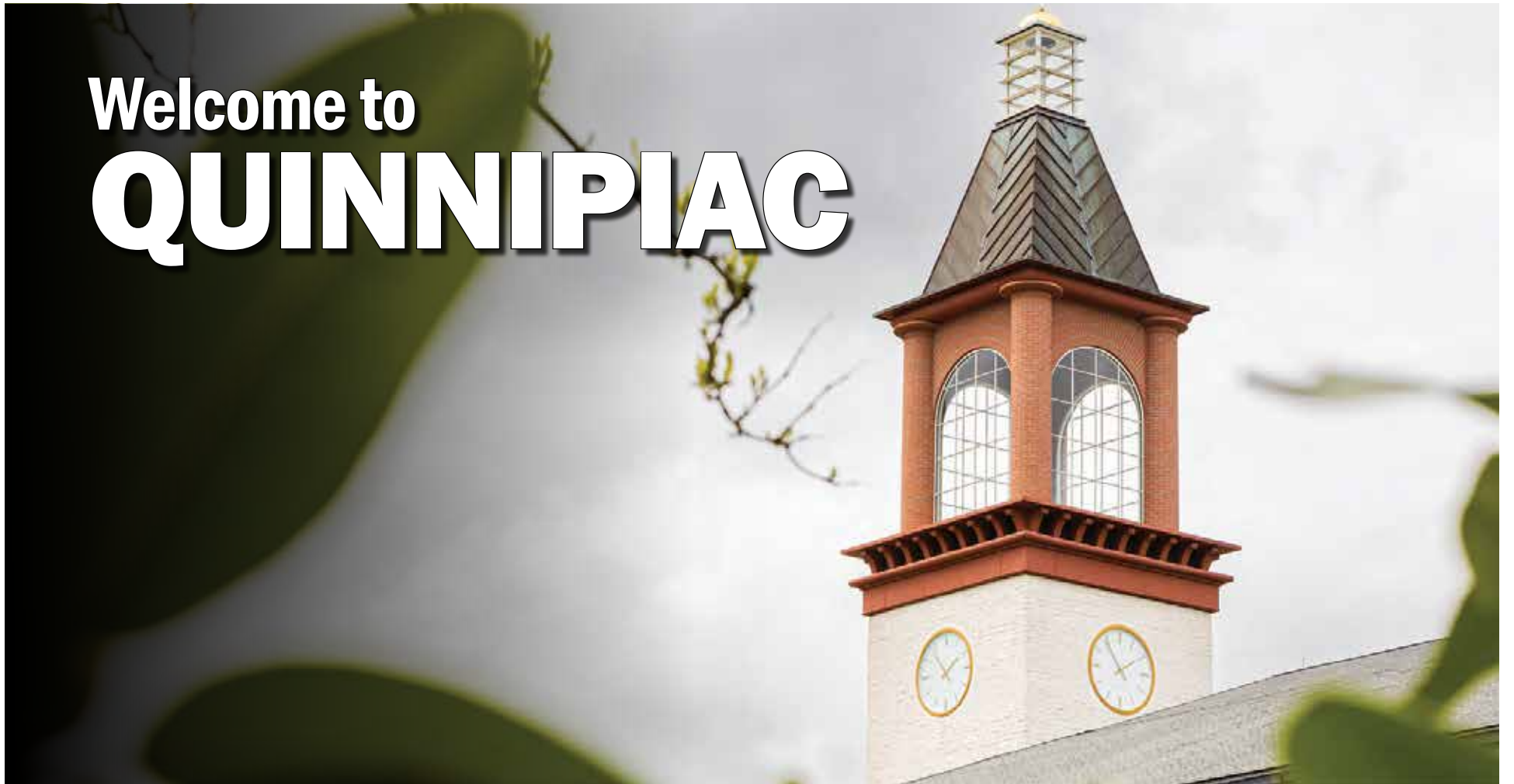


The QUINNIPIAC CHRONICLE

The official student newspaper of Quinnipiac University since 1929



PEYTON MCKENZIE/CHRONICLE

The Quinnipiac Chronicle orientation issue is a special edition featuring the organization's best reporting from the 2023-24 school year. Those interested in contributing are welcome to attend The Chronicle's weekly meetings on Tuesdays at 9:15 p.m. in Room 123 of the School of Business or email amartinakova@quinnipiac.edu for more information.

Quinnipiac University has \$48M tied up in offshore hedge funds that invest in the fossil fuel industry

By CAT MURPHY
Staff Writer

Quinnipiac University has put itself on the map in recent years — literally. Over the last five years, the private Connecticut university has poured tens of millions of dollars into offshore hedge funds.

Public tax records indicate that Quinnipiac has maintained a multimillion-dollar investment portfolio in the Cayman Islands — where lenient corporate tax laws enable investors to avoid paying taxes on their offshore assets — since at least 2018.

Quinnipiac's most recent financial audit valued its hedge fund investments at \$48.4 million as of June 2023.

More than a third of those assets — \$16.7 million — are tied up in Monarch Debt Recovery Fund Ltd., one of some two dozen hedge funds operated by multibillion-dollar pooled investment fund manager Monarch Alternative Capital.

And despite Quinnipiac's public commitment to "outcomes that support the long-term sustainability of our planet," Monarch Alternative Capital's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission show that the corporation bankrolls the fossil fuel and tobacco industries.

As of 2019, Monarch owns a 4.33% stake in Arch Resources — a \$3.2 billion coal mining and processing company — worth more than \$104 million.

Monarch is also a majority owner of Pyxus International, a \$1.6 billion tobacco distributor. The New York City-based corporation's 24.6% ownership stake in Pyxus is worth more than \$11 million.

And back in 2018 — the first year Quinnipiac disclosed its ties to Monarch — the corporation had more than \$90 million invested in oil and gas acquisition company Resolute Energy and crude oil shipping company Gener8 Maritime. Both

corporations have since been bought out.

"Quinnipiac does not have any direct investments in fossil fuels and has committed to not investing directly in fossil fuel interests," wrote John Morgan, associate vice president for public relations, in a statement to The Chronicle.

But by investing in Monarch, the university is banking on the success of Monarch's portfolio. So, while Quinnipiac may not be directly investing in fossil fuels, the university's multimillion-dollar stake in Monarch's pooled investments ensures it profits from the industry's success.

The university disclosed having another \$23.7 million invested in Pointer Offshore II, a Cayman Islands-incorporated hedge fund based in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Pointer's holdings — unlike Monarch's — are not public, meaning its SEC filings do not disclose its investments.

Quinnipiac invests the remaining \$8 million in Ironwood International, a hedge fund manager overseeing more than \$6.8 billion in global assets. Ironwood is technically headquartered in San Francisco. However, it is legally registered as operating out of the Ugland House, a law firm on Grand Cayman that serves as the official address for thousands of supposedly U.S.-based businesses. Ironwood's holdings are not public.

Because Quinnipiac's finances are shrouded in mystery, the history of the university's \$48.4 million hedge fund portfolio — today worth what 873 students pay in annual tuition and fees — is murky at best.

Public disclosure requirements rarely apply to private institutions, meaning the university's financial activities are, as a general rule, not subject to public scrutiny.

But Quinnipiac — like the majority of colleges in the United States — is a not-for-profit institution. And even private nonprofits must file annual returns with the Internal Revenue Service

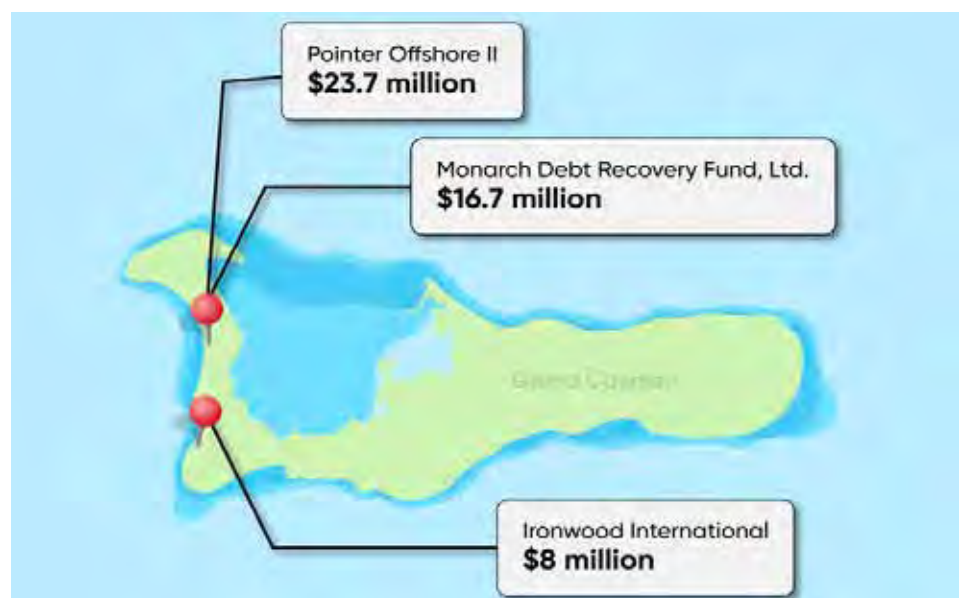


ILLUSTRATION BY PEYTON MCKENZIE

to remain exempt from federal income taxes. This tax return, known as the form 990, is one of the few public insights into the financial activities of private nonprofits like Quinnipiac.

However, as far as offshore hedge funds go, two relevant figures are subject to disclosure: the value of an institution's private investments and the value of an institution's foreign investments.

It was a technicality in the 990 form's disclosure requirements for private assets — not foreign assets — that forced Quinnipiac to reveal its hedge fund investments in 2018.

For context, the IRS typically only requires institutions to disclose the net value of their private investments, not specifics about the holdings. There is one notable exception: if an institution's privately held securities comprise more than 5% of its total assets.

Quinnipiac's \$81.9 million in private invest-

ments constituted 5.2% of its total assets in fiscal year 2018-19, forcing the university to disclose having \$39.8 million of that tucked away in three hedge funds in the Cayman Islands.

But in a different section of Quinnipiac's 2018-19 filing, the university denied having any foreign investments valued at more than \$100,000. In fact, in the decade that the IRS had required organizations to disclose foreign transactions, the university had never once reported investing money outside of the United States.

If not for the IRS's 5% disclosure threshold, it is possible that Quinnipiac's offshore investments may never have come to light.

The multimillion-dollar discrepancy calls into question the credibility of Quinnipiac's previous 990 filings.

An extended version with more information can be found at quchronicle.com.

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Hartford HealthCare partnership brings mental health first aid training

By **ALEXANDRA MARTINAKOVA**
Editor-in-Chief

Quinnipiac University and Hartford HealthCare are partnering to offer free mental health first aid training courses to students, faculty and staff throughout the spring 2024 semester.

Mental health first aid is built upon the same basic principles as CPR, teaching bystanders to assist someone experiencing a crisis, according to the National Council for Mental Wellbeing's official website.

Mental health first aid teaches about recovery and resiliency, the belief that individuals experiencing challenges such as depression, anxiety, mood disorders, trauma, psychosis and substance-use disorders, can and do get better, NCMW also states.

Thanks to a Health and Wellness Education grant from the state of Connecticut, Kerry Patton, associate dean of student affairs for health and wellness, brought the eight-hour long, nationally recognized training to the Quinnipiac community at no cost.

Quinnipiac, in partnership with Hartford HealthCare, is offering these courses both virtually and in-person.

The next available sessions are scheduled for Feb. 16, Feb. 24, March 2, April 5 and April 20. Every course starts at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m. March 2 is the only in-person session offered in Recreation and Wellness Center Room 218, with the other ones to be hosted on Zoom.

However, Patton noted that she can also try to accommodate any groups of faculty or students who might want a certain date or time.

"My goal is to try and have as many students, faculty and staff sign up and attend," Patton said. "The goal is to really try and increase awareness of mental health and this is the one particular training that is highly recommended."

Patton said that 150 participants have signed up for the course — 34% of which are students, as of Feb. 5.

Bernadette Mele, chair and clinical professor of diagnostic imaging, attended one of the Zoom sessions. She said the sign-up process was easy, with very clear expectations for attending.

"We had some two hours of paperwork that had to be done prior to the day, to help you prepare and be ready for discussions, and you had to be available for the entire eight hours," Mele said. "We had opportunities for group discussions, there were a lot of scenarios, videos that were helpful as well as break-out sessions with smaller group discussions."

The course teaches individuals to apply the knowledge they learn in a variety of crisis situations. Specifically, they learn how to properly help someone experiencing panic attacks, suicidal thoughts or behavior, non-suicidal self-injury, acute psychosis, a trauma response, overdose or withdrawal symptoms.

The training teaches a multi-step action plan that includes: assessing for risk of suicide and harm, how to listen nonjudgmentally, giving reassurance and information, encouraging appropriate professional help, encouraging self-help and other support strategies.

At the end, participants receive a three-year certification in mental health first aid.

The NCMW website states four reasons to take this course: to be prepared, to be able to help, to educate that mental illnesses are common and to show that you care.

"I thought it was very helpful in my role as a faculty member, a program director and department chair," Mele said. "It wasn't just having the knowledge behind me to be able to address crises in students, but it was also to be able to recognize it in my faculty as well as myself, and even in my teenage children and their friends."

Hartford HealthCare trainers are leading the courses, but Patton hopes to soon have members of the Quinnipiac community become trainers.

"What we are going to do is develop a train the trainer this summer," she said. "Hopefully,

ongoing, we'll have our own trainers to be able to hold this, and not just end it in spring."

This is the second training Patton brought to Quinnipiac thanks to her grant — the first one being the QPR training back in the fall 2023 semester — and she said she does not want these training to end.

"One of the things that I found really interesting was asking somebody if they are thinking about suicide," Mele said. "I never thought you could come right out and ask the question, but you have to. To hear that it was okay and not be afraid of it was actually pretty freeing."

In October 2022, Quinnipiac was one of 400 schools to participate in the Healthy Minds Study conducted by the University of Michigan's School of Public Health.

According to the key findings, 41% of respondents reported some form of depression, 36% admitted to anxiety disorders, 29% inflicted a non-suicidal self-injury and 36% received any form of mental health counseling or therapy.

College students are affected by a range of stressors, including academic and social pressure, balancing obligations and societal concerns, according to the American Psychiatric Association. With this in mind, Patton stressed the importance of access to resources.

"I would love for as many people in our community to be able to take on this opportunity," Patton said. "Sometimes the eight hours is a commitment but when people are finished with it, I think the reward that they feel of getting that support and knowledge is just so helpful for them."

Mele also argued that one does not need a specific reason to be able to attend.

"It can be just for the people in your life that you are concerned about," Mele said. "I don't think there's a reason that you won't be able to set aside eight hours to be able to do the training."

Highest-ranking women of color resign days apart

By **CAT MURPHY**
Staff Writer

Quinnipiac University's two most senior women administrators of color — Khalilah Brown-Dean, associate provost for faculty affairs, and Elicia Spearman, general counsel and vice president for human resources — announced their impending departures, bringing the total number of high-level resignations since October 2022 to 14.

Provost Debra Liebowitz on March 18 announced to the Faculty Senate that Brown-Dean, whose tenure at Quinnipiac has spanned nearly 13 years, would be leaving the university April 26 to take a position at nearby Wesleyan University.

"I feel very fortunate that Khalilah has spent the last 13 years sharing her commitment to students, faculty and staff here at Quinnipiac," Liebowitz wrote in an email statement to The Chronicle. "The institution is certainly the better for it. She leaves big shoes to fill, and I look forward to all of the impact

she will have in her new role."

Quinnipiac President Judy Olian then announced to faculty Thursday that Spearman is also leaving next month to become the Girl Scouts of Connecticut's next chief executive officer.

"I'm very sad to lose Elicia's expertise, wise counsel and creative energy that she brought to all she touched at the university," Olian wrote in the March 28 email. "Yet this new opportunity captures her longtime passion for female mentoring and development."

Spearman, who joined Quinnipiac in 2020 as its inaugural in-house legal counsel, is departing the university on April 3.

"As a Hamden native, it was very enjoyable to work in my hometown and serve as a brand ambassador for QU," Spearman wrote in Olian's email to faculty. "I'll be rooting for more continued success for all Bobcats. This will be a new and exciting opportunity as CEO of the Girl Scouts of Connecticut — and I'm looking forward to this next step in my leadership journey."

Caroline Park, a partner at law firm Wiggin and Dana who has provided outside legal counsel to Quinnipiac since 2012, will serve as acting general counsel until the university appoints Spearman's permanent successor.

Anna Spragg, associate vice president for human resources, will serve as interim vice president for human resources.

"As sad as I am to see Elicia leave, she is ascending to a tremendous leadership

opportunity, a CEO role, something she has a life passion about," Olian wrote in a March 28 statement to The Chronicle. "Quinnipiac is proud that highly talented individuals can expand their skill set while at our university and are thus positioned for further career opportunities."

The consecutive resignations of the campus's two most prominent women of color did not occur in a vacuum. Rather, they are indicative of an administrative mass exodus that has defined the university's last year-and-a-half.

Quinnipiac has said goodbye to 11 senior administrators over the past 18 months: four vice presidents, three deans, two Title IX coordinators and now the associate provost and general counsel.

Three lower-level administrative officials — the director and associate director of multicultural education and training and the director of recreation — also resigned during this period.

Brown-Dean and Spearman announced their imminent departures just weeks after Quinnipiac made a handful of high-level administrative hires that appeared to buck the months-long turnover trend.

But taken together, a total of 14 high-ranking Quinnipiac officials, including seven administrators of color, have left the university since October 2022 — the rough equivalent of one departure every five weeks.

A total of 14 high-ranking Quinnipiac officials, including seven administrators of color, have left the university since October 2022.

What happened to TK?

Quinnipiac allegedly fired women's lacrosse coach Tanya Kotowicz for playing an injured athlete. Internal documents – and the athlete's dad – say otherwise.

By CAT MURPHY
Staff Writer

Competing narratives are beginning to emerge surrounding the mysterious departure of Quinnipiac University women's lacrosse head coach Tanya "TK" Kotowicz.

Quinnipiac Athletics announced in January — seven weeks before women's lacrosse's 2024 season opener and seven months after the end of the team's winningest season since 2011 — that Kotowicz was "leaving the program."

The Jan. 3 press release did not elaborate on the seventh-year head coach's unexplained departure.

Ten minutes after the women's lacrosse account posted the release to X — the platform formerly known as Twitter — Quinnipiac rugby head coach Becky Carlson called the university's official statement "outrageous and not the whole story."

"The coach didn't 'leave the program,'" Carlson wrote in her repost. "The truth will come out."

Carlson declined to clarify what she meant by this.

However, documents reviewed by The Chronicle indicate that Quinnipiac terminated Kotowicz following a two-month internal investigation into allegations that she forced an injured player to compete in an October 2023 offseason scrimmage.

This documentation — a combination of email correspondences, text message exchanges, screenshots and video evidence — also raises serious questions about the veracity of these accusations and about the safety of some of the university's athletic training practices.

Neither Kotowicz nor her attorney, Felice Duffy, responded to The Chronicle's media inquiries.

Quinnipiac Athletics spokesman Nick Solari — the fiancé of now women's lacrosse head coach Jordan Christopher — did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

But using these documents as well as source interviews, The Chronicle has compiled the following timeline of the events surrounding Kotowicz's departure.

JANUARY 2024: THE TERMINATION AND ITS AFTERMATH

The university terminated Kotowicz on Jan. 2. Because most Quinnipiac coaches are not under contract, Connecticut law provides the university the right to terminate their employment "at will" — that is, with-



INFOGRAPHIC BY PEYTON MCKENZIE

out providing a reason.

Athletics administrators apparently informed her on Jan. 2 that the department planned to release a statement the following morning announcing her "resignation."

Kotowicz pushed back, reportedly refusing to sign the resignation paperwork because she was not, in fact, resigning — she was being fired.

In the wake of her dismissal, Kotowicz took to Instagram to share a 70-second video compilation of the more than two dozen messages of support she had received from her former athletes.

"I am so sorry it ended like this," one

such message included in the Jan. 4 post said. "I hope you know once we win that MAAC Championship it will be for you."

Officially, it appears that the university terminated Kotowicz for playing an injured athlete.

But even that athlete's father, describing the university's investigation as a "witch hunt," said he believes Quinnipiac had a pre-existing desire to fire Kotowicz and used a false narrative of the Oct. 22 incident as a pretext.

"The reason TK was fired was bullshit," he said. "I don't want her taking the fall for something that, from our perspective, didn't happen."

An extended version with more information can be found at qchronicle.com.

"The reason TK was fired was bullshit."

— Father of the involved athlete

Five takeaways from SGA's State of the QUnion

By LILY PHILIPCAK
Staff Writer

The Quinnipiac University Student Government Association hosted its annual State of the QUnion address on Feb. 21, allowing students to ask administrators about prevalent issues affecting the student body.

The panel featured five administrators: President Judy Olian; Provost Debra Liebowitz; Tom Ellett, chief experience officer; David Fryson, interim vice president for equity and inclusion and Sal Filardi, vice president for facilities and capital planning.

These were the main topics discussed:

FEB. 14 OPINION PIECE PUBLISHED BY THE CHRONICLE

Several students — many of whom spoke on behalf of the Muslim Student Association and the Muslim community — expressed concerns about The Chronicle's publication of an opinion piece titled "A cease-fire in Gaza will cause more harm than good."

"I think it is totally unacceptable for an article to be published, as it is very biased," a sophomore political science student said. "With the safety concerns occurring in other universities and the hate crimes that are currently taking place all over America, it does not make us Muslims feel safe."

Although Olian and Ellett voiced their understanding for students' feelings toward the conflict, they highlighted that opinion pieces represent the opinion of the writer, not of the organization.

"We encourage our students as journalists to be responsible journalists, accurate journalists — to cover the news as unbiased," Olian said. "Opinion pieces are opinion pieces, and we do not have any way to censor The Quinnipiac Chronicle, Q30 or any other outlets."

Olian emphasized the university's respect for free press on campus and encouraged students to express their opinions so long as their expression does not break the university's code of conduct.

"The free press can be inciting or hateful in the expression of their opinions on campus because we have a code of conduct, and we would potentially bring it forward if that's what it was," Olian said. "The freedom of expression is very broad and powerful in this country."

The last speaker asked the panelists to reconsider their stances on the The Chronicle article.

"We all have an individual responsibility to handle conversations like this carefully while respecting the opinions of others," a first-year international business student said.

With backlash coming from current students, alumni and a piece published in the University of New Haven's student-run newspaper, The Charger Bulletin, some students claimed that The Chronicle's publication of the Feb. 14 opinion piece is damaging the

reputation of the university.

"I recognize that sometimes what is published in those outlets, what is expressed through those outlets has a bearing on the status of the institution," Olian said.

The views expressed in The Chronicle's opinion section are those of the respective authors. They do not reflect the views of The Chronicle as an organization.

CAMPUS SAFETY

In November 2023, Public Safety investigated two incidents in which someone scratched swastikas into the mail lockers on the York Hill Campus. Amid a rise in on-campus hate crimes across the country, students inquired about measures being taken to ensure the safety of Arab and Jewish students.

Students also expressed safety concerns about the campus's openness, ranging from trespassers that are not affiliated with Quinnipiac interacting with students to the secu-

rity of the gates. Some students said they had been granted allowed access to campus by holding up cards for identification other than their QCard.

"We want to make sure that everybody feels comfortable, in who they are, what surrounds them and the protections they have," Olian said.

"I also recognize that there could be a disconnect between how safe you are and how safe you feel," Reyes acknowledged. "That is equally important and that we have to work just as hard to make you feel as safe as you are."

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Students also raised questions about the retention of students and faculty of color and first-generation students. Within the last 12 months, there has been a turnover of diversity, equity and inclusion university officials — with the most recent official to leave being Sarah Hellyar, former interim Title IX coordinator, on the second day of the spring 2024 semester.

"I will acknowledge that we are in a rebuild," Olian said, adding that the university has recently created several positions that are strictly focused on "inclusive excellence."

Olian said that the officials from the former Department of Cultural and Global Engagement — which has since been restructured as the Office of Inclusive Excellence — had different reasons for leaving, including better opportunities.

"It's not going to be an easy turnaround," Fryson said. "It is one that we are intentional in making sure that in terms of making sure that faculty, staff and students that are here not only have a sense of belonging but also have a sense of contact."

An extended version with more information can be found at qchronicle.com.



JACK MUSCATELLO/CHRONICLE

Quinnipiac University President Judy Olian answers student questions at the Student Government Association's annual State of the QUnion event.

Opinion

World issues are more than just a trend

By **LILLIAN CURTIN**
Opinion Editor

Many social media users become self-proclaimed “activists” during the COVID-19 pandemic when the whole world’s attention was on social justice — and used the technology they had at their fingertips to their advantage.

Since most college-aged people were in high school at the time, we posted on Instagram, made “moving” videos on TikTok and did everything we could to show our support about real issues we didn’t understand because we were adolescents. This was truly the beginning of a dangerous phenomenon: turning serious issues into trends.

Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022, and according to GoogleTrends, searches for “Ukraine” were at an all-time high during that time, but have decreased ever since. Similarly, when the war in Ukraine was “trending,” Instagram Reels about the war received between 200,000 and 3 million views, but now they’re getting roughly 50,000 views.

Why did publicity decrease?

It’s because when the news broke that Russia invaded Ukraine and we saw the destruction, we showed our support through social media. But now that it’s not occupying our feeds, “For You” page on TikTok or Instagram Reels, many people don’t give it much thought.

This issue hits home for Olga Caracciolo. Caracciolo is Ukrainian and has a daughter who attends Quinnipiac University. She finds the lack of interest in the destruction of the country hurtful. In an interview with The Chronicle, Caracciolo explained why mixing politics with social media can present issues.

“It is normal human behavior to try to shield from constant bad news,” Caracciolo said. “I can not blame anyone, but (I am) always trying to draw attention to this topic, and maybe if only just one person listened and dug a bit deeper to understand it, I am satisfied.”

Caracciolo said that nobody wants to pay attention to the war in Ukraine anymore, but American politicians hoping to win elections will use it to their advantage. Then, if they get elected, Caracciolo said politicians don’t do anything about

the issue they “supported” in their campaign.

“Does (the) media want you to not pay attention to the topic in Ukraine? Yes,” Caracciolo said. “However, on (a) personal level, I feel a lot of attention and sympathy to this topic.”

How much can we say we actually care when we don’t as individuals do anything to help?

I’m sure there are people who have no idea what is going on in Ukraine, but hate Vladimir Putin because it’s the popular mindset. This isn’t wrong, it just isn’t a personal opinion because it’s influenced by society. When it comes to current issues, nobody is truly educated on them, individuals just conform to groupthink, where we all follow the pack.

Of course, we should support Ukraine. However, it shows that only when many people are articulating their support, others do the same. After celebrities support issues, the general public will follow. This isn’t a bad thing, but it can be when the general public only thinks of serious issues as trends that they can participate in. This goes for many social issues, past and present.

Likewise, some only supported the Black Lives Matter movement when it was

“trending.” Do you remember when black screens with the hashtag #blackouttuesday flooded the internet in 2020 for Black Lives Matter?

Following the murder of George Floyd, many went to social media to show their support for racial justice and posts gained an immense amount of traction, bringing more awareness to the issue. While some protested on streets and used their voices, many teenagers simply took to TikTok and Instagram to express their support.

This was great when Black Lives Matter was trending because it brought a lot of attention to an important issue. But what about when it stopped? Support became increasingly quiet as it decreased in popularity.

NBC News found in a poll that “support for the Black Lives Matter movement peaked in June 2020 at 52%, a month after Floyd was killed.” However, it also found that, “Since then, public support to Black Lives Matter has continue to decline.” A poll conducted by the site shows an 8% decrease of support for the cause in less than two years

Does anyone know the name Irvo Otieno?

He was a Black man who suffered with mental illness and was suffocated to death in custody of Richmond, Virginia police on March 6, after an altercation, but no one knows his name. If people cared as much as they said they did, they would continue to support these issues.

With Black Lives Matter, most posted about the issue three years ago and then forgot about it. Many contributors to the trend were in high school at the time, so they were limited on the actions they could take. But what about now? What’s stopping people from protesting, fundraising and even sharing social media posts that we had no problem sharing years ago? As kids, posting online was the most we could do, but why not take the extra step now that we’re adults and be more proactive?

For a lot of us, we can live our lives without thinking about these social injustices. But far too many people have been affected by them firsthand. Floyd and Otieno’s family will always have a piece of them missing. The same goes for those that died in the war in Ukraine. To many people, violence and destruction is not just an issue on social media — it’s their lives.

As Caracciolo says, “Always start with yourself: ‘What can I do? How can I change it?’ Small steps make (the) biggest difference.” We must ask ourselves, ‘How can I make a difference?’”

There are so many organizations and fundraisers that you can donate to or become an advocate for. Taking the extra step doesn’t have to be a donation, it could be simply educating yourself on what’s really going on in the world. Put your phone down and turn on the news. We have to go that extra step, because we never know when we could fall victim to an injustice ourselves.

If you’re looking for a place to get started, here are some of the many organizations that help the victims of Ukraine:

- Unicef in Ukraine (Supports children and families in Ukraine)
- United Nations World Food Programme (Provides food assistance to those affected)
- Students United for Ukraine (A student-led program that supports Ukrainians seeking refuge)



Surveys claim 55% of voters do not believe Congress should authorize additional funding to support Ukraine, a 7% decrease from , per Time Magazine.

Bobcat Buzz



JACK SPIEGEL/CHRONICLE

A worker sprinkles cheese pizzas before the dinner rush on York Hill on Tuesday, Sept. 26, 2023.

Rocky Top Student Center’s personal pies stole a ‘pizza’ my heart

By **ETHAN HURWITZ**
Staff Writer

I am a big pizza guy. That’s why the Rocky Top Student Center’s personal pie station in the York Hill Campus dining hall is the best meal choice at Quinnipiac University.

Down on the Mount Carmel Campus, you get stuck with one large cheese, one large pepperoni and then a random third pizza that looks like someone tossed an entire salad on top of it. Walk up and ask for a slice (or two) and the workers will throw it back into the oven to heat up.

My analysis: no bueno.

The pizza is fine — it’s hard to make truly awful pizza — but it doesn’t

do it for me. It fills the hunger pit, but do I actually enjoy it? Questionable.

On the contrary, just take a little ride up to York Hill and get some pizza. Now that is a pie students can enjoy wholeheartedly.

Made-to-order, the toppings span entire food groups. Want sausage and ranch? What about bacon and barbeque sauce? Get crazy and just throw an assortment of toppings on there, why don’t you?

What I’m saying is that the options are limitless and the pizza is just better. While both campuses cook them in fancy pizza ovens, the upper campus is the one that will roll the dough out in front of

you, then throw it in as you wait.

Now yes, the line is outrageous. If you’re lucky enough to walk up and order with nobody ahead of you, congratulations. You just experienced a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and it won’t happen again.

But that line comes with the territory. You don’t see people lining up for a half-hour just for a single semi-warmed slice down at Cafe Q, nor should they. But up on York, people know what to expect and are willing to wait for their food.

My thoughts on the pies could span paragraphs, but I will cut it short. My pizza is ready.

Opinion

Raising the bar, not lowering the rim: Strategies for WNBA success

By **BEN BUSILLO**
Associate Opinion Editor

Does the ability to dunk possess that much importance in basketball?

Social media users have long debated the possibility of the WNBA lowering the height of its rims. Most notably, Shaquille O'Neal pitched the idea to three-time WNBA champion Candace Parker on an episode of "NBA on TNT."

The claim asserts that if the WNBA lowers the height of its rims, women — who are typically shorter than the male athletes — would be able to show off more explosive and athletic plays like dunking.

O'Neal and many sports fans on the internet say that the addition of the dunk will make women's play more exciting and attract more casual basketball fans, therefore increasing popularity in an unpopular league.

Lowering the rim in the WNBA will simply exacerbate the biggest issue the WNBA has — a lack of respect from the male-dominated basketball market. This solution ignores the current popularity of women's college basketball and does not address the root cause of the league's failure.

It's no secret that women's basketball is disrespected because of a perceived lack of athletic ability. This element of casual sexism in the sports community restricts the potential growth of women's sports.

Lowering the net will just feed into the mob of disparagement the WNBA already receives, and will reinforce the narrative that female athletes are inferior to their male counterparts.

Let's hypothetically say that this change would be a surefire way to increase the WNBA's popularity. If you make this change at the pro level, what does that mean for every other level of women's basketball across the country? If you lower the rim in the pros, you have to lower it everywhere else.

The NBA is not more successful solely because of the dunk. While dunks are excit-



ERIK DROST/FLICKR/NETSREPUBLIC/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS/PHOTOILLUSTRATION BY PEYTON MCKENZIE

ing, they should not be seen as a cure-all for increasing interest in the sport.

Women's basketball does not need dunks for people to take interest.

On Oct. 15, Caitlin Clark and the Iowa Hawkeyes set an NCAA women's basketball attendance record when they played in front of more than 55,500 fans at Iowa football's Kinnick Stadium. How many dunks were in that game? Zero.

Instead of chasing after elements from the men's game, the focus should be on celebrating the strengths and distinctive qualities that already exist within women's basketball. Women's college basketball does a great job of making those types of connections with the fans.

The easiest way to grow the WNBA is to target the existing NBA audience. From a viewer's perspective, the WNBA is the most poorly marketed major professional sports organization in the U.S. Part of the focus of its marketing strategy has been to try and convert more women into basketball fans.

The problem with that is men make up more than 80% of the NBA's fanbase. But what the WNBA doesn't realize is that true

fans of basketball watch because they enjoy the sport itself and a good storyline — no matter the gender.

Many people like to say, "women's basketball is boring," but when the media doesn't attempt to generate any buzz around big games, of course fans won't be as invested. When storylines are marketed correctly, people will watch.

Last year's NCAA Women's National Championship game between Iowa and LSU was heavily anticipated. The media did a great job of marketing the duel between superstars Clark and Angel Reese. In addition to the massive in-person audience, the game drew almost 10 million viewers, the largest television audience for any women's basketball game ever.

That being said, the WNBA should also continue to target young girls who play basketball. That's how you create stars, by giving young fans a role model. An entire generation of male basketball players can be influenced by an NBA star like LeBron James.

James was marketed as the next huge star in the NBA, which generated an entirely new fanbase.

Young female hoopsters do not have any highly

marketed megastars to look up to on the professional level. This is solely because the WNBA has done a very poor job at creating them. Stars are formed when they are marketed extremely well, and failing to tap into a base of young basketball players craving for a role model is a driving cause for the league's failure.

Promotions and events that highlight the skills of the best WNBA players help put the league in the spotlight it is capable of reaching. A great promotion that showcased the pure talent of the WNBA was the Stephen Curry vs. Sabrina Ionescu 3-point competition this past NBA All-Star Weekend.

Curry is considered the greatest 3-point shooter in NBA history and Ionescu is one of the WNBA's biggest stars. Though she lost the competition against Curry by three points, Ionescu shot at the NBA's 3-point line (which is a foot and a half further away from the hoop than the WNBA's) and ended up finishing with 26 points, which would have tied the winning score of the NBA 3-point contest that same night.

ESPN needs to give more primetime exposure to the WNBA. The first two games of the WNBA finals averaged close to 700,000 viewers, with Game 1 airing on ABC and Game 2 airing on ESPN. Last year the WNBA was holding its own when competing for time slots with NFL games and the World Series. The WNBA should market its stars and their personalities and watch the league flourish in a primetime game.

Lowering the rim completely changes the root principles of the game. Basketball is a game that can be played by anyone. Though the WNBA has never seriously considered this change, it will just create more division within a sport where gender bias is the biggest hurdle. A lack of attention is what handicaps women's basketball, not a lack of alley-oops.

Inappropriate jokes don't reflect maturity

By **BENJAMIN YEARGIN**
Staff Writer

Do you like "Dune?" Dune your Mom.

That was a popular joke when the first "Dune" movie came out, and with "Dune: Part Two"'s release in February, it's made a resurgence online.

But when people tell those jokes, there's always some underlying sense of shame, like you're not acting your age or you're being immature. That shouldn't be the case — toilet humor and silly jokes don't reflect someone's maturity or lack thereof. Instead, it shows a healthy and socially aware adult.

But what does maturity or "acting your age" even mean?

Acting your age automatically puts an expectation on someone to act a certain way. If a 20-year-old adult tells a fart joke, then they're acting "juvenile."

That's a load of crap and an easy, one-dimensional way to view maturity. Sure, don't throw temper tantrums and don't act like a degenerate, but toilet humor shouldn't be in that same boat as a marker of maturity. Instead, the definition of maturity is far more complex.

Maturity is defined as "the behavioral expression of emotional health and wisdom," according to Psychology Today.

It's being able to react to the emotions in your life in a healthy way, have some sort of humility and to take responsibility when you do something wrong.

Using "toilet humor" or telling a "your mom" joke does not make you immature or less of an adult. If anything, it's a sign of the opposite.

Moreover, humor is a valid coping strategy in a stressful world. It can be used when facing your own negative emotions while also navigating stressful group situations, whether that be professional or personal.

"When people are stressed or anxious, they become calmer after enjoying a good joke," according to the JED foundation — a nonprofit that works to reduce teenage suicide.

Being able to make a pun or lighten up a tense environment with a joke is a vital skill that more people should utilize. It can relax you, enhance your memory and reduce inflammation, according to the American Institute of Stress.

But don't confuse cracking a harmless or slightly inappropriate joke with being offensive or putting someone down. That's not humor and those kinds of jokes show immaturity and insecurity.

Putting someone down is not a good joke. It makes everyone involved feel worse. That's real immaturity.

Cowards tell jokes about other groups of people, or put someone down then hide behind the veil of "it's just a joke." It trivializes the people in the joke and relies on the subject of it to be humorous, which it never is.

Punching down — which famous comedians

Eddie Murphy and George Carlin both addressed — is never cool. Putting someone down while elevating yourself never is.

But do you know what is cool? My Mom! (thanks Muscle Man).

"Your mom" and "toilet humor" jokes are

juvenile, but they're harmless. They show maturity, social awareness and emotional intelligence.

Next time you judge someone for telling a harmless but inappropriate joke or want to tell one yourself, take a look at yourself to see how you're "Dune."



ILLUSTRATION BY PEYTON MCKENZIE

Arts & Life

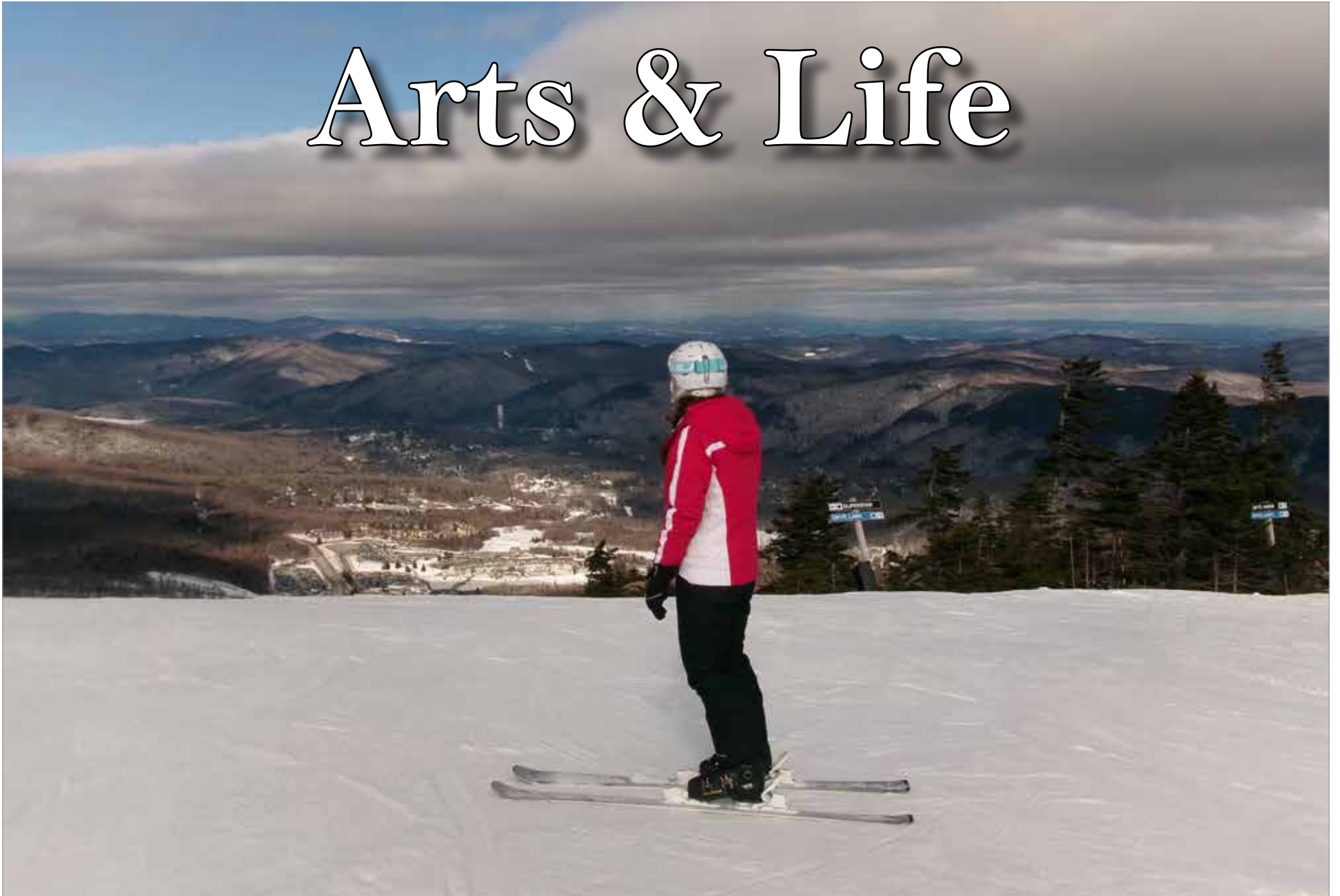


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY GRACE CONNEELY-NOLAN

Associate Arts & Life Editor Grace Conneely-Nolan admiring the view from the top of Killington Peak on the QU Snow trip to Killington, Vermont.

Skiing into new experiences Branch out with QU Snow

By **GRACE CONNEELY-NOLAN**
Associate Arts & Life Editor

Despite getting up at 3:30 a.m. on Super Bowl Sunday, the day was worth it. Standing in line for an hour and a half to get tickets was worth it. Being a part of QU Snow's ski trip made it worth it.

QU Snow — Quinnipiac's skiing and snowboarding club — held its annual trip to Killington, Vermont, on Feb. 11. The trip was in high demand among club members, with a cutoff of 50 Quinnipiac students out of more than the 100 that showed up to wait in line. As No. 47, I was unsure whether or not I would be able to go, but I am glad I stood my ground.

“My advice to incoming first-year students is to do everything you possibly can.”

— **GRACE CONNEELY-NOLAN**
ASSOCIATE ARTS & LIFE EDITOR

With the bus arriving at 5 a.m., we had a little over three hours on the road and arrived just before 9 a.m. Coincidentally, that was when the mountain opened anyway because of the warm weather. The staff needed more time to groom the snow from the rain the night before.

It was warm enough to take off my jacket at the height of ski season. At first, I was worried about it being too cold, but I was actually too hot. It was a beautiful day, but it didn't feel like Vermont in February. The slopes were thin but icy and slick, with many patches of grass and barely any snow clinging onto the trees.

Even with the warmer-than-usual temperatures, we had a full six hours on our own to ski. With this being the first time I could ski this winter, I was thrilled. My friend and I took many different lifts and actually got lost on the huge mountain. At one point, we skied at the other end of the mountain by mistake and had to take several different lifts to return to the same spot.

My main incentive to go on this trip was the fact that it was completely free. I spent no money at Killington and could enjoy everything at the season's peak. From beautiful gondola rides to skiing as much of the mountain as we could, I made memories that would only be possible by being involved on campus. After leaving just before 5 p.m., we arrived back at Quinnipiac in time to watch the Super Bowl Halftime Show.

The best memories come from getting out of your comfort zone. When I first came

to Quinnipiac, I was overwhelmed by the many opportunities available to students. It felt like a lot to find a balance at school. Just surviving the first couple of weeks required so much effort.

My advice to incoming first-year students is to do everything you possibly can. The first month is crucial; don't go home, and don't stay in your room. You are setting yourself up for the future by being active on campus. By becoming involved in the community, you can meet new people, find future mentors and enhance your resume by taking advantage of what this school offers.

Joining clubs immediately surrounds

you with people interested in the same things you are. They are a great way to keep yourself active and accountable for staying involved within the campus community.

As long as you take it lightly, there is no downside to trying new things. Initially, it seems hard, but your first year of college is about branching out from high school, growing and learning about yourself and who you want to be.

This trip added variety to my time here at Quinnipiac, and I wouldn't have experienced any of it if I was not willing to go out of my comfort zone. I look forward to QU Snow's trips in the future and making new memories and experiences.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY CAMERON LEVASSEUR

Killington Ski Resort is the largest ski resort in the Northeast, with over 73 miles of trails.

Noah Kahan proves nothing lasts ‘Forever’

By **AMANDA MADERA**
Arts & Life Editor

Have you ever listened to an artist who perfectly captures every gut-wrenching feeling you've ever had? Noah Kahan has no issue writing with brutal honesty, and his album "Stick Season (Forever)" — which released on Feb. 9 — explores wistfulness and yearning.

I began listening to Kahan in October 2022, when "Stick Season" first came out. The album instantly earned a special place in my heart, and since then I have explored his entire discography.

Out of all his albums — and three versions of "Stick Season" — "Stick Season (Forever)," which comprises the 14 original tracks plus eight deluxe tracks and eight collaborative tracks, is definitely my favorite.

The original "Stick Season" album catapulted Kahan into stardom and the mainstream media. Kahan is now No. 1 on the Hot 100 Songwriters Chart as of Feb. 8, according to Billboard.

In his newly released version, Kahan added two more collaborations to the list. "You're Gonna Go Far (With Brandi Carlile)" and "Paul Revere (With Gregory Alan Isakov)" made me love this new version of the album compared to the original.

Although "(Forever)" still includes every original song and deluxe track, Kahan is extremely in tune with his fans and continued to give us new content and expand "Stick Season."

"You're Gonna Go Far" was one of my favorite songs before the collaboration, so it took me a few listens to appreciate what Carlile added to the song. This song emphasizes that it's OK to leave home and begin your own journey. You shouldn't feel



ILLUSTRATION BY PEYTON MCKENZIE

guilty for taking time to find yourself and to accomplish amazing things.

Kahan picks and chooses which songs to change the lyrics of on collaborations, but on "You're Gonna Go Far (With Brandi Carlile)," Kahan decided to keep the original lyrics and have Carlile sing the second verse.

My favorite part of this new version are the harmonies and background vocals from Carlile. She made the song feel comforting and even though I never heard of her before this, I could tell she added her own style to her verses.

The lyrics "If you wanna go (if you wanna go) far/ Then you gotta go (then you gotta go) far/ You gotta go far" close out the song and have always been my favorite.

You can feel the sense of encouragement from both artists as they urge listeners to follow their dreams.

I have always thought of "Paul Revere" as an underrated song. Since its release on the deluxe version of the album titled "Stick Season (We'll All Be Here Forever)" on June 8, 2023, the song became one of my favorites.

Despite this, I've never really heard anyone talk about it on social media until Kahan released the version collaborating with Isakov.

As someone who grew up in New England, this song always spoke to me. I've thought about this song to mean struggling to fit in with a place where everything always stays the same.

Kahan and Isakov passionately sing "But I'm in my car, and I see the yard/ And the patch of grass where we buried the dog/ And the world makes sense/ Behind a chain-link fence/ If I could leave, I would've already left." I especially love this part of the song because you can hear the frustration in both of their voices.

Collaborating with Isakov was definitely the right move for "Paul Revere." I love his work and immediately knew that he would make this song even better.

I'm a sucker for love songs, and Kahan effortlessly puts feelings of attachment, devotion and weakness into words.

The release of the long-awaited track "Forever" was the perfect way to end the era of "Stick Season." Kahan teased his fans with snippets of the song on social media before ultimately releasing it on Feb. 9.

I find this track to be the most romantic. It expresses how despite having feelings of insecurity in a relationship, the narrator promises to grow and heal with their partner and live happily ever after.

Kahan's ability to use instruments in his favor to convey his emotions make him unlike any other artist to me. Every time I thought "Stick Season" couldn't get any better, he found ways to lyrically and stylistically enhance the album twice more.

In a world where indie-folk has been made to be a broad genre, Kahan found his own voice. Compared to popular indie-folk artists such as Lord Huron, The Lumineers and Hozier, you can find distinctions just by listening to instruments and lyrics.

As this chapter comes to a close, Kahan's music will "Forever" have "All My Love," and I'm excited for what he has in store next.

From bows to bad girl: JoJo Siwa's 'Karma' rebrand

By **GINA LORUSSO**
Associate Arts & Life Editor

Following the debut of her newest single, "Karma," JoJo Siwa is stepping into uncharted territory and embracing her so-called "bad girl" phase — which isn't exactly a positive thing.

The former "Dance Moms" star always stood out because of her vibrant outfits, trademark hair bows and candid personality. Best known for her youthful pop music, Siwa is transitioning toward a mature phase — one she says is not for kids.

The "Karma" era includes the same amount of sequins as her previous style, but she's openly using profanity in her new music and adding edge to her attitude — something she's never done before.

With her new style comes a new personality. Siwa is still the outgoing icon we know, but she thinks this change has never been seen before. However, this switch from rainbows to monochrome is only to generate attention and won't last long. Being that the majority of her fanbase is children, if she were to completely dedicate her image to match the "Karma" aesthetic, her brand would suffer tremendously.

The core message of her brand is empowerment and positivity for children and to inspire them to embrace their uniqueness. Now, her new image may be a bad influence for her audience.

Siwa ditched her pastel colors for a darker gothic look and became a less kid-friendly version of herself. While her new

style draws public interest, that isn't what outrages the public — it's her attitude.

Siwa's attire in the music video for "Karma" is almost an identical replica of Gene Simmons' iconic costume from the rock band Kiss. Interestingly, when compared to Simmons in an interview, Siwa was unaware of who the interviewer was referring to.

After sitting down with Billboard on April 5, Siwa came under heavy fire on social media.

During the interview, Siwa said she wants to pioneer a new genre of music called "gay pop." This genre, however, has been established for decades. Queer artists like Miley Cyrus, Elton John, Lady Gaga and Freddie Mercury have launched their careers with music inspired by the queer community — all of which Siwa said are her inspirations for this new era.

TikToker @lemongayde later stitched the interview to be a voice for the LGBTQ+ community.

"Part of being young and queer and coming out and joining this community — entering into this space — is learning your history. Learning your roots and knowing where we've come from, knowing just how much work it has taken to get us where we are today," they said.

After realizing it was a mistake, Siwa responded.

"I am not the inventor of gay pop, for sure not," Siwa said in a video published by TMZ. "But I do want to be a piece of making

it bigger than it already is. I want to bring more attention to it."

On the other side of things, Siwa isn't giving credit where it's due.

It recently came out that Siwa actually has no songwriting credits on "Karma," despite claiming she wrote it about one of her exes.

There are rumors that suggest "Karma" was originally written for Cyrus. The production team Rock Mafia — comprising Tim James and Antonina Armato, who are credited on Siwa's version of the song — replied to a series of Cyrus' tweets promoting the song's potential release in 2012.

Prior to Cyrus' recording, however, singer Brit Smith recorded and filmed a music video for "Karma" in 2011. This history has led fans to believe Siwa stole the song.

In another TMZ video on April 12, Siwa confirmed that the song was pitched to her and never belonged to another artist. She also said she has no idea who Smith is.

It seems like both Smith and Cyrus scrapped the song,

ultimately letting it fall into Siwa's hands.

A majority of the attention Siwa is receiving isn't the good kind. Any press is good press — and for Siwa, it's working.

Every time I open social media, Siwa is being discussed in all her glory. Post after post, someone's talking about her outfit, dance moves or something embarrassing she said or did. She gets people talking, and personally, I think she knows what she's doing and how to keep it going.

Siwa feeds into social media, documenting everything she does and even collaborating with influencers like Alex Cooper, the host of the podcast "Call Her Daddy." By doing so, she keeps her name in the headlines even if it's for something negative.

The music video for "Karma" already has 20 million views. The video's release was a can't-miss event after the internet saw the excessive teasers Siwa put out.

"Karma" has led Siwa into edgier territory, sparking discussions about where this era will take her and if her efforts will be successful.

Despite the controversies online, Siwa isn't slowing down. If anything, it's fueling her desire to keep moving.

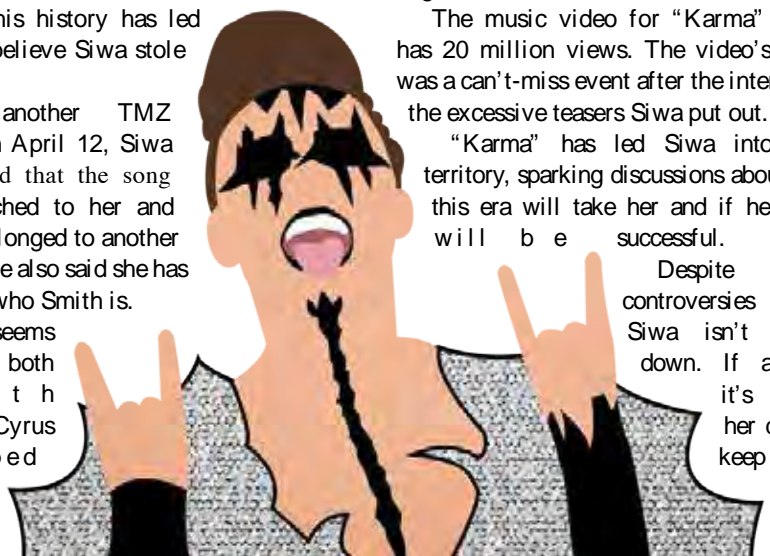


ILLUSTRATION BY TRIPP MENHALL

Brett Goldstein shines on 'The Second Best Night of Your Life' tour

By **ZOE LEONE**
Staff Writer

There are few places in the world you can spend an hour-and-a-half hearing about The Muppets, sex and why we should kill all men. Luckily for all of us, there is one exception: Brett Goldstein's "The Second Best Night of Your Life" comedy tour.

For those unfamiliar with the name — which he acknowledges very quickly in his set is a painfully average name here in the states — Goldstein catapulted to fame in 2020 after the first season of "Ted Lasso" went from Apple TV+ sleeper hit to one of the most critically acclaimed comedies of the last decade.

Goldstein played fan favorite Roy Kent, known for his grumpy sarcasm, heart of gold and affinity for the word "fuck." While the actor himself is much softer around the edges and generally speaks in complete sentences instead of Kent's trademark grunt, his ample cursing has led to many bleeped out acceptance speeches at awards shows.

As "Ted Lasso" rolled out its final season, Goldstein shifted from on-screen to off-screen as one of the creators and lead writers of another massive Apple TV+ hit, "Shrinking." Although he also served as a writer on "Ted Lasso" — he was originally hired for the writer's room before he tried out

for Kent — the delightfully dark humor on "Shrinking" struck as distinctly Goldstein.

And yet while these high-profile projects, ample interviews and multiple Muppet-related appearances have given the general public a fairly good idea of what Goldstein is all about, nothing could prepare you for attending one of his stand-up shows.

Goldstein's material starts strong but fairly tame. He cracks jokes about being a Brit in America, tells weird stories with his friends and family and says nothing in his life — not even the birth of his hypothetical child — could ever compare to being on "Sesame Street."

And then things get wild — and personal.

For a relatively private public figure, Goldstein holds nothing back as he dives into the nitty-gritty of his botched relationship history, affinity for one-night stands and, yes, his penis. I know what you're thinking: ew. But somehow, through it all, the audience never stops laughing. I'm fairly sure Goldstein is the only man on the planet who could make the phrase "a little pot of cum" seem endearing.

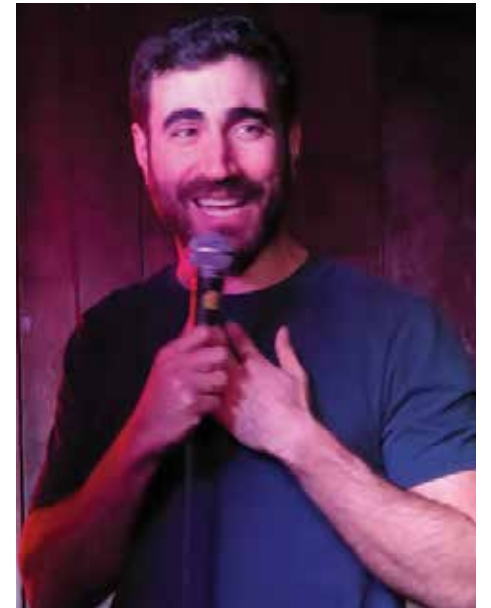
But Goldstein truly manages to balance an impressive line of jaw-dropping, yet non-offensive comedy. Nothing is off limits, and while obscenities and foul language are in abundance, there's never a moment where

you're left thinking, "This man is about to get canceled." For a white male comedian, it's oddly refreshing.

There are several bits in the show dedicated to masculinity and the horrible behaviors of men. Whether he's poking fun at his own self-destructive habits or discussing his disbelief at elements of society as a whole, the punchlines always hit as genuine. And considering Goldstein's background, it makes sense — he graduated from the University of Warwick with a degree in film and feminism.

That's the thing that makes "The Second Best Night of Your Life" so charming. You're not sitting in the audience for an hour and a half watching a brilliant comedy writer or "Roy Fucking Kent." You're watching Brett Goldstein, purely in his element, baring it all on the stage.

At the end of the written material, Goldstein answers questions from the audience that were filled out ahead of the show. The only instructions? The dirtier, the better. And while some were rather wholesome questions about favorite movies and lockdown habits, there was no lack of audacity as the audience asked him to whether he'd fuck, marry or kill Gonzo, Beaker or Oscar the Grouch (fuck Oscar, marry Gonzo and kill Beaker, in case you



ISABELLE ADAMS/FLICKR

Actor and comedian Brett Goldstein performs a stand-up routine on his "The Second Best Night of Your Life" tour.

were curious).

Whether you're a long-standing fan or just looking for a night of laughs, "The Second Best Night of Your Life" will not disappoint. It might not be as good as filming an episode of "Sesame Street," but it will do.

Brunch served with a side of drag

By **KRYSTAL MILLER**
Staff Writer

From being raised by late-'70s punks who were professional clowns, to now captivating students in the Carl Hansen Student Center Piazza, drag king Frankie Cyanide knows how to put on a show.

Students gathered in the piazza bright and early on a Sunday morning to enjoy brunch, bingo and a drag performance hosted by Quinnipiac University's Gender Sexuality Alliance.

Cyanide entered wearing a blue, green and gray tailored plaid suit, completing the look with striking black, green and purple makeup and chunky white heeled boots.

Cyanide now resides in Stamford, Connecticut, but is originally from Putnam County and Long Island, New York.

Gabrielle Inacio, the co-president of GSA, said the organization has been planning this event since the beginning of the semester, and having a drag king instead of a queen is what makes this unique from other past drag events.

"We really like supporting local artists," Inacio, a junior behavioral neuroscience major said. "We've learned that having bigger names is great, but as an e-board, I think we all decided that we'd rather support someone local. We feel a better sense of community by doing that."

One table in the piazza was colorfully decorated with pride flags and various stickers. The other had boxes of bagels and treats from Panera, as well as snacks and mocktails in elegant glasses.

There was also a door raffle prize, which was a pride flag signed by Cyanide. Any student that donated to the food drive for the New Haven Pride Center earned



CASEY WIEDERHOLD/CHRONICLE

Frankie Cyanide showing off his drag outfit and makeup during the Gender Sexuality Alliance's Drag Brunch Bingo.

another entry into the raffle.

Cyanide started off the event with a rendition of several songs, such as "Bad Idea" by Olivia Rodrigo, while dancing around the piazza. The crowd clapped and cheered him on with excitement.

Aleena Graveline, a sophomore game design and development and computer science double major, said her favorite part of the morning was Cyanide's performance. She also said she liked that students got the opportunity to get involved with lip sync battle during intermission.

"I always come to the drag events, I've been coming to all of them since I started school, I really think it's cool and fun that we have one so I always try to come if I'm available," Graveline said.

Students sat on the edge of their seats eagerly waiting for their numbers to be

called in bingo. Bingo rounds included making shapes like a music note or straight lines. As the game went on, Cyanide added clever commentary related to the numbers he was announcing, while sporting a bedazzled visor.

Neely Harrington, a first-year health sciences major in the physician assistant prep program, won a basket of painting supplies during bingo. Other baskets at the event had themes such as pride, music and books.

"I think it's really fun, it's exciting to experience, I've never been to a drag brunch so that's been cool and the breakfast is really good," Harrington said.

Inacio said with the increased violence against transgender youth, LGBTQ+ book bans and the restriction of gender-affirming care, drag shows are more important than

ever. She said drag is an expression of art and a way for the queer community to come together.

"(The political climate is) really quite horrible, but when you're at a drag show, it's kind of like a little bubble," Inacio said. "All that other negative stuff out in the world goes away and it's just you and other people in the queer community and allied supporters and the performer."

Multiple students volunteered for the competitive lip sync battle during intermission, where they performed to the song "Holding Out For a Hero" by Bonnie Tyler. All of the students won paper gold crowns at the end.

Anna Soliwoda, a first-year film, television and media arts major, started gliding across the floor to the beat while participating in the lip sync battle. She said she wishes there were more events like this on campus.

"It's a nice environment, it's not like you're gonna be judged," Soliwoda said.

Cyanide concluded the event with a fantastic final performance. As the routine went on, he revealed more coats under his brown trench coat. The other coats included two sequined jackets and another neutral colored jacket.

Inacio added that it is important for students' mental health and their sense of belonging to have spaces like the drag brunch where they can have a support system and meet others like them.

"I think it's really hard when you don't see yourself represented in a lot of places," Inacio said. "Nobody wants to feel like they're alone or left out, I think it's something that all people can relate to."

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PEYTON MCKENZIE/CHRONICLE

Women's soccer takes second-straight MAAC championship

By **AMANDA DRONZEK**
Sports Editor

HAMDEN — There's no atmosphere quite like a championship match, especially on the soccer pitch. It wasn't the battle of Whitney Avenue, but it was a Connecticut throwdown on Nov. 5, as No. 1 Quinnipiac and No. 2 Fairfield squared off for the MAAC title.

"Since the minute we stepped on campus, we had one vision," sophomore midfielder Madison Alves said.

The Bobcats, undefeated in conference play, scored the game's only goal in the opening minute and held on to win its second-straight MAAC championship with a 1-0 win over the Stags.

"At the beginning of the year we set a bunch of goals," graduate defender Olivia Scott said. "We don't lose at home. We retain home advantage. We win a semifinal and we win a final."

Quinnipiac is the fourth team in conference history to secure consecutive MAAC titles — and the first since Monmouth won four straight from 2016 to 2019.

"(The coaching staff) gave them a game plan two days after we lost to Penn State," Quinnipiac head coach Dave Clarke said.

Clarke and the coaching staff have had the same mantra all season.

"Retain the league title. Repeat as champions. We never talked about anything else," Clarke said.

The Bobcats are bound for the NCAA tournament — their second appearance in a row. In 2022, Penn State eliminated Quinnipiac 4-1 in a first-round victory.

But the Bobcats are a stronger team this year, seeking more than just a taste of the tournament.

Quinnipiac showed dominance early, with senior forward Courtney Chochol netting a rebound pass off a corner kick in the first

minute to leverage a 1-0 lead over Fairfield.

The Stags locked down their defense and held the Bobcats' lead to one heading into the half. Quinnipiac remained a brick wall in the back.

Both teams had offensive opportunities but came up with unanswered go-ahead passes and close shots.

With in-state rivals gunning for a trophy, the contest did not go without physicality. Chochol, graduate student defender Kayla Mingachos and junior midfielder Ella Gagno each received yellow cards during the match, as did Fairfield senior defender Sydney Corbett.

Quinnipiac emerged from the locker room for the second half greeted by an electric crowd of navy blue. On the far side of the stadium, fans hung over the wall and shook the house with blaring horns and silly strings. It was a party in Hamden that didn't stop.

"There's a camaraderie here," Clarke said. "All the parents, all the grandparents that are here. They're the ones that drove them to every practice. They're the ones that went to every high school game. They're the ones that sacrifice to get them to play and become a Division I athlete."

The Bobcats held possession in the Stags' zone for the majority of the half.

With just over 15 minutes in regulation, Quinnipiac was awarded a penalty kick after a foul in the box. Chochol fired what looked to be her second goal of the day, but the ball ricocheted off the lower right goalpost and out.

Although Fairfield's season ended, its gritty performance on defense held the relentless Quinnipiac offense to one goal.

In the end, the Stags couldn't produce enough to dethrone the champions.

"When that whistle blew I was in tears," Mingachos said. "It's not over yet for us."

John O'Connor's coaching career on par for greatness

By **RYAN JOHANSON**
Associate Sports Editor

John O'Connor isn't your ordinary golf coach. Quinnipiac golf's head man has been at the helm for 18 seasons, boasting five MAAC conference titles. He's a three-time conference coach of the year winner: once in the NEC (2013) and twice in the MAAC (2016-17), with a program-record 23 tournament wins.

But if you were to ask his teenage self, tournament wins weren't on his mind. In fact, neither was golf.

"When I was younger, I wound up swimming in high school and in college," O'Connor said. "I was the captain of my high school football team. Football ... was the most important thing to me for much of my life."

In his early life, O'Connor swam at the now-abandoned Twin Lakes Swim and Tennis Club in Stamford, Connecticut, as a sprinter — specializing in short-distance races ranging from 50-meter to the 100-meter freestyle — while playing wide receiver and free safety on the gridiron.

O'Connor chose the sub-30-second,

50-meter freestyle instead of the two-to-three-hour playtime over 18 holes. He opted for scoring touchdowns on the 100-yard field, rather than chasing birdies on 1,000-yard courses.

So how does a coach who didn't grow up loving the sport end up with 23 tournament wins and five conference titles? It's the skills he learned from being a sprinter.

"You don't have the opportunity to talk to people about what you're doing during a meet. It's all just you," O'Connor said. "I think it has given me the ability to read athletes and know which ones are going to be competitive. So much of what I see in coaching is the kids with more desire (to) succeed."

That focus and desire has translated to his players. They see how his commitment to other sports — while not being conventional for a top-ranked golf coach — has made him a better leader.

"Because he played so many sports, he knows what it takes to be a good athlete," graduate student Leeyen Peralta said. "He knows the work that it takes and the grit and the determination and I think he does a

good job in relaying that message."

Though O'Connor may not be a PGA professional or a former college player like many coaches, one thing he does have is an eye for talent.

O'Connor doesn't recruit just from his own backyard. He seeks players outside of Connecticut, from California to China.

The top three finishers in last year's MAAC Championship — Peralta, graduate student Kaylee Sakoda and junior Fuge Zhang — all are from the west coast or overseas.

"I used to go down to the IMG Academy in Bradenton, Florida, and I brought in some good golfers from there," O'Connor said. "I brought in a golfer from Bolivia. I brought in girls from Venezuela at that time, and then at some point I started going out to California. They've got so many great golfers."

Hailing from California, Peralta has been with the program for five years, garnering eight individual wins — with a program-record four tournament wins this season — and the 2021-22 MAAC Golfer of the Year award. She came to Quinnipiac after

O'Connor's pursuit at her senior showcase. From then on, Peralta was destined to grace the navy and gold.

"I knew that he was the coach I wanted to play for just because of the way he supported me and the way he interacted with me and my dad," Peralta said. "I knew that he would be somebody that I wanted to be a part of a team and work with."

The ability to recruit Peralta, Sakoda and Zhang happened because of the news that changed O'Connor's golfing tenure at Quinnipiac.

Starting in July 2006, he took the reins of the men's golf team from former head coach Todd Howes. In O'Connor's three seasons as the men's coach, he didn't finish higher than eighth in the NEC championships.

During the middle of his third season, on March 4, 2009, O'Connor found out that his men's golf team was being cut for budgetary reasons. In response to this on July 21, 2010, Quinnipiac announced its plans to add women's golf in compliance with Title IX.

An extended version of this can be found at quchronicle.com.

Ready or not?

By COLIN KENNEDY
Managing Editor

It's been a weird season for the Quinnipiac women's ice hockey team.

On one hand, the Bobcats have won 24 games, sit fifth in the ECAC Hockey standings and are in control of a third-straight NCAA tournament berth. But on the other hand? There just seems to be something missing — a level that they haven't risen to, a potential they haven't reached.

It'll have to find that next level soon as, come Feb. 24, Quinnipiac will face off against Harvard in a first round win-or-go-home matchup of the conference tournament.

"We've really been a group that has found ways to win," head coach Cass Turner told ESPN+ on Feb. 10. "We have so much experience and a belief ... (players) go into some games like 'We're just not going to lose, we're just not.'"

The team's belief in its ability to win may come in handy in the coming weeks, but it doesn't change the facts. The Bobcats finished their last 10 games of the regular season 4-6, not necessarily playing their best hockey when they needed to. That said, they did go toe-to-toe with No. 7 St. Lawrence and No. 3 Clarkson, but fell at home in overtime both nights.

"We work really well together, and we come off of lower moments really well," senior forward Kate Villeneuve told ESPN+ on Feb. 10. "Coming off after a loss, we really pick up the next day of practice and don't kind of dwell on anything, which is really important."

Quinnipiac finished the regular season with a weekend sweep on the road against RPI and Union. Not exactly the cream of the crop in the ECAC, but the Bobcats handled business and scored six goals in the finale against Union — their highest total since Jan. 12 at Harvard.

Amid the weekend sweep, the Bobcats may have found something within their depth.

Junior forward Maya Labad was all over the ice, racking up six points (three goals, three assists). Labad's most impressive play was a no-look dish to the other stand-out of the weekend, Alexa Hoskin.

The graduate student forward has been battling a lower-body injury all season and hasn't been able to get into a groove on the scoring sheet. But Hoskin may have finally broken through, tallying three goals and an assist and could be another much-needed weapon for Quinnipiac in the postseason.

"(Hoskin) truly believes in herself, and going through an injury like she had, it's challenging," Turner said. "It showed her resilience and toughness. She loves this game. She loves this team, and she's going to do everything she can to help them."

Looking ahead to Feb. 24's first-round matchup, the facts say the Crimson are not a very competitive hockey team. Only winning five games all year and sitting at No. 37 of 44 teams in the Pairwise, the Bobcats should make quick work of a team that has only scored 38 goals compared to their 123. Just looking at the head-to-head matchups this season, Quinnipiac went 2-0 with a combined score of 15-1. The Bobcats should cruise towards an eventual quarter-final series against Cornell.

The Big Red — who clinched a first-round bye — are a much higher-caliber team than Harvard, winning 22 games and unlike the Bobcats, finished the final 10 regular season games strong at 9-1. Both teams split their regular season matchups, each winning on the road — Quinnipiac back on Nov. 17 and Cornell on Jan. 20.

An extended version of this can be found at quchronicle.com.



CASEY NEDELKA/CHRONICLE

From left: Quinnipiac coaches Tom Pecora, Shaun Morris and Bradley Jacks during a game against Mount St. Mary's on Jan. 25.

Suits and sneakers

Why 'Coaches vs. Cancer' hits close to home for men's basketball coaching staff

By ETHAN HURWITZ
Staff Writer

In the midst of the 2020 season, then-assistant men's basketball coach Tom Pecora went on a two-week sabbatical.

Without telling anyone on the staff, he quietly went to get treated for prostate cancer.

"I just went in for my annual checkup," now-head coach Pecora said. "My primary care guy ... was like, 'Look, Tommy, the (test) numbers aren't high, but they're jumping.'"

Cancer has touched Pecora's life in many ways. His mother died after a bout with cancer at the turn of the century. His college roommate also fought cancer.

That's why the Coaches vs. Cancer initiative is so important for the Bobcats' head man.

A nationwide effort from both the American Cancer Society and the National Association of Basketball Coaches, the Coaches vs. Cancer initiative has created awareness and promoted healthy lifestyles through fundraising and advocacy events.

To raise awareness, college basketball coaches wore suits and sneakers during their games this past week. The sneakers are meant to draw attention to the overall cause.

"Most of the guys wear (sneakers) anyway, so it doesn't have the impact it used to," Pecora said. "But it's something that's close to my heart."

For 14 years, Pecora has hosted a "Coaches vs. Cancer" golf outing on Long Island. He even helped raise half a million dollars in donations for Manhattan's Hope Lodges — a facility-based community for those impacted by cancer.

"There's a place in Manhattan called Hope Lodges where you can go with your

family (if) anyone you know is ever going to get treatment. Not only at (Memorial Sloan Kettering (Cancer Center), but any of the hospitals in New York City," Pecora said. "We have a room there with my mom's name on it ... It's really important."

Assistant coach Bradley Jacks, who is in his fourth season on the Bobcats' staff, took time after a Jan. 25 win over Mount St. Mary's to speak to the media — something assistants are rarely asked to do.

For Jacks, the disease also hits close to home. "My mom, she's battled breast cancer three times," Jacks said. "It's huge, (I'm) encouraging anyone and everyone to donate until we can find a cure for this tough disease."

"It's a special event, many coaches bought into this," Jacks added. "I think it's huge to continue to raise awareness because everyone's affected by it."

In Sunday's two-point win over Fairfield, both coaching staffs remained in suits and sneakers. During the game, Fairfield sold commemorative hockey jerseys to honor a Fairfield student who battled cancer, with proceeds going to the Jimmy Fund.

"The more that we can continue to raise awareness and donate and give back, it's awesome," Jacks said.

There's more work to be done, yet Pecora — who is leading the Bobcats to their best start (16-4) in program history — doesn't forget those he's lost.

"I think of a lot of people on those days," Pecora said. "I think we're making tremendous progress in finding cures and it takes programs like this to help. Not only raising money, but also (letting) people not forget."



CASEY NEDELKA/CHRONICLE

Cancer survivor and Quinnipiac head coach Tom Pecora sporting sneakers during the "Coaches vs. Cancer" initiative on Jan. 25.

'BLEEDING NAVY AND GOLD'

Men's hockey dethroned by Boston College in regional final



PEYTON MCKENZIE/CHRONICLE

By CAMERON LEVASSEUR
Staff Writer

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — Hockey is a game of inches.

The one inch No. 9 Quinnipiac men's hockey let up in the third period gave just enough room for No. 1 Boston College to tie March 31's regional final. The one inch the puck trickled away from senior goaltender Vinny Duplessis in overtime was enough for the Eagles to win it, 5-4.

"I'm really proud of these guys," head coach Rand Pecknold said. "We wanted it ... it's disappointing right now. I love this group."

Eagles graduate student forward Jack Malone — who two hours earlier had his game-opening goal called back for a high stick — scored the winner.

"It's an unbelievable feeling," Malone said. "If they want to take one away from us, that's fine. We'll just try to get it back."

A scoreless first period devolved into a barnburner. Quinnipiac had the lead three times and BC fought back on each occasion. The Bobcats didn't trail for a second of regulation, but left the ice heartbroken.

"When you get into overtime, a lot of times it's just a bounce or a break or this or that," Pecknold said. "You can't predict how it's going to happen, we just got a bad break there."

That's the cruel reality of sports. Just a year ago, Quinnipiac ripped a national championship from the grip of Minnesota, storming back from down 2-0 to win in overtime. Now the Bobcats have witnessed things from the other side, watching their dreams of a repeat disappear in a flash.

"The goal from day one when we stepped on campus was (to) defend our crown," graduate student defenseman Jayden Lee said. "Ultimately, we fell short, but like coach said, I'm just so proud of our group and how far we've come since the summer."

The game started just like Quinnipiac's regional semifinal win over Wisconsin Friday — the Bobcats controlled the pace of play. They shut BC down in the neutral zone for much of the first period, limiting offensive chances until a surge from the Eagles in the final 10 minutes.

From that point on, Duplessis and BC freshman goaltender Jacob Fowler were the only two forces stopping the game from divulging into full chaos. And less than two minutes into the second, it did.

Still on the power play from a late first period call, sophomore forward Jacob Quillan tipped home a shot from senior forward Travis Treloar to give the underdog Bobcats the lead.

Thirty seconds later, senior defense-

man livari Rasanen rifled a point shot over Fowler's left shoulder and brought the Quinnipiac advantage to two.

But 30 seconds after they doubled their lead, the Bobcats watched BC cut it in half. Eagles sophomore forward Cutter Gauthier drew Duplessis out of position with a fake shot-pass and fed freshman forward Ryan Leonard atop the crease for a power-play goal.

The Eagles tied the game midway through the period, sophomore forward Andre Gasseau beating Duplessis with a one-timer from above the left circle. But Quinnipiac struck right back. Senior forward Christophe Fillion put home a rebound — his second goal in as many games — to put the Bobcats up 3-2.

That lead held for all of two minutes, when Leonard tucked his second power-play goal of the night after a questionable incidental head contact call on Quinnipiac junior forward Collin Graf.

"I thought five-on-five we were the better team tonight," Pecknold said. "But that's not the whole game. Special teams are huge and that's where they were better than us."

The teams headed into the locker room tied at three, but Quillan — the 2023 Frozen Four hero — stepped up again when the lights were brightest, beating Fowler just 16 seconds into the third period to give

Quinnipiac its third lead of the contest.

The score held 4-3 for the next 15 minutes as the Bobcats put on a defensive clinic, denying any opportunities BC created.

Then with under five minutes remaining and St. Paul in sight, they slipped. It was only for a moment — leaving freshman defenseman Aram Minnetian open for an uncontested shot in the slot — but it was enough. Minnetian scored and the Eagles pushed the game to overtime.

Quinnipiac put its foot back on the gas pedal in overtime, generating several chances that, if they were just a few inches left or right, would've sent the Bobcats to the Frozen Four.

But they weren't, and three minutes and six seconds into the extra period, a rebound slipped out of Duplessis' pads and landed on the stick of Malone.

A game of inches ended with a wide open net, a Malone goal and top-seeded Eagles soaring into the history books. And the 26 motionless Quinnipiac players — on the ice, the bench and in the stands — were left with a phenomenal hockey game, and what could have been.

"The passion was awesome this weekend," Pecknold said. "They were bleeding navy and gold. I'm just proud of the effort."

Eagles 5

Bobcats 4