# QTHON fundraiser hosted Connecticut Children's patients for the first time since 2019 p. 6





JACK MUSCATELLO/CHRONICLE

**NEWS P.3: TRIP TO UKRAINE** 

Quinnipiac Center for Religion reverends traveled to Lviv, Ukraine, to meet college students living through war



**OPINION P.5: FOMO IS A MOFO** 

Managing Editor Toyloy Brown III explains the fear of missing out is natural but with a new mindset, its effects can be limited



**SPORTS P. 10: NCAA NEUTRAL SITES** 

Attendance woes spark debate over whether home-site regionals are the answer for NCAA hockey tournament

## Medical student's hockey nonprofit trains underrepresented local youth

**By RYAN RAGGIO** Staff Writer

With a goal to give underrepresented youth from New Haven, the opportunity to play ice hockey, first-year medical student at Quinnipiac Rangers are hosting a 10-week program to teach young children the fundamentals of hockey.

Hockey Haven is a nonprofit that aims to increase diversity among youth hockey in Connecticut and eliminate hockey's financial barrier, which limits low-income families and minority

groups from being able to play. The programs incorporate a learn-to-play system that shows kids the hockey basics, such as skating and shooting. Hockey Haven started March 9 and are held weekly from 6-7 p.m. for the next 10 weeks.

The program recruited kids for the events by creating relationships with other nonprofits. Marcel said they also recruited kids through social media and by word of mouth.

The Monk Center Youth Jazz and STEAM collective, ConnCat, and New Haven Youth and Rec have been the most significant contributors funneling kids from their program into Hockey Haven, Marcel said.

"All of the kids are from underrepresented backgrounds or could not otherwise afford to play hockey and are racial minorities and/or low income families," Marcel said

He thought of the idea last summer. During the first week of the fall 2021 semester, Marcel met up with his friend and former opponent on the ice, first-year medical student Jake Baekey,

Marcel described hockey as his passion and through Hockey Haven's events, he is able to share his experiences from hockey that have

Marcel said. "To be able to get out there and

skate with these kids and give them that opportunity, seeing the smiles on their faces and seeing how grateful the parents are, is incredible.'

As a medical student, Marcel had to complete the required volunteer work. He decided to give back to the community through something he loves.

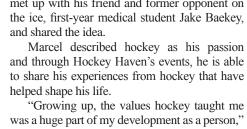
"Hockey is super expensive to play," Marcel said. "It costs around \$2,000 to outfit a player and get equipment, so I figured it would be a great opportunity to do something I'm passionate about and be a great opportunity to make an impact through hockey."

Marcel said everyone should have the opportunity to play hockey and the game should increase inclusivity with all demographics. More than half of the population in New Haven is made up of minority groups. Marcel said he felt that starting the program in New Haven would be beneficial for these families.

"The NHL is 95% white," Marcel said. "With the exclusivity of hockey and lack of inclusion, New Haven is a great area. The community is diverse and there are families with low incomes, the demographics that don't normally play hockey. It's the perfect fit for a program like this."

Hockey Haven caught the attention of the New York Rangers shortly after Sara Civian, a staff writer for The Athletic covering

••••••



Hockey Haven's 10-week clinic is held Wednesdays at 6 p.m. in New Haven.

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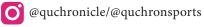
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#### CONNECT



The Quinnipiac Chronicle



New scholarship to cut 75% off tuition for eight Hamden residents

#### By AIDAN SHEEDY

Copy Editor

College will become cheaper for incoming students from Hamden as Quinnipiac University announced in a March 14 press release that the school will offer a new scholarship program for town residents, starting in fall 2022

The scholarship is worth roughly over \$50,500, 75% of full-time tuition. Quinnipiac committed to awarding eight students annually, totaling \$300,000 in scholarships per year once fully implemented.

"We have (students) right here in our backyard," said Bethany Zemba, vice president for strategy and community relations. "So it's an opportunity for us to embrace it and ensure that people consider Quinnipiac as an option for them."

The scholarship is available for any Hamden resident and is not exclusive to Hamden High School graduates. It does not require a separate application. Every Hamden resident accepted to Quinnipiac will automatically be nominated for the award.

"It shows that we want to engage in meaningful ways," Zemba said. "We want to show that we want to collaborate and that we want to work in partnership in the towns in which we reside."

Zemba worked alongside Daniel Cocchiola, coordinator of counseling and career pathways at HHS, to make this program possible.

"I think it definitely allows our kids to know that we have a neighbor who wants to be a partner with Cocchiola said. "That's a big deal." The origin of the scholarship came from the success of the annual junior book award, which is a \$15,000 grant Quin-

nipiac gives to a Hamden student each year. From there, Zemba and Cocchiola worked together to provide more to prospective students. "Essentially, that was the start of the partnership," Zemba said.

"(Cocchiola) and I con-

tinued to have conver-

sations and decided that we'd also like to make a scholarship available to a Hamden senior who wants to go to college as a first year."

Cocchiola said the administrators at HHS are actively seeking to increase community relations with the town and allow greater access to higher education for its graduates.

HHS has statistics that indicate many of its students will need financial aid in college.

> "The state data shows that 40% of our families require a free and reduced lunch," Cocchiola said. "65% of our students are going on to four-year colleges ... so a program like this with Quinnipiac can really give a start to move the needle a little bit."

> Affordability is the key to this initiative, but Zemba is focused on the symbiotic relationship between Quinnipiac University and the town of Hamden.

> "I think (Cocchiola) and I both believe that what's good for Hamden is good for Quinnipiac

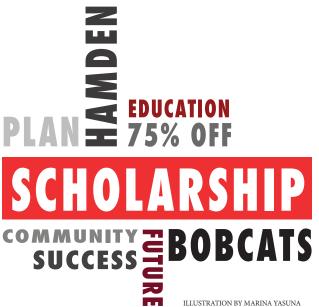
ILLUSTRATION BY MARINA YASUNA and what's good for Quinnipiac is good for Hamden," Zemba said. "So this is just another one of the multiple ways that we try to give back."

Hamden native and first-year health science studies major Margaret Creve-Coeur said she is excited for her former classmates and the opportunities they can have now locally.

"That's dope," Creve-Coeur said. "It's now a better education for the kids that are coming up like a lot of my friends ended up going to (Southern Connecticut State University) or community schools, so I think it's great that we are giving other kids an opportunity.'

Creve-Coeur said she is eager to see some familiar faces and believes there will be an attraction for local high school graduates to apply to Quinnipiac.

"Quinnipiac is already so involved with the high school and elementary school," Creve-Coeur said. "But the only thing that's holding them back is that they can't afford the tuition."



**HOCKEY HAVEN** from cover

the Carolina Hurricanes, and a high school friend noticed what Marcel had been promoting through social media.

"When I started posting about it on social media, she saw it and was like, 'Oh my god, I love this, what can I do to help,' and she tweeted it out," Marcel said. "She has about 70,000 followers on Twitter. The Rangers saw it and the next day, I got an email from the Rangers saying, 'We're heavily interested in this area, and we'd love to set up a meeting,' and from there we've been working with them.

The Rangers' minor league affiliate is located in Hartford and made contributions to Hockey Haven. The Rangers and equipment company Bauer provided all the equipment the kids use.

"They're an NHL team, so the value is invaluable," Marcel said. "I can't even say enough about the partnership. It's amazing."

The parents watching their kids on the ice from behind the boards felt that the opportunity was great for the community. News of the program spread 15 minutes north of New Haven to Hamden. Vice Chairman of the Board of Trustees at Quinnipiac Carlton Highsmith was in attendance.

"I was astounded," Highsmith said. "At first I couldn't believe it. I told my daughter, because my grandson is out there, that I had to see this."

Some parents felt that the program gives their kids a great opportunity to meet others, make friends and try something new.

"I thought it would be really good for my son to be able to socialize and try a different type of sport," said Keisha Taylor-Davis, a New Haven resident.

Other parents felt that having their children playing hockey with the older students was beneficial for them as it gives their kids people to look up to.

"They are role models, not just for sports but for our kids to be able to learn from them," Woodbridge resident Veronica Perez said. "We think it sets a good example."

Marcel said that creating the organization was not a singular effort.

"Collin Uyeki, Jake Baekey, Zach Foster and Courtney Morgan have been really instrumental in making this happen," Marcel said. "They've been incredible, putting in work every single day. It's been a real team effort."



First-year medical student Aaron Marcel's nonprofit Hockey Haven teaches hockey to underrepresented children from the New Haven area.

### Quinnipiac religious leaders reflect on humanitarian trip to Ukraine

#### **By MELINA KHAN**

When the Rev. Jordan Lenaghan walked into the student center of Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv, Ukraine, last week, he encountered three students who reminded him of the ones he works with at Quinnipiac University.

"I'm not afraid to die," Lenaghan said each student told him in English while preparing aid supplies for the Ukrainian army.

Lenaghan, executive director of religious life, and the Rev. Joachim Kenney, staff chaplain, spent 10 days beginning March 10 in Ukraine with the Knights of Columbus as part of a humanitarian trip amid the Ukraine war. Russia invaded the country Feb. 24 in what it called a "special military operation," leading nearly 4 million Ukrainians to flee the country so far.

After returning to Connecticut, Lenaghan and Kenney spoke about their experiences during a press conference March 23. During the trip, the two revs. said each person they encountered, including the UCU students, thought they would die in the war.

"If we were to transport those three students into the middle of Rocky Top, you wouldn't be able to say, 'they're different' they would look just like all of you," Lenaghan told The Chronicle. "I think that's the most jarring message for our students."

The reverends, who traveled to Europe with other Dominican friars to help refugees who had fled Ukraine, initially planned to stay in Krakow, Poland, near the Ukrainian border.

However, once they had arrived, the reverends became interested in crossing to the other side.

"We were speaking with a person on the ground who was handling logistics for all the Dominicans and the Knights and we said, 'Well, I want to go into Lviv, I want to see the other side of the story. I want to also be able to understand what they need," Lenaghan said.

The next day, the pair traveled to a warehouse in a nearby city, where they boarded an unmarked truck and began the journey into Ukraine.

"We got in this truck with this Russian-speaking guy with a Ukrainian passport that we had never met before," Lenaghan said. "We were in Roman collars, we were in the back of the cab and off we went on a 21-hour trip into Ukraine."

Upon arriving in Lviv, Kenney said they saw people who were trying to go about their daily lives as much as possible.

"The streets were filled with people ... but you also saw lots of signs of preparation for possible attacks," Kenney said.

Such preparation was clear when looking at the city's build-

ings, Kenney said. Monuments, churches and statues had been boarded up in case of an attack



Revs. Lenaghan and Kenney visited the student center at the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv, Ukraine, during a 10-day humanitarian trip.

Over the week, Lenaghan and Kenney set out to speak with Ukrainians and ask them about their experiences, including what they want Americans to know about the war.

Kenney said many Ukrainians asked the Americans to "close the skies," meaning they wished for the U.S. and NATO to impose a nofly zone over Ukraine. Other Ukrainians shared two words: thank you.

"There's a parish that we visited that was housing about 200 refugees, and one of the volunteers from the parish ... we asked her what should we take back and her words were 'thank you, just for helping us to know that we're not alone," Kenney said.

Lenaghan and Kenney said they hope to continue supporting Ukrainians from Hamden. They are planning to set up a program for Quinnipiac students to Zoom with students from UCU.

"We told everyone there, 'The two of us are not going to be able to change anything, but we can go back, we can tell your story, we can testify and witness and then we can begin to act,"" Lenaghan said. "So we do intend to begin to act, even here at Quinnipiac."

#### "I want to go into Lviv, I want to see the other side of the story."

#### — THE REV. JORDAN LENAGHAN

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS LIFE** 

### **School of Communications to offer public diplomacy minor**

By JACKLYN PELLEGRINO

Quinnipiac University will offer a new 18-credit minor in public diplomacy beginning in fall 2022.

The minor in public diplomacy was annonced in a School of Communications email on March 22. The program will be of interest to students preparing for a future career in global affairs, international relations, crosscultural understanding and communication, global strategic communication management, digital media, brand and reputation management and project management.

Antoaneta Vanc, associate professor and chair of strategic communication, said that she thinks this new minor will make students more attractive to future employers.

"This innovative, dynamic minor that sits at the intersection of communication and global affairs gives students the opportunity to learn and observe the world from different perspectives and to understand the world beyond their reach," Vanc wrote in an email.

The minor includes four core courses and two electives. Current public relations majors will be required to take Introduction to American Government and Politics, Introduction to International Relations, Public Diplomacy and Global Strategic Communication Management.

Students interested in public diplomacy who are not public relations majors will also be required to take Principles of Public Relations.

Elective classes range from courses in strategic communication, political science and legal studies.

Gabriela Alvares, a public relations graduate student and an international student from Portugal, said that she would be interested in the new minor since she has lived in many different countries and experienced public diplomacy firsthand. She is currently taking the public diplomacy class as an elective.

"The best part about (public diplomacy) is that you get a better perspective of what's going on in the rest of the world besides the U.S."

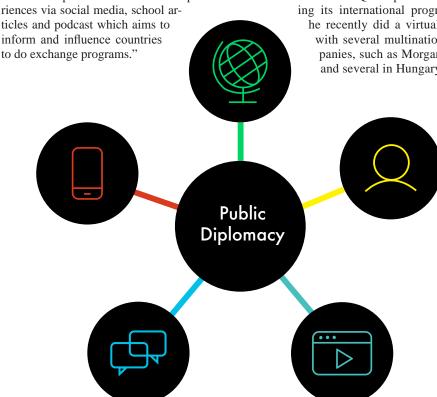
Although Alvares is graduating in May, she said she would have definitely taken the minor if given the chance.

"I believe I have an enormous responsibility when it comes to public diplomacy as I was given the chance in a lifetime to come and study abroad, namely at Quinnipiac," Alvares said. "Which has opened doors to many tools that expose mine and others' experiences via social media, school articles and podcast which aims to inform and influence countries

Christopher Ball, director of Central European Institute and Istvan Szechenyi chair, said that he believes almost half of the students in Vanc's public diplomacy class are foreign students coming to Quinnipiac, in part for this minor. He said the minor will help students stand out to prospective employers.

"Any company needs people to handle their PR and marketing but to have some understanding of being able to do that internationally and have some sort of a diplomatic side to it would be a unique niche aspect to their degree on their resume," Ball said.

> Ball said Quinnipiac is expanding its international programs and he recently did a virtual job fair with several multinational companies, such as Morgan Stanley and several in Hungary.



"I think those students will really be able to go for some of those jobs maybe they couldn't have in the past," Ball said. "In Connecticut, you still have the World Affairs Council, you have diplomatic events here ... so I think it's kind of a really cool, unique niche, that they hit upon building on our existing strengths."

Ambar Pagan, a senior political science major, is currently taking Vanc's course in public diplomacy. She said the first thing that appealed to her was the title of the course itself as she is looking to go to graduate school for diplomacy and foreign affairs.

"It has definitely been a really wonderful experience and I think it's something that though matter what career you go into it's really useful," Pagan said. "I think everybody should learn how to communicate with diverse cultures and how to form allyship in whatever form that may be in our daily lives."

Through taking the course, Pagan said she has learned more about the communication aspect of public diplomacy.

"It's really about connecting with the people and it's about getting to know what are the things they need," Pagan said. "It really starts with listening to your surroundings. Figuring out this media, politics, journalism, form of diplomacy has been really intriguing to me because I am interested a little bit in journalism and in communications."

Pagan said that Vanc and all the guest speakers have showed students that diplomacy is about "building bridges" between different cultures and how to communicate these differences.

"My goal is really to just make the world a better place, and I think diplomacy can really be a great tool for conflict resolution, to be a bridge-builder between different people," Pagan said.

# Opinion

# The case for coming out

## Showing your true self to the world is a complex, but necessary, decision

By ASHLEY PELLETIER

Arts & Life Edite

When you wear your heart on your sleeve, it's hard to withhold your inner self from the world.

I've known that I'm a member of the LG-BTQ community for around eight years now. I never had a jaw-dropping, sexual awakening moment. Rather I had more of a, "Hm, I don't think I'm straight," vibe.

I've always been comfortable with knowing who I am despite throwing around a number of labels until I found the word I think best fits me — queer. Even though I went to Catholic school my whole life, I never worried about my identity and whether or not I was going to hell. That just didn't matter to me.

However, I only came out publicly this past year. My close friends always knew and I was glad to talk about LGBTQ issues with them, but I held back from publicly talking about it because coming out to the entire world was daunting. I wasn't hiding my identity, but I certainly wasn't shouting, "I like women!" from the rooftops.

This open secret of mine often led to me withholding my passions.

The first time I ever thought about writing an opinion for The Chronicle was when Netflix canceled an LGBTQ show I liked, "I am Not Okay With This." It was not the first time Netflix canceled a show with positive LGBTQ representation. I was passionate about the topic, but I didn't feel comfortable publicly writing about it. So I didn't.

I've also never had the opportunity to go to Pride Month events because I didn't feel ready to come out on that scale. I'd feel envious of friends and others on social media sharing their pictures decked out in rainbow apparel, and I wanted that for myself. But I couldn't take that leap.

It's difficult to explain why I so often chose to keep my identity to myself. Most



ILLUSTRATION BY AMANDA RIHA

of the time, I don't even understand why I waited so long to come out. My family is supportive of me no matter what and my friends already knew and loved me anyway. I'm sure many people assumed I was queer, especially with my stereotypical pixie cut in high school and my current green hairdo.

When it comes down to it, I think I chose not to officially come out because I thought it would make too big of a deal out

of my sexuality. I didn't want to have any awkward or uncomfortable conversations that came with coming out, particularly with my parents. I've never even directly said that I'm queer to them. I don't even know if my father knows.

I didn't want it to be bigger than it was. If I don't make a big deal out of it, then it isn't a big deal, right?

That thought process isn't as clear-cut as I thought it was. Being a member of the LG-BTQ community is a big deal, especially in a time where Republican legislators threaten the rights of other members of the community, specifically our trans folk.

I live in New Hampshire, which is relatively LGBTQ-friendly. However, in the past year, two troubling bills have gone to vote in the state's House of Representatives, HB 1077, a bill aiming to repeal a ban on conversion therapy, and HB 1180, a bill that would exclude transgender students from sports.

Neither bill passed the New Hampshire House of Representatives, but they are not unique. Over 150 anti-LGBTQ bills of some form have been brought to state governments across the country in 2022 alone, according to the American Civil Liberties Union. While many of these bills die in the approval process, both Florida's "Don't Say Gay" bill and Utah's transgender sports ban were passed the respective Congresses.

Staying in my closet, no matter how transparent it was, allowed me an amount of plausible deniability. If I didn't feel like getting into an argument over LGBTQ rights, I could just "act straight."

However, my accepting community is part of my privilege. It isn't fair to those who cannot openly be queer that I chose to stay in the closet out of convenience.

Obviously, not every LGBTQ person has the capabilities to safely come out. Some live with homophobic or transphobic family members, or they would put themselves at risk within their community.

It is up to those who can safely come out to speak up for those who are in these positions. If we don't speak out, who will? We cannot rely on allies and our most outspoken members to advocate for us. Real change happens when the average queer person takes action themselves.



#### By RILEY MILLETTE

They said, "He wore the 'juicy' shorts last year and didn't win. He's wearing them again?"

Well, I'd rather go 0-2 than 0-1 because going 0-1 means I stopped trying. But what would I do if I went 0-2?

I guess we'll never know.

That's right, I won the second-annual Student Media Showdown, representing The Quinnipiac Chronicle. After getting bounced in the first round last year, we needed redemption. I spurned opportunities for help from my newspaper peers. I needed to win on my own accord.

But at the end of the day, this entire organization won the year's most prestigious student media award, not just me.

While I was preparing myself to read an original poem and dress up in an Among Us costume, I looked around and noticed how hard the Q30 Television production team was working.

Q30 Entertainment Director Corinna Caimi ran the show flawlessly. About an hour before the show started, she gave directions to a crew of around 50 people without shoes on. That's so cool.

I told myself that I have stressful moments ith my own student media organization. Ev ery Tuesday spent putting together the next day's issue is an anxiety-induced marathon. But SMS was different. Q30 gets one shot at it every year, and it's all live. No hiding behind the classic "undo" keyboard shortcut that us print folks have.

Spectators filled the piazza in the Carl Hansen Student Center. Almost every seat in the house was taken, plus people at home streamed the event. All because of Q30's marketing team, the event had a fantastic turnout. Not many events during the year capture the attention of both student media leadership and general members.

SMS was a fantastic event for everyone to enjoy — student media or not. O30 did an unbelievable job of delivering us that one night where all four outlets live in harmony.

And the cherry on top: I held the first-place trophy while we all watched the men's March Madness tournament together, and let out a collective cheer when Saint Peter's beat Purdue.

## You can't always keep up with others, and that's OK

For some rhyme or reason, we all want to be cool. Or at least project that we are.

One way is by "keeping up with the Joneses," having awesome experiences or partaking in the latest material trends so we don't fall behind. Well, let's unpack that.

The fear of missing out, FOMO for short, is the anxiety we feel when others are having a good time without us. However, in the broader sense, it can be more than just feeling absent from our friends' experiences.

It's a wide-ranging feeling, and nearly three-quarters of young adults reported they experienced this phenomenon, according to a 2013 study by ScienceDirect. To nullify FOMO's effects, we must find personal fulfillment apart from the influences of others.

FOMO is not a new phenomenon. It happens to people of all ages but is most pervasive among young people for numerous reasons. For the vast majority of teens and young adults, we tend to be less self-confident due to our lack of life experience. This anxiety can originate from our dissatisfaction with ourselves in comparison to those we are familiar with.

However, another wrinkle as to why FOMO is common among this demographic is the widespread usage of social media.

Social media apps like Instagram, TikTok and Snapchat are obvious culprits for why such a large percentage of people have experienced FOMO. As Nick Hobson of Psychology Today puts it, "the explosion of social media has launched our young people headfirst into the FOMO experience."

These apps provide easy access to friends and influencers' experiences, which has its perks. On the flip side, greater access means increased chances that we habitually go on our devices to see the positive things others engage in while we sulk in the dullness we may experience at the moment.

Some of us may not even be cognizant of our constant social media usage. One tell-tale sign that you experience some degree of FOMO is when you go on a social media app particularly before you get out of bed in the morning or when it is the last thing you do before you go to sleep.

FOMO can cause us to make life choices that hurt our wallets. Credit Karma and the software company Qualtrics conducted a study with a test group of 1,045 Americans ages 18-34 and found that nearly 40% of participants go into debt trying to keep up with their friends' activities and lifestyles.

The 2018 study also revealed two-thirds of respondents experienced buyer's remorse after spending more than expected on a social situation they would later regret.

That money spent was commonly used on social experiences like vacations, weddings, music festivals, sporting events or dinner with friends.

FOMO can act similar to peer pressure. Instead of the direct pressure coming externally from peers' words and actions, FOMO is an internal urge that draws from what we see from our friends.

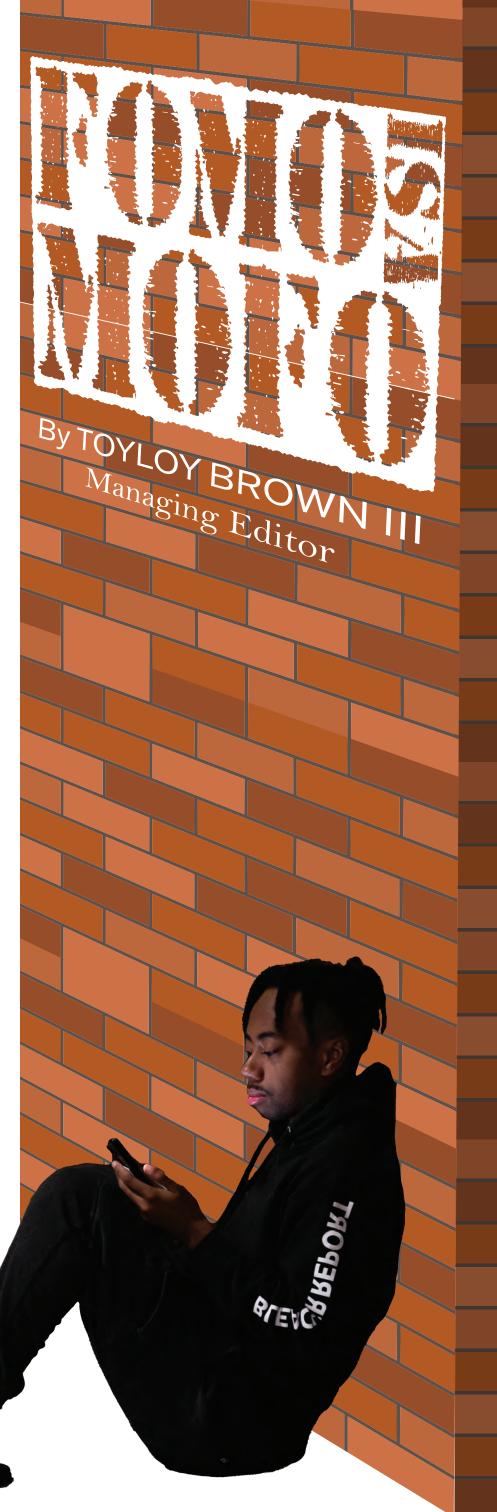
The first step to solving this is to acknowledge that FOMO is a factor in our decision-making. There is no shame in admitting to yourself or to others that outside influences make you feel deficient in some capacity. The next step is to recognize that you cannot truly get rid of it unless you adopt the lifestyle of a hermit.

All kidding aside, we should realize it is OK to feel compelled to keep up with our friends. Focusing on how we can respond to FOMO rather than feeling guilty for worrying about it is a more fruitful mentality to adopt. The concern of missing out is going to be persistent in our minds no matter what we do. The important thing is not to allow it to cloud our better judgment.

It can help to take a break from social media and remind yourself that, more often than not, a person's online persona is not a reflection of their everyday life. It is just the parts they allow their followers to witness. There is nothing wrong with a social media cleanse, but it is probably not a sustainable, long-lasting fix since social pressures don't just happen on social media. It is just as present in real life.

Our best bet is to espouse a mindset that reminds us that there should be no trepidation in deciding to pass on an activity and doing our own thing sometimes. We achieve this through having high self-esteem and not being overly reliant on the thoughts of others. Self-confidence gives us the strength to say "no" and the mental wherewithal to think clearly before we act.

As Albert Einstein once said, "The one who follows the crowd will usually get no further than the crowd. The one who walks alone is likely to find themselves in places no one has ever been before."



Opinion 5

# Arts & Life One day. 10 hours. \$125,000 raised.

#### Quinnipiac's annual QTHON raises money for Children's Miracle Network

By ASHLEY PELLETIER

Arts & Life Editor

Rainbow-colored T-shirts, glitter, school merchandise and masks flooded the Athletic and Recreation Center on Quinnipiac University's Mount Carmel Campus on March 26 from 2 p.m. to midnight.

For the first time since 2019, QTHON returned to its traditional event. In 2020, Quinnipiac held QTHON completely over social media due to COVID-19. In 2021, the event was held outdoors with assigned time blocks for participants to arrive. All 10 hours of QTHON were filled with dancing, performances and speeches from Miracle Children and their families.

QTHON is part of the Miracle Network Dance Marathon, a program at over 400 schools across the U.S. and Canada that has raised over \$300 million for children's hospitals since 1991.

Money raised year-round at QTHON and other dance marathons goes toward the annual treatment of 10 million children per the Children's Miracle Network website. Connecticut Children's Medical Center directly receives Quinnipiac students' efforts. In 2019, QTHON raised \$332,567.12 for Connecticut Children's Hospital. In 2020 and 2021, the number sat around \$200,000.

Alexa Rice, a junior physical therapy major, saw a huge difference in QTHON 2022, but hoped to see a return to the excitement of QTHON 2019.

"It's so crazy to see the difference from last year being outside," Rice said after opening ceremonies. "I hope it gets back to how hype it was in the years before us. I hope we can bring it back to that level."

However, the QTHON management team was not quite able to bring back the full power of the event.

This year, the fundraiser raised \$125,039.67. Marley McClure, the executive director of QTHON and a senior nursing major, said that it is in part because a majority of Quinnipiac students had never experienced a normal QTHON.

"It's really a year-long effort that we are creating on campus," McClure said. "A lot of people on Quinnipiac's campus have never gotten the experience of QTHON ... They never really understood that magic, that spark that QTHON in itself, that day holds."

McClure said that the number didn't matter; the only thing that mattered was helping the children at Connecticut Children's Hospital.

"We've never focused on our grand final total that we've revealed at the end of the night," McClure said. "The total doesn't reflect any of the hard work and determination that we've put in."

Jacqueline DiStefano, a senior marketing major and a member of Phi Sigma Sigma sorority, said that this year's QTHON held up to her memories of QTHON 2019.

"It's really exciting because we haven't been here since freshman year in person," DiStefano said. "It's fun to see that it's still as exciting as it was that year."

Members of the Quinnipiac class of 2022 are the only group of people who had experienced a full-fledged QTHON before this year.

"I've heard so much about it," said Julia McKenzie, a junior nursing major. "I think this is one of the big things that Quinnipiac does, so it's super exciting to actually do it."

When it comes down to it, the most important part of QTHON is the children. Nine patients at Connecticut Children's Hospital acted as Miracle Children at QTHON. Each Miracle Child is sponsored by a club. Several children and their families shared their stories, including Eli O'Mara, a 9-year-old boy who has ADHD and dyspraxia.

Allison O'Mara, Eli's mother, teared up as she talked about the emotional impact that events like QTHON have on her family.

"Connecticut Children's has been there for our family since Eli was born," O'Mara said. "It's these events that my kids can come to and their differences are 100% celebrated and there's nowhere else that they're treated like you treat them, and we're so grateful for every one of you. It's events like this that fills an empty space."

To sponsor a Miracle Child, groups had to raise Miracle Points throughout the year by hosting events and raising money. The American Sign Language Club sponsored Nicholas Stratton, a 9-year-old boy with epilepsy and cerebral palsy. Katie McIsaac, a senior occupational therapy major and president of the ASL Club, said having Stratton as a Miracle Child was a rewarding experience.

"It was amazing," McIsaac said. "I had so much fun, and I know everyone else in ASL Club did too. Nick was the sweetest kid, he was having so much fun and it was really great to be able to make an impact on and help make his QTHON experience so fun and memorable."

10 of Quinnipiac's performance-based clubs also did sets for QTHON, including Dance Fusion, Note-able! and Kickline. Bryanna Ferreira, a senior in the 3+3 physical therapy program and a member of Dance Fusion, said that the group's performance at QTHON was aided by the audience's energy.

"It was honestly such an indescribable feeling," Ferreira said. "What I liked the most was that everybody was so upbeat and supportive and cheering us on throughout the entire dance. It just felt so much more intimate than any performance we've had so far. It was just an amazing group of people."

While performances rotated, one particular moment marked the beginning of each hour — the Morale dance.

The Morale Dance is a series of dances set to an 11-minute mix of songs ranging from "Friend Like Me" from "Aladdin" to "Classic" by MKTO.

Kat Egan, a junior in the athletic training physical therapy program, decided to join the Morale Committee after seeing the Morale Dance on Instagram in 2020.

"After seeing how fun it was virtually my freshman year I knew it was something I wanted to be a part of because all the energy they bring is something I wanted to give back to the community and make the day for the Miracle kids even better," Egan said.

Throughout the day, the Morale Committee gave demonstrations of the different parts of the Morale Dance for participants to take part in the hourly performance.

The Morale Committee began choreographing and learning the dance themselves after returning from winter break.

"Twice a week we were meeting and practicing our butts off," Egan said. "It's been a great time. I was always so excited to go to Morale practice. It never felt like a chore. It was always something all of us on the committee were excited to do."

Regardless of the final dollar amount, McClure said that the money the Quinnipiac community raised will positively affect the lives of hundreds of children at Connecticut Children's Medical Center.

"Even if it's just \$1 or \$125,000, it makes an impact on those children's lives at Connecticut Children's (Medical Center)," McClure said. "They need that money. That is miracles that the Quinnipiac community has made for those kids."





CK MUSCATELLO/CHRONICLE

QTHON's Morale Committee was a constant throughout the event, particularly with its 11-minute Morale dance that volunteers performed at the top of every hour.





JACK MUSCATELLO/CHRONICLE

# COMMUNITIES COLLIDE

#### Culture Night brings 15 student organizations under one roof

**By JULIUS MILLAN** 

Just 30 minutes before Culture Night was scheduled to start, the piazza in the Carl Hansen Student Center was no more than an open space with seats and tables on the outskirts. The rooms adjacent to it were almost devoid of human activity. Within a few minutes, the space had already sprung to life on March 23.

For the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic shut down the world, Quinnipiac University's Multicultural Student Leadership Council celebrated diversity on campus with Culture Night.

Most attendees, like Kerry Deasy, a junior English major and president of the Italian Cultural Society, took the time to fully appreciate Culture Night and immerse themselves in other cultures.

"It's cool to have all the organizations be able to come together," Deasy said. "We couldn't do this last year, so to be able to do this now is such a blessing.

Members of 15 different organizations, including two Greek Life groups, trickled in one-by-one to set their tables up. They replaced tablecloths that showed their respective club's name, typically paired with a colorful tri-fold poster board that gave a brief description of each organization's leadership and goals.

Anesu Mhene, a junior legal studies major and student organization liaison of the MSLC, said it was refreshing to see people come back together to celebrate their diversity for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020.

"It really feels like we are getting back to normal,"

When the event officially began at 8 p.m., the space was clearly bustling with activity, with over 100 people stopping in. For the next three hours, students enjoyed a diverse



Guten Tag



blend of food, songs and dances from different cultures. Most organizations brought a wealth of foods, including dumplings from the Polish Cultural Society and different kinds of sushi from the Asian Student Association. The African and Caribbean Student Union brought beef patties,

the Black Student Union brought macaroni and cheese and the ICS brought chicken parmigiana. As the clubs organized their tables, members who helped set up chatted with each other while anticipation permeated the air.

Some sang and danced with the performers while others chatted away the evening with their

This get-together of cultures was a nice experience for some, including Deasy, even if it was just for the many food

"It's really cool to have a plate that has Italian food, sushi from the other table, empanadas from another table," Deasy said. "It's cool to see that kind of connection that we see here."

Throughout the event, students trickled in and out of the space. Some merely came for the food while others wanted to see the songs and dances performed by their fellow students. Many attendees, like Cailinn Stockman, a junior sociology major, found a golden opportunity to enjoy the evening dedicated to celebrating everyone's differences at Quinnipiac.

It's been nice to experience people's traditions, Stockman said. "QU is a whole community again with everyone sharing their traditions.'

For others, like first-year human resource management major Todd Bivens, this was a learning experience for those who were rarely exposed to many cultures.

'Learning more about everyone and seeing their traditions is a great thing to see," Bivens said. "For so long the world was so divided and now everyone is coming together, having a good time and showing what makes them unique.'







Thirteen of Quinnipiac's multicultural organizations shared food, fun and memories at Culture Night on March 23.

## 'HERE COMES THE LEGENDS'

#### The Quinnipiac Legends A Cappella compete in the International Championship of

#### Collegiate A Cappella semifinals

By NEHA SEENARINE

Stage fright is no issue when it's the Quinnipiac Legends A Cappella group's time to perform.

The Legends competed in the International Championship of Collegiate A Cappella Northeast Semifinal competition at the Berklee Performance Center in Boston on March 27. The group did not place in the top three, but the team is proud of its accomplishments.

"The competition was very fierce, but we left with a great score," said Stephanie Morrow, a senior international business major and the president of Legends. "It was a special moment for us  $\dots$  to make it this far in the competition is huge for us and as well as Quinnipiac."

This was the first live competition the group performed in since 2020

"I'm really looking forward to performing in person, it's been two years," Morrow said before the event. "The only people that have (performed) in person are seniors and juniors and now our freshmen and sophomores get to experience this and perform live at Berklee College of Music in Boston. That's such a great experience."

The 10-minute set consisted of three songs: "Love So Soft" by Kelly Clarkson, "Chasing a Feeling" by Léon and "Edge of Seventeen" by Stevie Nicks.

"I really wanted an old song ("Edge of Seventeen") for the ending and make it modern," Morrow said.

Something that Morrow doesn't have to worry about is calming her team's nerves before taking the stage.

"I know it's so weird, but I think I'm the one that gets the most nervous and everyone around me is more calm," Morrow said. "I just tell them I'm proud of them, and we're ready for this."

First-year member and psychology major Jake McCarthy was along for the ride to Boston for his first college semifinals competition and said he felt excited for the Legends competing against other notable a cappella groups.

"I feel like those big-name groups from Berklee College

that literally focus on music and just performing live in front of an audience with the energy and intensity there, it's gonna be awesome," McCarthy said ahead of the performance.

The competition at the ICCAs semifinals included a cappella groups from Berklee College of Music, University of Connecticut, Northeastern University, Hofstra University, Harvard University, University of Hartford and New York University.

"We're a group that's only been doing this competition for five years, whereas there are other groups we're competing against like Harvard and Berklee, who've been doing these competitions for decades," said Legends member McKayla Norris, a senior public relations and media studies double major. "I think it's just so amazing that we're able to make a mark and, ultimately, just have people know our name. So, that next year, in the years to come, it's like 'Oh, here comes the Legends."

The Legends placed first in the virtual Northeast quarterfinal ICCAs on March 5.

'We were so bummed that it was virtual," Morrow said. "My group was so hopeful, they were like 'All right well, we'll just perform in person at semis."

The group has 18 members, none of whom major in anything music-related at Quinnipiac. Regardless, their love for music shines through.

"All of us are health science, communications, business, things like that," Norris said. "We come together just because we had a passion for music and we just create such amazing things together. I think that that's the most rewarding part, we are definitely not a group that spends 24/7 doing this, and so to have these big accomplishments you know we put in such hard work."



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY QU LEGENDS/RAMIRO VARGAS

The Quinnipiac Legends A Capella performed live for the first time since 2020 on March 27 in Boston.



## A POET WITH PROWESS



#### QU sophomore recognized as 'Connecticut student poet' in contest

By NICOLE MCISAAC

News Editor

Writing.

Depending on the person and topic, it can be a chore as well as a passion. For Brian Ataka, a sophomore economics major at Quinnipiac University, it's a way for him to perceive himself.

"It's been almost like a safe haven for me for a long time," Ataka said. "I look at writing like a place to understand myself."

Quinnipiac University's Creative Writing Department hosted a virtual reading for winners of the Connecticut Poetry Circuit contest, allowing the poets to share and elaborate their work with attendees on March 28.

The Circuit, established in 1968, holds a statewide contest every year for college-student poets to compete for the title of Connecticut Student Poets. With a panel of judges weeding out contestants one by one, all selected winners tour the circuit in the spring and visit various universities around the state to recite their work.

Ataka was one of four selected poets to receive recognition this year alongside Yale University junior Vaughn Goehrig, Eastern Connecticut State University junior Colleen Goff and Western Connecticut State University sophomore Michelle Rochniak. All poets read several of their pieces over Zoom and answered questions from viewers at the end of the event.

When the spotlight shifted to Ataka, he chose to read his poems "I have no choice but to finish my coffee," "Offer Lies," "Longing" and "Alma Mater."

While many attendees voiced the connection they had with the poet's work, Jason Koo, associate teaching professor of English and host of the event, shared his deeper ties to Ataka.

Koo said he first met Ataka in fall 2020 during an English course. Despite facing the uncertainties of the pandemic, Koo said Ataka's eagerness to learn more about poetry revealed his true love for the art.

"His passion and enthusiasm immediately stuck out, it was very rare because I don't encounter that much at all," Koo said. "I

feel certain that Brian is going to do something very remarkable with his life."

For Ataka, the role of having Koo in his life was the reason he blossomed into the writer he is.

"I feel honored to have even been considered for this opportunity," Ataka said. "Without the belief that Jason Koo had in me and my work I would have this experience to relish. Above all, the feeling of gratitude is what fills my heart and mind at this moment."

However, for other attendees of the event, Ataka's poems resonated with their personal lifestyles.

Destiny Smith, a junior psychology major, said she was invited to watch the Zoom as part of Koo's Introduction to Poetry class. The word choice and meaning behind his poems were something Smith said she could easily relate to.

"I felt very much connected to Brian because throughout my life I also struggled with my relationship with my mother," Smith said. "I have always had a deep connection to poetry, someone else's words. I could not really communicate my feelings effectively as a child, but I always found a poem that was befitting."

Smith said she was able to learn from listening to poets perform, as "they are all-powerful and so personal."

"I was riveted by Brian Ataka's poem 'Offer Lies' and his short poem, he spoke about his head submerged in the bathtub," Smith said in an email. "He stated that it was a form of meditation for him, I reminisced back to my own memories."

Although Ataka is pursuing a degree outside of the English field, he said poetry became a tool to

acknowledge himself — even before he started writing as seriously as he does now.

"By putting the words on the page and hearing it aloud, I was provided with an instrument to fine-tune and change myself," Ataka said. "To find areas that I wanted to change about myself."

Ataka said that the power of poetry and the motion behind using his words serve as a way to better the world around him as well as impact those who need to know "that they are not alone."

"I also believe that writing has the ability to change others by providing something with something you can use to touch others," Ataka said. "When I read or hear great poetry, there's something that reaches into me, into my heart, into my mind and it pokes and pulls me."

Ataka said that the ability to put his poetry into a different perspective and think about the impact it holds on a larger scale allows him to understand the true meaning of how words can impact change.

"If you think about it almost like grassroots, that's where a lot of movement and effort is cultivated,"

Ataka said.

With the award now in his place, Ataka said he will continue to look for ways to develop himself as a poet despite not pursuing a degree in the field.

"Poetry will be a lifelong companion of mine, as I have always said I can only hope to write words that are worthy of being read by others," Ataka said in an email. "I hope to continue to study under Professor Jason Koo and refine my craft. The fruits of my work will hopefully speak for themselves."



#### QU's original satirical publication will return in fall 2022

By NEHA SEENARINE

If I told you I was in another Quinnipiac University newspaper before I joined The Quinnipiac Chronicle, you'd think I was lying.

I was a part of The Quinnipiac Barnacle. The last time the organization was active, I was a first-year student in 2019 attending its weekly Monday night meetings in the Arnold Bernhard Library. In the spring 2020 semester, everything went south for the organization. The COVID-19 shut down in March 2020 gave us a fear of sneezing in public and took away The Barnacle.

And now, two years later, the student-run satirical newspaper will be returning to Quinnipiac in fall 2022.

In 2020, Claire Gregg, now a senior biochemistry major, held the first Barnacle meeting of the fall semester on Zoom. Gregg took the position of editor-in-chief when the former leaders, Sophie Rodgers and Garrett Amill, graduated in the spring. Unfortunately, with a lack of resources and

communication held remotely, the organization couldn't flourish the way it did in past years.

"Barnacle is dead."

I've heard that many times, and also said it many times myself. The Barnacle no longer being a campus organization felt like a sudden loss to me. I explained to my peers about my short-term involvement. I talked about the friendships I made and the funny articles I wrote such as "Bio major writes thesis on the birds and the bees" and "Guy who puts new music on Instagram story truly ahead of the curve." I had my share of raunchier articles in The Barnacle with profanity, but the most important part was sharing my creativity with the Quinnipiac community.

When The Barnacle went on its hiatus, I knew I had to do something else with my time. A journalism student without any experience will have a tough time getting into the industry. However, I was never interested in writing breaking news. I found a new home at The Quinnipiac Chronicle writing for the Arts & Life section. My first article

was about the Kardashian family, but I've come a long way since then.

In the fall 2021 semester, I became the associate Arts & Life editor, and I pitched an idea that I never knew would take off: the satire column.

I had plenty of talks with editors on The Chronicle's editorial board on the vision of satire. The articles are Quinnipiac-related and most importantly, they're funny. Creative Director Connor Lawless made an amazing Las Vegas-inspired logo for the column, and I was over the moon. The Chronicle's first satire piece was "Quinnipiac to demolish Athletic and Recreation Center for parking spots," poking fun at the university listening to its students but in the most radical way.

The Chronicle's satire column is my proudest accomplishment so far in the organization. It has come to a point where I refer to myself as "the satire editor." I'm thrilled when people want to pitch ideas to me, and I help their pieces become stronger. A part of introducing satire to Chronicle was to keep Barnacle alive in some form.

But on Feb. 27, I received the most exciting email.

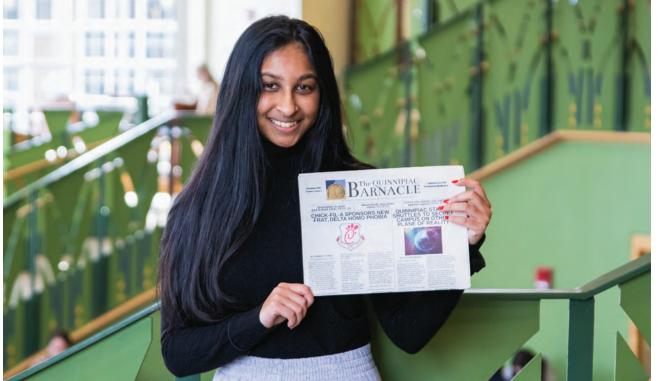
Gregg gave The Barnacle keys to me and told me, "The Barnacle legacy is yours now, and I know you'll do good with it"

All of sudden, I felt like I was Spider-Man and I had a responsibility to take on. I felt like Gregg was Uncle Ben saying, "with great power comes great responsibility." For almost a month, I've worked to revive The Barnacle with meetings every week, figuring out the best way to reincorporate it at Quinnipiac.

On March 23, I got an email that The Barnacle was reactivated on DoYouQU and Assistant Dean of Student Affairs Matthew Kurz was on board to become the club's advisor. I was screaming in my red Volkswagen Jetta. All I could think about was being a member in 2019, and flash forward to today, I brought the organization back from the dead serving as editor-in-chief. So naturally, my next move was to put up cryptic posts on The Barnacle's social media, teasing the return.

I was too excited to keep the secret anymore, so I posted about The Barnacle coming back on March 26, at 11 p.m. I'm sure people at the club are scrolling on LinkedIn on a Saturday night.

I am thrilled to bring an organization that means so much to me back to Quinnipiac, and I look forward to the relaunch of The Barnacle.



PEYTON MCKENZIE/CHRONICLE

 $I\ am\ exhilarated\ to\ resurrect\ The\ Quinnipiac\ Barnacle\ and\ serve\ as\ its\ editor\mbox{-in-chief.}$ 

# Photos of the week





On March 25, student media organizations came together for a pageant-style competition called 'Student Media Showdown,' which pitted Will DeBlis (top left) of WQAQ Radio, Ben Kane (top right) of Quinnipiac Sports Broadcasting Network, Alyssa Murphy (bottom right) of Q30 Television and Riley Millette (not pictured) of The Quinnipiac Chronicle.

DeBlis made the audience laugh and cry with interpretive dance of Adele's 'Someone Like You' while dedicating his routine to WQAQ General Manager and a judge of the competition Jack Main. DeBlis was eliminated first in the trivia round.

Murphy brought some nostalgia to the room with an original performance of 'Freak the Freak Out' from the Nickelodeon classic 'Victorious.' Murphy went all out in this one, beginning the song in costume, much like the character Tori Vega did in the show. Murphy eventually lost in the On-Air Wear round of the competition.

Runner-up Ben Kane came rolling onto the stage in the 'on-air wear' portion of the contest equipped with Heelys shoes and balloons, puting his own spin on the on-air component.

Millette took home first for The Chronicle, and his experience can be read on page 4.











Nearly 1,000 cars crowded the surface lots on the York Hill campus as The Quinnipiac Car Club held its fourth-annual Spring Car Show on March 27. The \$4,000 raised from the show will go to the National Breast Cancer Foundation and humanitarian efforts in Ukraine.

# **Scores Schedule**

#### **Friday 3/25**

BASE won 8-5 @ St. John's MIH won 5-4 vs. St. Cloud State (NCAA Allentown Regional Semifinals)

#### Saturday 3/26

WOT&F Monmouth Outdoor Opener (No Team Results) MTEN lost 5-0 @ Bryant MLAX lost 9-8 vs. Monmouth SOFT lost 9-4 vs. Hartford FH won 5-3 vs. Sacred Heart WLAX won 19-7 @ Marist WTEN won 4-3 @ Bryant SOFT lost 8-4 vs. Maine BASE lost 7-3 @ St. John's

#### **Sunday 3/27**

SOFT won 3-2 vs. Maine BASE lost 7-4 @ St. John's SOFT lost 4-0 vs. Hartford WTEN won 4-1 vs. Providence MIH lost 7-4 vs. Michigan (NCAA Allentown Regional Finals)



MARCH 26 NICOLE MCISAAC/CHRONICLE

#### Wednesday 3/30

SOFT @ CCSU 2 p.m. WLAX vs. San Diego State 3 p.m.

#### Thursday 3/31

WOT&F William and Mary Colonial Relays

#### Friday 4/1

WOT&F William and Mary Colonial Relays BASE vs. Canisius 3 p.m.

#### Saturday 4/2

WOT&F William and Mary Colonial Relays GOLF JEL Golf Women's Intercollegiate MLAX vs. Marist 10 a.m. MTEN vs. Niagara 12 p.m. WLAX vs. Niagara 1 p.m. BASE vs. Canisius 1 p.m. SOFT @ Canisius 2:30 and 4:30 p.m. WTEN vs. Niagara 3 p.m.

#### Sunday 4/3

GOLF JEL Golf Women's Intercollegiate FH vs. Fairfield 10 a.m. SOFT @ Niagara 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. BASE vs. Canisius 12 p.m. ACRO vs. Oregon 1 p.m. FH vs. Colgate 1:30 p.m.

#### Monday 4/4

MTEN vs. Monmouth 3 p.m.

## **Neutral sites deterring fans?**

#### Attendance woes, extensive travel raise questions about NCAA tournament locations



Of the 16 teams in the NCAA hockey tournament, 10 played at regional sites more than 500 miles from their campus.

#### By CAMERON LEVASSEUR

Associate Sports Editor

**3,256.** That's the number of fans that were in the PPL Center Sunday night as Michigan, the most talented team in the nation, faced off against Quinnipiac in the NCAA Regional Final in Allentown, Pennsylvania.

That's the the second-fewest fans in 41 games this season. The fewest? Two days earlier in its semifinal matchup against AIC (2,155 fans).

In Michigan's two biggest games of the season, it saw its lowest turnout by a substantial margin.

Allentown, one of four neutral sites chosen for the 2022 ice hockey regional tournament, is more than an eight-hour drive from Ann Arbor, pitting Michigan locals against a full day of travel just to support their team in person.

This is not an anomaly. Of the 16 teams who qualified for the NCAA Division I tournament, 10 played at a regional site more than 500 miles from their campus, Michigan being the closest of those 10. Even Quinnipiac, the fourth-closest school to its regional site, is still three hours from Allentown.

"I think it's the worst idea in sports," Michigan alumnus and New Jersey native Chris Hughes said. "It should be at the home arena of the No. 1 seed, just like baseball, softball, women's basketball. If this was at the Yost (Ice Arena, Michigan's home ice), it would be packed tonight, sold out, great atmosphere. Instead, you're going to have, if we're lucky, 2,000, 3,000 people."

Home-site regionals are not a new idea, as the NCAA used the system from 1977-91, but abandoned the concept in favor of neutral sites from then on.

There were rumors of a comeback in 2015 when NCAA Men's Hockey Committee Chair Brian Faison told Midco Sports Network's Dan Hammer that he would "move for alignment of NCAA Regionals to include home sites," at that year's coaches convention. But the idea was shot down with a resounding 52-6 decision, with one abstaining vote.

Despite the low attendance, that vote seemed to match the opinion of many at Sunday's game.

"I like it because it gives fans more of an experience," Michigan fan and New Jersey native Rick Card said. "Fans from other places can come see the games."

Other fans in the stands shared his sentiment.

"It gives people a chance to see games that they wouldn't ordinarily get to see," Pennsylvania native Mike Ferrara said.

Anna Ciacciarella, a Quinnipiac alumna and current graduate student at Michigan, said she can see the merits of both arguments

"I think that'd be awesome (to have home-site regionals)," Ciacciarella said. "I'm a fan of the arena back in Ann Arbor, but this is a pretty cool place too, and it's a great way to meet in the middle."

One reason fans cited as a cause for low attendance was a lack of local advertising.

'Maybe a little more exposure (is needed)," Card said. "I'm out here five days a week, and I didn't even know this was going on."

The PPL Center boasts a capacity of 8,500 for hockey games.

All three games' attendance from the weekend combined barely came within a thousand of that number.

"The arenas are way too big for the crowds that you're going to get," Hughes said. "You have no idea whether you're going to get any teams who play anywhere near the arenas in regionals ... in terms of all the teams and the environment, it should be somewhere where you're going to have big crowds."

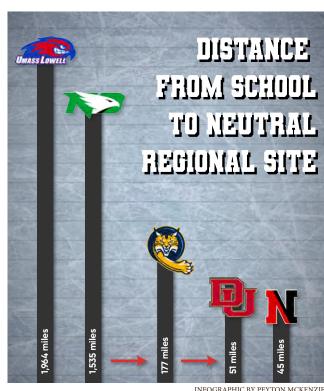
Home sites usually house the big crowds, where teams are able to fill larger arenas. Michigan's Yost Ice Arena holds 5,800 people. Of 23 games the Wolverines played there this season, 14 were sellouts and only one game, which took place during spring break, fell short of 5,100 fans in attendance.

The same can be said for other Western powerhouses such as North Dakota and Minnesota, who average 11,300 and 7,900 fans per game, respectively. They also saw their smallest crowds of the season during the regional tournament, pulling in less than 3,000 fans each.

The NCAA cannot expect sellout crowds when its bracket creates matchups such as Western Michigan and Minnesota in Worcester, Massachusetts. Students or local fans would have to fly or drive halfway across the country to watch the game.

The highest attended game of the tournament was UMass facing off against Minnesota in the semifinal round, which brought in 6,002 fans. Given the semi-local proximity of UMass (57 miles) to Worcester, more fans made the trip out.

This suggests the formula that proximity equals attendance which — as much as the NCAA may not want to admit it — is backed by numbers. If turnout is to grow for these games, home-site regionals could be the way to go.



# **Bobcats roughed up in round-robin**

#### Softball's weekend losses sum up 2022 season at halfway point



PEYTON MCKENZIE/CHRONICLE

The Quinnipiac softball team dropped three of its four games this weekend, scoring only 11 combined runs in the round-robin against Hartford and Maine.

#### **By ETHAN HURWITZ**

Associate Sports Editor

Graduate student infielder and outfielder Kayla Jensen was confident that the 2022 version of Quinnipiac softball would be better than prior years.

"I don't think people are going to see what's coming this year. Our team this year has been stronger than it's ever been," Jensen said.

To give her some credit, she's right, although not by much. Last year, they were 1-8 come late March.

Now? 4-14. That equates to a .222 winning percentage, the same as last season's.

Granted, 2022 has provided a much bigger sample size thus far, but it shows that Quinnipiac has struggled in recent weeks. This weekend's round-robin against Hartford and Maine showcased just that.

Saturday was a day to forget as Quinnipiac dropped both games, losing 9-4 to Hartford and 8-4 to Maine — the latter ending early due to rain — dropping its record to 3-11. In the two matchups, the Bobcats only mustered 11 hits total, including sophomore infielder Kayla Thomas' fourth home run of the season. Another positive was junior infielder Lala Pascual, who had six RBIs in the first two games.

"She's excellent right now, we rely on her a lot," Quinnipiac assistant coach Mandie Perez said on Sunday. "She's peaking at the right time."

The next day, Thomas was forced into an uncomfortable spot, as senior catcher Hannah Davis did not play due to injury. Thomas showed off her versatility and suited up behind the plate for both of Sunday's games.

'Sometimes you may have to do things or play a position based on whatever the team's need is in that moment," Thomas said.

The first game, against the Black Bears, was against Maine freshman pitcher Alexandra Gruitch. She toed the rubber with a 10.32 ERA, and the pitching matchup seemed to be exactly what the doctor ordered for the Bobcats and their cold bats. But Gruitch had her best game of her collegiate career, throwing 5.1 quality innings.

Once Gruitch was removed, the Bobcats pounced on Maine's bullpen and found a way to squeak by 3-2. Now, did the Bobcats use that come-from-behind win to spur another good game against the Hartford Hawks?

They were blanked 4-0, while only registering five hits all game. Quinnipiac couldn't scratch a run across for the sixth time this season, something the team needs to fix if it wants to climb back in the MAAC standings and make a run in the playoffs.

While the season has not been one to write home about, the biggest bright spot of the year is the pitching duo of Jaclyn Gonzalez and Sydney Horan. The freshmen have been the two mainstays of the rotation (78.1 combined innings) and have been the backbone of a staff that had its work cut out entering the campaign.

"We have a young staff," Perez said. "Whenever their name is called, they are ready to go."

Gonzalez was the star of the weekend's sole win, throwing four innings and earning her first career win. Horan also recorded her first career save in the same game, a testament to the importance of these freshmen.

"All of us together make a great pitching staff because we are able to use each of our different strengths to keep other teams off balance," Horan said. "We all have each other's backs and have been able to support one another through a lot with the help of some amazing team leaders."

Both Gonzalez and Horan have been superb, but the rest of the team needs to follow in their footsteps with the season almost halfway over.

The Bobcats have a one-game trip to 3-23 CCSU March 30 and then will go on a four-game road trip to New York to begin conference play against 9-10 Canisius and 4-7 Niagara.

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Allentown regional final loss to Michigan.

The team now enters an interesting offseason as the five graduate student transfers and seven seniors are set to move on. Brendan Less, the Dartmouth defenseman that transferred to Quinnipiac over the summer, already signed a contract with the New York Islanders' ECHL affiliate, the Worcester Railers HC.

In search of a new opportunity, sophomore defenseman Nick Bochen just entered the transfer portal, depleting the Quinnipiac blue line further. Following suit, freshman defenseman Jack Babbage and junior forward Ethan Leyh have also opted for the portal.

Though there is a possibility that some return, nothing has been confirmed. Pecknold maintained his focus on the team and the season, allowing the students to make their choices once it ended.

"To me, recruiting is 365 days a year if you want to win," Pecknold said. "There's a ton of kids in the portal right now. The grad transfers changed everything, we've got three more years of that. I refer to it like the Wild West right now."

As of now, only 13 players are returning, which leaves the door open for incoming freshmen or graduate student transfers. Quinnipiac currently has 12 incoming freshmen, eight of which are forwards. It's a position of dire need for this Bobcats squad should seniors move on.

It's very possible that Pecknold explores the transfer portal if he feels this team is good enough to compete. As the regional round concluded, many players entered the portal once their team had been eliminated.

Not much information is available on what the team's plan is. But with the breakout performance of Perets this year, it should not shock anyone if Quinnipiac targeted a defenseman or two to bolster its defensive core.

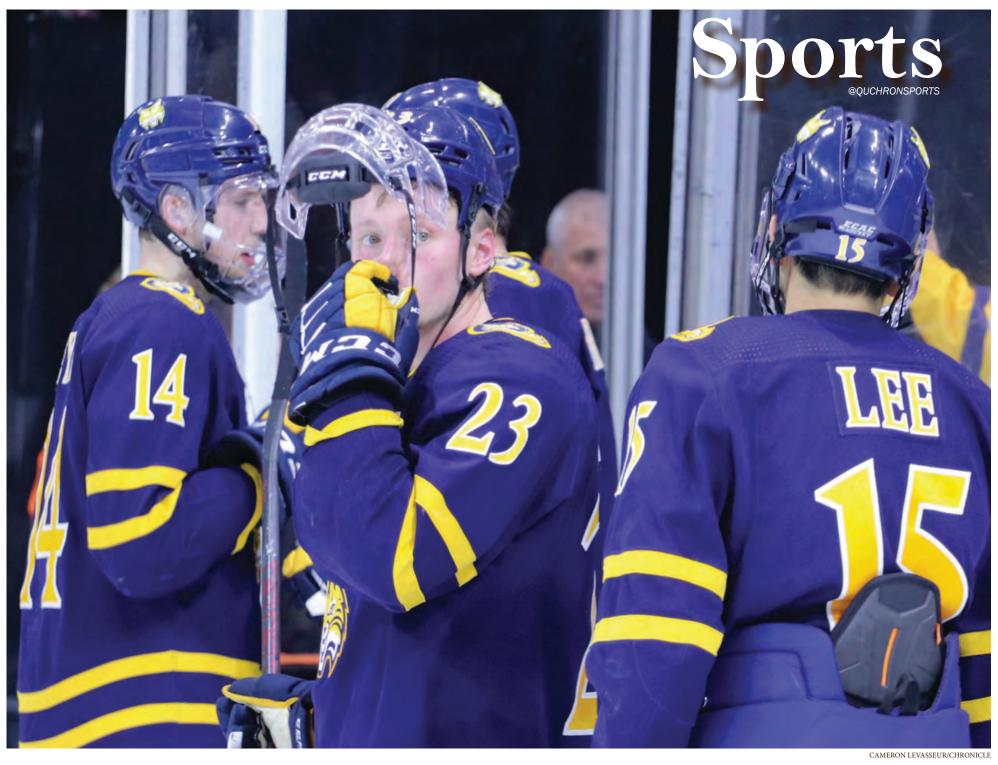
There are a few intriguing players that likely will crack the lineup of that incoming freshman forward group. Sam Lipkin, a seventh-round draft pick by the Arizona Coyotes in the 2021 NHL Entry Draft, who is currently lighting it up in the USHL with the Chicago Steel. In 59 games this season, Lipkin has 29 goals and 56 points which rank sixth and 15th respectively in the league.

As the Frozen Four comes to an end, more questions surrounding the team will be answered.

It's an exciting and mysterious end point of my four years covering this team. Four years worth of recaps and content have led to this point. My skills as a writer and journalist have grown tremendously from my experience with this team. For the last two years, I was able to cover the team in extreme detail, writing this column and providing analysis on multiple platforms. I've enjoyed every second of it, and I'm grateful for the opportunity I had to do so.



Senior forward Wyatt Bongiovanni (right) is one of six forwards potentially leaving the roster next year.



# Pete's pond: Allentown aftermath

# Unsung heroes of QU's season, freshmen joining the program and notable transfers

By PETER PIEKARSKI Sports Editor

Sports Editor

While Quinnipiac didn't achieve its goal of a Frozen Four appearance, the run this team made is still impressive. For the first time since the 2015-16 season, the Bobcats finished with more than 30 wins, just the third time to do so this century.

Along the way, this team collected a CT Ice championship and the Cleary Cup for finishing atop the ECAC Hockey standings winning a program-record 32 games. The recordsetting performance from freshman goaltender Yaniv Perets made for an exciting and successful season for a team that drastically changed from the previous season.

This season was just one year removed from a shortened schedule where neither fans nor media were allowed to experience it in person. Quinnipiac took advantage of playing in the People's United Center, winning 17 of its 20 homes games, including the home opener against then-No. 6 North Dakota, a shootout win over Clarkson, a shutout win over Harvard and blanking Yale to claim the Heroes' Hat.

Three players took major strides in their game to contribute to the teams' success this year. T.J. Friedmann, the senior forward from St. Louis, Missouri, had only accrued 13 career points with Quinnipiac prior to 2021-22. He finished the season with 10 goals and 13 assists in 40 games.

Another forward, junior Joey Cipollone, potted 10 goals this season along with eight assists, trouncing his production of two goals and five assists in the previous year.

Junior defenseman Jayden Lee finished the campaign with five goals and 10 assists, more than double his two previous seasons combined. Not to mention, he scored three game-winning goals along with arguably some of the most impactful goals for the team this season.

Lee scored the game-tying goal in the ECAC Hockey championship against Harvard late in the third period. Additionally, he opened the door for Quinnipiac to crawl back against Michigan Sunday night with a spin move that resulted in a shot that banked in off the post.

"In general, with Jayden I'm really happy with the season he had, I think he took a big jump," head coach Rand Pecknold said. "He was outstanding all year long, he took another jump not just tonight but in the playoffs in general. Really high IQ player."

It's been nothing short of an emotional season, beginning with the death of Quinnipiac's Team IMPACT member Michael Torello over the summer, who Pecknold spoke about

multiple times over the past few weeks. Team IMPACT pairs kids with serious illnesses to college teams to create a sense of community around the family.

It ended with senior captain and forward Wyatt Bongiovanni trying to maintain his composure and hold back tears during the post-game press conference following the

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CAMERON LEVASSEUR/CHRONICLE

Hobey Baker finalist Yaniv Perets set a NCAA Division I men's record with a season-long GAA of 1.17.