



DANIEL PASSAPERA/CHRONICLE

'I was one-by-one listing everything I lost,' QU student says after Hamden apartment fire

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Previewing Quinnipiac softball's potential turnaround season

Faculty advocates for voices in QU's decision-making process

By **CHATWAN MONGKOL**
Digital News Editor

Budget transparency. COVID-19 responsiveness. Terms of employment and work overload. These are some of the priorities that Quinnipiac University's American Association of University Professors is pushing for.

Chapter President Ruth Kaplan said the organization was founded in the fall 2020 semester after the university made multiple unilateral decisions that directly impacted faculty members in response to COVID-19.

Those decisions included precautionary layoffs, contract changes and a mandatory workload increase throughout the last academic year, which the group said also "diserved our students."

Kaplan, who is also an associate professor of English, said the faculty should have more voices in the administration's decision-making process.

"The shared governance is essentially the principle that universities should be known collaboratively by faculty, staff and administration," Kaplan said.

Provost Debra Liebowitz said having an AAUP chapter on campus "makes a lot of sense," citing her commitment to enhance an open line of communication between administrators and educators.

"Each of us has our own lane, but it's very important that we collaborate and engage across areas in order to help make the institution as strong as it possibly can be," Liebowitz said.

One of the issues faculty members said they faced was the increased workloads the leadership assigned them in 2020.

"Our conditions of appointment are not supposed to change during continuous employment at the university," Kaplan said. "But because of the financially uncertain landscape brought about by COVID in part, the university added extra work without extra pay for faculty in 2020-21."

The provost said the university made decisions related to additional workloads before her tenure in July 2020 with the mindset that COVID-19 was going to be a short-term issue. Faculty members eventually raised the concerns, and Liebowitz said those were valid given how the pandemic has persisted.

"I was able to make good on that promise and we delivered effectively a year ahead of the schedule I had promised, which I promised we would get back to a normal workload by this coming fall, but in fact, we were able to do it this past fall," Liebowitz said.

Kaplan said while most professors have returned to a "sustainable" workload as of the

spring 2022 semester, problems still exist.

Some professors still face issues with their terms of employment, according to the AAUP — lack of compensation for some program directorial posts and for professors who oversee credit-based independent studies. Some appointments have been shortened from one year to 9 1/2 months and they haven't been restored. The group also mentioned there have been proposals within schools around increasing workload.

"The financial landscape remains treacherous and COVID continues to evolve, and we want to make sure that kind of thing does not continue to happen or happen again because we need sustainable workloads to do our best," Kaplan said.

Although Kaplan applauded the administration's work to change things back, she said there is always room for improvement.

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Fire impacts 60 residents, including QU students

By **MELINA KHAN**
News Editor

After witnessing a fire tear through his apartment complex on Warner Street in Hamden Feb. 14, Quinnipiac University junior Tyler Woodward said the hardest part of the ordeal was yet to come.

The harrowing part came days later, Woodward said, when his insurance company sent him a spreadsheet to log the items he had lost in the blaze. All of his belongings, including a hat collection he had inherited from his grandfather and his roommate's \$5,000 shoe collection, were now reduced to a handful of attributes on a spreadsheet line.

"Honestly, that hit me harder than the actual fire because I was one-by-one listing everything I lost," said Woodward, a business analytics major. "When the fire was going on, there was maybe a portion of time where I thought I was going to have some things."

The fire broke out at Woodward's apartment complex at 42 Warner St. in Hamden last week, shortly after 7 p.m. Hamden Fire Chief Gary Merwede confirmed there were no injuries. A press release from the Office of the Mayor said 60 people have been displaced as a result of the fire. Hamden Fire Marshal Brian Dolan told The Chronicle an investigation into what caused the fire is set to begin Feb. 23.

The town of Hamden offered the displaced residents emergency services, including CT-transit buses, American Red Cross services and vouchers for the Clarion Inn. The Keefe Community Center, which initially held the residents during the aftermath of the fire, held a drive for household items for the residents. The Hamden Community Emergency Response Team announced Feb. 20, it would no longer be accepting donations.

The Quinnipiac University Bookstore on the Mount Carmel campus also held a donation drive for the fire victims. Cheryl Cartier, the bookstore's manager, said she organized the drive along with Vince Contrucci, director of community service. As of Feb. 21, the store had collected six boxes of items to bring to the Keefe Community Center.

"I'm a lifelong Hamden resident, and I saw the fire in the news, and just really wanted to help and thought that it'd be a good idea to have the bookstore involved to try to collect some stuff for the families," Cartier said. "I know Quinnipiac has a strong commitment to Hamden residents and the Keefe center especially ... there's always better outreach when you elicit help from the community instead of doing it by yourself."

Woodward and his girlfriend Elena Spangle, a sophomore international business major, said they had gone out for Valentine's Day and returned around 6:45 p.m., with no signs of fire. Less than 15 minutes later, they heard screaming coming from outside.

"We looked out the window, and on the snow, I saw the reflection of the flames," Spangle said. "It was just orange."

Realizing what was happening, Spangle, Woodward and his roommate Zach Wolansky, a student at Southern Connecticut State University, evacuated the building.

Once outside, Spangle said they saw a build-



DANIEL PASSAPERA/CHRONICLE

Hamden Fire Marshal Brian Dolan told The Chronicle the investigation into what caused the fire at 42 Warner St. will begin Feb. 23.

ing several doors down from theirs in flames, with the fire spreading rapidly.

"The way that the apartments work, there's one attic that goes across all of them," Spangle said. "So it was already spreading, and it was just dark black smoke."

Witnessing the fire escalating, Woodward said the building's residents realized its severity.

"We have support systems, but for a lot of those families, that place is their home and that's all they have."

– Elena Spangle

SOPHOMORE INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS MAJOR

"As soon as everybody realized that this wasn't going away, the fire is just gonna continue to spread, our neighbors (were) knocking on doors, getting everybody out, making sure there were no animals inside of doors that were locked," Woodward said. "The fire department was smashing in doors to get anybody, any life they could out of the building."

Woodward said he had also gone back into the building to rescue his own pet.

"I immediately ran back inside, because our guinea pig was still in there," Woodward

said. "Looking back on it, things could have gone way worse."

Even once they had evacuated, Woodward said he did not think he would lose all of his belongings.

"When I first came out, I thought that that one part was going to catch on fire and it wasn't going to spread," Woodward said. "I was like, 'OK, I won't be sleeping here tonight, but my belongings will be safe.' And 30 minutes later, that was not the case."

With the loss of his apartment, Woodward moved home to Durham, Connecticut, and has been commuting to Quinnipiac from there. He said the university's Community, Assessment, Response and Evaluation Team has since been in touch with him and Spangle to provide them support.

Woodward and Spangle, who kept some of her things at the apartment, are now determining what will be covered by renter's insurance.

"You never know with insurance or anything, but we did start a GoFundMe, which has been really helpful so far and I'm sure it will continue to be, so that's giving me hope," Woodward said.

The GoFundMe fundraising page to help Spangle, Woodward and his roommate has raised \$5,000 as of publication. However, Spangle said she worries more for the other families who have been displaced by the fire.

"I know that I'll be fine and my boyfriend will be fine and his roommate will be fine, but I just feel bad for the families there because the socioeconomic status of a lot of those families is very different to ours," Spangle said. "And we know that we have support systems but for a lot of those families, that place is their home and that's all they have."

FACULTY from cover

..... She hopes that faculty members can have time to do what they love to do – engage with their students.

"We'd love to see the administration continue (its) commitment to ensuring that workload remains sustainable," Kaplan said. "And we'd love to see them give serious consideration to how to make sure that we just keep up with inflation."

Faculty Senate Chair Bernadette Mele, a clinical professor of diagnostic imaging, echoed that workload has always been an issue and faculty has always been vocal about it.

"I wouldn't fault anybody about what occurred in the beginning (of the pandemic) because it was different. It was difficult," Mele said, referring to decisions made in response to COVID-19 that she believed were in the "best interest" of the health of the community.

With rising inflation, another priority the AAUP-QU is pushing for revolves around budget transparency. However, the group said the provost's office has taken actions to

be more straightforward in recent months.

"We often hear that the budgets are tight, programs need to work with less, faculty lines are scarce, and cuts are inevitable," the group wrote in its Spring 2022 newsletter. "But how are funds being allocated to the schools in the first place? What do budget priorities look like on the administrative side?"

Liebowitz said there has been a "sea change" when it comes to budget transparency that the university hasn't historically done. "On institutional budget finance-related issues, we now engage in detail with the set or in on specifics with the Senate Executive (Committee) and also with the Finance and Future Plans Committees of the Senate," Liebowitz said.

The university also engages with each school regarding priority spending within it that involves faculty members, especially in schools with an enrollment decline.

"There's less revenue, but there's also fewer students to educate, and figuring out how to do that in schools that have had a decline in enrollment is sensitive and difficult

and has to be done in the most careful ways possible," Liebowitz said.

Through productive conversations with faculty, Liebowitz said she is confident they are making more progress. She frequently meets with faculty representatives who were elected by their colleagues.

Mele said she and her Senate Executive Committee meet with the administration every other week. The communication is better than it was with the prior administration, Mele said.

"We have our input as to what we feel (are) our priorities associated with the budget," Mele said. "It doesn't mean that it's necessarily going to happen, but it just was the voice of the faculty."

Despite the recognition of the AAUP chapter on campus, neither the faculty senate nor the provost has a history working with the organization.

"They're an advocacy for the faculty, whereas we're more of the governing body," Mele said. "I think that we can complement each other."

'Parking, dining and course registration': administrators address students' concerns

By KATIE LANGLEY and JACK SPIEGEL

"Some of the questions that we get have a little bit of hot sauce on them," said Don Sawyer, vice president for equity, inclusion and leadership, at the Student Government Association's annual State of the QUnion event Feb. 16.

Quinnipiac University administrators answered questions from students about everything from parking to inclusion.

The panel of administrators included Sawyer, President Judy Olian, Chief Experience Officer Tom Ellett, Provost Debra Liebowitz, Chief of Public Safety Tony Reyes and Vice President for Facilities and Capital Planning Sal Filardi.

After introductions by Olian and SGA President Nick Ciampanelli, students had the opportunity to submit questions. SGA Vice President and senior economics major Chris Longchamp moderated the event.

Ciampanelli, a senior political science and economics double major, told The Chronicle that the "cornerstone" event allows students to ask the tough questions to learn about university functions and planning.

The State of the QUnion kicked off with student questions, including queries on the future of masking on campus.

Ellett announced that once Connecticut's state masking order expires, "We (Quinnipiac) are likely to recommend masks remain required in classrooms, but optional in other indoor settings."

In terms of campus safety, Reyes said his office is "vigorously recruiting" officers after The Chronicle reported that Public Safety's 10 vacancies resulted in 154 overtime shifts and up to 16 hour-workdays.

Reyes also confirmed that his office is working to ensure the proper functioning of Mount Carmel's 13 blue lights, and that lights will likely be added with campus expansion.

Regarding parking enforcement, Reyes said that officers are cracking down on un-

authorized parking, and have given out over 1,000 tickets in the last month.

Ellett said the administration believes that there is enough parking to accommodate the needs of students on both the York Hill and Mount Carmel campuses.

In September, The Chronicle reported that there are 4,541 parking spots, located on Mount Carmel and York Hill campuses and off-campus lots. Ellett said over 20% of the spots in Hogan Lot go unfilled every day.

"I think that there is something in the culture here that everyone — and there's a good portion of students — who think, 'I need to park right in front of where I go,'" Ellett said. "That's just not possible. There are more students that come to Mount Carmel than there are spaces."

Ellett said that the solution is for students to park off campus and take a shuttle to Mount Carmel, even if this adds time to their commute. He said that Quinnipiac is "not an anomaly" among colleges when it comes to needing to take shuttles between campuses.

"Go online to any student newspaper, any college or university. What are the three main problems students complain about?" Ellett said. "Parking, dining and course registration."

Longchamp told The Chronicle that questions about parking reflect that it is the "biggest issue" facing students. He was quoted as saying the same thing at last year's State of the QUnion.

Ellett said the plan to improve parking in the long run includes investing in the shuttle service and a new MBA consulting program that allows



JACK SPIEGEL/CHRONICLE

Quinnipiac University administrators (left to right) Sal Filardi, Tony Reyes, Judy Olian, Debra Liebowitz and Tom Ellett responded to student questions at the annual State of the QUnion event.

students to recommend policies.

With the new \$90 fee for commuter students, the panel faced questions about commuters feeling unwelcome on campus. The university postponed the fee for the fall semester due to student and SGA disapproval.

"Having (the parking fee) delayed a semester was a win. (But) it wasn't ideal," Ciampanelli said.

Ellett said that the university is working to make commuters feel more at home with new initiatives, such as the commuter and transfer assistant program.

The panelists also said that they are working with SGA on coordinating specific spaces for students who identify as female.

Jeremy Gustafson, SGA vice president of inclusion, diversity and engagement, told The Chronicle that increasing spaces for women is just one of his goals. He said he plans on working closely with both administration and multicultural student organizations on campus to improve inclusion and accessibility.

In terms of administrative engagement, Gustafson said response to DEI-related complaints by university officials has been "a hodgepodge" and lacks communication.

"Sometimes it seems like there could be more cross-department collaboration on certain projects," Gustafson, a senior economics major said.

Despite this, Sawyer said that he is working to make the university more inclusive, with increasing global partnerships and the university's LGBTQ plan, which includes gender-neutral housing and restrooms.

While many students had pressing questions for the administration, others shared that they were brought to the event with the promise of raffles and pizza.

"I wanted to hear what everyone has to say," said Gabrielle Inacio, a first-year biochemistry major. "And free food."

Blue lights initiate campus safety debate

By JACKLYN PELLEGRINO

Staff Writer

With 13 blue light emergency systems on the Mount Carmel campus, some Quinnipiac University students say the lack of blue lights is cause for concern.

Chief of Public Safety Tony Reyes said the "seldomly used" blue light emergency system provides services to students around campus for dangerous situations so students can have quick access to Public Safety.

According to records from Public Safety, there are 13 blue lights on the Mount Carmel campus. This includes six in North Lot, five in Hogan Lot, one in South Lot at the shuttle stop and one on the road enclosing the Pine Grove forest. In contrast, there are 14 blue lights at the York Hill campus, 18 at the York Hill parking garage, four at the North Haven campus, five in Whitney Lot and two on Mount Carmel Avenue.

Despite the amount of blue lights on campus, some students feel as if the systems are not visible enough in their daily routine.

"I don't feel very safe with the amount of blue lights there are," said Kate Hagem, a first-year health sciences major, "I know just from the walk from my classes to my dorm there aren't any. It's very rare that I see a blue light on campus. I wish I saw more."

Reyes said that students can use the systems if they are in trouble or distressed, in case of a medical emergency or to report incidents such as criminal or suspicious activity.

"It's an immediate access or a way to be able to contact (Public Safety) and it's a visible light, it's a blue light for a reason, it's visible," Reyes said. "So, it also serves as not just a service for the person using it, it serves as a deterrent for people that could potentially be looking to do criminal activity or commit some sort of a crime."

The time Public Safety takes to respond when a blue light is used depends on the location and that public safety officers are available on all three Quinnipiac campuses, Reyes said. He said "there's no real data" on response time.

"Let's say it's a very busy night and our officers were tied up, our dispatch would have the ability to dispatch local police department officers, whether in North Haven or Hamden so that there could be an immediate response," Reyes said.

Given the lack of blue lights in certain areas on campus, some students said they are concerned for their safety.

Nicholas Bussiere, a junior graphic and interactive design major, said he sees fewer blue lights at Quinnipiac in comparison with other schools.

"One of my siblings goes to (Boston University) and anywhere you look you see a blue light," Bussiere said. "When you're on the Quad (at Quinnipiac), you do not see anything which I find is crazy. Obviously when you go to Village and stuff like that, there's some that are on the building but often you don't notice them."

Reyes said that it's difficult to compare campus to campus as there are too many variables. He said that other universities are much more populated, so there might be a need for more blue lights. But, the blue lights at Quinnipiac are strategically placed where students walk more.

"It depends on the location, the demand for it, the need for it," Reyes said. "If we notice that there's either a rise or an uptick, in particular crimes in certain areas that necessitates putting a blue light somewhere, we would do that."

Sacred Heart University, 13 minutes away from Quinnipiac, is 311 acres and has 33 blue light call boxes. Quinnipiac, which is 234 acres,

has 56 blue lights across all three campuses.

Monique Drucker, vice president and dean of students, said that over the years, students have asked about the blue lights and the university has looked at where they are in the parking lots. But, the placement of the blue lights has been a decision between facilities and public safety.

"Most of the data that has been pulled from the blue lights showed that they haven't been used very often at all from students," Drucker said. "I think there's definitely an interest from students to know that they are there and that they are available to them and that's important for their sense of safety and security to our students."

Bussiere said that the only time he has seen the blue light is in the North parking lot but other than that he feels like there are not many where a lot of people are.

However, some Quinnipiac students said that they feel safe on campus with the current blue light system.

Tommy Vangeloren, a first-year communications and media studies major, said that it's not just the blue lights that help him

feel safe on campus.

"I feel like it's not exactly just the blue lights, it's more just the campus in general," Vangeloren said. "It's a pretty safe feeling, I think it's also because I'm a guy, I feel more safe."

In a 2018 student survey by the University of Memphis's student newspaper, The Daily Helmsman, male students stated they felt safer during nighttime on campus in comparison to females.

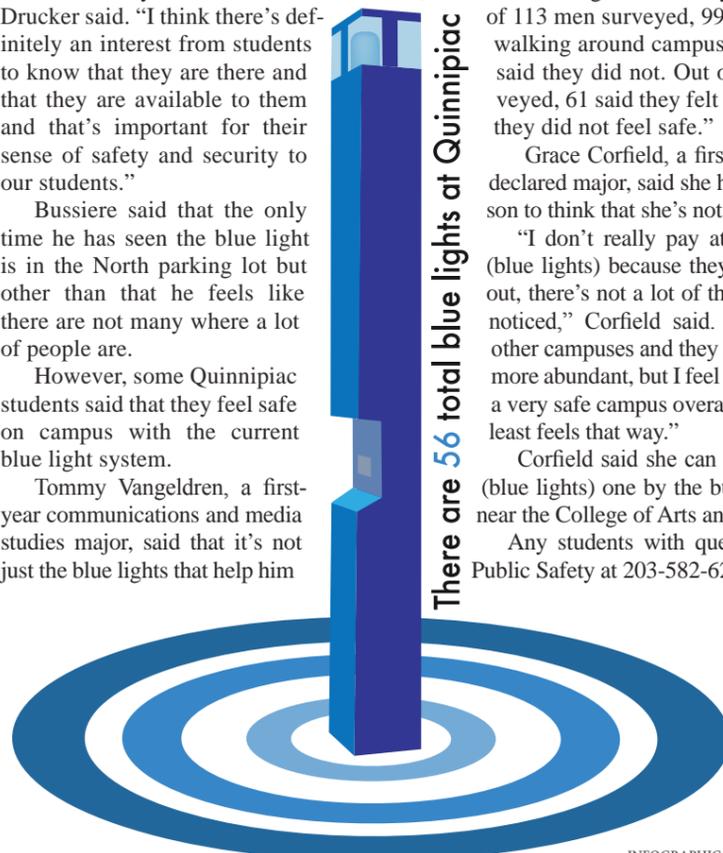
According to The Daily Helmsman, "Out of 113 men surveyed, 99 said they felt safe walking around campus at night, while 14 said they did not. Out of 113 women surveyed, 61 said they felt safe, while 52 said they did not feel safe."

Grace Corfield, a first-year business undeclared major, said she has never had a reason to think that she's not safe on campus.

"I don't really pay attention to a lot of (blue lights) because they're kind of spaced out, there's not a lot of them from what I've noticed," Corfield said. "I'll drive around other campuses and they are definitely much more abundant, but I feel like (Quinnipiac is) a very safe campus overall somewhat or it at least feels that way."

Corfield said she can locate "maybe two (blue lights) one by the bus stations and one near the College of Arts and Sciences."

Any students with questions can contact Public Safety at 203-582-6200.



INFOGRAPHIC BY CONNOR LAWLESS

Opinion

The future isn't made for us

The metaverse sounds like a fantasy escape, but we shouldn't forget our reality

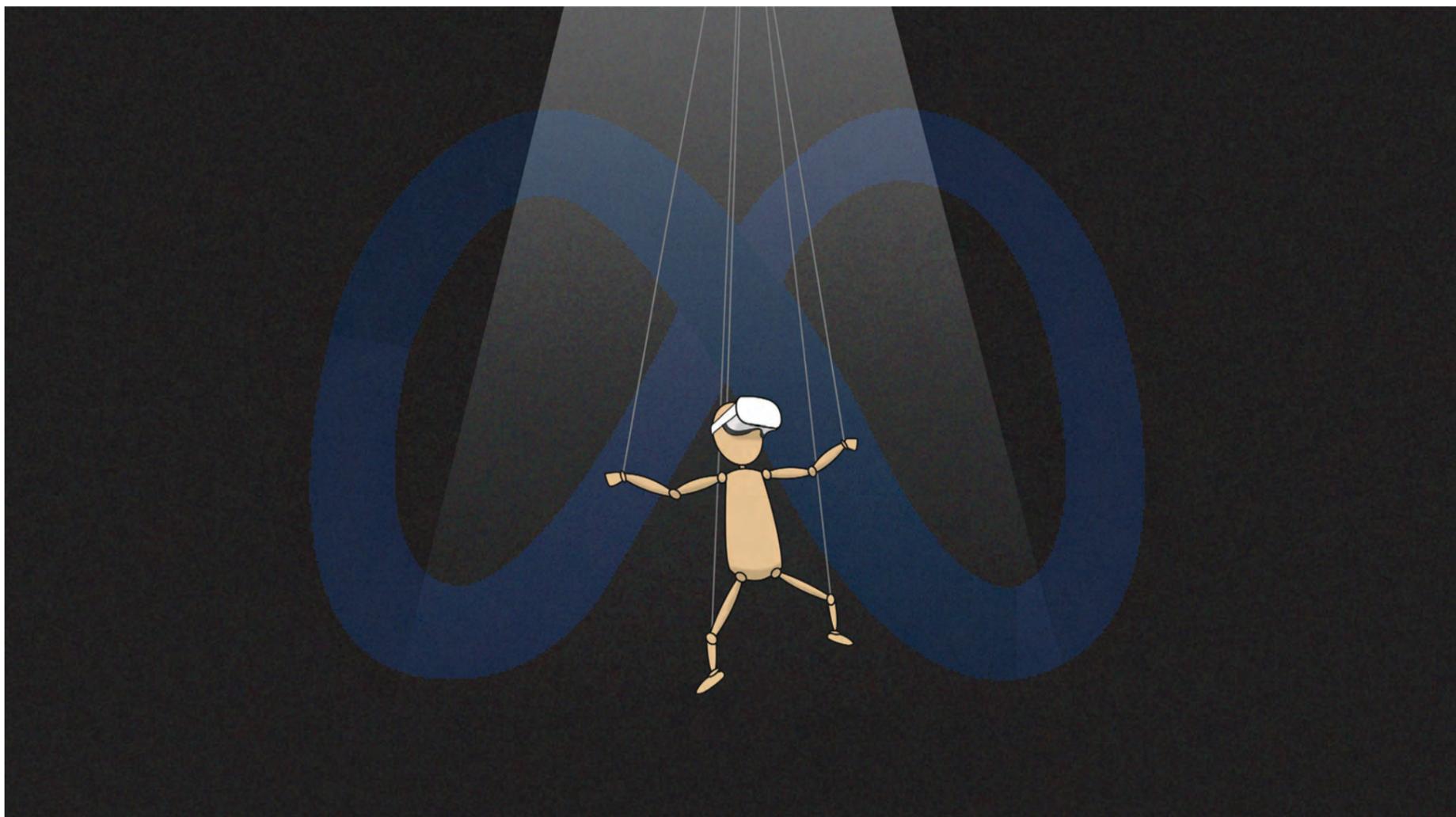


ILLUSTRATION BY XAVIER CULLEN AND CONNOR LAWLESS

By **XAVIER CULLEN**
Opinion Editor

It's a tale you've heard a million times. The climate is changing drastically, people are dying from avoidable diseases and hope for a better tomorrow seems non-existent.

It seems like every day the average person is left to defend themselves from the hands of the rich and powerful. From forest fires to tornadoes, natural disasters have been destroying homes of the poor and vulnerable in record numbers.

One group of people causes these problems with mass industrialization and pollution, while another group of people has to deal with the aftermath, helpless in stop-

ping it. It's a commonly understood fact, but it feels like not many people want to think about it.

We use things like video games, sports and social media to forget about the issues plaguing our world. Whenever someone tries to remind us of issues and injustices during those times of escape, they are shunned and ostracized. Another escape is emerging, developed by Facebook, now known as Meta.

If you're one of the lucky few people who missed the several Super Bowl advertisements about the "metaverse," then the term might seem foreign to you.

In a nutshell, the metaverse looks to use virtual and augmented reality technology to

transport anyone into a digital world where you can be anyone and do anything.

The idea is certainly not new, and VR games have been able to connect people in a similar way for years. But what is new about the metaverse is the scope. This isn't meant to just be some cool VR games or tricks. This is meant to supplant our normal day-to-day lives.

Instead of driving to work, you can sit next to your coworkers from the comfort of your own home with a VR headset strapped to your head. Instead of going to live concerts, you can watch from the virtual stands. Instead of hanging out with friends at a coffee shop, you can chat right next to them despite being hundreds of miles apart.

The idea seems like something straight from a sci-fi novel. A world away from our own, where the limits of the physical body are now only limited by the mind's imagination. It feels too good to be true. With Meta running the helm, it is.

Facebook has been deceiving its users for years. In October 2021, a whistleblower released documents showing the company knew that Instagram was negatively impacting the mental health of children. Despite the studies and proof shown to them, Meta executives assured the public everything was fine. They also knew that drug cartels, hate groups and human traffickers pervaded Facebook, yet the company has done nothing.

A name change can't erase the wrong that Meta has done. If it can't control social media apps, how can it be trusted with an all-encompassing living experience?

Just like those sci-fi books, this advanced technology sounds great on paper. In reality, it strips us of our personhood. Meta's vision would push out in-person meetings,

face-to-face conversations and true human experiences. Replacing our bodies are corporate-friendly avatars, awkwardly moving around fake rooms.

What happens to the world around us when we become engrossed in a fantasy world? Humanity's current goals seem to be escaping our current reality, with our lovely planet Earth being cast aside in favor of shiny new gizmos and gadgets.

Billionaires are looking to abandon the ship that they wrecked. Meta is now looking to create a digital getaway because our current world isn't filled with enough dopamine rushes. Rich people aren't looking to solve the issues at hand, they're looking for ways to forget about them entirely.

The future isn't for us. By the time the first humans reach Mars, it will not be the average Joe standing on the planet's rocky, red surface. It will be those who have enough money to pay for a one-way ticket off the ticking time bomb that is Earth. When the metaverse reaches Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg's vision, the real world and the digital one will become interchangeable, and Meta will have complete control of our lives.

I want to be able to experience the nature around me. I want to live in a world where our planet's natural beauty still shines every day. I don't want that to be forgotten.

We shouldn't let the fate of humanity rest in the hands of a company that has knowingly crippled our mental health and breached our privacy at a historic scale. Giving Meta a monopoly on the future means that we will not be able to control our own destiny.

With the internet seemingly growing in importance each day, maybe a metaverse is inevitable. And so long as we let capitalistic companies control it, they'll control our lives.



PHOTO BY ANTHONY QUINTANO/FLICKR

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg's sordid history of unethical business practices casts serious doubt on the security of the metaverse.

Opinion

My student loans deserve a federal apology

By **NEHA SEENARINE**
Associate Arts & Life Editor

A presidential campaign is like an over-hyped movie trailer. However, President Joe Biden's attempt to forgive student loans is a scene that we'll never see in the actual movie.

U.S. student loan debt is \$1.75 trillion and "grows six times faster than the nation's economy," according to the Education Data Initiative.

I was persuaded by Biden's presidential campaign. He vocalized his commitment to forgive student loans, invest in community colleges, double Pell Grants and provide free education to low-income students. As a Biden voter, I was all for him wiping out my debt, but he left me in the dark.

Biden has made little to no progress with his promise. He put a temporary hold on federal loan repayment and relieved more than \$11 billion of debt within his first year of presidency.

Congratulations to those handful of Americans, but the rest are doing no better than before.

The amount of people suffering from student loan debt is longer than the list Santa checks twice. The thing is, I have no idea to what extent Biden will go to relieve federal student loans. Based on the progress he's made so far, it seems that he doesn't care to fix this crisis overnight. Biden's presidential campaign feels deceiving, offering Americans false hope that their debt will be wiped.

Student loan debt is a major problem for everyone involved. The average annual

growth rate for the U.S. federal student loan debt is 16.1%. In France, however, student loans are not a national issue. French students do not have to take out loans because tuition ranges from \$200 to \$2,200. By contrast, the average American is left with \$37,113 worth of debt, if not more.

The consequences of paying back debts are damaging for one person to handle. It's not easily attainable or affordable. The six-month grace period a graduate gets is not graceful at all. It's unrealistic to think every student will have a job opportunity to help them repay their loans.

Federal loan repayment plans are set so the person can be cleared of debt within 10 years. A decade or more is like a never-ending burden, as life is constantly throwing you bills. Young adults struggle to live as it is, and their debt will carry on in their adulthood.

The cost of living in the U.S. is disgusting. The chances of someone moving out from their parent's home immediately after graduation is almost unheard of. About 54% of college graduates plan to move back home according to a 2019 report by Apartment Guide. With limited job opportunities that pay a recent grad a liveable wage, you can't expect them to afford all their bills. The additional stressor of paying off federal loans is discouraging for a young adult's transition to the adult world.

I know if I win the lottery, I would throw my lucky earnings to pay off my debt. I struggle knowing that I have over \$14,000 in federal loans with additional private loans

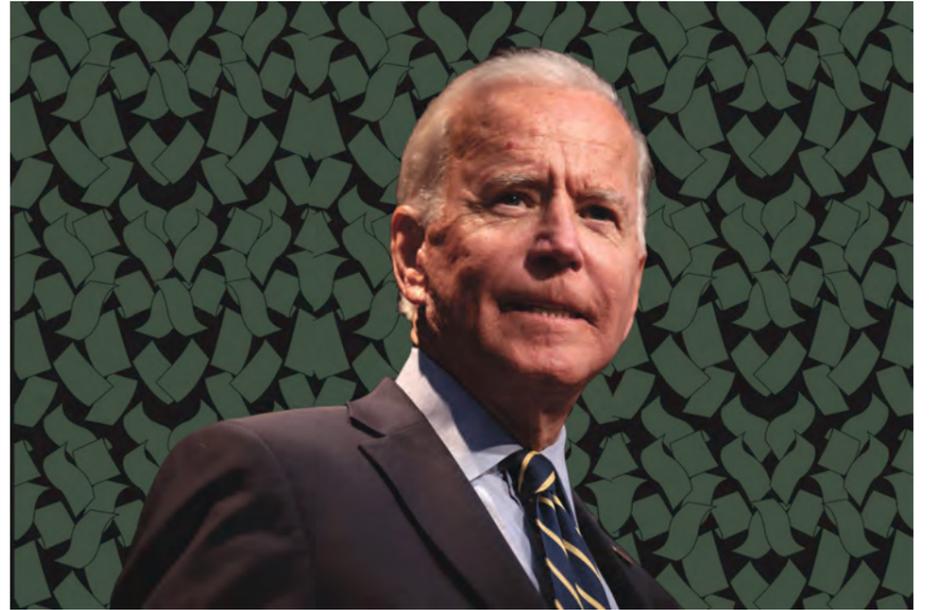


PHOTO BY GAGE SKIDMORE/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS, GRAPHIC BY CONNOR LAWLESS

piled up. I still have another year of college, and I feel miserable knowing I'll have additional debt with interest rates taking more trips to space than NASA. I find comfort that I'm not the only one in this boat, which is tragic for me and my peers.

Student loans are ruining my life. It's shameful that higher education is unaffordable, and some may argue that if you can't afford school you shouldn't go. However, Americans should be able to receive an education regardless of their low income. It's

not always someone's fault that they're poor.

Federal loans might be ideal in the short term, but chances are it doesn't cover the full tuition cost. The aftermath of repayment looks like a laundry bin of two months worth of dirty clothes.

Biden told voters what they wanted to hear. He knew younger generations and parents would appreciate his promise of forgiving student loans. However, the federal debt being cleared looks like an apology borrowers will never get.

Show compassion to those struggling with eating disorders

By **MELINA KHAN**
News Editor

A year ago, a Quinnipiac University student interviewed me for a story recognizing National Eating Disorders Awareness Week. It was my first year of college. Going public about my experience made me feel overwhelmingly afraid of what others would think, how it would make me look and who might read it.

But I did it anyway because I knew how important the topic was.

"There is a toxic environment in college around food and diet culture and all of that kind of stuff ... I am strong enough to handle it, but it doesn't make it less hard," I said at the time.

I'm strong enough to handle it. I think about that phrase a lot.

What does it mean to "handle" something? Does that mean you have it under control? Because there are days — so many since I said those words — where I feel like I can barely handle the disorder that has followed me like the dark cloud of an impending downpour since I was 14 years old.

Until I was 18, living in eating disorder recovery was manageable, thanks to the support system I have at home. My family, friends and therapist understand what I've gone through because they've experienced it with me. They understand my triggers, what kind of topics are sensitive for me and what isn't okay to talk about around me.

When I came to college, I never anticipated how difficult it would be. I always considered myself strong enough to not waver in my recovery. I was wrong.

In so many aspects of college life, there exists en-

vironments around diet culture, weight loss and physical fitness that can be incredibly toxic for those who have experienced disordered eating.

Being in college means going to social functions like parties or clubs where there are expectations around how to look or dress as a female. Encountering these instances is bound to make anyone compare themselves to others, but as someone with a preexisting negative relationship with their body, it can be overwhelming. Trying to pick out an outfit to go out with friends is made more anxiety-inducing by body dysmorphia, which creates a greater divide between me and feeling comfortable in my own skin.

This is something that I've had to consistently grapple with, and has created new obstacles in recovery.

When I moved away to college, living away from home and my support system for the first time was hard. Being in charge of your own meals, including when and what to eat, can feel incredibly daunting and remains my biggest vulnerability to relapse.

Some days are easier to handle than others. I've learned how important it is to talk about my experiences because, unfortunately, they are common in college.

According to a 2005 study by Dr. Diane Neumark-Sztainer who specializes in adolescent nutrition, over half of teenage girls and nearly a third of teenage boys use unhealthy weight control behaviors. This means that there are probably people you

encounter on campus every day that are struggling but don't show it. That's why it's so important to show compassion to everyone, or as the National Eating Disorders Association is promoting this year: "See the change, be the change."

National Eating Disorders Awareness Week is recognized during the week of Feb. 21. It's a week to raise awareness of the deadly effects of eating disorders. It's also an opportunity to have compassion for those who need it.

Throughout my recovery, I have realized how important it is for those around me to be understanding and supportive. For me, being held accountable is difficult but necessary. While it is important to recognize that everyone's experience with eating disorders is unique, coming to understand what kind of support those in your life who may be struggling need is a small way you can make a difference.

Moreover, in keeping with this year's NEDA week theme, if you see something, consider what you can do. While addressing the person directly may not be effective in all situations, there are still options. Offering to get food with or for them, being with them during meals or simply asking them how they are doing are small gestures that go a long way.

It's important to remember that you ultimately know and love this person, which is already enough to take the first step toward supporting them.

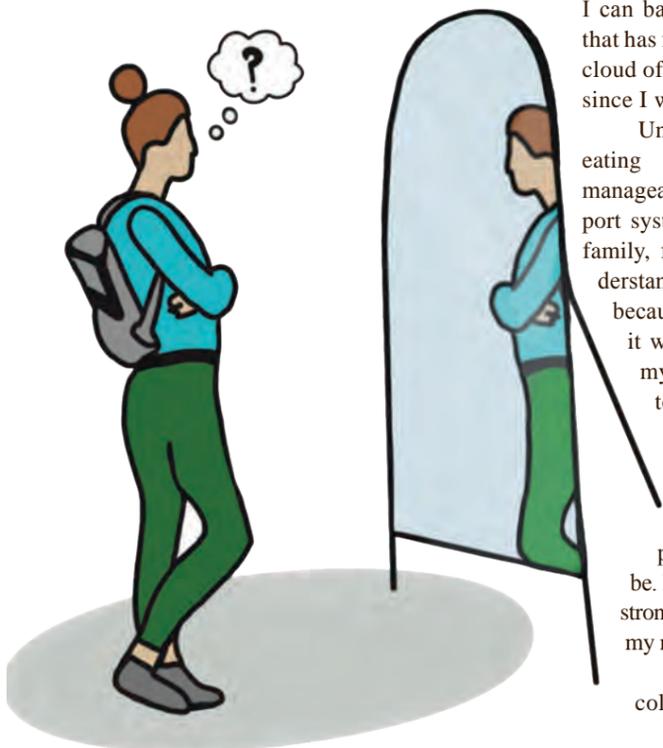


ILLUSTRATION BY SARAH HARDIMAN

Arts & Life

THE ASA DID MORE THAN SPREAD GOOD LUCK FOR LUNAR NEW YEAR

By **TOYLOY BROWN III**
Managing Editor

Strength. Bravery. Exorcizing evils. These are qualities that many desire and are some of the symbolic characteristics of 2022, the year of the Tiger in the Chinese zodiac.

Quinnipiac University's Asian Student Alliance returned to its ritualized Lunar New Year celebration with the community on Feb. 16.

Lunar New Year marks the start of a long-awaited spring, ushering out the old year and bringing forth prosperity. Also known as the Spring Festival, it is the most important holiday in Chinese culture and is observed in other Asian countries like Singapore and Vietnam. This year, Feb. 1, marked the first new moon of the lunar calendar and the beginning of Lunar New Year.

ASA used this special occasion to invite all members of the university and bring them good luck. That fortune was channeled through the red decor in the upper levels of Cafe Q on the Mount Carmel campus as well as the red attire worn by the executive board.

"Red symbolizes prosperity and good luck," said Ashley Hong, vice president of ASA and a junior occupational therapy major. "We have all these red decorations and red couplets and everything because the more red you wear, the more lucky the year will be."

The luck doesn't stop there. The ASA served cultural foods at the celebration that symbolize favorable qualities as well. Noodles from lo mein dishes represent the longevity of life. Dumplings mean wealth as they resemble the shape of an ancient Chinese gold ingot.

The true embodiment of good fortune may have been the fact that everyone experienced this ASA event in the same place, especially since in-person events have been few and far between throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ben Liu, ASA's faculty co-advisor for nearly 13 years and a marketing professor, said he was pleased with the event's gregarious nature.

"We haven't been able to do the (Lunar New Year) event in person for the last two years," Liu said. "It's nice to be able to see people, real people."

Gillian Chung, co-president of ASA and a senior nursing major, concurred and remarked on the difference between last year's Lunar New Year bingo compared to this year's more traditional celebration.

"It's nice seeing everyone in person after being on Zoom (last year)," Chung said. "I never saw people in real life ... So I think it's just nice seeing everyone's faces."



PEYTON MCKENZIE/CHRONICLE

The Asian Student Alliance offered calligraphy and other activities in its Lunar New Year celebration.

"Bingo was crazy, that was like 200, 300 people. But I think that was because it was on Zoom, it's just easier, and I know we have a lot of commuter students in our club and we did have big, big prizes."

Prizes were once again given away this year but this time to the top three winners of a Kahoot! trivia. One of the prizes was a Lunar New Year-themed Barbie doll.

After ASA e-board members gave a brief presentation on the holiday, attendees entered the game code to participate in the trivia for the night.

Colby Chung, a second-year in the physician assistant program, was one of the three winners. He said he favored this year's event over last year's, and it was not simply because he won a moon-shaped Lunar New Year lamp.

"I thought it was a really great sense of community that we built, and I think just having it in person was really great," Chung said.

The evening featured a number of activities for participants to engage in. A couple of them were of the arts and crafts variety such as origami and paper-lantern making. There was also a table for people to learn or practice writing Chinese calligraphy.

"A lot of the people who came here came from a Chinese class in this school," Hong said. "So they were able to apply their Chinese writing skills to this calligraphy."

"I think this is our biggest turnout for any event."

If arts and crafts and calligraphy weren't someone's forte, there was a table with Lunar New Year-themed Legos.

Outside of socializing with people of different backgrounds, building the Legos was one of the best parts of the night for Zach Saracino, a third-year biochemistry major in the 3+1 molecular biology program.

"I've been a sucker for Legos since I was a kid," Saracino said. "It was a special Lunar New Year Lego set and I was like, 'Oh I got to finish this.'"

Although the atmosphere was light and lively as the ASA rang in the brand-new year, the togetherness served another purpose, a more discreet one. The communal affair provided relief and a safe space for Asian students, especially as atrocities against Asians have become too common in the U.S.

Anti-Asian hate crime increased by 339% nationwide in 2021 compared to 2020, according to the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism. Already in 2022, the nonsensical and appalling murders of Michelle Alyssa Go and Christina Yuna Lee have devastated people.

The ASA's Lunar New Year celebration was a comforting haven for its Asian students and a reminder for those who aren't to remain compassionate.

"I just want everyone to know to support your Asian community," Gillian Chung said. "It's been tough lately. I know for a lot of other people too, but the Asian community we've been pretty hit hard with hate crimes and everything. So if you have friends, just tell them you're there to support them and you're there for them."

TAKING FLIGHT

Ross Gay's 'Be Holding' tells a Black story through photos and lyric

By **ASHLEY PELLETIER**
Arts & Life Editor

Award-winning author and poet Ross Gay turned a 25-second basketball clip into a book-length poem.

Gay's poem, "Be Holding," stemmed from him watching a video of former Philadelphia 76ers forward Julius Erving, making a reverse layup in the fourth game of the 1980 NBA Finals.

"Reverse layup" does not do justice to the moment. Erving floats through the air. The move seems impossible, but

with a sweeping arc of his right arm and a little bit of luck, the ball bounces off the backboard and right through the hoop.

It's a magical moment. It's unsurprising that someone could be transfixed by it, watching it over and over again in the middle of the night as the narrator does in the poem.

Erving's show-stopping move is the first image Gay illustrated for his Zoom audience at the creative writing department's first installment of the "Yawp!" series for the spring 2022 semester.

Images like Erving's are the basis for the story Gay tells in "Be Holding." He also uses other photographs such as "Fire Escape Collapse," a Pulitzer Prize-winning photo of a Black child and her godmother falling 50 feet to the ground, a photo of a grandmother and her grandson from the sharecropping era of the 1930s and two young women expressing pure joy to the camera.

Two common threads are sewn through these images — Blackness and flight.

For some of the images, the flight is literal. Erving floats through the air as he defies the crowd's expectations. Another photographed two girls falling, one of whom fell to her death

The other images were more metaphorical. In the photo from the 1930s, the young boy is wearing an aviator cap and holding an origami bird, two symbols of flight that he could not experience. The elation of the two women floats off the page and sets them free long after the photographer captured the moment.

Each image is one of what Gay refers to as a "movement" in the poem.

"I could see a couple movements (in the poem)," Gay said. "What feels like the first movement of the book is that, in some way, Erving is, when he's flying, he's looking off. He's looking back into time and he is looking at this moment where people start flying out of the water and that's this story or myth or whatever of the flying Ebo."

The flying Ebos is a story dating back to the early 1800s. It is a story of rebellion by enslaved Black people who were forced to endure the Middle Passage, but refused to accept the degradation they faced.

"(The Ebo) people who were enslaved were brought over here and they were like 'We're not gonna be enslaved,' and they walked into the water and they flew back home," Gay said. "I knew that there was gonna be some connection to Dr. J's flight in that."

"Be Holding" is written entirely in couplets — two-line stanzas. Oftentimes, trains of thought will start in one couplet and continue through several others. This makes it difficult to read on your own, especially if you aren't accustomed to reading poetry.

However, it is an entirely different experience when Gay reads it. The words come tumbling out of his mouth in the perfect rhythm — the way they were meant to be read in the first place.



ILLUSTRATION BY EMMA ROGEL

SIZE, DOES IT MATTER?

By **NEHA SEENARINE**
Associate Arts & Life Editor

The least of my concerns is what a man is packing underneath his pants. If you think I'm going to whip out a measuring tape, you got it all wrong.

Penis. It's a tough word to bring up in a conversation. I'm sure it's in the forbidden topics along with sharing your social security number and airing out your medical records.

Not many people want to talk about the little guy, at least in broad daylight.

I understand why most people feel uncomfortable talking about male genitalia. It's not the most attractive body part and it's never the best conversation starter. However, when "penis" does enter the chat, it's usually about one thing — size.

People are oddly curious about penis size. It seems to promote a macho attitude and a high success rate in the bedroom. Individuals might find interest in having an ideal size when searching for a partner. Meanwhile, men may worry if their body is not good enough and if they were cursed with bad genetics.

Does size matter? No, not really.

The average erect penis size is around 5 inches in the U.S., according to a study by psychologist Bruce M. King. The results from men were self-reported, "researchers are rarely able to verify self-reported information with factual data, but there is evidence that social desirability influences

some men's self-reports of penis size." In this case, the average size could be a bit smaller.

We often associate bigger with better and that's not true at all. For example, when I order a burger at a restaurant, I'm disappointed when I can't lift it with my two hands. It's too tall and I'm furious when the toppings start to fall out.

It doesn't surprise me that men would lie about their penis sizes. I've noticed men tend to bump up their height, whether it's on a dating app or their driver's licenses. There is a stigma that men have to be large and masculine, but people sometimes forget that men have feelings too. It's not always easy to keep up a certain physique and worrying about their private parts is just another stressor.

The correlation between size and achieving sexual excellence is beyond me. Just because you have a wand doesn't mean you have the magic touch. People have different versions of what intimacy means to them, so relying on size doesn't call for a good time.

X-ray vision is a made-up skill, and no one is hypothesizing how large some guy might be. Sometimes we forget that the sexiest character trait is personality. Beyond physical appearance, we're attracted to the way a person acts. Someone can have the prettiest face in the room, but the most disgusting personality. I can guarantee you wouldn't want to wake up next to them.

In reality, who's asking? I could not remember a time when asking about size was an icebreaker question. Honestly, if someone told me they had a monster truck underneath their boxers, I'd be embarrassed for them.

I've picked up on people who tend to brag about the things they don't have. I remember seeing an Instagram post about a woman that had a Louis Vuitton bag without cash in it. People will tell you what they think you want to hear. They want to shape themselves in the way they want to be perceived. If a man is talking about their big size within your first few conversations with them, it's a bluff.



ILLUSTRATION BY AMANDA RIHA

GETTING DOWN AND DIRTY WITH KIM PETRAS' EP 'SLUT POP'

By **DAVID MATOS**
Associate Arts & Life Editor

From CupcakKe's song "Deepthroat" to Cardi B and Megan Thee Stallion's song "WAP," music my Catholic school teachers would condemn me for listening to has always had a special in my heart. Kim Petras' extended play "Slut Pop" is no exception.

Petras released "Slut Pop" just in time for Valentine's Day on Feb. 11. This is her fourth EP with only seven tracks that fall under the dance-pop subgenre. Each song is aggressively erotic and so abundantly sex-positive, that I found myself snorting in disbelief as if I'm a child that just found out where babies come from for the first time. I loved and hated every second of it.

The German pop artist has always kept it rather family-friendly with her music as exemplified through fan favorites like "Heart to Break" and "Malibu." However, as a long-time fan, her cookie-cutter pop princess persona was quite tiresome for me, so something fresh from the artist was long overdue. Needless to say, I was exhilarated by the title alone when Petras announced "Slut Pop" as her next EP.

From a purely musical standpoint, this EP doesn't really break any barriers. Each song features quintessential electro-pop sounds and feels as if you're listening to a DJ set rather than a fully materialized track. Though jarring and unexpected, the lyrics across the board aren't exactly the most creative either.

The full run-time of the EP is a mere 15 minutes and 51 seconds long, but it drags. This is mainly due to each song sounding strikingly similar to one another. Once you get over the repetitive nature of the lyrics introduced in the first few songs, you do not feel the necessity to complete the rest of the EP. I mean, to be fair, when a lyric as "perfect" as "This is slut pop, whip your dick out" explodes in your AirPods, there really is no topping that. But I don't care for songs that loop with the same one or two pieces of audio, and "Slut Pop" is full of it.

Despite its many flaws, the EP is clearly not meant to be taken seriously in the slightest. Musical artists like CupcakKe, Nicki Minaj and Cardi B have used erotic

themes to brand themselves and have built a career on essentially making a mockery out of intimacy. Nicki Minaj's song "Anaconda" and CupcakKe's song "Vagina" are not necessarily good but earned popularity due to their shock value and humorous take on sex and genitalia — two things that are often condemned in everyday conversation.

Petras wanting to dedicate a whole EP to topics of intimacy in the most explicit way possible should be perceived as comical and not earnest.

Music that teeters between absolute filth and the tech-house subgenre is something that numerous queer folks tend to connect with wholeheartedly. I'm definitely among that demographic.

Songs that are deemed controversial due to its atypical messaging and rebellious undertones is something that many queer consumers can connect with. Their identities are seen by the masses as just as contentious to the music they listen to. Songs like "Throat Goat" and "Treat Me Like A Slut" are just the kind of thing I would customarily find blasting in the speakers at a gay bar. It is why I can appreciate the fact that an EP like this exists, especially from an artist with a huge queer fan base.

What I can't admire is the fact that producer Dr. Luke co-wrote some of her songs and is credited in producing Petras' EP. Singer-songwriter Kesha accused Dr. Luke of sexual abuse in 2014 and even filed a lawsuit against the producer. Kesha dropped the lawsuit in 2016. Dr. Luke filed a counter lawsuit of defamation against the singer which is still ongoing.

Most of the internet has sided with Kesha, but Petras' collaboration has opened old wounds, creating a new target on Petras by most of social media, especially Twitter and TikTok users. Working with Dr. Luke in any capacity is shameful, and considering the album's central theme is aggressively about intimacy made the whole situation worse. My admiration for Petras and "Slut Pop" was clouded when Dr. Luke was confirmed to be a part of it, especially in such a big way.

"Slut Pop" is far from a good EP and its link to Dr. Luke just makes its imperfections even more apparent. I can, however, cherish the EP for what it's trying to be. It's a good time and a middle finger to people who are too uptight to appreciate the humor behind intercourse. If you're looking for a more wholesome and less controversial alternative by the artist, I suggest streaming the song "Coconuts" which is essentially a love letter to the singer's breasts, or "coconuts" as she would refer to them.



ILLUSTRATION BY PEYTON MCKENZIE

BOOK OF THE WEEK

'Sadie' combines prose and transcript to tell the devastating story of two girls

By **ASHLEY PELLETIER**
Arts & Life Editor

Since the rise of the true-crime podcast in the 2010s, our perception of how we view crime has changed. We tend to fixate on serial killers and their victims as characters in a fictional narrative. They are completely separated from the reality we live in.

"Sadie," written by Courtney Summers, combats that in a unique way, with the novel being written from two perspectives. The first is a transcript of a podcast called "The Girls," which attempts to tell the story of Mattie and Sadie, two sisters who grew up in the rural, forgotten town of Cold Creek.

The story opens with 13-year-old Mattie's murder, leaving her sister, 19-year-old Sadie, to pick up the broken pieces. Sadie takes off in search of Mattie's killer, leaving behind May Beth, a surrogate grandmother for the girls.

When Sadie's abandoned car turns up with all of her belongings in it, May Beth calls upon radio host West McCray to try and find Sadie, telling her and Mattie's stories along the way. Juxtaposed with McCray's transcripts, Sadie tells her own story of abuse and loss. While some teenage narrators can be irritating or naïve, Sadie is pessimistic, determined and impulsive.

The book's format is something I have never seen before. At first, it took a while to get into it. I'd pick it up and read a chapter or two in a sitting, but once I got hooked, I was devoted to finishing the book in just a few days.

One of the aspects of the book that intrigued me the most is the secondary characters — the ones that Sadie and McCray interact with that aren't significant in the moment, but are vital to the plot. In particular, I like how they talk to McCray. The moments that we see them interact with Sadie later reflect on their podcast appearance, even if they don't share all of the details that we get from her narration.

"Sadie" shows the possible upside of true crime. While I have spoken on the negatives, such as the retraumatization of victims and their families, the novel takes the consequences of editorializing true crime in a different direction. In an investigation where Sadie just disappeared, McCray is the only one who cares enough about her to try and figure out what really happened.

This book can be incredibly heavy at times. It has themes of childhood sexual abuse, murder and addiction. However, Summers handles them with skill. They never felt so extreme that I couldn't keep reading.

If you're a hardcore fan of true crime, you'll really enjoy "Sadie." However, I am not one of those fans. The ending of "Sadie" is depressing, much like most cases of this nature. I was left unsatisfied by the ending, hoping there were just a few more pages when I got the answers to my remaining questions but that's not real life.

While "Sadie" is a work of fiction, it feels real. The people feel real. The plot is believable. I would not be surprised if Summers had based the entire novel off of a real event, which really sucks. Regardless, I would still recommend it.



DANIEL PASSAPERA/CHRONICLE

Courtney Summers tells a true-crime story through audio transcripts and first-person narration in her novel, 'Sadie.'



ILLUSTRATION BY PEYTON MCKENZIE

DO YOU WANT YOUR POETRY FEATURED?

YOU CAN SUBMIT YOUR WORK TO

THEQUCHRONICLE@GMAIL.COM

Poems by Michael LaRocca

Michael LaRocca is the associate opinion editor for The Quinipiac Chronicle

'Leisured Hardship'

I like to take the slow path.
I do not choose it, it finds its way to me.
 Its dirt is dirty.
 Its water is wet.
But it gets me where I need to go.
I do not understand its wishes.
It breaks everyone that enters,
 I just break slower.
I do not mind the wrong turns.
They do not take long to correct.
 I continue,
 excited to see its end.
 I've seen it before.
 I cherish its beauty,
 yet it holds me back.
Even if I go two steps ahead,
 and one step behind.
 Slowly.
 I will find my way.

'Literality'

Here one sits.
Thoughts race through their mind.
There is a desire to create;
the fingers begin to move.
Sounds, sights, tastes form
into what one can believe is valuable,
 or not.
They are released-
 those senses-
 into the world.
Praised or criticized,
they are never enough.
One can always be better,
 but that chase
 will never end.
The quest for greatness.



ILLUSTRATION BY CONNOR LAWLESS

Quinnipiac opens meal plan credit card

This article is for comedic purposes only. Actual names and likenesses used in this article are used in a parodic context, and are not a reflection of any actual person.

By NEHA SEENARINE
Associate Arts & Life Editor

Quinnipiac University introduced a new way to “tap it” on Feb. 18.

Students will be able to apply for meal plan credit cards for the fall 2022 semester. The card will be called "Ambition Reloaded."

The Ambition Reloaded cards will allow students to build a credit score for the duration of their undergraduate years. The university proposes the cards are more beneficial and teach students how to handle real-world situations.

“There is no better way to learn about adult finances,” Quinnipiac’s Dining Financial Advisor Jeff Fellowes said. “People like to eat, so it’s not a loss to anyone.”

Cards will require students’ social security numbers, annual income and cumulative GPA. Their applications may be denied if they have outstanding balances on their student accounts.

“I never had a credit card,” senior accounting major Mason Kyocera said. “I imagine that this is like a cruise ship, I just tap my card and everything is free.”

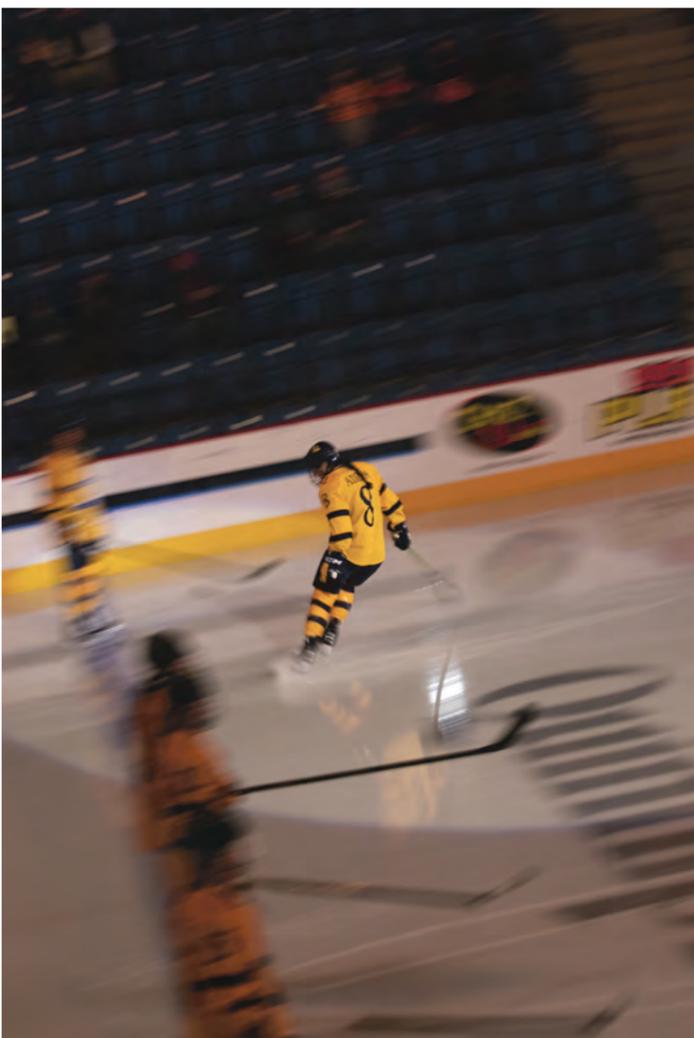
Students will have a credit limit of \$50. A bill will populate in the student’s email in the following 72 hours, forcing the spender to pay off their dining plan debt within three hours of receiving their email. If they fail to pay, missed payments will be reported to the credit bureau. Their dining plans will be deactivated until the payment is made.

“They definitely don’t want any undergrads to have an 850 credit score,” first-year history major Daisy Velez said.

Ambition Reloaded cards will be available in Boomer blue, Quad grass green or a custom picture of the student doing the “Bobcat roar” from orientation.

PHOTOS OF THE WEEK

By JACK SPIEGEL AND AIDAN SHEEDY



JACK SPIEGEL (LEFT) AND AIDAN SHEEDY (RIGHT)/CHRONICLE

Patently waiting for the women's hockey team to take the ice, Jocely Kenny, 10, of West Haven wanted the players, including Lexie Adzija (left), to know they are the role models of the next generations of hockey and women in sports.

Scores & Schedule

Wednesday 2/16

MLAX lost 12-7 @ LIU

Thursday 2/17

WBB lost 59-54 @ Fairfield

Friday 2/18

BASE lost 13-3 @ Saint Joseph's

WIH won 4-1 vs. Yale

ACRO won 270.89-139.05 @ Kutztown

MIH won 5-0 @ Dartmouth

Saturday 2/19

WBB won 76-57 vs. Niagara

WLAX won 9-8 @ LIU

SOFT lost 6-5 @ Howard

BASE lost 15-8 @ Saint Joseph's

MLAX lost 19-13 @ Brown

WIH lost 1-0 vs. Brown

WTEN won 5-2 vs. Stony Brook

MIH lost 1-0 @ Harvard

WIT&F 2nd place (MAAC Championships)

Sunday 2/20

SOFT lost 14-1 vs. Iowa State

BASE won 18-8 @ Saint Joseph's

SOFT lost 19-5 @ Howard

MBB lost 67-66 @ Marist

Tuesday 2/22

MIH vs. Yale 7 p.m. (Results unavailable before publication)

Wednesday 2/23

SOFT @ Sacred Heart 2:30 p.m.

WLAX @ Sacred Heart 3 p.m.

Thursday 2/24

WBB @ Marist 11 a.m.

MBB vs. Siena 7 p.m.

Friday 2/25

WIH vs. Clarkson 3 p.m.

MLAX @ Sacred Heart 3 p.m.

BASE @ NC State 6 p.m.

MIH vs. Cornell 7 p.m.

Saturday 2/26

GOLF Gardner-Webb Invitational 9 a.m.

BASE @ NC State 2 p.m.

SOFT @ Sacred Heart 1 p.m. / 3 p.m.

WBB vs. Siena 1 p.m.

WTEN @ Army 3 p.m.

WIH vs. Clarkson 3 p.m.

MIH vs. Colgate 7 p.m.

Sunday 2/27

GOLF Gardner-Webb Invitational 9 a.m.

BASE @ NC State 1 p.m.

SOFT @ Sacred Heart 1 p.m.

MBB vs. Canisius 1 p.m.

WIH vs. Clarkson 3 p.m. (if necessary)

MTEN vs. Sacred Heart 6 p.m.

Tuesday 3/1

WLAX @ Yale 3 p.m.

Rebuilding the roster

Baseball program set for uncertain season after 2021 standouts graduate



MORGAN TENCZA/CHRONICLE ARCHIVES (2021)

The Bobcats lost several key players from last year, including catcher Colton Bender (above) and utility Evan Vulgamore.

By **BENJAMIN YEARGIN**
Staff Writer

The Quinnipiac baseball team's record last year was 7-21, a .333 winning percentage.

If this was a batting average, it's good enough to get you in the National Baseball Hall of Fame. But it isn't. This winning percentage is not good enough if your aim is to win the MAAC, which the Quinnipiac baseball team tried to accomplish in 2021.

The team was led by a number of players who have since graduated, including catcher Colton Bender, pitchers Blake DeCarr and Dakota Herman, infielder Dylan Lutz, outfielder Andre Marrero and utility Evan Vulgamore.

Marrero accrued a .429 on-base percentage and led the team in slugging percentage (.570). Lutz was first on the team in batting average with a .309, meaning he hit the ball approximately three times every 10 plate appearances. The San Diego Padres drafted Bender in the 10th round of the 2021 MLB Draft, and Vulgamore was on the All-MAAC First-Team in 2021.

On the mound, the team lost DeCarr and Herman, who both tied for second on the team with eight appearances. DeCarr finished the year with a poor 8.27 ERA, allowing 25 runs and 1.84 walks and hits per innings pitched.

Losing your four best hitters and two of your most consistent pitchers creates a massive gap in the lineup that underclassmen need to step up and fill. The million dollar question: Who will the Bobcats look to?

For leadership, search no further than graduate student infielder Ian Ostberg.

Ostberg is one of the eight remaining players from the 2019 NCAA tournament team and a staple in the lineup for Quinnipiac. Though he is coming off a down year, batting .245/.287/.309 last season, he will still add consistency, and could bounce back.

When Ostberg returns to the lineup, he will also provide an underrated facet of the game: the stolen base. His five stolen bases last year led the Bobcats, who stole a combined 22, in the bottom half of the MAAC. Look out for Quinnipiac to play some small ball — utilizing bunts, stolen bases and hit-and-runs — in order to get some extra runs in tight games against competitive teams like No. 10 NC State and the defending MAAC champions Fairfield, who went 33-1 in conference play last year.

Having someone like Ostberg who knows what a successful team looks and feels like, will guide this overwhelmingly young roster through a tumultuous year.

Out of the 32 players, 23 on the active roster are freshmen, sophomores and juniors.

Look to junior outfielder and pitcher Anthony Donofrio and junior pitchers Brandyn Garcia and Kevin Seitter to anchor this team not only for this season, but for the rest of their careers as Bobcats.

Donofrio transferred to Quinnipiac last season from Division III Cortland where he had six hits in 11 at-bats, with a .600 on-base percentage and a .636 slugging percentage in 2020. In the three games played this year, Donofrio is batting .462/.563/.538 with five RBI's on the year. Donofrio will add a stable and consistent offensive and defensive presence to this Bobcats team.

However, with the offensive prowess that the Bobcats bring to the table, keep in mind they scored eighteen runs on Sunday against Saint Joseph's, baseball is the epitome of a team game. Pitching needs to be elite for Quinnipiac to win ball games this year, too.

Garcia and Seitter are two anchors of this young Bobcat pitching staff that both bring an arsenal of velocity and break. Garcia showcases a fastball, curveball and slider from a sidearm release, almost Madison Bumgarner-esque, whereas Seitter brings a four-seam fastball, two-seam fastball, changeup and curve.

Garcia was a workhorse on the mound, leading the team with 33.1 innings pitched and posting a solid 4.32 ERA with two complete games, but the Bobcats were second to last in the MAAC last year in team ERA with a 7.21 ERA. It's worth mentioning that Quinnipiac only pitched 206 innings last year, but still not acceptable for a team that won the MAAC in 2019.

One more thing worth noting is that every team in the MAAC played doubleheaders for all of its regular season games last year, truly testing its depth as a club. The Bobcats failed this test, and it's going to get worse this year as all the graduates they relied on are gone.

Quinnipiac is slated to play much stronger teams in its long stretch of road games. Beginning the season, they tend to lose more on the road than when it gets into MAAC play at home. That stretch will hit hard this year as it plays Saint Joseph's, NC State, James Madison, George Mason, VCU and Saint John's all for a three-game series before it begins conference play against Canisius on April 1.

This baseball team has an abundance of young talent, there's no question about that. But will this young talent be enough for the Bobcats to be competitive this year?

There will be an uptick in offensive production from Donofrio, sophomore first base and outfielder Sebastian Mueller and junior infielder McGwire Tuffy, who is batting .375/.444/.375 along with hitting the team's only home run on the year, but the pitching will still remain lackluster despite improvement.

With offense and pitching refinement along with their challenging conference schedule, it's fair to say Quinnipiac could reach 20 wins.

Look for a team that will suffer a lot of losses, but will come out improved, ready for battle and possessing more experience for next season.

'We don't want another year like last year'

Previewing Quinnipiac softball's potential bounceback season

By **ETHAN HURWITZ**
Associate Sports Editor

Good teams don't lose 14 of their last 16 games. The Quinnipiac Bobcats softball team didn't have a 2021 season to remember on the diamond.

After repeatedly falling short in recent history, the Quinnipiac softball team looks to rebound and compete in the MAAC in 2022. Searching for its first winning regular season since 2012, it has a lot of ground to make up if it wants to catch up to the Manhattan Jaspers, the defending conference champions.

The Jaspers won't face the Bobcats until April 10, but until then, the team has confidence that it will get off to a fast start.

Hillary Smith, who is in her fourth season as head coach, has made an instant impact on the team as a whole, said graduate student outfielder and infielder Kayla Jensen.

"She's not just setting us up for softball. She is setting us up for our life out of college," Jensen said. "I think she is an amazing head coach, and she will only do great things for this program."

Smith, who holds a career record of 27-73 as the Bobcats' skipper, has a solid cast to build around in her fourth year. Highlighted by 2021 All-MAAC Rookie Team sophomore infielder Kayla Thomas and junior infielder Cy Gonzalez, Quinnipiac should be a very good offensive team in the conference. Both Thomas and Gonzalez were some of the better contact hitters in their lineup last season, batting .269 and .296, respectively.

Some returning members who can help this team flip the switch are senior catcher Hannah Davis, junior outfielder Serena Fogg and junior pitcher Lala Pascual, who played on the Dominican Republic National Team before arriving at Quinnipiac. In a sport that requires a lot of leadership, the veterans of this program will be able to help turn the tides and fix some errors that cost them the previous year.

Losing 16 games by three or less runs, including five one-run losses, is something the team does not want to replicate. Senior infielder Bridget Nasir talked about how last year was just that — last year.

"Our mentality is better," Nasir said. "We have been calling it 'Team 46' and I think Team 46 is going to do it."

As the 46th edition of the Quinnipiac softball team takes the field in the spring, it will be a nice building block for what is hoped to be a promising future for the Bobcats.

Both Nasir and Jensen are adamant about looking forward and not focusing on the past, a theme both said is new this season. In other years, the program would tend to look back at the prior seasons and get stuck in their old ways. This year, a switch has been flipped, and the team has their sights set on 2022 and beyond.

Nasir, a California native, has been a solid contributor for the Bobcats in her first three seasons, totaling 45 hits and 36 walks in her Quinnipiac career. Although a career .183 hitter, she has been a threat to swipe bases, going 6-for-6 in attempts in 2021.



CONNOR LAWLESS/CHRONICLE (2021)

Quinnipiac ranked third to last in the 2022 MAAC Preseason Coaches' Poll after an 8-28 season last year.

The Bobcats also welcome a solid group of freshmen who have already meshed extremely well with their teammates, something that Jensen said was not seen in years prior.

"They have such a personality," Jensen said. "For where they're at, a lot of them are really, really good."

The group of newcomers, including pitchers Sydney Horan, Taylor Walton, Zali Adams, Jaclyn Gonzalez and utility Brooke Hilliard, are expected to contribute from the first pitch. These first-years can give the team some depth in the arm department, something they have struggled with in recent seasons.

Jensen, who began her collegiate career at the College of Central Florida, has been a consistent lead-off hitter for Quinnipiac. Her career-high 23 walks last season were a bright spot in the Bobcats' lineup that did not have many shining moments. In three years, Jensen also has 28 career steals, adding another element to the team's offense. In fact, she and Nasir were the only Bobcats to not be thrown out stealing all of last season.

The softball season starts with

a 14-game road trip, with stops in Washington D.C., Nashville and Baltimore. The Bobcats will host their first home game against the Maine Black Bears on March 26. Just before conference play is the UMBC Tournament in Maryland on March 19-20 and that has the potential of being a jump-starter early on in the season.

"I'm just so excited to play everyone on our schedule," Jensen said. "I don't think they will know what hit them."

After being ranked No. 9 in the MAAC to begin the collegiate season, the Bobcats clearly have a large chip on their shoulder as they enter the 2022 schedule. If Quinnipiac can back up their preseason confidence on the field, this has a chance to be an improved year for softball.

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His area of strength is around the crease, creating screens and providing traffic in front of the goaltenders' eyes. de Jong feasted on creating chaos around the goal line and would frequently find ways to corral or poke rebounded pucks for another shot.

Despite potting all those goals last year, de Jong only has one power-play tally this year. That's in part due to the first power-play unit not throwing enough pucks on the net. The top unit tries to be too fancy rather than resort to a simplified approach.

Even if a goal doesn't occur on a power play, a team's overall confidence level does not diminish if shots get through to the net. Team morale depletes if a top unit can't generate anything and spends most of the opportunity trying to re-enter the offensive zone.

Outside of that, Quinnipiac's only noticeable issue is a consistent effort in the opening minutes. Sometimes the energy level is lacking, and the intensity that the Bobcats tend to play with is fairly flat. That's being slightly nitpicky, but it will matter come time for conference playoffs.

This team displays a lot of aspects that previous contending Quinnipiac teams have not. The defensive approach and goaltending performances continuously baffle teams. Quinnipiac's penalty kill has been otherworldly, boasting the best in the country at 92.6%.

It also happens to be Quinnipiac's best penalty-kill percentage of the 21st century.

That level of effectiveness can largely be credited to arguably the best blue-line core in the country. In addition to star senior Zach Metsa, performances have skyrocketed from senior Marcus Chorney and junior Jayden Lee. That's not to mention the outstanding play from graduate transfers Griffin Mendel and Brendan Less, which have put this Quinnipiac team on a new level.

Of course, the team would not be where it is without the unexpected sovereignty of its two netminders. Led by freshman Yaniv Perets with graduate student transfer Dylan St. Cyr backing him up, the goaltending continues to shock the nation.

They have a combined .947 save percentage, .96 goals against average and 14 shutouts. If those stats belonged to one goalie, it would rank third, second and first, respectively.

With only three games remaining in the regular season, all of which are home games, Quinnipiac does not have a lot of time to amend its blatant blemish. Of those games, only Colgate poses a solid penalty kill. Yale and Cornell factor more towards the middle of the league.

Beyond that, the ECAC Hockey standings remain a two-way dog fight between Quinnipiac and Clarkson. The Bobcats hold a one-point lead with a game in hand over the Golden Knights. Two wins for Quinnipiac secure back-to-back Cleary Cups as well as the first seed in the conference playoffs.

Three games in five days. A lot can unfold. It's Quinnipiac's conference to lose.



The Battle of Whitney Ave Returns...

Looking for coverage of the Yale game?

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Pete's pond: Man-disadvantage

Quinnipiac's power play has been its Achilles' heel all season, aching now more than ever

By **PETER PIEKARSKI**
Sports Editor

Since October's Ice Breaker tournament, the main point of Quinnipiac's game I've highlighted as needing work is the power play. Fast forward to today, and it's still the most concerning issue this team faces.

It's not just the power play either now. The offense that opened the season with vigor and imposing endurance seems to have lost a level of its execution in more crucial games.

I don't mean to diminish the success this team has accrued thus far, considering how dominant Quinnipiac has been in most of its games. It controls the pace of the game, the time of possession and the shot share.

The scoring disparity between Quinnipiac and its opponents is staggering. Through its first 18 games, the Bobcats averaged 3.39 goals per game while only allowing 1.11 goals against. Since Jan. 14, they have averaged 3.2 GPG while holding opponents to a shocking .87 GPG. Currently, the Bobcats are tied for 12th in the country in GPG with 3.3 and in first for goals against per game at 1.0.

Quinnipiac's ability to dominate teams has been evident all season long. Just look at the shot comparisons. The Bobcats lost on the shot board in only one game this entire season, and that was in the CT Ice championship game against UConn.

Almost every aspect of this team exclaims elite national contender.

However, despite their level of dominance, a couple of flaws need to be tidied up. The offense has stumbled a few times down the stretch, specifically in high-profile matchups against conference foes such as Cornell, Harvard and Clarkson. Quinnipiac only managed to score a total of two goals in those three games.

The one aspect which seemingly matters most is the power play that continues to suffer. With three games to go, Quinnipiac has mustered a measly 13.0% on the power play, seventh-worst in Division I. During games against ECAC Hockey opponents, Quinnipiac's man-advantage has converted seven times on 62 opportunities, which sits at a woeful 11.3%.

The league average is 19.1%, which Quinnipiac substantially falls short of.

In five total games against Cornell, Harvard and Clarkson, Quinnipiac went 1-for-15, a dreadful 6.7% conversion rate.

What's the issue? Why can a team this good struggle so much when the other team is without a skater?

Well, it's quite simple. The Bobcats do not shoot for volume on the power play. They focus too much on trying to tee up the best shot possible. They have two elite shooters in re-

spective senior and sophomore forwards Wyatt Bongiovanni and Ty Smilanic. Opposing penalty kills recognize this and adjust to prevent one-time opportunities for the both of them.

The team fails to realize that one of the more vital scorers on the power play for them is senior forward Ethan de Jong. During the 2020-21 season, de Jong scored eight of his 14 goals on the power play, which led the team.

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AIDAN SHEEDY/CHRONICLE

Senior forward and assistant captain Ethan de Jong only has one power-play goal this year after scoring eight last year.