



TYLER RINKO/CHRONICLE

OUT OF TIME

Quinnipiac's title hopes end with Saint Peter's buzzer beater in MAAC semifinals

By **ETHAN HURWITZ**
Sports Editor

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — There are **18.7** seconds left on the clock.

Quinnipiac men's basketball is coming out of a full timeout, still down 60-57 in Friday's MAAC semifinals. Graduate student guard Savion Lewis — who had 14 points, five rebounds and seven assists — gets the inbound pass and starts to dribble left to right.

16.9, 16.8, 16.7

He passes to the elbow. The receiver? Graduate student guard Matt Balanc. He hasn't had the best game up to this point. Neither have the majority of the Bobcats — “We struggled at the foul line,” Quinnipiac head coach Tom Pecora said.

They missed 10 from the stripe, including five from senior forward Paul Otieno. It wasn't the best night for him either, despite his 12 points. He was shut down in the paint and any potential maneuvering was rejected.

“(Defense) is what we lean on,” Saint Peter's senior guard Latrell Reid said. “60 (points allowed), we win ball games.”

14.4, 14.3, 14.2

Balanc stops, pivots and heads to the sideline after a screen from Otieno. He launches a three that should not have come close to the rim. In his face was Peacocks redshirt sophomore forward Mouhamed Sow.

The desperation triple arches high. Swish. The Quinnipiac bench erupts and the Bobcats — who have trailed by as much as 10 in the second half — have new life.

“I was hype, but we had to get back and get a stop,” Balanc said. “We didn't win the game, we tied it.”

It's true, the game wasn't over. Peacocks

head coach Bashir Mason, coaching in just his second season for Saint Peter's, calls a timeout with 10 seconds remaining.

5.2, 5.1, 5.0

After some give-and-gos between Sow and Reid, the latter takes the ball at the top of the key and drives to his right. He stops, then picks up steam in the paint.

“We butchered the play, there was supposed to be a back screen,” Mason said. “We didn't do that, but it was supposed to be in (senior guard Roy Clarke's) hands.”

Clarke's game was subpar. With only five points, his head coach wanted the senior to have his hero moment. Instead, it was Reid taking it to the rim with the game on the line.

3.3, 3.2, 3.1

Otieno, Balanc and junior guard Alexis Reyes contested the layup. Reid missed, but the Bobcats — who outrebounded Saint Peter's, albeit by just four — couldn't corral the loose ball.

“Something we talked about ... It's not about the game-winning shot,” Pecora said. “It's about making sure there's not a second opportunity.”

0.9, 0.8, 0.7

After just six three-pointers all season, Sow's semifinal performance was a breakout of sorts. He had drilled three from beyond the arc and was setting the tone for the No. 5 Peacocks all night.

“Everybody has faith in me,” Sow said. “I'm just trying to hit one, two, whatever comes my way.”

Sow crashes the paint. He has 13 points, far and away his most of the season. He's playing valuable minutes because the Peacocks' other big man — junior forward Mi-

chael Houge — had fouled out.

The missed shot falls right into the hands of Sow, who instantly goes right back up to the rim with under a second remaining.

“I had faith in him that he was gonna make it,” Sow said. “I was like, ‘If you don't make it, I'm just going to try and get the offensive rebound.’”

And just like Balanc's out-of-body three-pointer seconds prior, Sow puts his team's fate in the air with **0.6** ticks on the clock.

Down the net it goes, and onto the MAAC Championship the Peacocks go.

0.0

“We were right there physically,” Lewis said. “Obviously, they got the last effort and finished it.”

The physical atmosphere of the game was turned up a notch. It's something that the Peacocks have preached all season long, even having Mason yell mid-press conference to demonstrate how he wants his team to sound in practice.

It got the better of the MAAC's top-seeded Bobcats, who bested Saint Peter's twice in the regular season, including a statement win to close the schedule.

“Early on in the game, we never really got our flow offensively,” Pecora said. “I think that was the difference maker.”

For Quinnipiac, a Hollywood ending for Balanc's career and a chance to win a MAAC title evaporated in an instant. For Saint Peter's, a trip to the conference championship and eventual NCAA Tournament awaits — “survive and advance,” Mason preached.

Now the two programs head their own ways, separated by just a matter of seconds.

Olian ranks 21st on Hartford Business Journals' 'Power 50'

By **ALEXANDRA MARTINAKOVA**
News Editor

Hartford Business Journal ranked Quinnipiac University's President Judy Olian among its 2024 Power 50 list on March 4.

The Power Players list is a section that highlights private- and public-sector, non-profit, higher education, real estate and healthcare officials in Connecticut, who are not only top leaders within their organizations but also the broader business community, per the journal's website.

Olian ranked No. 21.

“This is really a recognition for Quinnipiac University and the increasingly impactful role our university plays in the civic life of Connecticut,” Olian wrote in a March 6 statement to The Chronicle. “We all need to be engaged in lifting the communities in which we live.”

She wasn't the only individual from Quinnipiac to make the list. Quinnipiac School of Law alum and Hartford's newest mayor Arunan Arulampalam was featured at No. 7.

The No. 1 spot belonged to Gov. Ned Lamont and first lady of Connecticut Annie Lamont.

The Journal's editorial staff chose and ranked the fifth-annual Power 50 class. Though it is not an official ranking, the staff identifies newsmakers and swindlers who have a broad impact within the region and state, according to the website.

The article attached to Olian's profile recalled the Quinnipiac men's hockey 2023 NCAA Championship win, and her seizing the opportunity of the school's sudden popularity to cast a positive spotlight on the small private college.

The article also highlighted the South Quad project and quoted Olian on the Hartford HealthCare partnerships that expanded hands-on learning opportunities for students in health care and other industries.

Hartford HealthCare's President and Chief Executive Officer Jeffrey Flaks sat at No. 2 on the list.

However, Olian wasn't the highest ranked college president on the list. The No. 3 spot belonged to Radenka Maric, president of the University of Connecticut.

Justin Elicker, New Haven's mayor, made the list at No. 14.

Benjamin Zachs, chief operating officer of Fine Fettle, a cannabis company with several retail dispensaries, rounded out the list at No. 50.



CAT MURPHY/CHRONICLE

Hartford Business Journal ranked Quinnipiac University President Judy Olian on its 'Power 50' list alongside figures including Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont.

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Quinnipiac's 'March Madness'

University goes on hiring spree, brings on three new high-level administrators

By **CAT MURPHY**
News Editor

The term "March Madness" typically refers to the culmination of the Division I collegiate basketball season, but Quinnipiac University applied it to something else this month: administrative hires.

Quinnipiac officials kicked off spring break this March with three high-level hiring moves and a new Title IX coordinator, turning what is typically one of the quietest weeks of the school year into one of the busiest.

Between March 8 and March 11, the university named permanent appointees to two newly established directorial roles and a vice presidential position.

These hires alone tell only part of the story, though — put into the context of the university's 18-month-long saga of administrative turnover, they are indicative of a potential upswing in the trend. Quinnipiac's diversity offices have been the hardest hit by the university's revolving door, suffering six key departures since January 2023.

In December, at the height of the turnover among diversity officers, Quinnipiac dismantled its former Department of Global and Cultural Engagement.

It is the transition to the newly re-focused equity office — the Office of Inclusive Excellence — that David Fryson, interim vice president for inclusive excellence, was hired to lead.

Fryson announced in a March 11 email to the Bobcat community that Claude Mayo, Quinnipiac's director of academic integrity, would serve as the university's inaugural director of inclusive excellence, effective immediately.

The newly established title — like the office that houses it — is a product of the DCGE overhaul that restructured the department's equity-specific initiatives under the Office of Inclusive Excellence and assigned its remaining functions to other campus departments.

Mayo has firsthand knowledge of the

challenges posed by the recent departures among diversity officials. For the past eight months, he has been doing double-duty as the interim director of multicultural education and training following the previous director's departure last summer.

"At a time when the institution needed assistance in equity and inclusion, he stepped in and has been a stabilizing and astute presence," Fryson wrote. "As he assumes this new position, his institutional knowledge will be an invaluable asset."

Mayo has worn a number of other hats in his three years at Quinnipiac. Since coming to Hamden in 2021, he has also served as the pre-law adviser, the lead administrator of the First-Year Immersion program, an adjunct faculty member and the faculty affiliate for several student organizations as well as the Multicultural Living Learning Community.

As director of inclusive excellence, Fryson wrote, Mayo will oversee the advancement of on-campus equity initiatives that ensure Quinnipiac "continues to be a welcoming environment where the sense of belonging is palpable and expanding."

"Claude has demonstrated an outstanding level of commitment to Quinnipiac University in a variety of positions," Fryson wrote. "He brings forth a wonderful ability to connect at all levels of our institution."

Because the former assistant director subsequently resigned in December, it is not immediately clear who will succeed Mayo as director of multicultural education and training.

Mayo's directorial appointment to the Office of Inclusive Excellence marks Fryson's second permanent hire in his three-month tenure as the university's interim chief equity officer.

Fryson's other hire, Patricio Jimenez, took over as Quinnipiac's Title IX coordinator on March 11. Jimenez — a lawyer and former Title IX investigator at Syracuse University who Fryson tapped to lead Quinnipiac's Title IX office in January — is the university's second permanent and fourth

acting coordinator since January 2023.

Amid the DCGE overhaul, the university also established a religious inclusivity post: director of spiritual well-being.

On March 8, the university appointed Jermaine Pearson, a Protestant chaplain and intercultural engagement specialist with over a decade of experience in higher education, to serve as the inaugural titleholder.

"Jermaine brings a deep commitment to building inclusive environments that nurture belonging and connection," the press release posted to MyQ said. "Jermaine has demonstrated a remarkable ability to provide compassionate support to students, staff, and faculty from various cultural and religious backgrounds throughout his career."

The mass exodus among administrators has not been exclusive to Quinnipiac's diversity offices — turnover has affected the entire university recently.

Over the last 18 months, four university vice presidents have left Quinnipiac to take similar positions elsewhere.

Among them is Todd Sloan, former vice president for development and alumni affairs, who resigned in September to become Princeton Theological Seminary's vice president for advancement.

At the time, President Judy Olian appointed Nick Wormley, a former Quinnipiac student-athlete and the then-associate vice president for development and alumni affairs, to serve as the interim vice president until university officials could appoint Sloan's permanent successor.

But over spring break, Olian removed the word "interim" from Wormley's title — he is now Sloan's permanent successor.

"Nick brings not only a love for our university, but also extensive alumni and development experience," Olian wrote in a March 11 email to faculty and staff. "He has served as the Interim VP for the past five months and has demonstrated compelling leadership, fundraising successes, and strong connections to our alumni, parent and donor communities."



PHOTO COURTESY OF QUINNIPIAC UNIVERSITY

Claude Mayo, former director of academic integrity now serves as Quinnipiac University's director of inclusive excellence.



PHOTO COURTESY OF QUINNIPIAC UNIVERSITY

Patricio Jimenez, Title IX coordinator, is Quinnipiac University's fourth acting and second permanent coordinator since January 2023.

Former Connecticut Sen. Joe Lieberman talks at QU about crossing the political aisle

By **KATIE LANGLEY**

Editor-in-Chief

Former Connecticut Sen. Joe Lieberman is perhaps best known as Al Gore's running mate in the highly-contested 2000 presidential election that came down to a few stray pieces of paper in Florida.

And while his run with the former Clinton vice president was marred by requests for recounts and a heated legal battle — one that the Gore campaign lost — Lieberman wants you to know him as more than a failed vice presidential hopeful.

Instead, Lieberman has made his mark as a two-party system nonconformist and a vocal advocate for bipartisanship.

Speaking at Quinnipiac University to an at-capacity Mt. Carmel Auditorium on March 7 just hours before President Joe Biden's State of the Union Address, the Democrat-turned-independent emphasized Americans' need to reach across the aisle and overcome political polarization.

David Fryson, Quinnipiac's interim vice president for inclusive excellence, introduced Lieberman, whose visit was part of the university's Critical Conversations Speaker Series. Lieberman — who served as a Connecticut senator for 24 years — presented a talk titled, "Creating Dialogue Across Differences." His speech was followed by a question-and-answer session moderated by Khalilah Brown-Dean, associate provost for faculty affairs.

In his address, the 82-year-old Stamford, Connecticut, native spanned both traditional and modern values, calling for diversity and inclusion as he peppered in religious messaging.

Lieberman also focused largely on the legacy of America's founding fathers, arguing that compromise is just as important in 2024 as it was in 1776.

"The founders knew because they were committed to this great cause, that they needed to listen to each other and compromise," Lieberman said.

However, the current partisan system of

"ideological warfare," Lieberman said, "exploits" peoples' anxieties instead of looking for resolutions.

"Technological changes, demographic changes, cultural changes have created in a lot of people in our country a profound sense of insecurity, anxiety and, uncharacteristic for Americans, pessimism about the future," Lieberman said.

Compromise is one of the core values of Lieberman's centrist political organization, No Labels, which strives to defeat political divisiveness and serve as a voice for the "politically homeless" — those who don't identify as Democrat or Republican.

The organization has already committed to sponsoring a third-party presidential candidate in the 2024 election if the two parties select presidential nominees the majority of Americans don't support — like Biden and former President Donald Trump.

"I'm inspired by a wonderful quote from Thomas Jefferson, way back where he wrote to a friend, 'In this new country of ours, it will be a good thing to have a political rebellion,'" Lieberman said about a potential third-party ticket. "Every now and then, it'll be as important as storms are in the natural world ... And I think we're at a moment like that."

And with 70% of Americans saying that Biden should not seek re-election and more than 55% believing Trump should not run — according to a January Reuters/Ipsos poll — it is clear that many voters are not thrilled with their choices.

Students who attended Lieberman's speech said they have seen the need for bipartisanship in today's polarized political climate.

"I was raised with a Republican father and a Democratic mother, who both kind of go their separate ways on political issues, and I've always kind of thought that a lot of people would agree with them on different topics but would align themselves with one party," said Lauren Jerram, a senior applied business



KATIE LANGLEY/CHRONICLE

Former Connecticut Sen. Joe Lieberman emphasizes the importance of political bipartisanship in his March 7 visit at Quinnipiac University, as a part of the Critical Conversation Speaker Series.

major. "And it was interesting to hear a ... former senator talk about that same issue and say, 'People aren't one or the other.'"

Coincidentally, Lieberman's visit to Quinnipiac came at a crucial moment in the 2024 presidential race, with Trump and Biden largely sweeping their respective parties' Super Tuesday contests just two days prior.

Lieberman said he anticipates the Trump and Biden campaigns to continue to be "bitter" rather than focusing on issues and policies. However, he said that he would support Biden if the race comes down to the two.

"Trump represents a unique threat," Lieberman said of the former president's refusal to accept the results of the 2020 election.

Thomas Peters, Student Government Association's vice president for public relations, said conversations like Lieberman's talk at Quinnipiac are especially crucial in the current political climate.

"It's great that we have people that per-

haps we don't necessarily agree with come and speak to us, and we listen to them because, as (Lieberman) expressed in his conversation here today, that there's a lot of division that we need to heal in our country," said Peters, a junior political science major.

Lieberman has won many elections throughout his time — for Connecticut state Senate in 1971, state attorney general in 1983 and four separate elections to Congress between 1989 and 2013 — but that does not mean he forgets losing the big one. And though Lieberman never made it to the White House, he is proud to call himself a member of a "very exclusive club" of "people who have lost national elections." The former senator left Quinnipiac students with some advice about resiliency: get up and keep on trying.

"So in 2000 ... what did I do the morning after Al Gore and I conceded? I went to the Senate. I went to my office," Lieberman said.

Quinnipiac provides students with micro-credential courses and digital badges

By **LILY PHILIPCZAK**

Staff Writer

Quinnipiac University offers a variety of credit and non-credit micro-credentials and digital badges made for undergraduate and graduate students, to showcase their specialized training, abilities and skills to future colleagues and prospective employers.

Micro-credentials and digital badges are educational programs that teach career-oriented skills or competencies tailored to students' needs, with a focus on experiential learning. Students can register for these through Self Service.

Alison Witherspoon, director of the department of lifelong learning, said that micro-credentials are still relatively new in higher education.

"By leveraging their earned micro-credential as a talking point in interviews, students are able to demonstrate their ability to apply professional skills in ways that align with the next step in their professional journey," Witherspoon wrote in a March 18 statement to The Chronicle.

Nathaniel Johnson, program specialist, said that micro-credentials can be helpful to students

in trying to find a job after college.

"Micro-credentials are a good mechanism to show the kind of commitment to lifelong learning that help employers see the potential in a person to keep growing and adding value to their organization," Johnson wrote in a statement to The Chronicle.

Students are able to earn micro-credentials on multiple levels. They are earned based on the intensity of the course and the rigor of assessments, per the Quinnipiac University website. Students can pursue any level. Micro-credentials and badges do not expire the way licenses and certifications do, but the effectiveness of skill sets could decrease if it isn't practiced.

Micro-credentials and badges for undergraduate students include applied Google data analytics, engineering writing, foundations of web development, gender and society and undergraduate nursing research distinction.

For graduate students, there is applied healthcare, cyber risk management, designing educational resources for the health professions, ethical hacking and penetration testing and oncologic physical therapy.

Other courses such as community and

civic engagement, applied research and interprofessional relationship-centered leadership are also available to all students.

The most popular micro-credential available to both undergraduate and graduate students is currently interprofessional healthcare education.

Kimberly Hartmann, a professor of occupational therapy, serves as the director of the Center for Interprofessional Healthcare Education.

"Micro-credentials help students highlight a particular foci of learning that is outside of a course of a degree and demonstrates a cohesive program of learning," Hartmann said.

The Center for Interprofessional Healthcare Education promotes collaboration between the various healthcare disciplines. The multidisciplinary microcredential provides students with the opportunity to engage with the local Hamden Community.

Interprofessional education is designed to have students from various majors learn alongside one another to develop team-based skills that can help improve the quality of healthcare.

Meaghan Johnson, a senior nursing major, learned about the IPE microcredential in her health science class as a sophomore.

"As a nursing major, sometimes we are unable to learn about the responsibilities of social workers, occupational therapists, (and) physical therapists," Meaghan Johnson said. "Pursuing this credential has allowed me to develop a greater understanding of each field of practice."

Meaghan Johnson said that participating in the Legacy Project, which is geared toward patients with dementia, was her favorite experience.

In the Legacy Project, two students from different disciplines interview an individual with dementia and use their stories to create a memory book about their life. The students later present it to the individuals at the end of the project.

"I was able to develop a deep connection to an individual within the community and make an impact," Meaghan Johnson said.

Her partner was an occupational therapy major, and due to the partnership she was also able to gain insight into the discipline.

"With this credential, I believe that I have the skills to collaborate with the multidisciplinary team and provide quality care to my future patients," Meaghan Johnson said.

Opinion

Car-dependent suburbia has America spinning its wheels

By **JACK MUSCATELLO**
Digital Managing Editor

The average American suburb has a few key ingredients: big box stores, seas of parking lots and six-lane roads cutting through neighborhoods. From behind the windshield of a car, it's the ultra-normal symbol of the American Dream.

But it shouldn't be this way. Housing availability has plummeted, car prices and insurance premiums are soaring and complaining about traffic still ranks supreme in small-talk conversations with relatives. Traveling through modern suburbia is broken, expensive and fundamentally boring.

A history recap, a trip to South Carolina and a look into Quinnipiac's own backyard may provide answers for a more promising future in American suburban transportation. Let's break it down.

THE HISTORY OF CAR-DEPENDENT SUBURBIA

American cities and towns were once decidedly walkable. Pedestrians, trolleys, bikes and the occasional car filled avenues, each criss-crossing the other on shared pavement. It was chaotic, sure, but by design. People had viable options for how they liked to travel, creating a genuine sense of freedom in transportation.

But after Henry Ford's assembly line revolutionized car production and World War II ushered in a new era of American-made manufacturing, urban planning shifted gears.

Bustling avenues turned into larger roads, the term "jaywalking" quickly became a crime and highway systems only allowed car traffic to trek miles into the new suburban sprawl. The car, and suburbia at large, were immediately emblematic of a somehow better, safer and wealthier region for a largely white section of the middle class.

Everyone else was left behind, in cities suddenly desperate for funding, with crippling infrastructure that has lacked recognition or political support.

This almost exclusively suburban focus has continued for more than 70 years, further segregating expansive hamlets from city centers. Only ugly, brooding interstate highway networks connect the two.

A LESSON LEARNED IN MYRTLE BEACH

To make the most of this year's spring break, I took a trip to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. But the vacation destination soon revealed itself as a shining example of how misguided the aforementioned "American Dream" really is.

Just inland from the famous hotel strip lies Kings Highway Route 17, stretching parallel to the beach. It's a six-lane highway functioning as an arterial, a term that urban planners use for a road that connects smaller

streets together in a neighborhood.

With seemingly unending signs for roadside tourist traps, drive-thrus and seafood restaurants, it looks like the perfect rest stop for that three-row SUV.

But, without access to a rental car and eager to save an Uber trip, me and two friends walked alongside it.

Thankfully, there were sidewalks available for most of the walk. But the rush of cars and pickups cruising in excess of 55 mph mere feet from us was alarming. How does one comfortably walk here, and much less enjoy it?

They can't. Outside of the beach's tourist segments, wide sidewalks are slim to none and many of the streets adjacent to Route 17 have barely any pedestrian amenities at all. Crosswalks are also difficult to find, and we spent several minutes walking out of the way to safely cross the multi-lane behemoth.

Yet there are plenty of parking lots.

HAMDEN'S HIGHWAYS

The supposed mini-golf capital of the world is not the only place with such anti-pedestrian design. Town after town, including Hamden, feature the same major arterial highway structure and car-loving design philosophy. Whitney Avenue and Dixwell Avenue, which both funnel the majority of traffic through the busiest parts of town, carry the Route 10 designation in the same way the Merritt Parkway is also Route 15.

A pseudo-main street that functions just like a major state parkway practically declares the automobile as the only viable way to fulfill local trips.

To be fair, there is a public transportation network in Hamden. But it's relegated almost exclusively to CT Transit buses or Quinnipiac's native shuttles, which would work much better if they didn't get stuck behind the same car traffic — especially in busy rush hour. With no designated bus lanes and infrequent stops along Whitney Avenue, which doesn't have any safe shoulder area, it isn't a suitable alternative to driving.

This problem is quickly amplified, especially for students, by the sheer cost of owning a vehicle. The car market is only just now returning to pre-pandemic numbers, though new vehicle costs are almost 20% higher than in 2019. Used cars are much worse, with an average cost of over \$26,000, per CNBC.

That's almost half of the average starting salary for college

graduates across the country, which is before insurance, maintenance, gas and other fees are factored in.

The once-promising emblem of freedom that the car provided has now turned into an expensive burden. And, with year-over-year climate change forecasts setting up this century's best sci-fi dystopia, the impending electric vehicle craze doesn't promise any relief in the costs department.

A PROMISING IDEA

There is a local sign of promise, though, which could spark a cultural and economic shift away from car dependency.

To celebrate Hartford's 400th birthday, the iQuilt Partnership, which began in 2011 as an effort to beautify Connecticut's capital region, has been steadily working on elaborate plans to add several acres of park space and walking paths, in place of the current I-91 and I-84 looping mess of an interchange.

It's an ambitious idea, removing decades-worth of car-centric development in favor of increased walkability, sightlines to the Connecticut River and less barriers between the downtown and other city neighborhoods. That ambition might even be too great, with a price tag of \$17 billion and a timeline of nearly two decades.

But change needs to start somewhere. The mighty automobile shouldn't hold the top spot for how Americans can get around town. Beautification projects are a promising step toward rectifying the horrible planning decisions that have come to define an entire country's overreliance on cars. The future, and your savings, practically depend on it.

Opinion

The dangers of complacency

Why Americans have a responsibility to support Palestinians

By **ZOE LEONE**
Arts & Life Editor

On Feb. 25, a Twitch stream went live outside of the Israeli embassy in Washington, D.C., sharing video footage of a man in fatigues who would identify himself as Aaron Bushnell, a cyber-defense operations specialist with the 531st Intelligence Support Squadron of the U.S. Air Force.

“I will no longer be complicit in genocide,” Bushnell stated as he made his walk to the embassy. “I am about to engage in an extreme act of protest. But compared to what people have been experiencing in Palestine at the hands of their colonizers, it’s not extreme at all.”

Bushnell would then place his phone on the ground and douse himself in liquid from a bottle, before indeed committing one of the most extreme acts of protest: self-immolation, or the act of setting oneself on fire.

As Bushnell burned, he repeatedly chanted “Free Palestine!” First responders and law enforcement gathered at the scene. He was rushed to the hospital, but succumbed to his injuries that night.

And while he was not the first to commit this form of protest against the horrors occurring in Gaza — a woman carried out the same act in December 2023 outside of the Israeli consulate in the state of Georgia, according to Reuters — Bushnell’s role in active duty brought a wave of attention to the act.

Self-immolation is a horrible sacrifice. While it has garnered attention throughout history, there’s no ignoring the cost of human life from such an extreme form of activism. And while it’s a decision and a sacrifice many of us can’t wrap our heads around, Bushnell made a choice.

The media cycle and its consumers could no longer remain blind or neutral to the plight of Palestinians — to more than 30,000 people in Gaza who have died since Oct. 7, a number that experts agree is likely conservative, according to Time.



JOE PIETTE/FLICKR

A vigil dedicated to Aaron Bushnell sits outside a military recruiting storefront in Philadelphia mere days after his death.

Bushnell, while at a devastating cost, did what he set out to do. Complacency is dangerous, and for months, many have been comfortable with turning their heads away the horrors occurring in front of them. He forced public awareness — especially in the West — to a subject they had been apt to ignore.

As Americans, we have a responsibility to pay attention now more than ever.

Since Israel’s founding in 1948, the state has received more foreign aid from the U.S. than any single country during that time period: an estimated \$300 billion, according to Human Rights Watch.

In comparison, the country that ranked second in foreign aid during roughly the same time frame is the former country of South Vietnam, which received \$184.5 billion, according to data from the U.S. Agency for International Development.

And on Feb. 13, the Senate approved a \$95 billion emergency aid bill, with a planned \$14.1 billion of those funds going to Israel, according to Reuters. However, the money the U.S. sends to Israel doesn’t grow on trees, and

it certainly doesn’t come from the pockets of the politicians approving it. It comes primarily from American taxpayers.

The amount varies from state to state, but an estimated \$69 million of just Connecticut’s taxpayer dollars goes to Israeli aid, according to the U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights. For context, that money could provide 8,211 households with public housing for a year, 24,035 children with free or low-cost health-care, 754 elementary school teachers with pay for a year and cancel the student loan debt of 1,828 students.

Regardless of whether Americans are actively paying attention to the death and horrors occurring in Gaza — children starving to death, families being completely eradicated from existence and worshippers being forced to pray outside ruined mosques during Ramadan — they are passively participating and funding it.

It’s a choice made on our behalf by the government, one that’s been made for a very long time, but it doesn’t change the fact that it’s happening. And while committing tax fraud is perhaps not the most effective form of

protest in this case, there is still plenty Americans can do to lend their support and actively try to change what is being decided for us.

Many towns and states have introduced resolutions calling for a cease-fire, including Hamden. As the upcoming election grows closer, pay attention to candidates’ stances on Palestine and foreign affairs before casting a vote.

For those that are able, there are monetary ways to support Palestinians, but be careful where you decide to donate. Care for Gaza is a great non-profit that supplies Palestinians with necessary items and food packages. Donating eSIMs — SIM cards with international wireless access — through organizations like ConnectingGaza is also a great way to help Palestinians keep access to wireless networks, which enables them to provide footage and information from Gaza itself.

One of the easiest and most effective ways to engage and educate yourself and others is to pay attention and share information straight from the source: Palestinians. There’s a slew of journalists — Motaz Azaiza, Bisan Owda and Plestia Alaqaad, to name a few — who are sharing daily updates, as well as organizations, such as Al Jazeera, that provide coverage that is often missing from Western news.

There is a comfortability in privilege — an ease that comes with safety and security, the ability to not lend a voice or even a shred of empathy to something that we perceive as not directly affecting us.

But the reality is that what occurs in Palestine does directly affect Americans. And what we do, the choices we make and the money we pay, regardless of our desire to do so, directly affects Palestinians. The American dollar has blood on it.

And while Bushnell’s methods were extreme and a devastating loss, his message is clear and one that cannot be forgotten. Complacency is a killer. And Palestinians cannot afford the complacency and ignorance of the American public.

When joining clubs on campus, less is more

By **BENJAMIN YEARGIN**
Managing Editor

When I was a first-year at Quinnipiac University, I heard dozens of times when first joining extracurricular activities to do everything you can.

I did, and I regret it. Here’s why. Doing everything that you can only works for a short period of time. There’s only so many clubs and organizations that you can give your all to, before you can’t give anything to any of them.

At the involvement fair — which happens on the Wednesday of the first week of fall classes — I signed up for the Quinnipiac Bobcats Sports Network, The Chronicle, Q30 TV, WQAQ 98.1 FM, Pep Band and

Autism Alliance.

I participated in four of the six for two months of the school year before I realized it was unsustainable. So I dropped Pep Band.

I was committed to doing broadcasts for QBSN, writing articles for The Chronicle and beat reporting women’s ice hockey for Q30. But it was too much.

By February, I was miserable, exhausted, making poor life decisions and burnt out. I knew something had to change.

What changed is I was able to free up more time in my schedule by just focusing on The Chronicle.

This isn’t an ad for The Chronicle, but being able to focus my time for extracurriculars into one club gave me

more time to hang out with friends, do classwork and do my hobbies.

Productivity experts say the same thing too. Doing less, but better will give you better results on your work in the long term while also alleviating stress, according to Forbes.

I understand if you choose to “do everything you can.” In your first month at school while classwork is low, it can be a moment to see what you like and meet new people.

Joining clubs can give you a sense of community, help you develop your “soft skills” and networking opportunities, per Bentley University.

However, for the rest of your college life, do less, better. You’ll thank me for it.

Bobcat Buzz



ILLUSTRATION BY PEYTON MCKENZIE

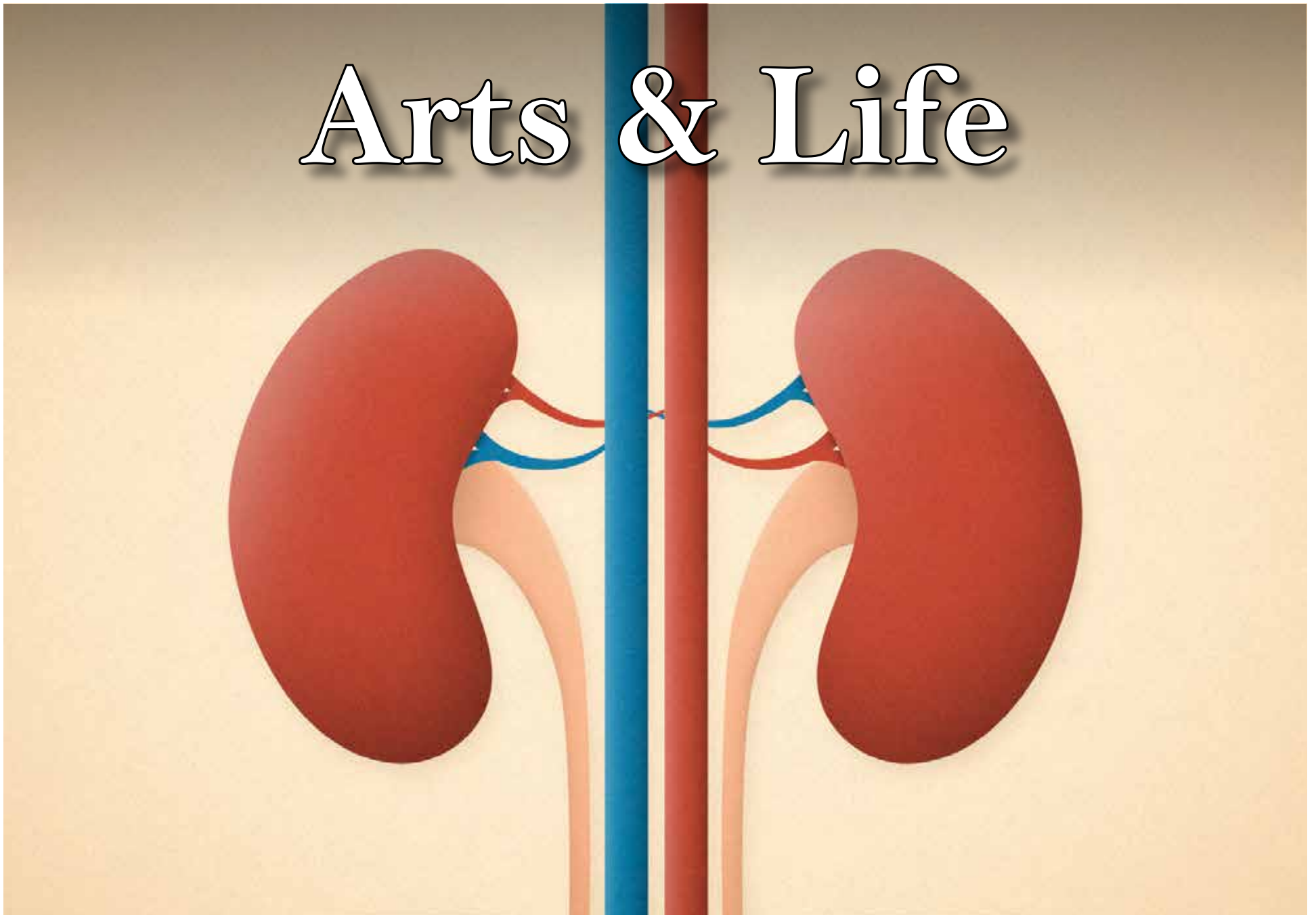


ILLUSTRATION BY PEYTON MCKENZIE

National Kidney Month: The importance of kidney advocacy

From the perspective of a kidney disease patient

By **LILLIAN CURTIN**
Associate Opinion Editor

March is National Kidney Month. For the past three years, I've advocated for patients with kidney disease, and you should too.

My journey into advocacy started when I received a diagnosis that would change my life.

In 2021, I discovered that I was part of the one in seven Americans who are impacted by a kidney disease. I spent my childhood feeling weaker than other kids, and wasn't able to keep up physically with them. I was 16 years old when I was diagnosed with primary membranous nephropathy, a type of chronic kidney disease. I had been suffering from it my whole life but didn't know it, because nobody caught it.

It was caught randomly and, in a way, miraculously. I simply just wanted to join my local fire department. I was told the process was quick, I just needed a physical. Nobody expected the doctors to find anything wrong with me. Yet, they did. My lab work was all over the place, since I suffered from proteinuria, or elevated levels of protein in the urine.

I went to Connecticut Children's Medical Center, where my first doctor told me, "We have read all about you." I was popular in the nephrology department for all the wrong reasons. I was a medical mystery.

There, my doctor explained the list of possibilities, lupus being one of them. I didn't know anything about what he was talking about, except that lupus is what Selena

Gomez has and she had to get a transplant. I was afraid that could be me.

The next step was to get a biopsy. That part was easy — the doctors put me to sleep and I took the most amazing nap. The issues started when I had to stay the night in the hospital. I had to stay on my back, and as a stomach sleeper, I knew I was in for a very uncomfortable night. I couldn't release pressure off of my back for 24 hours to stop any bleeding from the biopsy site.

As a high school junior, I struggled. A lot. When I got back to school after my biopsy, I couldn't participate in gym class. My physical education teachers gave me looks, as if I was making excuses.

That was the first time I realized people are less likely to care about an illness if it's not visible.

The second time I realized this was when I had to undergo treatments. I had to spend two days in the hospital, once a week for a month. I have to do this every year, but the time of the year depends on what my lab work looks like.

Just when I thought the most stressful part was over, life got even harder. I found out that I was allergic to my own medicine, Rituximab. I had to be given constant doses of Benadryl through an I.V. So, I slept through two days a week for a month, while being mentally and physically exhausted the rest of the time.

If I was in my teachers' position, I would've understood that there was no possible way for

me to do all of my school work while in the hospital. Yet, they didn't. They were snarky with me when I couldn't get my work done, and wouldn't give me extensions.

I had to teach myself my schoolwork because they just expected me to know on my own. Of course, this wasn't the case for all of my classes, but it was enough to make my junior year even more stressful.

I don't want anyone else to go through that. I am an advocate because I wasn't diagnosed quickly enough. I had gotten physicals before, but no one caught my disease until I moved to an area with better medical care. I don't blame the doctors in my hometown, I blame a lack of education about the symptoms.

I am an advocate because I wasn't approved for treatments by my insurance provider. Since I was a child, my treatment was considered "experimental." Of all children with nephrotic syndrome, only 1%-5% have PMN, per Kidney International Reports.

Thankfully, after weeks of fighting, I was approved. But what if I wasn't? What if I didn't have access to the medicine I needed? Spreading awareness about treatments and the disease could help children get the treatment that they desperately need.

Finally, I am an advocate because I look back, and I'm mad about how my teachers treated me when I missed class for appointments, treatments and recovery. Just because you can't see my illness, doesn't mean it's not there.

Kidney disease is known as the "silent killer" because it can progress without you even having any symptoms.

If diagnosed, you need to act fast. It's important to advocate for resources and awareness so that when treatment is needed, it's available, without judgment or setbacks.



CONTRIBUTED BY LILLIAN CURTIN

In 2021, Associate Opinion Editor Lillian Curtin was diagnosed with a rare form of kidney disease.

Ariana Grande radiates positivity with the release of 'Eternal Sunshine'

By **GINA LORUSSO**
Staff Writer

Ariana Grande's "Eternal Sunshine" took me on an emotional journey, navigating the realms of coping with the past and embracing the present.

Grande released her seventh studio album on March 8, in which she documents the obstacles of her failed marriage with Dalton Gomez and the excitement of her budding relationship with "Wicked" co-star Ethan Slater.

It's evident that Grande used this album as a diary to create some of the most beautifully written and transparent songs of her career.

Prior to the album's release, the cover art provided a sneak peek to the record's overarching message. The image shows Grande resting her head on a clone of herself, symbolizing resilience and self-reliance in light of challenges, reassuring that she can count on herself during tough times.

The day "Eternal Sunshine" came out, I listened to it on a continuous loop for hours, fully immersing myself in the melodies. With the help of Grande's fanbase, "Eternal Sunshine" became Spotify's most streamed album in a single day in 2024. More than a week later, the appeal of this album remains thanks to Grande's subliminal messages and catchy beats.

Having spent time focusing on the lyrics and sounds of each track, my top three picks are "bye," "supernatural" and "we can't be friends (wait for your love)."

"bye" is a disco-inspired track that has a slight R&B flare, similar to Grande's single "yes, and?" released on Jan. 12. These tracks remind

me of vogue-style music because they have an irresistible upbeat tune while also capturing an essence of confidence.

While "bye" and "yes, and?" are definitely dance hits, "supernatural" is relatable on a completely different level.

"supernatural" is one of those songs you can't stop singing no matter how hard you try — it just nests itself in your head. The lyrics, "This love's possessing me/ But I don't mind at all," demonstrate how new love is always a unique and overwhelming but amazing feeling all at once.

The only music video for this album so far belongs to "we can't be friends (wait for your love)" drawing inspiration from the 2004 film "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind." Grande personifies the character Peaches, an homage to Kate Winslet's character, Clementine.

In the video, Peaches undergoes a procedure where memories of an ex-boyfriend are erased. At the end of the video, Peaches clings to the necklace she's wearing as she sheds tears, begging the doctors to spare a specific memory. Despite her plea, the doctors erase it anyway.

At that moment, Peaches seems to regret following through with the procedure, but in the end, it's essential to move forward in her journey toward fulfillment. The lyrics perfectly echo this message with the lines, "But I don't want to feed this monstrous fire/ Just want to let this story die/ And I'll be alright."

Grande has not revealed who this song is about, but fans have speculated that it's



ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX KENDALL

addressing either Gomez, late rapper Mac Miller — Grande's ex from 2018 — or Grande's relationship with the press.

Unlike "thank u, next," Grande's chart-topper from 2019, "Eternal Sunshine" opts out of explicitly name-dropping Grande's exes.

Despite such references being excluded from the album, fans took it upon themselves to send hateful messages to those they think the songs are about, prompting Grande to address the situation.

"Anyone that is sending hateful messages to the people in my life based on your interpretation of this album is not supporting me and is absolutely doing the polar opposite of what I

would ever encourage," Grande wrote on her Instagram story on March 9.

Aside from the usual banter on social media, there has been a massive amount of support for this album. There is simply no denying the talent Grande has as a vocalist and writer.

As a long-time Grande fan, I'm obsessed with the way she poured her feelings into this album. A majority of the time, she writes about being afraid of what new love can bring after being hurt so many times throughout her career. With this record, she's at a significant point in her career where she's finally realizing how strong she is despite past hardships.

Jason Kelce: Saying goodbye to the underdog

By **TYLER PLATZ**
Staff Writer

Former Philadelphia Eagles' center Jason Kelce delivered these words following the Eagles' 2018 Super Bowl victory parade:

"Hungry dogs run faster."

He echoed these same words when he announced his retirement on March 4 after 13 years in the NFL.

Kelce, who played in 193 career NFL games, decided to walk away from football at the age of 36. He tearfully shared his decision to retire in an emotional press conference on March 4, following the Eagles' season-ending loss to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the wild-card round in January.

"I am retiring from the NFL after 13 seasons with the Philadelphia Eagles," Kelce said. "And today, I must admit, I am officially overrated. Vastly overrated. It took a lot of hard work and determination getting here. I have been the underdog my entire career, and I mean this when I say it, I wish I still was."

Kelce's use of the word "underdog" is fitting, as it exemplifies his legacy. Through the course of his career, Kelce has come to define what it means to be an "underdog." Coming out of the University of Cincinnati, scouts said he was too undersized to play center in the NFL. Drafted 191st overall in 2011 by the Eagles, Kelce found a home in a city synonymous with underdogs.

In his tenure, Kelce was selected to seven Pro Bowls, received six All-Pro honors and won a Super Bowl, but accolades do not truly reflect his impact. In an era where the salary cap and free agency often cause players to change teams, Kelce remained devoted to the Eagles. The grit and toughness he displayed resonated with fans every Sunday and showed that he understood what it meant to be a Philadelphia athlete — what it meant to be an underdog.

"This city really appreciates accountability, appreciates people being very honest, real, emotionally invested, caring," Kelce said in a 2021 press conference. "There's a lot of people that say it's a hard place to play, I think it's pretty fucking easy to be honest with you. You just go out there (and) play hard."

Kelce's embrace of the underdog mentality became the heart and soul of the Eagles in 2018 when they won their first Super Bowl in franchise history. Throughout the playoffs, Kelce and the Eagles weren't favored in any games with a backup quarterback starting, despite entering as the No. 1 seed. Oddsmakers consistently labeled Philadelphia with that magic word, "underdogs."

After "upsetting" the Atlanta Falcons in the divisional round and the Minnesota Vikings in the NFC championship game, the story was complete when the Eagles,

once again as underdogs, defeated the New England Patriots 41-33 in the Super Bowl.

Kelce cemented himself in Eagles fans' hearts at the ensuing championship parade. His fiery speech on the steps of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, with the statue of Rocky Balboa behind him, captured the spirit of the team's underdog journey.

"I won't forget the parade and what it meant to the city of Philadelphia. The joy it brought our community and the closure it gave to so many," Kelce mentioned in his retirement press conference. "The speech that had written itself and one that had symbolized what we had all lived as players, as a team, and as a city. That wasn't my speech. It was Philadelphia's."

Kelce was not alone in his NFL journey. At his retirement press conference, Jason was joined by his brother, Kansas City Chiefs tight end Travis Kelce. Much like the Manning

brothers before them, the bond Jason and Travis share has become part of football lore.

Each a star at their respective position, the Kelce brothers led their teams to the Super Bowl in 2023, which the Chiefs would go on to win. Coincidentally, during that regular season, Jason and Travis debuted their weekly podcast, "New Heights," which brought their level of fame to a new level.

The brothers shared an emotional moment on the show's March 6 episode when addressing Jason's retirement. Travis tearfully expressed his appreciation for being on the football journey with Jason.

"It feels like it's complete, it was a success," Travis said about Jason's career. "I appreciate you showing me the way and bringing us all along the journey with you, big guy."

Who doesn't love an underdog story? "New Heights" has indeed taken Jason's level of fame to new heights. While he has long been beloved by Eagles fans, his audience now transcends all NFL fan bases.

In the playoffs following the Eagles' loss, Jason was seen jumping through tables with Bills Mafia as well as cheering on the Chiefs alongside Chiefs Kingdom in support of Travis. Jason is a man of the people.

His appeal isn't in the X's and O's, his incredible blocking or even his nomination as a "Sexiest Man Alive" finalist. Instead, it's his underdog spirit, showcased throughout his career in his dedication and character on and off the field.

If this really is the end for Jason, what an incredible journey by not only an exceptional player but an extraordinary person as well. Your fans may not get to see you on Sundays any longer, but they know where they can find you soon.

We'll see you in Canton, Ohio, Jason.



PENNSYLVANIA2/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS/WBUR/FLICKR/PHOTOILLUSTRATION BY TRIPP MENHALL

Wendy Williams' battle with dementia, and how it affects her now

By **KRYSTAL MILLER**
Associate Arts & Life Editor

For more than 14 years, Wendy Williams echoed the phrase "How you doin'" countless times throughout living rooms to announce her iconic talk show, "The Wendy Williams Show."

Now, fans may never hear the same high-spirited Williams. The host was diagnosed with dementia in 2023, but her care team only released this information on Feb. 22.

Her talk show ended two years ago, but a new Lifetime documentary has spurred rumors about the popular media personality's health.

The four-episode documentary series shows the behind-the-scenes of Williams' life, including her struggles with Grave's disease, hyperthyroidism, lymphedema, primary progressive aphasia and frontotemporal dementia.

These illnesses have caused Williams to forget names and places, struggle to communicate her thoughts and understand language. When the main purpose of her talk show is to do these things, Williams' health complications would've made continuing on very difficult.

Williams also battles with alcohol abuse. This has created tension within her family, with disputes regularly occurring in the show because Williams wants to continue drinking while her family wants her to move to Florida with them and be sober.

The documentary shows a very vulnerable side of Williams that at some points raised the question of whether or not it should've been aired. For example, Williams is shown yelling at the woman doing her nails and arguing with her

manager, Will Selby.

In the documentary, Williams is also seen forgetting where the smoke shop is right next to her former talk show studio and getting angry when the store doesn't have the correct vape pen. This moment helps the audience understand her condition more, but it is depressing to see someone in such a weak state.

In 2022, Williams was placed under a temporary financial guardian, attorney Sabrina Morrisey — a stranger to Williams — by the court after her bank froze her account. The bank is investigating whether or not there was financial exploitation in the charges made on her card.

According to the documentary, members of her family such as her sister and son wanted to be her guardian instead, but they claim the court would not allow them.

This guardianship controls where Williams can go because she does not have access to all her money. Williams has even taken to selling her personal items.

Morrisey filed a lawsuit to prevent the documentary from being aired, claiming it exploited Williams and portrayed her in a demeaning manner, but it was eventually overturned by the New York County Supreme Court.

Although I can see how this documentary brings awareness to mental and physical health, I don't think filming Williams upset in her bedroom for all those hours was necessary. It does clear up a lot of what people have been questioning about Williams recently, but I think it's just too much. Williams is also likely not

in the right headspace to be fully consenting to what is being shown in the episodes.

Williams' management team is also pushing her toward the spotlight prematurely, as seen in the documentary. Her publicist, Shawn Zanotti, encourages her to go to a meeting to try to get another talk show and Selby is seen attempting to start a podcast with Williams. The podcast currently does have a website, but there are no available episodes, only merchandise. Williams craves the fame and attention from being a talk show host and wants to get back into it, but it is very clear from the documentary that she is not ready.

On TikTok, clips about her condition and the documentary have been going viral. Some people have claimed this is her karma and she is an awful person. No matter what Williams has gossiped about on her talk show, that does not give people an excuse to wish illness upon her.

Williams' determination to be successful is something that I really admire. From a young age, she knew she wanted to interview people. Because her talk show connected to so many people over the world for years, Williams has a large following. The audience on her talk show was always engaged and excited to see her on stage. She truly appreciates her fans, and will frequently take photos with them and talk to them.

She paved the way for other female daytime talk show hosts and proved she could have a long-standing career. She shows women that they can achieve their dreams and be the star of their own show. She isn't afraid to tell her audience how she

feels or what her life is like, which is what makes her so unique from other celebrities.

As much as I would love to see Williams happy doing another talk show, I think it is for the best that she lets her reputation as a host stay as is. She should spend more time with her family and work on taking care of herself. If she tries to do another show in her current state, I don't see it ending well.



CELEBRITYABC/FICKR

Wendy Williams' talk show ended after more than 14 years because of her health struggles.

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Quinnipiac baseball takes first step to Omaha with initial stage of field renovations



PEYTON MCKENZIE/CHRONICLE

An aerial view of the renovated Quinnipiac Baseball Field, which sits alongside the Troup and Larson residence halls on Quinnipiac's Mount Carmel Campus.

By **AMANDA DRONZEK**
Associate Sports Editor

Oklahoma State baseball debuted O'Brate Stadium in 2020. UConn unveiled Elliot Ballpark just one year later. So why not Quinnipiac?

In hindsight, these programs are nationally ranked and far more competitive than the Bobcats' squad. But after a historic 30-win season in 2023, who's to say Quinnipiac didn't deserve an upgrade too?

"It's awesome, it's been a long time coming," senior catcher Keegan O'Connor said.

Quinnipiac Athletics started renovations in May 2023. The \$2 million facility — dubbed "Project Omaha" — has actually been in the works for nearly six years.

Omaha, Nebraska, is the home of the College World Series held every June at Charles Schwab Field Omaha.

And what are the Bobcats ultimately gunning for? A trip out west.

"This is one of the best facilities in New England right now," head coach John Delaney said. "And these guys deserve it. I mean, they put in a lot of work."

And so has Quinnipiac's alumni. Throughout the last 18 months, the Bobcats have raised nearly \$1.5 million of their \$2.5 million goal to rebuild the stadium, with much of the funds coming from former players.

"These guys know the support they're getting from alumni so every time you step on this field, you're playing for the guys that were here before," Delaney said. "There's a lot of tradition and a lot of support from everyone."

Quinnipiac Athletics replaced the surface with turf, updated the dugouts and batting cages and placed fencing around the diamond.

In "Field of Dreams"-like fashion, the

Bobcats stepped out for spring training — not from a cornfield, of course — but to an unrecognizable place they now call home. But unrecognizable isn't bad in Quinnipiac's case. It's a strength it never had.

"It's much needed and it's brought a new life to the program," assistant coach Trey Stover said.

The Bobcats can finally practice year-round on their field — a luxury they haven't had with New England winters.

"It gives us the ability to get everything done on the same field at the same time," O'Connor said. "It's more effective for the team."

Not only that, it's effective for incoming prospects who could potentially wear the

navy and gold. Quinnipiac has a new opportunity to recruit bigger names and compete at a higher level.

"We now have the facilities to become an elite program," Delaney said. "This now just allows us to maybe pick up the guys that we might lose to Power Five (conferences)."

Even if the Bobcats snag those players, their team values remain the same.

"It doesn't change how we go about business," Delaney said. "My motto has never been, 'We're not gonna win because we don't have this.' You gotta go out there and compete and you find kids that can look past the facility part of it and buy into what we can do as a coaching staff."

That buy-in came into play on March 2 when the Bobcats took their first home game on the new turf in a 5-4 come-from-behind walk-off over Merrimack.

Quinnipiac baseball is still a middle-of-the-road program that's struggled against stronger non-conference opponents, including teams from Conference USA and the Coastal Athletic Association. Currently, it stands at 5-11 on the season after being swept by William & Mary over the weekend.

But anyone can be a contender with the right motivation and team culture. And if a new field is what puts the Bobcats on the map, the journey to Omaha may not be so far away.



TYLER RINKO/CHRONICLE

Graduate student RHP Sam Favieri pitches to a Merrimack batter in Quinnipiac's home opener on March 2.

Women's basketball hopes to build off playoff win, MAAC Tournament performance

By **BENJAMIN YEARGIN**
Managing Editor

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — Quinnipiac women's basketball performed just about how a No. 7 team in the MAAC would be expected to perform in the the conference tournament: OK.

The Bobcats edged out an overtime win over No. 10 Saint Peter's Tuesday afternoon, then lost Wednesday afternoon to No. 2 Niagara — who eventually fell to Fairfield in the conference championship.

But that's alright for the Bobcats. Head coach Tricia Fabbri knows that just getting a win in the MAAC Tournament would be enough for Quinnipiac to gain momentum heading into next season.

"Coming in from last week and getting a win in the tournament is going to lead to our building of a next step," Fabbri said on March 13. "Their ability to ... take the punch but continue to build ... it's going to be very important to us as we go forward."

So let's break down both games and why the Bobcats achieved what they did.

On Tuesday against Saint Peter's, Quinnipiac merely survived and advanced. It never dominated the game, it just outpaced

the Peacocks enough to get the win.

Freshman guards Ava Sollenne and Karson Martin were the reason why.

Their 19 and 18 points respectively fueled Quinnipiac's offense, while Saint Peter's defense honed in on defending the frontcourt — specifically freshman forward Anna Foley, who still put up 10 points and nine rebounds.

"We were just mixing up our defenses, a little bit of pressure here, then mix up who was guarding her," Saint Peter's head coach Jennifer Leedham said on March 12.

The Peacocks' 2-1-2 zone defense countered Foley's normal positioning as a five in the post by putting three people around her, with any one of them being able to crash in and pressure her. When they did crash on the All-MAAC Second Teamer, sophomore forward Ella O'Donnell or junior forward Grace LaBarge, Sollenne and Martin were both open beyond the arc.

Sollenne and Martin finished Tuesday with a 67% and 60% 3-point percentage, both percentages among the best in their respective careers.

"I get a lot of confidence from my

coaches just to keep shooting," Sollenne said on March 12. "(It) makes me feel way more confident taking those shots."

The Bobcats weren't ever favorites to win the conference, and against all of the teams in the top five of the MAAC, they were underdogs.

But besides No. 5 Manhattan, Niagara — Quinnipiac's quarterfinal opponent — was the best possible matchup.

"Credit to a very tough, younger Quinnipiac team," Niagara head coach Jada Pierce said on March 13. "They took us to overtime twice this year, we knew this game was going to be a big game for us."

But the Bobcats' performance on Wednesday afternoon was nothing like those two overtime losses — Quinnipiac was shown the door in the third quarter.

To give the benefit of the doubt, the Bobcats had just a single day of rest and both Sollenne and Martin played 99% of the game against Saint Peter's, so the team was gassed.

But Niagara — en route to the MAAC Championship game — simply dominated.

The Purple Eagles' "hurricane havoc," a full-court relentless man-to-man defense,

forced Quinnipiac to turn the ball over a season-high 35 times. Whether it be from a 10-second violation, a five-second violation, steals or bad passes, Niagara was all over the Bobcats.

The Purple Eagles scored 31 points off of turnovers. Quinnipiac scored five.

Both O'Donnell and LaBarge fought their way to double-doubles, mainly due to grabbing boards from Niagara's terrible second quarter and three point field-goal percentage. It shot 21% in the second, and 15% from three the entire game.

Although Quinnipiac's dreams of being a "Cinderella" story in the MAAC Tournament fell right on its face in the quarterfinals, its young core experienced both the highs of winning a close game, and the lows of being bested by a stronger team.

There's a lot yet to be built in Hamden, but the experience Sollenne, Martin, Foley and the rest of the freshmen had, is something to keep building the Bobcats foundation.

"Getting that one win in AC is going to propel us going forward," LaBarge said on March 13.



TRIPP MENHALL/CHRONICLE

Senior defenseman Cooper Moore holds off RPI freshman defenseman Jimmy Goffredo in a battle for the puck in a regular season game against the Engineers on Feb. 17.



TYLER RINKO/CHRONICLE

Freshman forward Anna Foley shoots the ball against Niagara in the MAAC Quarterfinals on March 13.

MEN'S HOCKEY from 12

..... got to fight every shift, you've got to fight every battle."

That fight needs to begin in the first period,

a struggle for the Bobcats all season. If they bear down on the Saints early, St. Lawrence will crack under pressure. If they let them hang around, one mistake could spell another disappointing end in the conference tournament.

"We need to have a little more of a killer

instinct," Pecknold said after Game 2. "But we'll talk about that as a group and we've got to have better buy-in if we're going up to Lake Placid and win."

Thanks to its Pairwise position, Quinnipiac already has an NCAA Tournament bid

locked up. It's playing for glory in Lake Placid, and the chance to — finally — be back atop the conference it has dominated in the regular season for the last decade.



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Sports

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Men's hockey aims to break curse at ECAC Tournament

By CAMERON LEVASSEUR
Sports Editor

ECAC championship weekend is just days away, and despite the history of Herb Brooks Arena, it won't take a miracle for the Bobcats to bring home their second Whitelaw Cup in program history. But they will have to break a curse.

Quinnipiac enters the weekend as the tournament's No. 1 seed for the fourth-consecutive season. It's 0-3 in those previous attempts, all overtime losses, twice in the final.

In 2023, the Bobcats battled into double overtime before falling to Colgate in the semifinals, a game head coach Rand Pecknold called "probably our worst game of the year."

In 2024, Quinnipiac looks to reverse its fate and earn an auto-bid to the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 2016.

That starts with a semifinal matchup against No. 7 St. Lawrence. The Saints have already proven their upset potential, knocking off No. 3 Colgate in the quarterfinals and earning a regular season win over the Bobcats in February.

"They're a tough physical team. They battle hard," junior forward Jacob Quillan said after Quinnipiac's quarterfinal series clinching win over RPI on Saturday.

The key for St. Lawrence to win Friday's semifinal is the same as it was against Colgate: turn the game into a chess match and be the one to capitalize on opportunities.

The Saints were outshot by 17 and 21 respectively in their sweep of the Raiders, but squeaked out one-goal wins in both games thanks to stout goaltending and opportunistic offense.

Freshman defenseman Jan Olinginski's winner in Game 2 of that series came off an unforced turnover that sprung a breakaway. Colgate largely dominated possession and chances, but one error ended its season.

RPI sophomore forward Sutter Muzzatti's game-tying shorthanded goal in Game 2 of the Engineers' series against Quinnipiac is the epitome of what the Bobcats cannot let happen against St. Lawrence. A lack of effort on the retrieval following an RPI clear allowed Muzzatti to win the puck race and outmuscle his defender to the net.

Graduate student goaltender Ben Kraws played an enormous role in the Saints' success last weekend, posting a .957 save percentage across two games, including 47 saves in Game 1.

Kraws is no stranger to big performances against Quinnipiac — he made 41 saves in the teams' first meeting of the season. His career-high mark also came against the Bobcats, stopping 49 of 54 shots in a 5-2 loss as a junior with Arizona State.

The Saints will be tremendously out-gunned. They have just two 20-point scorers, Quinnipiac has 11. Their 2.3 goals per game is No. 57 in the nation. Quinnipiac sits third, averaging 4.3.

The Bobcats drubbed St. Lawrence 8-1 in the teams' last meeting three weeks ago, though Kraws was not in net.

There's no question that Quinnipiac is the better team. But at this stage in March, it has to also be the higher effort team to win and advance.

"Everyone's fighting for their lives at that point in the season, you can't put a team away easy," Quillan said. "You've

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DAYTONA DANCING

Men's basketball accepts invitation to CBI

By ETHAN HURWITZ
Sports Editor

For the first time since 2018-19, Quinnipiac men's basketball will participate in a non-conference postseason tournament.

On Selection Sunday, the Bobcats were announced as one of 15 teams competing in the Ro College Basketball Invitational from March 23-27 in Daytona Beach, Florida. They were selected as the tournament's No. 6 seed, facing off against No. 11 Evansville.

"We're excited to have our season continue at the 2024 College Basketball Invitational in Florida," head coach Tom Pecora wrote in a March 17 press release. "An invitation to any postseason tournament is an honor, and I'm glad that our success during the regular season is being recognized. We look forward to showcasing our talent further down in Daytona Beach against other excellent college basketball programs."

In years past, Quinnipiac would have been guaranteed a spot in the National Invitational Tournament, which used to grant automatic bids to regular season champions before a rule change this past offseason.

Following the Bobcats' 62-60 loss to Saint Peter's in the MAAC semifinals Friday night, their postseason hopes dwindled to the CBI or the now-returning CollegeInsider.com Postseason Tournament.

"Hopefully our season's not over, I think we're gonna have an opportunity to play in

one of the other postseason tournaments," head coach Tom Pecora said Friday. "I think it's a shame that they've taken away the NIT bid from mid-major conference champions because it's a tradition-rich tournament."

The CBI is one of just four nationally rec-

ognized postseason tournaments and one of three that isn't under the NCAA umbrella. Because of this, programs must fork over a \$27,500 fee to be eligible for participation.

It will also be a final opportunity for

graduating guards Matt Balanc and Savion

Lewis to play in a Quinnipiac uniform. Balanc — who was named to the MAAC All-Tournament Team — hit a circus-like three pointer to tie the semifinals before losing just seconds later.

"We wanted to win a chip," Balanc said Friday. "Sadly that wasn't able to happen ... That's really what we wanted. We wanted to win a championship."

Heading into the bracket, Balanc has a chance for history. He sits 15 points away (1,714 total) from tying the all-time program record for career points. It was a championship-type season for Quinnipiac, despite the abrupt ending. The Bobcats' 24 wins were the most in school history, and they broke their single-season Division I scoring record with 2,567 points this year.

"We won 24 games, I don't know how many teams in the country can say that," Pecora said. "My goal as the head coach is for us to just continue to get not only great players, but great people to come to Quinnipiac."

The MAAC isn't new to this tournament. Siena won the title back in 2014, and this will be the second time the Bobcats play in the CBI. Quinnipiac dropped an opening round matchup to Penn in 2012.

Tip-off for the CBI will begin on March 23 at 11 a.m., and the 24-9 Bobcats will face off against the 16-17 Purple Eagles on Sunday, March 24 at 5:30 p.m.



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