for further comment about the decision to pull out of the U.S. News and World Report.



INFOGRAPHIC BY PEYTON MCKENZIE

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# Accessibility 'not specifically' part of South Quad planning, university official says

By CAT MURPHY

Associate News Editor

Some Quinnipiac University students with disabilities are questioning the university administration's commitment to disability inclusivity amid new concerns about the accessibility of the South Quad construction site.

Sal Filardi, vice president for facilities and capital planning, announced the extent of construction-related changes to the south side of the Mount Carmel Campus in an email to the Quinnipiac community on Jan. 20.

The ongoing South Quad construction closed the pathway connecting Bobcat Way to the College of Arts and Sciences buildings through Pine Grove. Alternatively, students, faculty and staff can travel behind The Commons residence hall, down Hilltop Road and up Pine Grove Road to access the CAS buildings from Bobcat Way, according to Filardi's email.

A subsection of the Code of Federal Regulations addressing nondiscrimination on the basis of disability pertains to the accessibility standards applicable to new construction and alterations.

The path of travel to areas of primary function must remain "readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs," during alterations such as reconstruction that may impact the accessibility, per 28 CFR § 36.403.

However, an investigation conducted by the Chronicle indicated that a one-inch speed bump extends into the pedestrian pathway on Hilltop Road.

"It's not a very big obstacle, but it could still be considered an obstacle," Filardi told the Chronicle on Jan. 27.

Although Filardi said at the time that university officials were planning to remove the protruding section of the speed bump from the pedestrian pathway "within the next few days," the speed bump has yet to be altered as of Feb. 6.

The detour path to the CAS buildings also includes a section of sidewalk without an accessible exit for individuals who use mobility aids such as wheelchairs.

Although the sidewalk features two curb ramp entrances, the path ends in an approximately eight-and-a-half-inch descent to the pedestrian pathway painted along Hilltop Road.

Filardi said that university officials "didn't notice" the lack of a curb ramp and were "moving to correct that as quickly as possible."

However, Filardi said that adding a curb ramp to that section of sidewalk may not be feasible. University officials would instead look to extend the painted pedestrian pathway



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**The South Quad construction posed accessibility barriers that a university official said he "didn't notice."**

and add signage labeling the inaccessible sidewalk, Filardi said.

"I don't think there's anything else that we can do to make the sidewalks any more accessible," Filardi added. "I think they're relatively accessible now."

Although the pedestrian pathway was repainted on Feb. 3, to encompass the length of the sidewalk, signage identifying the sidewalk has not yet been added.

Kate Palumbo, director of the Office of Student Accessibility, said university officials are implementing individualized accommodations as well as exploring long-term solutions that are "more sustainable throughout the duration of the construction."

The construction of a temporary shuttle stop in front of the CAS buildings is among the options being considered, said Tony Reyes, chief of public safety.

"There's a lot of consideration on whether or not we can do that, but it is a viable option adding a stop there," Reyes said. "Definitely in the long term, it's something we should consider."

However, university administrators did not explicitly consider the accessibility of the pedestrian pathway during the construction planning process, Filardi said.

"Not specifically was accessibility part of the process because it was just rerouting on existing campus sidewalks and pathways," Filardi said. "It's not like we've created something new that students are walking through for the first time."

Reyes said that university officials expected students with concerns about the accessibility of the construction-related changes to con-

tact the Office of Student Accessibility.

"Communication went out to the entire community prior to the start of the semester with an explanation about the construction," Reyes said. "I would imagine that would prompt a student that has any special request to call our respective offices, if that's going to present a challenge for them."

However, university officials also chose not to publicize the specifics of the detour route until just before the start of the spring semester, Filardi said.

"We purposely put it out shortly before everybody was coming back," Filardi said. "We wanted to make sure it didn't get lost in the email over break."

Several students with disabilities voiced concerns about the accessibility challenges posed by the detour.

Cailinn Stockman, a senior sociology major, expressed anxiety about the inaccessibility of the detour path.

"I have a lot of muscle tightness and muscle weakness, which makes it hard to basically walk and move, so I do use a scooter to navigate campus," Stockman, who has cerebral palsy, said. "It was a little bit scary having to navigate (the construction) with the chair because of the uneven surfaces and speed bump."

Paul Ashton, a sophomore film, television and media arts major with a mobility disability, criticized the university's lack of consideration for students with disabilities.

"I knew about the route, but I didn't think it would be that egregious," Ashton said. "It feels like they prioritize their own construction and their own future plans over the students that are actually there now."

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# QU replaced Braille signs during renovations to meet legal standard of accessibility

By **CAT MURPHY**  
Associate News Editor

Quinnipiac University officials appear to have replaced several individual Braille signs in Tator Hall to meet the legal standard of accessibility without updating every sign in the building, an investigation conducted by the Chronicle revealed.

Braille is “a system of raised dots that can be read with the fingers,” according to the American Foundation for the Blind. Tactile signage often features Braille to make “permanent rooms and spaces” within public accommodations identifiable and accessible to individuals who are blind or who have low vision, per the 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design.

Section 703.4.1 of the 2010 ADA standards stipulates that the baseline of the highest tactile character on Braille signage must be mounted a maximum of 60 inches from the ground.

The Chronicle investigation in September 2022 identified at least 58 tactile signs in Tator Hall that do not comply with the 2010 mounting height standards.

However, the 2010 standards include a “safe harbor” provision under which elements constructed or altered prior to March 15, 2012, in compliance with the 1991 standards “are not required to be modified,” according to section 36.304 of Title 28 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

The signs in Tator Hall are compliant with the applicable height specifications outlined in the 1991 regulations, which required tactile signage to be centered 60 inches from the ground. Thus, university officials are not legally obligated to relocate the signs to the height standards specified in the 2010 requirements.

Sal Filardi, vice president for facilities

and capital planning, confirmed in October 2022 that the university would not replace the signs because “they were installed at a time where that’s what the code was.”

“There are no students on any of our campuses that require Braille,” Filardi said at the time. “There’s technically no need for the signs right now.”

However, the safe harbor provision is not applicable to elements that have undergone alterations since March 15, 2012, per 28 CFR 36.406.

The original tactile signage identifying rooms TH-105, TH-107, TH-112, TH-119, TH-128, TH-217, TH-218, TH-226, TH-229 and TH-324 has been replaced since 2012, according to the Chronicle’s investigation.

All but one of the updated signs comply with the 2010 ADA height standards. The remaining sign, located outside room TH-112, has been updated but is mounted above the maximum height requirement established in 2010.

The Chronicle’s investigation indicated that at least three-quarters of the updated signs in Tator Hall were replaced amid renovations.

The signage identifying two engineering classrooms, TH-105 and TH-107, and a faculty office space, TH-119, was replaced sometime after the university launched its engineering program in the fall of 2012.

Filardi told the Chronicle in 2015 that the university had previously rededicated several spaces on the first floor of Tator Hall to accommodate the new engineering department.

“There’s a couple classrooms of engineering along the wall,” Filardi said at the time. “We also put a suite in there for the faculty.”

Filardi confirmed that his description corresponded to rooms TH-105, TH-107 and TH-119, all of which have received updated tactile signage compliant with the 2010 ADA standards since 2012.

The Chronicle’s investigation also linked four of the updated signs to renovations undertaken in Tator Hall between 2017 and 2019.

Two lecture classrooms in Tator Hall were renovated in approximately 2017 to create a large biology lab in TH-217 and a lab preparatory space in TH-218, a professor with knowledge of the construction told the Chronicle. Filardi confirmed that signage identifying rooms TH-217 and TH-218 was updated at this time.

The town of Hamden issued Quinnipiac a building permit on May 30, 2019, to renovate several classrooms in Buckman Center and Tator Hall, including rooms TH-229 and TH-324. Filardi confirmed that the signs located outside classrooms TH-229 and TH-324 were replaced amid the 2019 renovations.

The tactile sign identifying room TH-226, an electrical closet located outside room TH-229, has also been replaced with a sign matching those outside rooms TH-229 and TH-324. Filardi told the Chronicle that the sign identifying room TH-226 was likely replaced as part of the 2019 renovations.

Filardi confirmed that various renovations prompted university officials to update individual tactile signs in Tator Hall but repeatedly denied that the signs were replaced specifically to comply with ADA standards pertaining to alterations.

“It’s not about

legally,” Filardi said. “It’s about the appropriate use of resources.”

Rather, Filardi said university officials opted to replace the signs in Tator Hall as part of a larger initiative to standardize the signage on Quinnipiac’s campuses.

“It’s more of a branding thing than it’s been a code-driven thing,” Filardi said. “Eventually, all the signs will be changed.”

However, Filardi also said university officials are not planning to replace the original signage in Tator Hall because the current signs meet the “needs of the campus.”

“It’s just not common that you just go and change everything because you can,” Filardi said. “We’re not changing them out until we need to.”

Filardi declined to elaborate on why university officials would not replace the signage in Tator Hall for accessibility purposes.

“I don’t know that I could really answer that,” Filardi said.



## Community members receive inaugural award honoring MLK

By **KRYSTAL MILLER and CARLEIGH BECK**

Five members of the Quinnipiac University community received the MLK Dream Award on Feb. 1, for honoring the legacy



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**Professor of psychology and womens and gender studies William Jellison, who recieved the MLK Dream award, said that concepts of diversity should be included in all courses.**

of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. through their work for the community.

The winners of the first annual award were Marilyn Ford, professor of law; William Jellison, professor of psychology; Khalilah Brown-Dean, associate provost for faculty affairs; Emily Diaz, junior political science major; and Mercy Quaye, alumna and founder of The Narrative Project.

“The award is to a student who, kind of embodies some of the characteristics and the morals and values that MLK hopes to see in our youth today, that is continually fighting for what they believe in and for what’s right,” Diaz said.

Diaz is the president of the Latino Culture Society and the treasurer of the Indigenous Student Union. She sat on the Cultural Planning Committee but is currently spending the semester in Washington, D.C., working with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute. She said she is conducting research on the indigenous people in Chile decolonizing histories of gender.

“My work really intends to empower people of color across the board, all of our students, and finding ways where we can have access to equitable resources and opportunities on campus,” Diaz said.

Diaz said she worked to see herself represented in more positions of power on campus, and has worked with the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Indigeneity Initiative

and the Department of Cultural and Global Engagement at Quinnipiac.

She also said the multicultural education part of the DCGE has helped her with access to resources and the Quinnipiac University Enriching Students Transitions program, where she worked as a mentor in the First-Year Immersion program to support underrepresented students’ transition to Quinnipiac.

“I work really hard on sort of facilitating unity within our Black and brown students ... so that we can come together and sort of move away from the categorization of who we are,” Diaz said.

According to the Quinnipiac Spring 2022 Equity and Inclusion report, the class of 2025 is 78.8% non-underrepresented minority.

Diaz said she feels supported and lucky that her work means something to Quinnipiac even when she is not on campus this semester.

“I’m just grateful that there is a community here, and I hope that with the work that I do, but the work alongside the other people who have won awards is really shining through the community, not for me, but to support them, and make sure that they have the resources, opportunities and access to the things that they deserve,” Diaz said.

Jellison, who teaches psychology and women and gender studies, said receiving the award rendered him “speechless.”

“I’m kind of taken aback,” Jellison said.

“I think it’s an honor to be recognized for what I do and what I’ve done for a couple of decades on campus.”

Jellison is the faculty affiliate for the Unity Living Learning Community and is also the faculty advisor for the Gender and Sexuality Alliance Club. Both the LLC and the GSA are organizations that help bring the Quinnipiac LGBTQ community together.

He has taught courses that incorporate topics like gender and sexuality. Some of these courses include MCI 150, Queering the Screen: LGBTQ, which runs during the fall semester.

“I think sometimes (diversity, equity, and inclusion) work is seen as an ‘add on’, it’s seen as something that people do on the side, not necessarily a core part of their work,” Jellison said. “(DEI) serves the needs of our students, it has value when it comes to serving the needs of all out are students.”

Jellison explained why DEI courses, especially those pertaining to the LGBTQ community, are important to students.

“I think we can incorporate these ideas into all our courses,” Jellison said. “The more we see the relevance of it, it becomes less about ‘I need to take this class to check off a box’ and more about ‘how can I be more informed or more well rounded?’”

A ceremony for all the recipients of the MLK Dream Award will be held on Feb. 25.

# Opinion

## I'm short: Let's talk about Turner Syndrome

By **CARLEIGH BECK**  
Staff Writer

February is Turner Syndrome Awareness Month. Starting a discussion about this syndrome is important because this condition is not talked about enough, yet many families are affected by it. I was diagnosed with the condition at nine years old, which is why I'm passionate about spreading awareness about it.

Growing up with Turner Syndrome, which is symbolized by a butterfly, came with difficulties. I had doctor appointments that I missed school for. Sometimes I felt like an outcast because of my condition, and I was made fun of for it.

### What is Turner Syndrome?

Allow me to take you back to biology class for a minute. Chromosomes are bundles of DNA and almost everyone has 23 pairs of them. The last pair determines the sex of the person: two "X" chromosomes for females, and an "X" and a "Y" for males. Turner Syndrome occurs when a female is missing part of one or all of an "X" chromosome.

Though there are multiple traits of TS, the most common one is short stature, with the average height with no growth hormone medication being four feet, eight inches. Another common trait is ovarian failure, which causes a lack of production in estrogen, so women with TS require hormone replacement therapy. Some of the other traits include hearing loss and autoimmune diseases.

According to The Turner Syndrome Foundation, the condition is only found in

0.05% of females, and unfortunately, 98% of fetuses with TS don't make it due to miscarriage or stillbirth. TS is the cause for 15% of all miscarriages.

### My Diagnosis

My parents and doctors noticed I was much shorter than the average eight-year-old girl, so they decided to test me for conditions that could cause this. After testing me for a plethora of conditions, they tested me for TS. Through the tests, it was found that part of one of my "X" chromosomes was missing and I was diagnosed with the condition.

Because TS can cause many other medical issues, I proceeded to get more tests and ultrasounds to make sure I was in good health. Luckily, the only major concern has been issues with my thyroid.

Soon after my diagnosis, I started on a nightly injection of growth hormone that helped me grow. However, because I was diagnosed a little late, the medication only worked for so long, I only grew to be four feet and eight inches tall.

### Why Awareness Month Matters

The condition has many names, such as Turner Syndrome, TS or 45 X. However,



ILLUSTRATION BY AMANDA RIFA

many people don't know about it. Even if people did know about this condition, there are many misconceptions in the media.

One example of this is the "Law and Order: SVU" episode "Clocks," which is about a 17-year-old girl with TS who goes missing. Not only did the actress not have TS, but the episode received a lot of backlash from the TS community because of how characters would describe her. Detectives described her as a "woman stuck in a child's body," almost to the point where they infantilize her.

The problematic episode reflects the unacceptable behaviors women with TS deal with on a regular basis. Many of my friends with TS have pointed out that people perceive them differently because of their height. This goes as far as feeling like they're not being taken seriously as adults.

I also have experienced this. I've felt like I've been treated differently because of my height. People have called me names ranging from "mini Lego figure" to "midget."

I recently spoke with Catherine Melman-Kenny, a friend of mine who has TS and is a recent graduate of Monmouth Uni-

versity. We talked about our experiences with TS, and she brought up a story from when she had to get bloodwork done.

"I walked in... for a blood test. As soon as I got in, one of the employees went to go grab her coworkers and said 'come look at her, she's so tiny and adorable,'" Melman-Kenny said.

These terms aren't just offensive, but they can deeply affect one's opportunities and mental health. As seen in "SVU", people treat short women like children, not adults. This is because many tend to assume they're shy and weak, leading short people to be overlooked.

Not only is TS Awareness Month important to let the general public know about the condition and raise the voices of those with TS, but it's important because it helps the medical community better understand the condition.

There are not many medical professionals out there who know what TS is. Because of that, it's difficult to find clinics that have the proper medical care for people with TS. I'm lucky because there is a great TS clinic an hour away from my home where I've been receiving treatment since I was diagnosed. But for many, this is not the case.

By spreading the word about TS, women with the condition will have more access to everything from opportunities in the workplace to necessary medical treatment. This will improve their quality of life and allow future generations of those with TS to thrive.

## Shake Smart cafe shakes up the status quo of healthy eating

By **DAVID MATOS**  
Arts & Life Editor

I never thought I'd make drinking smoothies part of my daily ritual in the heart of winter, but Quinnipiac University's Shake Smart cafe has pushed me to change my attitude.



JACK MUSCATELLO/CHRONICLE

The shakes at Shake Smart start at \$5.75 and can be paid for through meal plan.

Quinnipiac launched its new shake shop on the Mount Carmel campus as part of the newly-designed Recreation and Wellness Center. To be frank, the newly constructed RecWell center overshadowed the addition of Shake Smart, but the cafe has become the secret underdog of the new expansion.

From homemade Jamba Juice to Juice Generation, I've had my fair share of shakes and smoothies. The shakes made at Shake Smart, however, are by far the yummiest and most addictive. The menu offers a variety of shake and smoothie options that cater to an array of demands.

Each shake includes one of four protein powder options — chocolate, vanilla, plant-based and cookies and cream. Also, the cafe provides multiple milk-based choices, including low-fat, nonfat, almond and oat milk along with traditional fruits like strawberries and blueberries, to name a few, to add to your drink. Furthermore, the cafe serves coffee and tea. My personal favorite is the green tea matcha which is great for pre-workout at the RecWell center or just to quench your thirst.

The variety of ingredients is a nice addition to the cafe and I like how many of the menu options are customizable, allowing you to put together the perfect drink.

Though it's nice to have the option to conjure up my creation, I usually like to opt for one of the ready-made recipes on the menu after my daily workout. Though I have yet to try everything, my favorite so far is the pink cadillac, which consists of dragon fruit, pineapple, orange juice and vanilla protein. Though the drink is made up of exclusively healthy ingredients, it tastes sweet and almost like I'm drinking cotton candy. When I'm not in a sweet mood, I usually go for the greens to go, which trades the dragon fruit for spinach and banana.

Having a place on campus that makes healthy eating accessible is satisfying, to say the least. In my first semester of college in the fall of 2019, I was coming off of just losing 100 pounds. I was in the healthiest shape I have ever been, but coming to college I found it difficult to maintain my weight due to the lack of healthy options on campus. Eating salads and quesadillas from

the Bobcat Den every day was tiring, and it got to the point that I felt like I was starving myself. It's nice to finally have a place on campus that promotes healthy eating, while still being appetizing to anyone simply looking for a tasty treat.

The downside, however, is the pricing of their shakes. With each shake ranging at around \$7, I could easily see Shake Smart shaking up my meal plan. Also, though their blended and non-blended acai bowls are delectable, I have trouble with the fruit-to-acai ratio in their bowls. Each bowl feels overwhelmed with acai and not enough fruit. I'm also not a fan of their oatmeal, but I'm picky with oatmeal to begin with.

It's nice to have a new spot on campus to do your work, hang out with friends and pick up a yummy treat. Also, I must add the student-curated soundtrack that blasts over the shake cafe while you're waiting for your order is brilliant. Though I might be having a difficult day, it's nice to have an impromptu jam session to Britney Spears' "I'm a Slave 4 U" or Beyonce's "Run the World (Girls)" to lift my spirits.

# Opinion

## What the American mall has taught me about change

By **MICHAEL LARocca**  
Opinion Editor

Since the beginning of COVID-19 and as I enrolled here at Quinnipiac University, I've learned how to be grateful for the person I am and the circumstances under which I have lived.

I have begun to notice that many places and activities that made my childhood so distinct and iconic are evolving, specifically the American mall. It would be stubborn of me to believe that nothing should change, but I cannot help but observe how different things are now.

Whether it be the decline of dining in at fast food restaurants in favor of delivery or my inability to relate to the children's programming of today like I used to, I'm finally feeling the effects of my childhood fading away.

While those are two of the many changes I have endured, I can live with them. However, the one change I cannot live with is the decline of the American shopping mall. I understand that accepting change is a good thing, but why shouldn't we be allowed to keep one thing we like the same? Even if the mall is not appreciated by the people of today, I reserve the right to hang on to it as hard as I can.

When one hears about malls in 2023, all that's discussed is how they're in rapid decline and they're doomed shopping venues in the age of online shopping. Business Insider even estimated that there may be as few as 150 still standing nationwide by the year 2032.

With all this negativity surrounding the mall, I concluded that I grew up at the end of an era. I idolized it. I saw it as this huge utopia that my little brain could barely fathom.

The two malls I have frequented throughout my life are the Monmouth Mall in Eatontown, New Jersey, and the Freehold Raceway Mall in Freehold, New Jersey.

I've lived through many unforgettable moments at these places. I remember eating Johnny Rockets at the Monmouth Mall with my grandparents, as well as seeing "Black Panther" with my friends there in high school. I went on my first-ever date at the Freehold Raceway Mall, and the merry-go-round in its food court will forever be a monument of my childhood.

Why would I want to let go of these places when they've given me so much?

As a youngster, going to these places used to be a treat, keeping the magic alive. As I got older, however, I was able to drive to these places more often, allowing me to fully analyze the state they are in and better understand them.

The Freehold Raceway Mall, miraculously, is still in pretty good shape. Whenever I take my 40-minute trek out there, I'm always pleased by how clean it is, how people are still visiting it and how there are still stores filling its outlets.

To me, it represents the final flicker of light coming from the candle that is the American Dream.

On the other hand, the Monmouth Mall is in

shambles. The aforementioned Johnny Rockets has been closed for years now and many of the storefronts I grew up visiting now lay vacant. To make things worse, crime spiked in the area surrounding the mall, causing the movie theater to be cut off from the mall for security reasons.

The state of the malls I grew up with puts me in a place I've never seen before. I can see the things I love simultaneously thriving and falling apart. One shows me why I'm still hanging on and the other shows me why I should let go.

Yet, I still visit both. I visit Freehold Raceway because of how timeless it is and I visit Monmouth despite how terrible it has become. They are two sides of the same coin, and I still plan on paying.

For me, the magic is still alive. Win or lose, I will still go to the mall. I understand that everything is changing. We live in a completely different world in 2023 than we did back in 2012.

I have never been the most receptive to change throughout my life, but I'm trying to get better. However, this is what I am hanging on to. I'm hanging onto the memories of my childhood, adolescence and adulthood.

Why would I ask someone to give away all the DVDs they grew up watching or take down all the posters in their childhood bedroom? That's how I feel about these beautiful, nostalgic, abhorrently large buildings.

I don't want to see these monuments of American capitalism fall, but if they do, I will stand with them until the very end.



MIKEKALASNIK/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

The Monmouth Mall (pictured above), is expected to have portions of it redeveloped into an apartment complex.

## Flats or drums: May the best wing win

By **NEHA SEENARINE**  
Arts & Life Editor

Chicken wing flats are underappreciated.

When I order wings as an appetizer at a restaurant, there's one thing I always notice: the chicken wing flats are left for last. My friends always seem to go for the drum pieces instead, but flats have an underrated beauty to them.

The flats are made up of two bones with dark chicken meat between them. People prefer its counterpart, the drum, because it only has one bone. That's a lazy excuse not to enjoy the flat.

The shape of the flat is perfect every time. When fried chicken wings are being cooked, they are placed alternately in egg and flour before frying. The flat allows the flour coating to be thin and even when the wing is being cooked.

Whereas, when the drum is being fried, the batter tends to be at the head of the piece. This leads to the final product having more chunky parts of fried batter, which may distract from the chicken portion. The flat's coating is thin and

crispy leading its consumer right to what they want, the chicken.

When you order chicken wings at a restaurant, the common follow-up question from your server is, "Would you like ranch or blue cheese with that?" Whether your wings are coated in a sauce or bare, it is almost always better complimented with a sauce.

Flats hold the sauce better than chicken wing drums. Whichever dressing you prefer, they are usually served in a little container. With flats, it is easier to dip the wing in and get an even coat of dressing on it. This is beneficial because if you're sharing the dressing with anyone else at the table, there's less chance of double-dipping. Also, when you dip the drum, the proportions of the wing are not even because it's fat at the top and the width descends making it difficult to cover.

Although I'm aware the chicken wing flats are not a fan-favorite, I know their worth. In the end, there's always more for me.

By **CONNOR COAR**  
Contributing Writer

Let me paint you a picture. You and your friends are watching the Super Bowl at a restaurant, bar or even in your dorm room. It is a calm environment and you are trying to enjoy time with the people around you.

The last thing that you want is to work for the food you are eating. That is exactly what happens when you eat wing flats: you have to work your way around the two bones to get to the chicken.

Of course, you could make a somewhat reasonable case for wing flats. You can break it like a wishbone and then pick at the chicken with your fingers, but that causes too many unnecessary steps when you are trying to watch a game.

The ratio of bone to chicken is a lot less in a wing drum than a wing flat. Many times, the thickness of the entire wing flat is more of the bone than the actual chicken which can discourage people very quickly after taking their first bite.

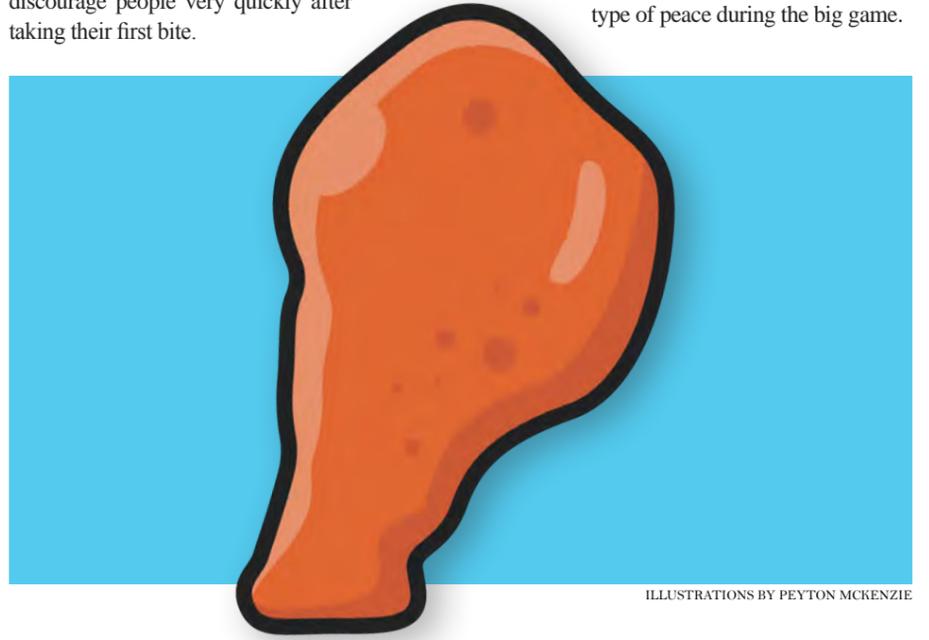
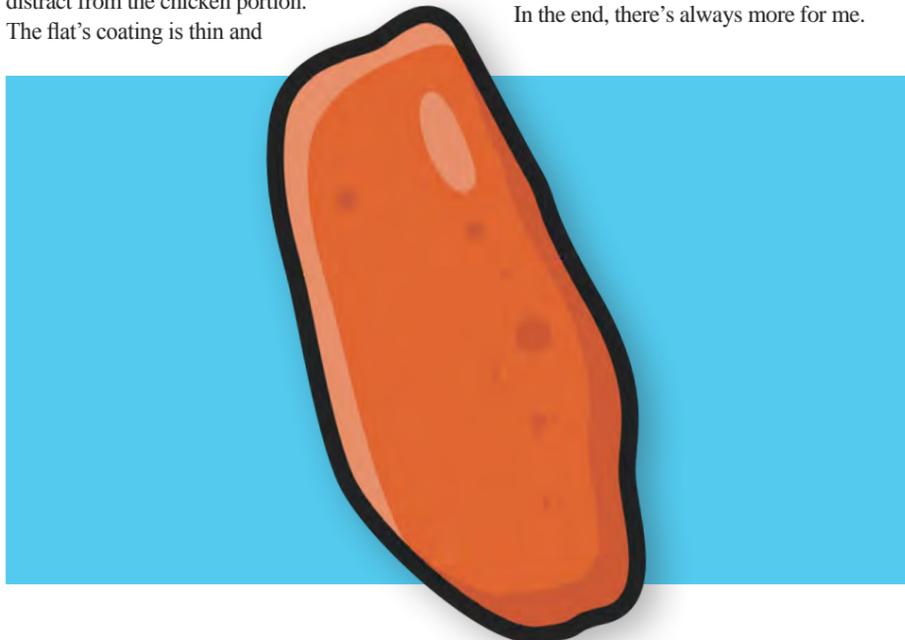
When I am eating a wing drum, I don't need to inspect the wing to see where I can take my first bite. All I need to do is take a bite anywhere on the wing and enjoy it along with the blue cheese that is on the bone.

When you dunk a wing flat into a small blue cheese container, all of the sauce ends up on the bone that is covered by the bread batter. On the flip side, when you want to get blue cheese on your wing drum, you can easily apply the dressing to the wing and do not have to bite into a bone.

Most people also have some sort of beverage to go along with the wings to wash down after every few bites, so you would need a free hand to be able to perform such actions.

Whether you are a wing connoisseur or a casual fan of the finger food, I think that it is safe to say that you can get some sort of moral win after working to get the chicken for wing flats.

However, wing drums bring a certain type of peace during the big game.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY PEYTON MCKENZIE

# Arts & Life

## Breaking down the nepo baby boom

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

Between “Hannah Montana,” “Fifty Shades of Grey” and “Euphoria,” there is one common denominator: nepotism babies. The actors who made names for themselves in these titles (Miley Cyrus, Dakota Johnson and Maude Apatow, respectively) — and hundreds of other celebrities in hundreds of other examples — are products of nepotism.

Until last year, the privilege of being born into a successful family and all the resources that come with it, especially in Hollywood, was noticed but rarely called out.

But this largely changed after a December 2022 article by Vulture rounded up the recent discourse about the children of celebrities and the buzzword to describe them: nepo babies.

The article, which pinpointed the internet as the origin of the phrase, dubbed 2022 “the year of the nepo baby,” because of the online chatter about the topic. But since then, “nepo baby” has only become more widely used — TikTok videos tagged with the term have racked up more than 300 million views to date, and Google searches of the phrase peaked in popularity on Dec. 24, 2022 per Google Trends.

The main argument critics have against calling someone a nepo baby is that the term suggests that having a well-connected family brings about unfair advantages.

In many cases, though, children do

follow in their parents’ footsteps. Data from the General Social Survey, which tracks trends in American society, indicates that children are between 1.7 and 2.7 times as likely to pursue the same career paths as their parents, depending on their gender.

However, the career is only one half of the conversation — the other, more significant side is whether nepo babies can be successful in their own right, which is where many celebrities are objecting.

Lily-Rose Depp, the actress daughter of Johnny Depp and Vanessa Paradis, said in an interview with “Elle” magazine in November 2022 that the term “just doesn’t make any sense.”

“Nothing is going to get you the part except for being right for the part,” Lily-Rose Depp said.

Kaia Gerber, the daughter of supermodel Cindy Crawford and Rande Gerber, acknowledged her privilege in an interview with “Elle” magazine in January. But she also said that nepotism in the acting industry is “so different,” because “no artist is going to sacrifice their vision for someone’s kid.”

Online, such comments by nepo babies like Lily-Rose Depp and Kaia Gerber have been criticized for being tone-deaf. But they’ve also continued the conversation about nepo babies, including who qualifies as one.

Last month, a horde of TikTokers began



ILLUSTRATION BY EMMA KOGEL

weighing in on their own claims to the nepo baby-verse by sharing uncommon family connections. From dads owning the popular hometown plumbing company to moms who pass on their thrifting skills, the new trend has shed light on just how widely the term can be applied, even if it’s a stretch.

Between the debate about who’s really

talented in Hollywood and the TikTok trend of normal people sharing their claim to fame, it’s clear the term nepo baby has hit the mainstream. Moreover, it proves that nepo babies are not just celebrities — in fact, nepo babies are everywhere, depending on how you choose to apply the term.

## Fast fashion and fighting fads

By **FIONA STEVENS**  
Contributing Writer

Singer Olivia Rodrigo’s fashion sense has many labels: grungy, early 2000s and disco-chic. Every red carpet or paparazzi look has a carefully crafted aesthetic for the 19-year-old three-time Grammy winner.

The fashion credit goes to Rodrigo and her

stylist duo, Chloe and Chenelle Delgadillo, who pair up looks from the iconic Vivienne Westwood with platform Dr. Martens. But with such gorgeous couture comes a price tag. In turn, fans of the actress’ dresses, shoes and bedazzled butterfly clips are left wondering how they can emulate their idol

best.

The fashion industry works in a trickle-down formation. Designers showcase their works on the global stage of fashion week and the best of the pack are selected by stylists and celebrities to flaunt their work on an upcoming red carpet.

With these premieres and the clamor to wear such glamour, department stores like H&M begin to introduce the trending styles into their catalog. Even simple things such as a color palette begin to start to take over the racks. Shortly after the launch of Rodrigo’s “SOUR” tour, the pastel purple, sage green and sky blue of the album cover began to appear on a series of plaid skirts and lacy baby tees, all priced at an affordable \$15.

But fashion is not a stagnant entity. It’s an innovative, creative craft and with the rise of social media, what’s trendy is out within two weeks. So how does the consumer pay affordable prices on clothes that will sit in a closet for months when what was once hot is now not?

The term fast fashion has been integrating itself into the media cycles for the past year as consumers have been turning to the monstrosity that is online shopping. Companies like SHEIN or Fashion Nova offer rock-bottom prices and sales that advertise on-trend clothes that arrive at your house within a week. When you can strut the latest styles, protect your wallet

and be caught up with the trends, what’s the problem?

The ugly side of the fashion industry—the exploitation of overseas labor, adding to our globe’s overall waste and the coercion of the unwitting consumer is what fast fashion lives by. The facts are difficult to ignore with nearly 170 child laborers contracted to help create 92 million tons of clothes that are tossed away yearly. With changing trend cycles, retailers like SHEIN seize the opportunity to promote the latest and greatest with the help of social media influencers who are looking for the payout. The goal is to turn a profit and a profit alone, without consequence. What also gets lost is the original appreciation and intention behind the art of fashion.

It’s always been a creative expression of identity; what you wear is your first introduction to who you are as a person. Rodrigo’s looks are crafted to emphasize her journey from Disney actress to smash-hit pop star and constantly reinvents her image. So, are you into athleisure, emphasizing comfort in between workouts? Do you accessorize, mix metals or have a shoe collection? Are you the trend setter or seeker? Following fashion trends that are over in a quick minute are lackluster and offer nothing to your presentation of self. I urge everyone to take a good look at their closets and ask themselves: Who am I really?

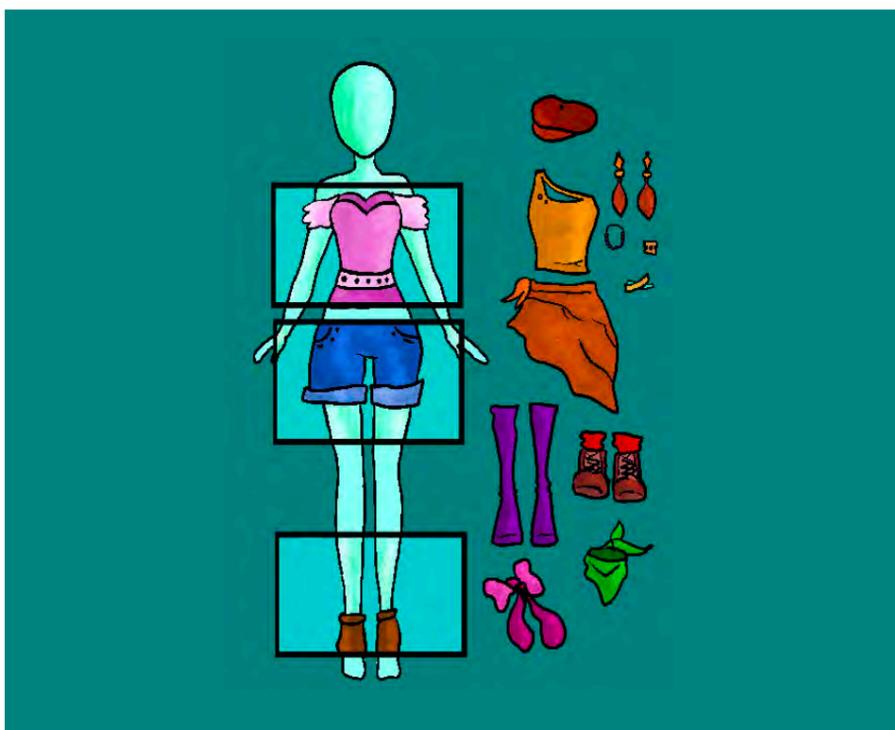


ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX KENDALL

# Arts & Life

## '80 for Brady': A championship-caliber friendship flick

By **ETHAN HURWITZ**  
Sports Editor

After legendary quarterback Tom Brady announced his retirement from the NFL last week, "80 for Brady" was released in select theaters on Feb. 3. Director Kyle Marvin, along with Brady as a producer, use the real-life "Over 80 for Brady" fan club as an inspiration for the film, which has gotten waves of media attention since the initial announcement last year.

Focused around a group of older women (Jane Fonda, Sally Field, Rita Moreno and Lily Tomlin) who travel to Super Bowl LI, the four find themselves in a load of child-like high jinks in their quest to find their idol, Brady.

With the ladies' increasing age, they attempt to make one last-ditch attempt to watch their beloved Patriots. With Lou's (Tomlin) worsening illness, the friends use the Super Bowl backdrop to solidify

their friendship.

The film has a quick runtime of 98 minutes and gets to the story immediately, so there is no fluff with trying to understand what the premise is. It does a good job of explaining the struggles the women face as they try and go off to the Super Bowl at a fast-paced speed.

Whether it was writing a Rob Gronkowski fan-fiction, winning a spicy wing-eating contest, accidentally taking edibles or trying to sneak out of a nursing home, the women find themselves in outrageous situations that would rival any stereotypical college weekend.

It's corny with a number of niche Brady moments (as one would expect from Brady's own 199 Productions company) but has enough generation-spanning references to get a laugh out of anybody. Cameos from Sally Kirkland, Rob Corddry, Guy Fieri and Julian Edelman allow viewers from any generation to recognize someone on screen.

Each actress had their moments to shine, but both Lou and Betty (Field) can take control of the friend group and seemingly quarterback them back to Earth. While the plot takes a number of twists and turns, the central idea of "it's not what you do, but who you do it with" stays firm throughout.

Another common thread was the topic of

cancer. Lou is dreading her diagnosis after previously going through chemotherapy and uses Brady and the Patriots as an escape. It contrasts against the light-hearted comedy that is seen throughout the film. Because of Brady's mother's cancer diagnosis during the Super Bowl in real life, it draws some emotions from all of the parties involved.

Sure, logic is loosely employed in the film, and a lot of seemingly magical moments happen in an instant, but it is all fun. A silly movie that combines some of Hollywood's biggest names with football's biggest talent is something people need to watch. The plot may be whimsical, but for a buddy film that also intertwines the theme of age, it is a charming watch.

Would I have enjoyed it as much if it was focused on another quarterback and another NFL franchise? Likely not as much, but the nostalgic Patriots clips and mocking of the Boston sports media footage consistently brought a big smile to my face. Clips of a real sporting event played in the backdrop to the ladies' journey, something most sports movies don't include.

You don't have to be a football fan to enjoy it (though it may help) and I think that it is well worth the watch, despite how much outlandish mayhem is present.



ILLUSTRATION BY AMANDA RIHA

## NFL offensive linemen: America's true unsung heroes

By **ETHAN LOGUE**  
Contributing Writer

I've kept this bottled up for a while, but it's something that I believe needs to be said: NFL offensive linemen are the real heroes of football.

Now I know what you may be thinking, how can this be true? When has an offensive lineman ever taken home an award like "Most Valuable Player," "Offensive Player of the Year" or "Offensive Rookie of the Year?" OK, the answer is never, but that's not the point.

The point is, we fail to shine a light on the men in the trenches who have been doing the dirty work and carrying our favorite teams to victory ever since the game's creation back in the 19th century.

Offensive linemen are often compared to air conditioning. You only notice it when it isn't working. Think on that for a minute, - when you're watching your favorite team play you never sit back on a play and say, "Wow, what a great play by the left guard." No, you only look at the great pass, run or catch by those stuck-up skill-position players.

However, when there's a holding penalty, a false start or a hands-to-the-face penalty by an offensive lineman, you call for his

head and you want him out of the game no questions asked. When the air conditioning is on during a hot summer day you think nothing of it. It's doing what it's supposed to, so why does it deserve any attention? But as soon as the air conditioning breaks, all hell breaks loose.

It's the same way we treat offensive linemen. We as a country need to be better.

This Super Bowl Sunday, whenever there is a great run, throw or catch instead of looking at the quarterback, running back or receiver, look at the offensive line. Take a gander at the pocket they created to allow that catch or the lane they created for the ball carrier. Think of the physical pain and stress they endure as well.

For 60 minutes the men in the trenches are helmet-to-helmet fighting to gain a few yards and putting their bodies on the line, only to receive none of the credit.

With new rule changes created every offseason designed to protect the skill position players, offensive linemen are becoming more obsolete and forgotten with each new year. Because of this, it is crucial to recognize and appreciate the offensive linemen in our lives.

Do yourself a favor and forget about the prima donna quarterbacks who draw flags

with the faintest forms of contact and focus on those sexy beasts in the trenches, doing the dirty work so your favorite team can prosper.

I hope we can all realize at the end of the day that offensive linemen are the true

beauties of football, (seriously, Google pictures of your favorite team's linemen and appreciate for a few minutes how stunning they all are), and please, do yourself a favor and hug your favorite linemen and let them know how much they mean to you.



ILLUSTRATION BY CONNOR YOUNGBERG

# Lil Yachty's 'Let's Start Here': A welcomed surprise

By **JOE BASKE**  
Contributing Writer

In Lil Yachty's five-or-so years in the hip-hop spotlight, there's nothing you can find in the mumble-rap aficionado's discography that will quite prepare you for "Let's Start Here," his new 14-track alternative rock album released on Jan. 27.

From Lil Wayne's disastrous "Rebirth" album, to Kid Cudi's "Speedin' Bullet 2 Heaven," to everything Machine Gun Kelly has ever done, the relationship between rappers and rock has historically resembled that of silverware and power outlets. It's reasonable to approach this album with hesitation. In Yachty's case, though, "Let's Start Here" is built on a surprisingly stable foundation.

Yachty assembled an all-star cast of production veterans to guide his earliest experiment into the world of alternative sounds, between Grammy-winning songwriter Patrick Wimberly, veteran audio engineer Justin Raisen and a slew of others to assist on the songwriting and production fronts. Yachty's team made their presence known on just about every track, constructing one of the single best-produced albums in recent memory.

To say that Yachty is overshadowed by the angelic, upbeat instrumentals he performs over isn't so much an insult to the rapper as it is a compliment to the album's production, which Yachty also played a part in creating (he has production credits on 12 of the 14 tracks, according to Genius.com).

The album's production largely features slow, basic drum patterns overlapped against bright, golden synths and bass lines that embrace a vintage '70s sound, with the likes of "pRETTY"

and "paint THE sky" being the most blatant examples of such an aesthetic being adopted.

Yachty's feature selection on "Let's Start Here" is tasteful, but far from overwhelming, although most outshine Yachty's mediocre and mumbled vocal performances. In an impressive display of controlled chaos, Diana Gordon's anguished vocals on the back half of "the BLACK seminole" sound as close to strained screaming as a voice can while still maintaining a level of melodic clarity.

One track later, Texas rapper Teezo Touchdown's melodic emo sound is infused with Yachty's laid-back cadence on the chorus of the ride — another one of the album's highlights.

Most features are given minimal time to shine throughout the album, merely serving as garnishes to reinforce Yachty's artistic vision. Although that's not to say Yachty remains loyal to this rule all throughout. On "drive ME crazy!", Gordon is gifted the entire first verse and with it delivers the single strongest vocal performance on the album. The verse only sounds all the more impressive once juxtaposed with Yachty's dry performance that immediately follows, during which he sounds more like an amateur vocalist half-heartedly singing along to Gordon's song in the shower than he does someone who's supposed to do this professionally.

Yachty's best individual moments come on the hooks, during which he reaffirms his well-established status as a professional hit-maker. The choruses of "pRETTY," "the ride" and "drive ME crazy!" will be playing on repeat in the heads of listeners for days after first hearing them.

When he first introduced his album during a listening party on Jan. 26, Yachty expressed his desire "to be taken seriously as an artist," as revealed by Pitchfork in its review of the album. For a man who spent the early half of his 20s as the poster boy for the skyrocketing mumble rap movement, this sentiment is impressively mature and introspective, and could indicate further ambitious developments being present in the artists' future sound.

"Let's Start Here" is far from a perfect record, but it's also not supposed to be. Instead, as its title indicates, it's an experimental beginning to an intriguing musical journey of a post-

revelation Yachty. In an industry that almost incentivizes artists to regurgitate the same tired sound, the rappers' willingness to reject such sentiments in the pursuit of a more uncertain path puts him well above the vast majority of the class of rowdy, antics-driven rappers he rose to prominence alongside.

In essence, although it has its highs, there's not a whole lot that exists between the covers of "Let's Start Here" that is particularly revolutionary or exciting. Instead, its best qualities come in everything it represents: the industry's large-scale adoption of throwback '70s sounds, the mature development of Yachty's



NICOLAS PADOVANI/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Lil Yachty released his newest album, "Let's Start Here" on Jan. 27.

# There's something 'Special' about Lizzo

By **ZOE LEONE**  
Associate Arts & Life Editor

February started with the arrival of a new superhero: Lizzo. Everyone's favorite bop star (a title of her own making) released a music video for the titular track of her latest album, "Special," on Feb. 1.

The video was directed by Christian Breslauer, who's known for his cinematic collaborations with major industry names, such as SZA and The Weeknd. Lizzo and Breslauer previously collaborated on her "2 Be Loved (Am I Ready)" video, which was a follow-up to her iconic "Truth Hurts" video.

"Special," however, as the title suggests, was a special project for Lizzo. The artist explained in an Instagram post that after thanking fans for their support and encouraging them to keep the "same energy" when they encounter people that look like her in everyday life on her tour, she wanted to provide representation that everyone could benefit from.

"This video is for any one who has felt unseen, alone, disrespected," Lizzo wrote. "I see you."

The "Special" video features Lizzo as a waitress who is actually the caped crusader that has been saving her city. While she's initially met by pushback in both her personal and masked life, her rescues of a young girl from a car accident and a family from a fire turn the rest of the citizens in her favor.

Seeing Lizzo as a superhero is not an unfamiliar concept for many of her fans. As a bigger girl myself, listening to "Juice" for the first time in 2019 was the first time I had ever

seen a celebrity who even remotely looked like me be something other than the comedic relief or the face of a weight-loss program. Lizzo was big and beautiful and talented and above all else, she was proud.

I didn't need to see a cape to recognize Lizzo as a hero. As her career progressed and her fame grew, the comments made about her body and what she chose to wear on it only increased tenfold. Whether it was an uproar about her decision to go on a smoothie cleanse

or posting pictures in a bikini, everyone seemed to have something to say about her.

To me, the only thing I could ever think of was admiration. With the release of "Special," and the song it's named after, that love for Lizzo only grew as it formed a new bond: one between me and my mother.

There is just about no one in the world who loves Lizzo more than my mom does. From the minute she heard "Truth Hurts," she was completely hooked. When her latest album

came out, we listened to it together everywhere.

"Special" was initially a song I overlooked on the album in favor of some of the more upbeat, tongue-in-cheek songs that Lizzo is most known for, but it was an instant favorite of my mom's. Once I took the time to really listen to it, I understood why.

The song's lyrics center around Lizzo's own experiences as a plus-size Black woman and how she wants her listeners to know that even if the world doesn't see them, she thinks everyone is special. Paired with a mellow pop beat and full sound, "Special" is a song that's just as important to Lizzo as it is to her fans.

"I've always wanted to make my momma proud. Today was her first time hearing my new music. She told me she has ALWAYS been proud of me. She always made me feel special," Lizzo wrote in a TikTok post to her account in late January 2022. "In case nobody told you yet... you're special. Keep going. I'm proud of you."

Whenever my mom and I listen to the song, we send each other a picture of the song's title. As the first woman to make me feel like I was special, much before Lizzo ever did, it's beautiful to see how our bond has only strengthened through her music.

That's the power of Lizzo. No matter your age, your size, or your race, she has a unique ability to connect with people from all walks of life. There's a confidence that grows just from listening to her songs, but also to the messages she infuses in each of them.

So the next time you're having a rough go of things, crank your volume and throw on "Special." It might just save your day.



RAPH\_PH/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Lizzo dazzles a crowd with her incredible vocals and powerful musical message in London in 2019.

# Everything is peachy for ‘Ginny & Georgia’

By **CASEY WIEDERHOLD**  
Associate Photography Editor

As it sits atop the current list of Netflix’s top 10 most watched television shows, “Ginny & Georgia” overtook my recent binges. The show is the story of mother-daughter duo Georgia Miller (Brianna Howey) and Ginny Miller (Antonia Gentry). The second season of the show was released on Jan. 5, grasping the attention of those who watched it as it first aired in 2021.

The episodes divulge into the lives of the titular characters as Ginny and Georgia Miller navigate their lives in the fictional small town of Wellsbury, Massachusetts. Georgia Miller is a teen mom with a shady past, the more free-spirited type of personality, whereas Ginny Miller is the more mature one in the family. Georgia Miller goes out and gets what she wants, while also maintaining her “cool mom” status. Ginny Miller on the other hand, handles much more in her life.

I thought the second season of the show was much more intense than the first season. The episodes were filled with emotional intensity that I was on the edge of my seat for most of the show. I found that there were moments during the episodes where Ginny Miller would say something to Georgia Miller and from it stemmed an argument, then the episode would end on that note.

The series uses the mental health of Ginny Miller as a central plotline throughout both seasons, developing into a crucial storyline of season two. For example, she experiences acts of racism from her English teacher, and as a biracial woman, this creates more of an impact on her mental well-being. Being the daughter of a white woman and an African-American man, Ginny Miller realizes that her mother will never understand her struggles and eventually leaves the English class because she feels that she is targeted, as she is creating lesson plans to educate the class on African-American authors.

I believe that displaying mental illness in television shows has become more of a prevalent topic in 2023, with viewers starting conversations about mental health, and the subject is becoming more recognized in

media. However, I feel that most shows do not portray mental illnesses such as depression or anxiety accurately. Directors and script writers tend to portray the mentally ill as unpredictable, angsty, restless or a variation of those behaviors. Until I watched “Ginny & Georgia” this was how I would see individuals with mental illnesses portrayed.

For example, a key point to Ginny Miller’s character is that she struggles with self-harm throughout the show, turning to an unhealthy coping mechanism to deal with the conflict between the protagonists. Ginny Miller suffers from anxiety and depression as a result of her chaotic childhood and high school experience. She confesses to her father that she was turning to unhealthy coping mechanisms and ultimately suffers from a panic attack. Her father suggests that Ginny Miller go to therapy and she hesitantly accepts the suggestion, knowing that her mother would stick her nose up at the idea of her daughter going to talk to someone.

I think the way the showrunners handled Ginny Miller’s struggles were shown in a graceful way. In other shows, such as “13 Reasons Why,” I remember hearing about how there was a scene cut because it was too

graphic. In “Ginny & Georgia,” the scenes where these harmful actions are presented only display the facial expressions of Georgia Miller.

“Ginny & Georgia” has shown the traits of anxiety and they also show ones of depression. Felix Mallard portrays Marcus Baker, a character that suffers from depression. In episode eight of season two, the storyline shifts from the focus of Ginny Miller and Georgia Miller and keeps the central focus of the episode on Baker. In the earlier episodes leading up to this one, the audience sees Baker beginning to slip and start to consume alcohol. This reaches a peak and his family becomes worried about him.

The displays of mental illness from both Baker and Ginny Miller are representations of the mental health spectrum. There is Ginny, who turns to burning herself and then acts as though she is fine, and Baker who turns to alcohol, skipping class and other risky behaviors. The portrayals of mental illnesses in adolescents are shown from multiple perspectives, both sides of the spectrum, which is usually not a topic that we see everyday. In the media, harming and then acting as though everything is fine afterwards is a different end

of that depression spectrum. To see both ends of this was very interesting, especially since the episodes shown had one from Baker’s and one from Ginny Miller’s perspectives.

As for the adults in the series, the only displays of mental illness that are shown are from Georgia Miller. Georgia Miller grew up with a shady past, and became a teen mom at the mere age of 15 years old, losing her teenage years to raising a child. On top of that, Georgia Miller’s childhood was not filled with rays of sunshine. She was in abusive relationships, and was even molested from a young age, until she ran away after giving birth to Ginny Miller. Georgia Miller devotes her life to protecting her two children Ginny Miller and Austin Miller, doing what she can to prevent them from ever having the life she grew up with, while still staying true to her secretive roots. The show briefly mentions that Georgia Miller used to suffer from panic attacks, though they have since stopped happening. However, once her past begins to catch up to her, she begins to suffer from the panic attacks once again.

As a person who suffers from mental illnesses, I found myself in awe of how this was portrayed. I became curious to see how the writers went about creating these storylines for the program. I found that the writers consulted a psychologist and worked with Mental Health of America in order to create these meaningful storylines because the showrunners wanted to do it right. The showrunners would send scripts to the psychologist, then wait to receive feedback on the episode in order to see what they could or could not have on television.

For all of the chaos that comes with watching “Ginny & Georgia” seeing an accurate portrayal of mental health was one of the better aspects of what was happening. I think it is important to have accurate portrayals of mental illnesses in the media, especially in television. Not everything in the arts has to be shown as good or bad necessarily because that is not how reality is. This was a refreshing take on television that I would hope to see more of in the future. The presentation of important issues such as this, made myself, as well as many others, feel seen.



ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX KENDALL

## Cruising into Jeep culture

By **BEN KANE**  
Contributing Writer

When I was 17 years old I got my ocean blue Jeep Wrangler. Being from Rhode Island, there wasn’t too much to do, so I often just went for drives and listened to music.

The first time I went out, I drove past a white Jeep Wrangler with a black top and they waved at me. I didn’t think much of it and continued my drive. Then as another Jeep drove past, they waved at me again, then again and again. The cycle happened over and over and I became more and more confused.

After I finished my drive, I went home and did a little research. It turned out there was something called a “Jeep Wave.” It’s as simple as holding up your pointer and middle finger, almost like a peace sign, when a Jeep passes you heading in the opposite direction.

There are many theories as to how the Jeep Wave began. For example, some people believe it began after World War II as a way to salute soldiers because many came home from the war and bought Jeeps. Others believe that it actually began during the war to differentiate enemy from an ally as Jeeps were often used as a way to transport supplies.

For most people, the wave starts as an unnatural and robotic type of action, but slowly it becomes very subconscious. I have gone

from forcing myself to be cognizant that a Jeep was driving in my direction to passing by a Jeep when I was driving my dad’s pickup truck and flashing the wave.

The wave, however, isn’t where Jeep owners stop. Ever heard of the childhood game, duck, duck, goose? Jeep owners have taken this game and put their own spin on it. It’s called duck, duck Jeep and the rules are very simple. It’s a game that usually occurs in the summer months. If you see a Wrangler parked, leave a rubber duck in the door for the owner.

It sounds very fun, but odd, and that’s exactly what I thought at the beginning. Working at a beach all summer, I’d see thousands of cars come in and out of our parking lot every day, including many Jeeps. After seeing a woman with a Stop & Shop bag stuffed to the brim walk towards my car, I became suspicious.

I watched her walk away and sprinted towards my car to see if anything was damaged. After quick inspection, everything seemed in place—apart from the little rubber duck playing the guitar that was stuffed in my door. I walked back to work and asked my friends to check their cars for an aquatic friend, but they didn’t have one.

This happened multiple times throughout that summer, but only the final time a note was left with the duck that had a QR code to a Facebook Group. It was a group designated to show off all the rubber ducks people had received and handed out.

While I have never returned the favor, I do now have a very big rubber duck collection

that sits on my dashboard to show everyone in the world that I’m a real Jeep owner.

As corny as it sounds, owning a Jeep is more than owning something that takes you to and from places, it’s a way of life. The Jeep community is such a close and tight knit group unlike any other, and I’m so happy I randomly stumbled upon it.

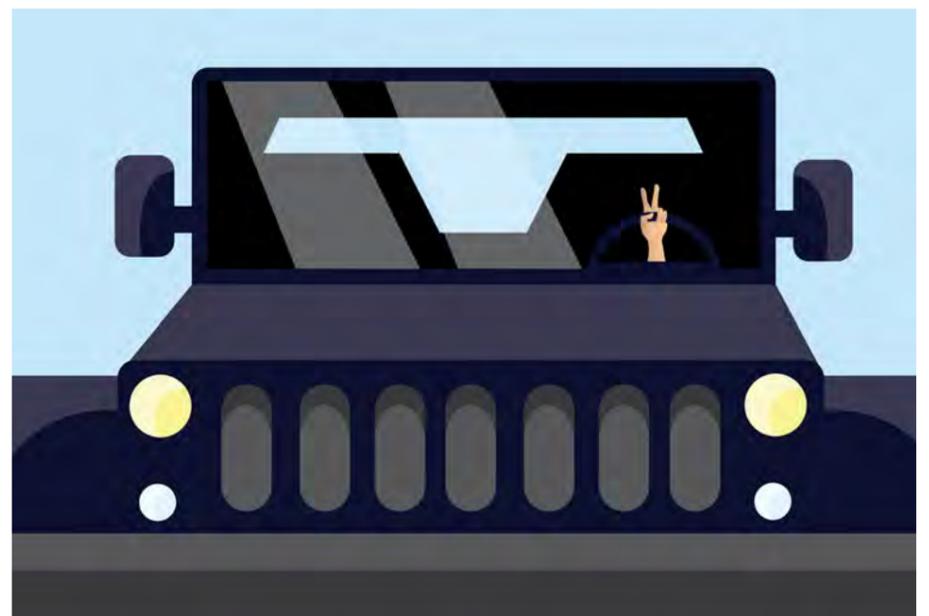


ILLUSTRATION BY SHAVONNE CHIN

# Tumbling into another record-breaking year

## Can acrobatics and tumbling take the championship jump?

By **JENNIFER MOGLIA**  
Staff Writer

With Quinnipiac's hockey and basketball teams only having a few home games left before their regular season winds down, students may be wondering where to shift their focus in the world of Bobcat athletics. One team gearing up to start its season this week is the acrobatics and tumbling team.

Quinnipiac's 2022 season ended at the NCATA National Semifinals when they fell to the top-seed Baylor Bears by just 4.44 points. The Bears went undefeated for the entire season up to the semifinals and went on to win their seventh consecutive NCATA championship against Gannon.

The meet against Baylor was a close match-up the entire time. The only event scores separated by more than one point were the scores for the toss, tumbling and team events. The scores for the compulsory, acro and pyramid events were only separated by 0.3, 0.325 and 0.5 points respectively.

The fact that the Bobcats were able to hold their own with a team as strong as the Bears was a promising sign for this upcoming season. An even more promising sign was their performance in the Quad Pass that same weekend.

The team of junior base Tiffany Zieba and Summer Knoell, sophomore top/base Layla Tracey and Lyndsey Rudolph secured an Individual Event Final National Championship with a score of 8.775 in the Quad Pass heat of the Tumbling event. They defeated Hawaii Pacific in the final competition of the season to get their redemption after the loss to Baylor.

What's so unique about acrobatics and tumbling is that there is essentially no contact between the two teams who are playing each other. The athletes don't have to worry about guarding the opponent's tallest player or getting a puck past their goaltender. Each player's focus is on their own performance and the performance of their teammates, with less of a focus on scouting the other teams.

"To be honest, I never look at the other team, not in our sport," head coach Mary Ann Powers said with a laugh Monday. "We really have to take care of our own material."

The Bobcats will face four opponents at home this season: Kutztown this Saturday, Augustana on March 5, Frostburg State on April 1 and Caldwell on April 14. In mid-March, they will travel to Clinton, SC and Waco, TX to face Presbyterian and Baylor, respectively.

For Powers, there are a few keys to success regardless of the opponent this season.

"I make it very clear that I want to see an upward climb," Powers said. "If we are at our best right now, we've peaked way too early ... we'll have mistakes, and that's okay, but let's continue



CONNOR LAWLESS/CHRONICLE ARCHIVES (2022)

**Quinnipiac made the 2022 NCATA National Semifinals last spring, falling to Baylor by 4.44 points.**

to climb upwards, let's get stronger."

Those expectations are clearly present, as the Bobcats were tabbed as No. 4 in the NCATA Preseason Coaches' Poll. Quinnipiac received 401 total points in the poll, falling behind Baylor (494), Gannon (435) and Azusa Pacific (417).

In regard to key players, there are a few important faces that will be missing from the roster this season. Top/base Cassidy Osher, whose resume includes 2019 ECAC Specialist of the Year, two-time All-ECAC Honorable Mention (2018, 2019) and ECAC Specialist of the Week (2/19/2019), won't be on the mat this season after finishing up her graduate season in the spring.

Another player whose presence will be missed on the mat is base Asia Johnson, who finished her senior season in 2022. Johnson, a 2019 All-ECAC Selection, an NCATA Rookie of the Week (4/7/2019) and a two-time ECAC Rookie of the Week (4/5/2019 and 4/11/2019) bounced back last season after being injured in 2020 and 2021.

Out of the 10 seniors on the team last year,

the only one returning for a graduate year is base Bella Pierce. The numbers from her freshman season in 2020 were promising, including a massive 9.83 average and a season-high 9.95 in the compulsory toss. Both pyramid groups she was in dominated and she had a positive impact on other event groups she was a part of, making her veteran presence helpful in the upcoming season.

Having a lot of freshmen on the team could be a worry for some teams and coaches. Powers couldn't speak highly enough of the new players joining the squad this season.

"This whole first-year class is just genuine and really a pleasure to coach too," Powers said. "They're all-in, they're invested, they're dedicated, they're hard workers."

Powers mentioned freshmen top/tumbler Katherine Carter, base Abby Hamilton and back base Hailee Oswald as players to watch this season, emphasizing their strength and how well they work in team maneuvers.

Looking ahead to the season as a whole, the home opener stands out not just because it's the

first meet of the season, but because it is Quinnipiac Athletics' "Women in Sports Day." While the acrobatics and tumbling team faces Kutztown, the Quinnipiac women's ice hockey team will face Union just across the hall.

Head coach Powers stressed the importance of supporting this initiative.

"One of the things I always say to my team is that there's always going to be that little girl out there who wants to be just like you one day. What is the best thing you can do for that little girl? Stay in for the long haul. Put a smile on your face. Be outgoing. Be an impact player."

The Bobcats' first meet against Kutztown kicks off at 1:30 p.m. this Saturday at M&T Bank Arena. There is no doubt in Powers' mind that her team is ready.

"I look forward to my first meet every single season," Powers said. "These young women have a long, long practice season, probably almost too long ... [I look forward to] seeing what they're going to do on game day."



CONNOR LAWLESS/CHRONICLE ARCHIVES (2022)

**Quinnipiac acrobatics and tumbling (401 points) was ranked No. 4 in the NCATA Preseason Coaches' Poll on Feb. 5, behind Baylor (494), Gannon (435) and Azusa Pacific (417).**



**'We have big goals that we're ready to accomplish'**

PEYTON MCKENZIE/CHRONICLE

## Veteran leadership, young talent headline hopeful 2023 for Quinnipiac softball

By **MICHAEL LAROCCA**  
Opinion Editor

The pressure is on. It has been a historic year for Quinnipiac athletics. Four of the six fall sports teams won conference championships, and currently, all four winter sports teams are championship contenders.

This success leaves the spring sports teams with expectations that they will perform up to the standard set by their peers, and no team will feel that pressure more than Quinnipiac softball.

Heading into 2023, the Bobcats are coming off a season with a decade's worth of futility. The program has not had a winning season since 2012, back when Quinnipiac was a member of the NEC, and have not been to the MAAC Tournament since 2016.

No one affiliated with those squads remain, and after a 12-29 campaign in 2022, this year's team is going to have to climb the mountain from the base. However, when you're at the bottom, it's tough for those at the top to see you making your way up.

"I feel that most people aren't going to expect much out of us," head coach Hillary Smith said. "We don't want anyone to know that we're coming. We're coming full force and we have big goals that we're ready to accomplish."

Smith's fifth season at the helm of the program is going to be defined by how well her team can han-

dle adversity as well as who will step up and lead.

That leadership may take form in the return of graduate student catcher Hannah Davis, who missed all of conference-play last year due to injury, losing out on an opportunity to make an impact as a senior.

"I think last year set the bar for me," Davis said. "I'm a different leader now because of what happened to me last year ... I've learned a lot behind the scenes. I've learned how to motivate each girl individually as opposed to focusing on my own performance."

Other veterans, like graduate student utility player Bridget Nasir and senior infielder Lala Pascual will also need to step up as the team was hit with an overflow of underclassmen, including six freshmen and five sophomores.

However, those freshmen may have been molding into form sooner than some may expect, with players like infielders Sofia Vega and Natalia Apatiga already receiving high praise from Smith.

"I call (Apatiga) a ninja," Smith said. "You're going to see her do things that are going to blow your mind. She's going to make plays that you just can't believe ... The same goes with (Vega). She surprised me because we put her in a position she's never played before. I mean, the plays that she was making, I was like, 'Oh my god, you're an animal.'"

While Vega and Apatiga were mentioned spe-

cifically by Smith, she made sure to emphasize how much this freshman class will mean for the team moving forward.

"I think they're going to be a big part of the puzzle that we've been missing," Smith said. "I'm excited to see how they fit those pieces in for us, and to see how we excel this year."

However, before the team can excel, the main piece that needs improvement is the pitching staff.

In 2022, the Bobcats relied heavily on the trio of then-freshman, now-sophomore pitchers Jaelyn Gonzalez, Sydney Horan and Taylor Walton. Especially Gonzalez and Horan, who were the workhorses of the staff pitching 185 innings combined, which equated to over 70% of the team's innings pitched.

The pairing worked their way to ERAs over 4.6, which as freshmen anchoring the pitching for an entire team, can be seen as serviceable. However, that production cannot be sustainable over multiple seasons. As a result, junior pitchers Tori McGraw and Julia Woeste will have to step up in ways they did not in 2022, when they had ERAs of 8.61 and 11.16 respectively over 30 combined innings. If the pitching is able to hold things down, only then can this team hop on the road to winning.

That road will begin with 26-straight non-conference matchups, including a 20-game road stretch before the team's home opening doubleheader

against Holy Cross on March 21. MAAC play specifically opens up on April 1, where the Bobcats will face off against the 2022 MAAC champions, the Canisius Golden Griffins, a matchup that Smith has marked on her calendar.

"That's who we're trying to be," Smith said. "That's our bar. We're going out there and we want to compete against them and we want to come out with wins. We want to win that series. We don't want to split it, we want to win it."

Overall, this is shaping up to be a season unlike any other for Quinnipiac softball. With the success of the fall and winter teams, all eyes are on them to keep up the momentum, and it is a challenge they're willing to take on.

"That's just the Quinnipiac standard," Davis said. "That's what we have to hit, that's bare minimum, and we know we have to achieve more than that ... I think that just gave us more ammunition to be like, 'Okay, you guys can do that, watch this, watch us, we're gonna go further.'"

All that's left to do for this team is wait for opening day, which will be at the Hampton/Norfolk State Tournament on Friday, Feb. 17, where the Bobcats will face off against Georgetown at 12:30 p.m.

Very few people believed that Quinnipiac could win championships in the fall, but they did. Maybe this will be another case of history repeating itself. It's in their hands. They just need to go get it.

## Travis Tellitocci named MAAC Commissioner

By **CAMERON LEVASSEUR**  
Sports Editor

The Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference named Travis Tellitocci as the next MAAC Commissioner on Tuesday.

Tellitocci, who is currently the assistant administrator of football, basketball and officiating for the Ohio Valley Conference, will take over on May 15, becoming just the fourth commissioner of the MAAC in its 43-year history. This comes after 35-year commissioner Rich Ensor announced his retirement, set for the conclusion of the 2022-23 athletics seasons.

"I am really humbled by this opportunity, because I know the significance of the opportunity," Tellitocci said in a press conference Tuesday.

Tellitocci was hired after an extensive national search by a committee co-chaired by Quinnipiac President Judy Olian and Niagara President the Rev. James Maher. Both had high praise for the West Virginia native.

"We were impressed with both Travis' rich experiences in both professional sports and college athletics, which position him well to elevate the MAAC Conference and help set its bold vision for its programs," Olian wrote in a statement released by the MAAC Tuesday. Maher shared a similar sentiment.

"We think he comes from an incredible tradition of understanding the MAAC, believing in the MAAC and seeing the incredible possibilities that the MAAC has going forward," Maher said. "He brings vision, he brings energy, he brings incredible experience from the Ohio Valley Conference."

That understanding of the MAAC stems from Tellitocci's time as a student at Marist, where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in communications in 2004 and a master's degree in 2014. He also worked for the college from 2006 to 2016, rising to the position of deputy athletics director.

Tellitocci's previous experience with the conference allows him to enter the role with an awareness of its strengths and how they can translate to future growth.

"There are a number of things that I think make the MAAC special," Tellitocci said. "First and foremost, there are common shared values among a number of the schools ... I think the other part is that there's a tight geography within the league ... so as schools expand their footprints, conferences expand their footprints, I think the geography is really a benefit to the conference."

The soon-to-be commissioner's outlook suggests he'll make strides to bring the mid-major conference to a bigger stage.

"We will not be afraid to take chances in the MAAC," Tellitocci said. "That's been a hallmark of my career. We'll be strategic, calculated and steadfast in our approach to those chances, but we definitely want to be bold, innovative and have vision."

A large part of that vision involves bringing student-athletes into the governing process and putting them at the forefront of what the MAAC does, given they are its main product.

"I just think the MAAC has always been about emphasizing student-athletes," Tellitocci said. "They're going to be at the core of the decision-making process in terms of governance as well."

Beyond athletics, Tellitocci also plans on making sure the conference continues its commitment to ensuring student-athletes receive an enriching education.

"The last line of the MAAC mission statement talks about empowering student athletes to be champions in academics, competition and life," Tellitocci said. "As we constantly hear about the transfer portal, name, image and likeness, NCAA transformation, I think we've lost sight on what we do as institutions of higher learning and that's to provide a quality education. So that's got to be at the core of what we do."



COURTESY OF MAAC ATHLETICS



# Sports

@QUCHRONSPORTS

## Jumping through hoops

PEYTON MCKENZIE/CHRONICLE

### Men's basketball's up-and-down weekend deserves a deep dive

By **ETHAN HURWITZ**  
Sports Editor

The Quinnipiac men's basketball program certainly had a weekend to remember. How one remembers it is up to the individual.

You could start on Friday, where the Bobcats beat their in-state rival Fairfield Stags on national television. M&T Bank Arena was sold out with a variety of giveaway opportunities for fans in attendance.

"(The atmosphere was) different, it's a culture that we've never seen before in my three years," junior guard Luis Kortright said on Feb. 3. "To see the Bank like that, it was exciting and it made a lot of us want to play (well)."

Playing in Quinnipiac's first nationally-televised game of the season, that atmosphere that Kortright referred to was electric. Not just for the fans in attendance, but for the players, especially for graduate student forward Ike Nweke, who transferred from Columbia,

where the attendance numbers were spotty.

"It was amazing, you know, just being able to have our actual student body here and just being able to pack the whole arena," Nweke said on Feb. 3. "That was an amazing feeling."

The Bobcats were able to run away against the Stags, nabbing a 66-51 victory in the first matchup of the year between the two teams. Quinnipiac had three players reach double figures (Nweke, Kortright and junior guard Dezi Jones), as a part of a 40-point second half.

You could also view Quinnipiac's weekend by how it ended. A monumental four-point loss to an 8-16 Mount St. Mary's team that were heavy underdogs (+450) coming into Hamden. After pulling out to an early 15-2 lead, the Bobcats came out of the locker room flat, allowing the Mountaineers to pull off a 9-0 stretch to start the second half and take the lead.

The team got thrashed once again by an opposing guard—this time, it was Mountaineers senior guard Jalen Benjamin, who dropped 23 points in the winning effort. Despite having a terrific defensive unit from both the paint and perimeter, the Bobcats' struggles defending guards have tormented them all season.

"(Guards) can make really difficult shots," Quinnipiac head coach Baker Dunleavy said on Feb. 5. "Benjamin can give you trouble at all levels."

Sandwiched in between those games was a social media firestorm which included a now-deleted gameday post and an issued statement on that offensively-deemed graphic.

"Regrettably, we at QU Athletics shared an image on social media to promote a men's basketball game that never should have been posted," wrote Greg Amodio, director of athletics, in a statement posted to both Twitter and Instagram. "It is our intention in these promotional images to highlight the hard work and grit of our student athletes. However, we realize now that this image is offensive. We are deeply sorry for our insensitivity. Through learning and reflection, we will do better."

The apology, which showed Kortright donning a chain prop around his shoulders next

to a pregame promotion to the Fairfield game, quickly distracted the fanbase from the win the day prior. That distraction seemed to be (intentionally or not) drowned out by the official men's basketball Twitter account, which tweeted 25 times during the Mount St. Mary's game, an amount typically not reached during games.

Despite the win, a slow start against the Stags and a dreadful ending against the Mountaineers showed that Quinnipiac, who went on a six-game win streak to kick off 2023, was mortal.

Redshirt senior guard Matt Balanc was the team's most valuable asset in both games. Balanc scored 19 points in the latter matchup, pushing his career total up to 1,000. He became the 45th player in Quinnipiac history (19th in the Division I era) to reach the plateau and the first since graduate student guard Tyrese Williams who did it just two months prior.

"He's brought consistency, toughness, leadership and all the intangibles that you want as a coach," Dunleavy said on Feb. 5. "He's a guy that has led us in scoring in the past, but also has the character and the competitive toughness to be defined by winning and doing things the right way. I'm really proud of him and glad we have him in our program."

The Maryland native also made headways online with a hyper-athletic block against the Stags that looked like something out of the professional leagues. The chasedown block just showcased something Dunleavy has praised all season: defense.

"You know, we were playing probably our worst version of ourselves offensively, but we also knew that we were doing some really good stuff defensively," Dunleavy said on Feb. 3. "A lot of our defensive effort turned into transition offense, which created some easy baskets."

Despite the Bobcats playing good defense during the Fairfield win, that seemed to dwindle against Mount St. Mary's. The hosts allowed 15 points off turnovers and let the Mountaineers shoot 73% from the field in the second half.

On the horizon, the Bobcats now need to

turn the page and prepare for a three-game road trip to New York for matchups with Niagara (8-5), Canisius (3-10) and Siena (9-4). With both the Purple Eagles and Saints toting in-conference records that either match or exceed Quinnipiac's, the Bobcats certainly have their work cut out for them when it comes down to the eventual playoff seeding.

Though the year has been a drastic 180 since last year's last-place showing, the Bobcats have begun to even out toward the start of February. If winning the program's first MAAC title is the goal (which it has been all year), the team needs to start performing at a more consistent level heading into Atlantic City. As of publication, Dunleavy's squad sits fourth in the MAAC standings and with the top of the conference becoming more clear, Quinnipiac will need to right the ship – and focus on reaching those highs – to close out the schedule.



DANIEL PASSAPERA/CHRONICLE

Graduate students **Matt Balanc** and **Tyrese Williams (5)** have both eclipsed 1,000 career points.



CASEY WIEDERHOLD/CHRONICLE

Junior guard **Luis Kortright** is averaging 9.8 points per game and 4.0 rebounds per game.