

Eight colleges.
Eight years.
One scam.

INFOGRAPHIC BY LINDSEY KOMSON, AMANDA RIHA AND CONNOR YOUNGBERG

Serial scammer ‘Jeff’ targets QU — again

By CAT MURPHY
News Editor

A man claiming to represent the non-existent “Quinnipiac Activities Club” entered classrooms on Quinnipiac University’s Mount Carmel Campus on Sept. 28 to advertise tickets to a New York comedy show.

But the perpetrator, who introduced himself only as “Jeff,” is a serial scammer with a regional reputation. He has been duping college students in the Northeast with the same ruse for at least a decade — and he has targeted Quinnipiac students before.

Tony Reyes, Quinnipiac’s chief of Public Safety, announced in a university-wide email just before 2:45 p.m. on Sept. 28 that Public Safety officers were searching the university’s main campus for the individual after a student reported witnessing suspicious activity in the Center for Communications and Computing and Engineering building.

“We received a report today around 1 p.m. from a student who said an unidentified male was going into classrooms in CCE on the Mount Carmel Campus to sell tickets to a New York comedy show,” Reyes wrote in the email. “The student said he believed the male was attempting to scam him and the other students, and used a tap system device to take credit card payments.”

Reyes later notified students, faculty and staff that the university’s Department of Pub-

See **SCAM** Page 2

990 filing shows dip in Olian’s salary, \$50M in foreign investments

By CAT MURPHY
News Editor

Quinnipiac University’s fiscal year 2021-22 tax documentation revealed the salaries of the institution’s top earners, a 10.5% drop in the university’s endowment and foreign investments totaling more than \$50 million.

The Internal Revenue Service requires that all tax-exempt entities — including nonprofit universities like Quinnipiac — disclose their annual returns via form 990 tax filings.

The Chronicle obtained a copy of the university’s form 990 tax filing for the fiscal period beginning on July 1, 2021, and ending on June 30, 2022.

Here’s a breakdown of Quinnipiac’s 2021-22 fiscal year:

EMPLOYEE SALARIES

Quinnipiac’s 990 tax filing revealed the salaries of the university’s eight highest-compensated employees, each of whom made more than \$270,000 in FY 2021-22.

President Judy Olian, Quinnipiac’s highest-paid employee, earned just under \$984,000 in her fourth year as the university’s chief executive. Olian’s base pay — which accounted for approximately 70% of her total earnings — increased slightly between FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22, though a reduction in her bonus and incentive compensation meant she earned about \$40,000 less in 2021 than in 2020.

Five of the state’s 11 highest-paid private

college presidents earned more money in FY 2021-22 than Olian. However, only the heads of Yale University and the University of New Haven earned higher base salaries, and the presidents of Sacred Heart University and Wesleyan University were the only two to receive higher bonuses.

After Olian, former men’s basketball head coach Baker Dunleavy was the university’s highest-salaried employee in FY 2021-22. Dunleavy, who resigned in April 2023 to accept a general manager position at Villanova University, earned a \$770,000 paycheck in his fifth season at Quinnipiac.

Quinnipiac men’s hockey head coach Rand Pecknold, Provost Debra Liebowitz and Chief Financial Officer Mark Varholak each ranked among the university’s top five highest-paid employees. Elicia Spearman, general counsel and vice president of human resources, and Tricia Fabbri, head coach of the women’s basketball team, also appeared on Quinnipiac’s tax filing among the highest-paid employees.

And, despite stepping down from his presidential role in 2018, President Emeritus John Lahey rounded out the list of the university’s highest-salaried employees. Lahey, who served as Quinnipiac’s president for more than three decades and who still teaches a 100-level philosophy course online each fall, earned nearly \$272,000 in FY 2021-22.

Over two decades of Quinnipiac’s 990 filings indicate that the university’s former presi-

dent earned more than \$20 million between FY 2001-02 and FY 2021-22, around \$2.8 million of which he received after retiring. Olian, meanwhile, has earned approximately \$3.5 million as Quinnipiac’s president since her 2018 appointment to the post.

However, the sum of Lahey’s university paychecks does not include the compensation he received from Quinnipiac University Online, Inc., a separately chartered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization the institution operated between 2001 and 2019.

Lahey served as the chairman of Quinnipiac University Online throughout his final 17 years as the university’s president — and earned nearly \$3.9 million for doing so, according to the organization’s tax filings.

BENEFITS

The university’s 990 tax filing also revealed that Quinnipiac provided certain benefits — first-class or charter travel and travel for companions — to at least one of the university’s executives.

In and of itself, this is not all that unusual. Each of the top 11 private universities in Connecticut provided at least one executive with housing, travel or personal benefits, according to their form 990s.

However, Quinnipiac notably did not “follow a written policy regarding payment or reimbursement or provision of all of the expenses,” per the university’s tax filing. University offi-

cials also did not explain the lack of a formal policy in the filing’s supplemental information section as required by the form.

Quinnipiac’s previous tax filings indicate that the university has provided these benefits and oth-

See **990** Page 2

Highest Paid University Employees 2021-22	
Judy Olian President	\$983,634
Baker Dunleavy Head Men's Basketball Coach	\$769,607
Rand Pecknold Head Men's Hockey Coach	\$623,002
Debra Liebowitz Provost	\$588,059
Mark Varholak Chief Financial Officer	\$570,068
Elicia Spearman Vice President of Human Resources	\$487,607
Tricia Fabbri Head Women's Basketball Coach	\$395,544
John Lahey Former President Emeritus	\$271,929

INFOGRAPHIC BY PEYTON MCKENZIE

MEET THE EDITORS

- EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Katie Langley
- MANAGING EDITOR
Benjamin Yeargin
- DIGITAL MANAGING EDITOR
Jack Muscatello
- CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Peyton McKenzie
- NEWS EDITOR
Cat Murphy
- ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR
Krystal Miller
- OPINION EDITORS
Michael LaRocca
A.J. Newth
- ARTS & LIFE EDITOR
Zoe Leone
- ASSOCIATE ARTS & LIFE EDITOR
Jacklyn Pellegrino
- SPORTS EDITORS
Ethan Hurwitz
Cameron Levasseur
- ASSOCIATE SPORTS EDITOR
Colin Kennedy
- DESIGN EDITOR
Amanda Riha
- ASSOCIATE DESIGN EDITOR
Lindsey Komson
- PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR
Aidan Sheedy
- ASSOCIATE MULTIMEDIA EDITOR
Connor Youngberg
- COPY EDITORS
Carleigh Beck
Alex Martinakova

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.

Sign up for our weekly newsletter by emailing Katie Langley at katherine.langley@quinnipiac.edu

THE CHRONICLE is distributed around all three university campuses every Wednesday. Single copies are free. Newspaper theft is a crime. Please report suspicious activity to university security (203-582-6200). For additional copies, contact the student media office for rates.

ADVERTISING inquiries can be sent to thequchronicle@gmail.com. Inquiries must be made a week prior to publication. SEND TIPS, including news tips, corrections or suggestions to Katie.Langley@thequchronicle@gmail.com WITH CONCERNS, contact The Chronicle’s advisor Vincent Contrucci, at vincent.contrucci@quinnipiac.edu





LETTERS TO THE EDITOR should be between 150 and 300 words and must be approved by the editor-in-chief before going to print. The Chronicle reserves the right to edit all material, including advertising, based on content, grammar and space requirements. Send letters to thequchronicle@gmail.com. The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the writers and not necessarily those of The Chronicle.

SEE WHAT’S HAPPENING ON QUCHRONICLE.COM

JOIN US

Staff Meetings on Tuesdays in SB 123 at 9:15 p.m.

CONNECT

-  @quchronicle/@quchronsports
-  The Quinnipiac Chronicle
-  @quchronicle/@quchronsports
-  @quchronicle

SCAM from cover

lic Safety had partnered with the Hamden Police Department to “identify and arrest the person responsible.”

“Please know that this individual is not a member of any QU club, and that the university would not sanction any activity that would disrupt classes or any university operations,” Reyes wrote in the email update just before 5:45 p.m. “If you believe you are a victim of this scam, please contact your bank or credit card company immediately for further instructions.”

Although Reyes released a photograph of a potential suspect in the scam, officials had neither identified nor located the suspicious individual as of publication. Reyes did not immediately respond to The Chronicle’s request for additional comment on the incident.

However, a quick Google search revealed just how many times “Jeff” — or maybe a gaggle of self-proclaimed Jeffs — has perpetrated this exact scheme on college cam-



COURTESY OF TONY REYES/QUINNIPIAC UNIVERSITY

Hamden police are working to arrest the unidentified man pictured above in connection with a ticket scam that took place on Quinnipiac University’s Mount Carmel Campus on Sept. 28.

990 from cover

ers to its employees in the past, though officials always reported following a formal policy.

Trinity College was the only other private Connecticut university that reported not using a written reimbursement policy — but the college’s tax filing included a supplemental explanation.

And unlike each of the 10 other private universities in the state, Quinnipiac did not “require substantiation prior to reimbursing or allowing expenses,” per the university’s tax filing. Put simply, it appears that Quinnipiac executives did not have to provide verification of their purchase to bill the university for reimbursement.

It is unknown which university employee or employees received these benefits. It is also unclear why Quinnipiac neither followed a written policy nor required employees to provide proof of purchase to qualify for reimbursement.

“The university does not comment on the 990,” wrote John Morgan, associate vice president for public relations, in an Oct. 3 statement to The Chronicle.

FINANCIAL STATUS

Quinnipiac’s most recent tax filing also indicated that the institution maintained relative fiscal stability in a year marked by intense inflation and financial turmoil, particularly in comparison to nearby colleges.

The university’s \$674 million endowment, despite declining by more than 10.5% between FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22, ranked fourth

among the state’s top 11 private universities.

Quinnipiac students in March 2015 fell victim to the same ruse when a man named “Jeff” claiming to represent “Quinnipiac Activities” barged into classrooms to sell tickets to a show at the New York Comedy Club.

But Quinnipiac is far from the only university where the swindler has become somewhat of a living legend. Someone introducing himself as “Jeff” has performed the ruse on at least eight college campuses across five states.

Scores of Reddit threads indicate that the veteran scammer targeted students at the New Jersey Institute of Technology in 2016 — and then again in 2020. In both 2018 and 2022, the con man appeared to dupe students at Stony Brook University in New York.

But during the spring 2023 semester, “Jeff” — or a remarkably similar perpetrator — went on a monthslong scamming spree.

Early in the semester, he hit the State University of New York at Albany. Then, he showed up at Pennsylvania’s Drexel University in February. He showed up at Temple University and Rutgers University in March before targeting Boston University in April.

And then “Jeff” seemed to vanish — that is, until he resurfaced on Quinnipiac’s Mount Carmel Campus on Sept. 28.

In most of these instances, students took to social media to warn others about the on-campus ticket scam. But former students then flooded the comment sections to provide some much-needed context about the ruse: it was not nearly as novel as it seemed.

“This is still going on?!” one Redditor commented on a March 2023 post about the scam’s revival at Drexel. “This happened when I was a student 2010-2015.”

Underneath almost every thread, users made it abundantly clear that someone had been perpetrating the scheme on college campuses for far longer — a decade longer — than the public accounts alone might suggest.

“They are still doing this?” another Redditor wrote when the scam reappeared at Stony Brook in September 2022. “Been out of SBU for 15 years.”

One former Temple student was astounded to learn the ruse they remembered falling victim to as a college freshman was still somehow

around nearly a decade later.

“Crazy that he is still vibin,” the user wrote in the March 2023 thread.

Others, meanwhile, realized only amid the Reddit frenzy that too they had been conned.

“I bought these back in 2008,” another former Temple student wrote. “Just now realizing they were a scam.”

But in yet another perplexing twist in the already bizarre story, the New York Comedy Club is a real venue.

A club employee on Sept. 30 denied having any knowledge of the yearslong charade and said the scheme was “not affiliated with the club.”

“We are definitely not aware of that,” the employee, who declined to provide his name, said. “That wouldn’t have been us”

More confounding still, a different employee then confirmed on Oct. 2 that the venue honors the purple-and-white ticket stubs “Jeff” advertises on college campuses so long as patrons make reservations.

“It’s a third party, but we do accept those passes,” the employee told The Chronicle, noting that a separate entity, Monetary Marketing, is ultimately responsible for the club’s third-party ticket sales.

Although “Jeff” sells the admit-two comedy show tickets — which, in line with the New York City club’s online ticket prices, have a printed \$50 face value — to students and faculty for \$10, there is a notable catch.

Per the fine print, the club enforces a minimum per person purchase requirement that obligates each patron to order at least two food or drink items. The club then adds an automatic 18% gratuity charge to all purchases — all before factoring in New York City’s 8.875% sales tax.

And the cheapest drinks on the New York Comedy Club’s menu are \$7.50, meaning the minimum order required with an admit-two ticket — four drinks with gratuity and tax — would instantly run up an additional \$38.06 tab.

“The tickets may be legitimate, but I was led to believe that I was paying \$20 for two people total,” one Yelp reviewer wrote after buying tickets in a college lecture and falling victim to the club’s drink minimum. “It’s a cheap tactic to mislead college kids, who don’t have much money in the first place.”

FOREIGN INVESTMENTS

The university declared more than \$1.2 billion in net assets at the end of the fiscal year — a figure topped only by Yale and Wesleyan.

Quinnipiac’s 990 filing also indicated that the university earned more than \$41.6 million in net revenue. Although this figure represents an 8% decline from the previous fiscal period, the university earned more in FY 2021-22.

The university’s tax filing indicated that Quinnipiac invested more than \$50 million in Central America and the Caribbean.

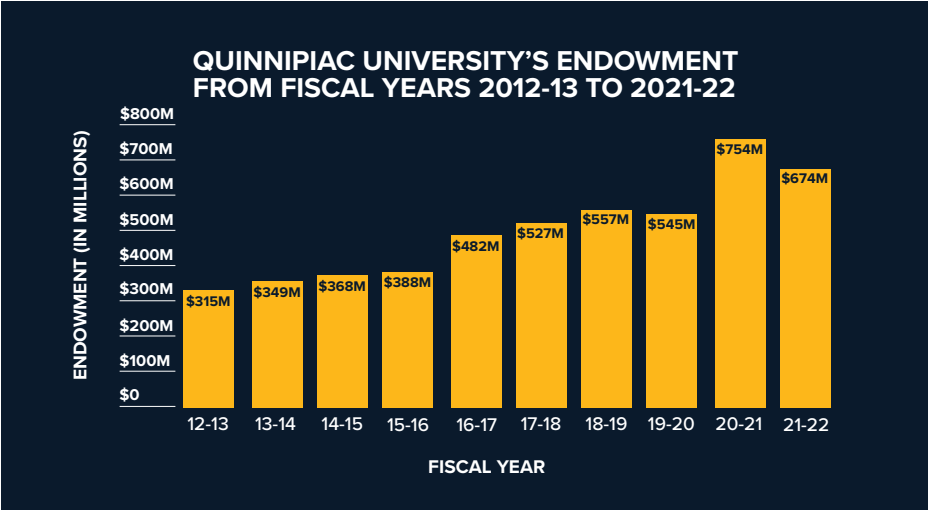
Although Quinnipiac officials did not disclose any foreign investments between 2009 and 2018, 2021 marked the third consecutive fiscal year in which university officials invested tens of millions of dollars in Central America and the Caribbean without explana-

tion. And in those three years alone, the university’s foreign investments totaled more than \$153 million.

Details on the specific country or countries in which the university invested were not available. The reason for the investments also remains unclear.

However, Quinnipiac is far from the only institution that invests overseas. Connecticut’s seven largest private colleges — excluding Yale University, which invested \$8.75 billion overseas — declared more than \$815 million in foreign investments in FY 2021-22.

Relative to the other institutions, though, Quinnipiac’s \$50 million foreign investment did not appear remotely out of place. Aside from Yale, three institutions — Wesleyan University, Fairfield University and Trinity College — declared tens of millions of dollars more in foreign investments than Quinnipiac.



INFOGRAPHIC BY AMANDA RIHA

Quinnipiac medical school introduces anesthesiology residency program

By **KRYSTAL MILLER**
Associate News Editor

Quinnipiac University received accreditation to launch an anesthesiology residency program at the university's medical school next year, according to a Sept. 18 post to X, formerly Twitter.

The Frank H. Netter MD School of Medicine's new residency program is based at St. Vincent's Medical Center in Bridgeport. However, the residency, which is located within the Hartford Healthcare system, also has several clinical rotations in a New York medical center. The only other Connecticut universities with anesthesiology residency programs are the University of Connecticut and Yale University.

Students can apply for Quinnipiac's anesthesiology program through The Electronic Residency Application Service. Applications are accepted from September to January, and then those who are accepted will go through an interview process. Then the National Residency Matching Program matches the students to programs they are most interested in. Quinnipiac's three-year anesthesiology residency program is currently approved for four students per year, for a total of 12 residents.

In June 2021, the Quinnipiac University School of Nursing abruptly announced the discontinuation of the nurse anesthesia program due to a lack of students and financial reasons, leaving students uncertain about whether they were going to graduate.

Dr. Scott Kurtzman, assistant dean for graduate medical education and designated institutional official, said university officials applied to the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education in September 2022 to obtain the residency program. The program organizers received a tentative accreditation letter, which determines if a graduate medical



JACK MUSCATELLO/CHRONICLE

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education accredited Quinnipiac University's Frank H. Netter MD School of Medicine in September to host an anesthesiology residency. The new program is slated to begin in July 2024.

program meets standards of quality, from the ACGME in April 2022 before receiving a definitive letter this September. The start date of the program will be July 1, 2024.

Kurtzman emphasized that there is a demand for anesthesiologists across the United States. The Association of American Medical Colleges predicts that there will be a shortage of 12,500 anesthesiologists by 2033 — 30% of its current anesthesiology staff.

"So, (the university's decision to start the residency) was based on the quality of the program and availability, the need for anesthesiologists in the country in general and to satisfy the needs of the medical school students," Kurtzman said.

The benefit of this program, Kurtzman said, is that students get to work in a hospital setting alongside anesthesiologists.

"They'll get to see if they like this program, and it gives them another place where they'll have a lot of exposure," Kurtzman said. "So if they want to become anesthesiologists, hopefully they can match to our program."

Dr. Vlad Frenk, the residency program director, helped submit the application to the ACGME and works with the residency students. Upon joining St. Vincent's Medical Center, Frenk said he noticed Quinnipiac medical students had limited exposure to anesthesiology.

"We discussed it with the medical school and changed the way that medical students rotate with us, we increased their time and exposure and that resulted in an increased interest in their art in our field," Frenk said.

A residency position, Frenk said, is a training stage following a student's graduation from medical school. The resident's specialty determines the number of years it takes to complete the program.

He said the government and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services determines the number of people accepted into a residency.

Frenk commented that in addition to a shortage of anesthesiologists, there is also a shortage of training positions for anesthesiologists in the United States. He said that is why increasing the amount of programs is important to accommodate more students.

"Last year, only about 60% of students who applied were able to find a position, so 40% of people could not get into a program," Frenk said.

Quinnipiac officials ultimately aim to increase the overall number of anesthesiologists through the program, Frenk explained.

"Our team feels confident based on the wide variety of the surgeries that we do and the level of expertise that we possess, that we will be able to train well-versed anesthesiologists who would be able to practice cutting-edge medicine and we're happy to raise the new generation of physicians," Frenk said.

QU launches forensic science minor

By **AMANDA MADERA**
Contributing Writer

A handful of Quinnipiac University science professors banded together to establish a forensic science minor that will enable students to take courses incorporate hands-on activities while satisfying natural science credit requirements.

Many professors have been teaching three-credit forensic science-related courses at Quinnipiac already, including forensic science, forensic anthropology and introduction to forensic psychology.

In a statement to The Chronicle, Jaime Ullinger, director of anthropology, wrote that the forensic science minor will offer students new opportunities — namely, new forensic science classes. These one-credit courses, she said, will introduce students to specific topics, including the role of DNA in forensic science, forensic odontology and forensic imaging.

"All of the courses will talk about the ways in which we build arguments and ideas using evidence," wrote Ullinger.

For Kylie Allardice, a junior psychology major, said forensic psychology had always intrigued her but that it was a high school class that sparked her interest in forensic science.

"I found it super interesting and unlike most other science classes I had taken," Allardice wrote in a statement to The Chronicle.

But it was only after taking an anthropology course with Ullinger that Allardice

decided to declare her minor in it, she said.

"Seeing all the different ways forensics can be applied in different disciplines was super interesting," Allardice wrote.

Lisa Kaplan, professor of biology, has been teaching forensic science at Quinnipiac since 2007. She expressed her passion for the subject, noting that studying forensic science feels to her like being in an experiment.

"Forensic science has this really unique ability to allow people to explore science in a way that they might not normally be thinking it's something they want to do," Kaplan said.

Ullinger noted that students who have declared minors in forensic science have been active participants in the local community as well.

"We have been working with some high school students in Connecticut, and QU students have participated in sharing forensic science that they have learned in the classroom with the students," Ullinger wrote.

High school students from New Britain, Connecticut, visited Quinnipiac last fall. Kaplan and Ullinger "offered some hands-on activities related to forensic science" and many Quinnipiac students helped with the event, Ullinger wrote.

New Britain High School students will visit Quinnipiac again this year on Oct. 20.

Although Kaplan acknowledged the minor will likely attract predominantly science majors, she said the specialization is unique

ly connected to a range of studies.

"It's a great match for the biological sciences," Kaplan said. "But it's also a great match for criminal justice, sociology, psychology, basically, for anybody who has an interest in it."

Forensic science is integrative and examines how the medical field and legal system work together to solve problems.

"This minor will give students an opportunity to learn about forensic science and give them a foundation to go onto an advanced degree in the field that they may be interested in pursuing as a career," Ullinger wrote.

While the National Institute of Standards and Technology defines forensic science as "the use of scientific methods or expertise to investigate crimes or examine evidence that might be presented in a court of law," professors at Quinnipiac define it differently.

Forensic science combines a lot of aspects of physical science in terms of how to gather and inspect data, with social science, Ullinger wrote.

"You could take all these courses, and not even recognize what it is you were doing, because they'd be associated with other disciplines," Kaplan said. "Whereas now that we have a forensic minor, students can see how it's a composite science."

This allows students who may not excel in physical science to be exposed to a type of science that utilizes their strengths in humanities and social science, Kaplan said.

"Biology, chemistry and physics aren't necessarily the ways that people feel comfortable being exposed," Kaplan said. "So forensics has a little bit of all of those disciplines in it. That makes it great. It's an equally valuable exposure to science."

Television dramas that focus heavily on the role of forensic science in criminal investigations — "CSI" and "Law and Order," for instance — often pique viewers' interest in the subject.

"There's a lot more people who now incorporate this science into their understanding, at least how it's portrayed on television, which isn't super accurate all the time, but at least it gets them interested," Kaplan said.

Taking these courses will give students real-life experience and knowledge that television shows cannot provide, Allardice argued.

"Oftentimes, forensics can be brushed off as a topic that is dramatized in TV shows and shouldn't actually be taken seriously," Allardice wrote.

Kaplan said she believes that forensics is equally as important in regards to other science courses taught at Quinnipiac.

"This is now the time to be able to give them a nice formalized way to express that interest by exploring courses that will give them little tastes, and then a better understanding of what forensic science actually is," Kaplan said.

Opinion

World issues are more than just a trend

By **LILLIAN CURTIN**
Contributing Writer

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)



AMAURY LAPORTE/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

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

Bobcat Buzz



PEYTON MCKENZIE/CHRONICLE

Intramural pickleball games are played on the basketball courts in the Recreation and Wellness Center.

Pickleball shouldn’t displace more popular sports

By **FULLER ALBRIGHT**
Contributing Writer

Pickleball is a phenomenon that has swept the nation; its competitive, yet leisurely nature made it a great success.

Quinnipiac University is no exception, with its intramural sports program offering a pickleball league open to students in the fall and new outdoor pickleball courts.

The pickleball craze has created some problems in the university’s community, most notably the catastrophic impact it has had on students’ nightly pickup basketball games. Many nights, basketball players gather at Burt Kahn Court in the Recreation and Wellness Center only to be turned away because pickleball players are using the courts.

The pickleball courts are now

painted on top of the basketball courts, so an area that can normally be used for 10 people is now being used for one-on-one pickleball.

Students like myself go to the Recreation and Wellness Center almost every night to play basketball and owe a lot of our college experience to those green courts.

Though now with intramural pickleball, that experience is in jeopardy. A standard basketball court (like the ones in in RecWell) is 94 feet by 50 feet and a pickleball court is 44 feet by 20 feet, meaning that two pickleball courts could be set up on one basketball court, instead of the current one-to-one setup.

In my opinion, this is an extreme waste of space, as there is a much larger community of pick-up basket-

ball players than pickleball, and it takes that space away.

There needs to be a better balance between the two activities and the space they take up. Without a solution, students will continue to see up to four basketball courts used by as little as eight people, while upwards of 20 are gathered around a single one. This problem will only continue as the weather gets colder further into the semester.

It is great that university intramurals are inclusive to all sports including pickleball, but there needs to be better management of the shared space in the recreation center. Pickup basketball is extremely important to the students at Quinnipiac, and they shouldn’t suffer just because another activity needs the space.

Opinion

Suck it up, buttercup

The importance of coexisting with those you dislike

By **A.J. NEWTH**
Opinion Editor

I’m sure we all have that one individual in our lives who knows how to grind our gears. Whether interactions occur in the workplace, in the classroom, in family environments or even in friend groups, it’s pretty common that there may be someone you dislike more than others for a plethora of reasons.

It’s easy to get caught up in feelings of hostility. The reality is, you need to get over it. It’s time to suck it up and learn how to coexist.

Sometimes the animosity stems from personal issues with the individual, but more commonly, you may just be annoyed by them — and that’s OK. The average person meets 10,000 people in their lifetime according to Medium, so there’s bound to be a few you’re not a fan of.

There are times that you may think to yourself, “Wow I really can’t stand them.” Instead of adding to the negativity in your surroundings, I have a proposal. Challenge yourself to coexist with the individual you dislike and observe how that changes your environment.

In my skills for contemporary business class this semester, the course hones in on a lot of necessities for entering the business workforce. While many of them relate to proper presentation delivery and respect, one of the most important themes is handling people you don’t get along with in the workplace.

In an article for Harvard Business Review, Robert Sutton, professor of management science and engineering at Stanford University, discussed how resentment in the workplace can affect even those you like. Sutton noted that we all have a tendency to look for confirmation of our own opinions, but we should resist it. “Because emotions are so contagious, you can bring everyone down,” Sutton said.

Conflict with others in any circumstance is



ILLUSTRATION BY AMANDA RIHA

never ideal, but it’s even worse in a work environment. Disliking a coworker can cause issues within the organization that affects productivity, team dynamics and even project failure. In my experience, I’ve seen coworkers terminated simply because they didn’t like each other.

In contrast, learning how to bite the bullet and get along with difficult people in your life has the opposite effect.

Start by letting go of the grudge you hold against the individual. Whether it’s personal or just something they do that bothers you, by letting go you not only set yourself up to deal with future interactions, but you also relieve yourself of the weight that grudge had on your conscience. I understand letting go can be difficult, but it’s ultimately worthwhile.

It’s also beneficial to focus on healthy ways to communicate. Avoid any topics that may set either of you off and practice civility. These tips

have positive outcomes on workplace relationships, but also improve friendships and family dynamics as well.

While the phrase “fake it till you make it” applies to balancing these difficult interactions, it’s also essential to be wary of your own emotions and protect your peace. If getting along with someone you dislike becomes difficult, it’s OK to step aside and give yourself a moment to collect your thoughts.

Managing relationships in life is a challenge that will never subside. Dealing with difficult people is a task everyone will face at some point, and coexisting despite the urge to quit or start a fight is what will make you stronger as an individual.

Choosing to be the bigger person — choosing peace — not only makes those difficult environments like work and school safer spaces, but it may also impact your mental well-being. You

may observe kinder decision making leads to nicer thoughts about yourself, and even reduced anxiety or anger when running into someone you dislike, per The List Magazine.

Not having to worry about the silent treatment or hostility in your environment can also improve your work ethic and perspective.

In the workplace, coexisting with others in a positive way can increase productivity, motivation and conflict resolution, according to Indeed. It promotes employee retention, increases trust and improves collaboration.

I know getting along with particularly difficult individuals is a big task. It takes a significant amount of patience, perseverance and a lot of mental strength. But why let someone you dislike hold you back from being successful? I promise you, they’re simply not worth it.

This goes for friends and family as well. Whether it’s hanging out in a group setting with that one person who makes you want to pull your hair out, or attending that holiday meal with your uncle who won’t shut up about politics, you learn to deal with it.

I can’t promise that dealing with someone you dislike will make them any more enjoyable. However, I can attest to seeing improvements in yourself. I noticed several differences in my demeanor when I learned to coexist with people I don’t want to be around.

By letting go of the reasons their presence bothered me, I was able to feel the relief because they didn’t take up any more space in my mind. I felt healthier and happier knowing I was reducing anxious interactions and bettering myself as a person in the process.

It’s impossible to like everyone you meet. By adapting and choosing to coexist despite your feelings, you become a better employee, student, friend and person as a whole.



Diversify your portfolio with ETFs

DISCLAIMER: This piece is strictly based on the opinions and experiences of the writer and should not be viewed as a substitute for professional financial advice.

By **NICHOLAS PESTRITTO**
Staff Writer

As someone who has been depositing money into a securities or brokerage account — an account allowing me to buy and sell various types of investments — for almost a year, I have learned that there are certain ways to get the best returns on my initial investment.

Yes, investing money into individual stocks is great, but why invest in singular companies stock when you can put your money into Exchange Traded Funds? More commonly known as ETFs, they are funds that expose you to several companies’ stock, all grouped into one fund and under one ticker symbol, the three or four letter abbreviation of which a company trades under on stock exchanges.

Investopedia states that an ETF is, “a type of pooled investment security that operates much like a mutual fund.”

In simpler terms, it is a special fund that is made up of tiny pieces of stocks from specific companies. You can buy and keep these pieces in different investment accounts. The fund itself either owns a piece of companies’ stock or

follows a specific stock index and owns pieces of the companies in that group.

Forbes states that a stock or market index tracks the performance of a certain group of stocks, bonds or other investments. A good example of this would be the S&P 500, the most well-known stock index, which tracks the 500 largest corporations on U.S. stock markets.

One of the most popular ETFs follows the companies under the S&P 500 and it holds small percentages of those companies’ stock, such as Apple, Microsoft and Amazon, in its fund, per Yahoo Finance.

ETFs may be similar to mutual funds but there are also many differences. Investopedia also says that investing in an ETF is usually more cost-effective than putting your money into a mutual fund, and they are considered to be more liquid, meaning that they can be converted into cash more easily than other investments.

Mutual funds are also sometimes exclusive to certain investment corporations, such as Vanguard or Fidelity, two of the major brokerage firms that offer

a wide array of ways to invest money. This means that you must have an account through these certain companies or you cannot buy into them. There are some ETFs that are exclusive to certain companies and people, but exclusivity is more common in mutual funds.

Those who invest in ETFs will not have to worry about losing their money if a certain company’s stock goes down since ETFs have several different companies’ stocks under their one fund, which causes less fluctuation in price because it is diversified with those different companies.

Investing in ETFs is one of the best ways to diversify your investments and it stores your money in different ways than other traditional investments.

Now it is your time to start investing in ETFs; open an account that allows you to buy and sell various types of investments and look at which ones may be right for you. You can invest any amount of money and it will help you in the long run.

Arts & Life



A 'totes' adorable night

Women Empowered presents their first Paint Night

By GINA LORUSSO and GRACE CONNEELY-NOLAN

For its first October event, the Women Empowered club organized a Paint Night where students came to enjoy refreshments, tote bag painting and bonding with their peers — the ultimate way to spend a Monday night.

The first-ever Paint Night hosted by the club had an even greater turnout than expected. Attendees were able to destress from a long day of classes and engaged in casual conversations.

“It’s all about creating a good community for women,” Liv Ruschioni, a senior journalism major and Women Empowered’s president, said. “It’s always really fun; everyone enjoys it.”

The unexpected attendance level brought about an unfortunate occurrence: there weren’t enough bags. Paint Night was so successful that the Woman Empowered club ran out of tote bags before the event was set to start. Just before 8:30 p.m., there were over 50 attendees gathered in the Mount Carmel dining hall while being welcomed by members of the e-board. This year’s incoming class was the largest percentage of attendees joining the Women Empowered club.

“I love Women Empowered,” said Julia Kloss, a first-year undecided communications major. “It is a community where everyone supports each other and everyone is super friendly.”

Even though the tote bags ran out, pizza, drinks, snacks and music kept the night going. Like Kloss, those who didn’t get to paint were still able to join in and listen to the music, a diverse collection of pop hits from Paramore, Ariana Grande, Shakira and more. The buzzing energy was immaculate and inviting, appealing to potential new members looking for a way to meet more people and get involved within the Quinnipiac community.

The creative juices started flowing as students inspired each other to paint fruit, flowers, stripes, cow print and quotes that matched their vibe. It didn’t matter if they were artistically inclined, everyone was able to express themselves in their own, unique way on a blank canvas. Popular design trends from TikTok and Pinterest were brought to life and featured on the Women Empowered’s Instagram page.

“I love seeing everyone’s personality pop

out from their bags,” said Rebecca Huyck, a sophomore interdisciplinary studies major and Women Empowered’s secretary.

The Women Empowered club recently formed a partnership with Naturally Me, an organization within the Multicultural Student Leadership Council. Naturally Me provides resources and guidance for students about physical, emotional and mental care, giving students a safe space to relax and practice self care.

The Women Empowered Club values creating an inclusive environment with a supportive community, as well as raising awareness for many charity organizations. Paint Night is just one of the many successful events that the Woman Empowered Club hosts. With the equally overwhelming attendance at its recent Bingo Night, club members said they’ll have to rent larger spaces to accommodate the surplus of interested students.

Coming up on Oct. 16, there will be a breast cancer awareness event where attendees can write cards for breast cancer patients, sending their support as well as decorating cookies to be gifted to Yale New Haven Hospital. This event has been an annual occurrence for the Women Empowered Club for the past five years.

“I think (the breast cancer event) is the most meaningful and has the most impact on the community as well as outside of Quinnipiac,” Ruschioni said.



As Alicia Key's "Girl on Fire" lights the room, first-year radiologic sciences major Leah Chester paints her tote bag in fiery colors at the Women Empowered Paint Night in the Mount Carmel Dining Hall on Oct. 2.

AIDAN SHEEDY/CHRONICLE

Absolute units return for Fat Bear Week

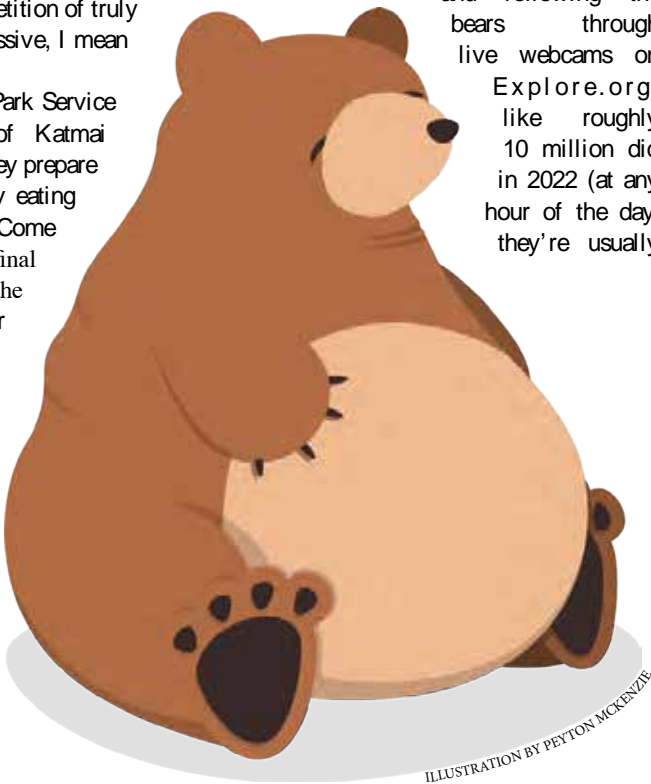
By KATIE LANGLEY
Editor-in-Chief

I’ve never been one to watch many sports, but I think I get just a small glimpse at what the average straight man feels while filling out their March Madness bracket during Fat Bear Week.

Fat Bear Week is a competition of truly massive proportions. By massive, I mean up to half a ton.

Each year, the National Park Service tracks the brown bears of Katmai National Park in Alaska as they prepare to go into hibernation — by eating a whole lot of salmon. Come October, the bears enter the final stretch of beefing up for the winter and have reached their fattest forms.

And each fall, the public gets the opportunity to vote on a selection of chunky contenders in a series of tournament-style elimination rounds. The behemoth bear that voters determine as the fattest of them all receives social media fame and, most likely, the best chance of survival



in the harsh Alaskan winter.

There’s plenty of ways to get involved in the fanfare: by logging on to vote for your preferred bear in every round or downloading your own bracket and following the bears through live webcams on Explore.org, like roughly 10 million did in 2022 (at any hour of the day, they’re usually

catching salmon at a babbling brook).

The winner of Fat Bear Week is not determined by any scientific process: there’s no final weigh-in or display of strength. To put it simply, voters just decide which bear they vibe with the most.

And this year’s competition, set for Oct. 4-10, is stacking up to be an exciting one. Will four-time winner and stout senior Otis take home the title again? Will 2022’s winner, Bear 747 aka “Bear Force One” — who received more than a million votes — come back for the repeat? Will a rotund rookie enter the race and pull off an upset?

Tens of thousands already selected their favorite chubby cub in the Fat Bear Junior bracket on Sept. 28 and 29. The youngling dubbed 806 Spring Cub won the hearts of more than 18,000 voters due to his impressive weight gain and longshot story of perseverance in the brutal wilderness.

Whatever happens, I know I’ll be tuning in for this year’s showdown, as will millions of others.

And this year, it almost didn’t happen as planned.

The looming government shutdown — brought upon by Congress’ failure to agree on a budget — threatened the annual tournament. The Parks Service announced it would have to postpone Fat Bear Week if federal services

went into shutdown mode. Most federal employees are not paid during government shutdowns, meaning that there would be no rangers to monitor the Bear Cams and no parks employees to manage the online presence and social media promotion of the campaign.

If providing millions of federal workers with their well-earned pay wasn’t enough to inspire action, thank God Congress got it together and agreed on a last-minute temporary budget to delay the shutdown (not for long, funding will run out Nov. 17) in time for Fat Bear Week.

And as if this beloved competition wasn’t pure enough, it recently helped bring about the rescue of a stranded hiker. Viewers tuning into the Katmai Bear Cams on Sept. 5 were surprised to notice not a bear, but a distressed hiker. The man was mouthing “help me” and signing a thumbs down to a camera stationed on the remote Dumpling Mountain.

Viewers informed Katmai park rangers, who rescued the hiker just hours after he was spotted online.

This incredible story illustrates Fat Bear Week’s universal appeal: there’s drama, there’s inspiration, there’s underdogs and dominating forces — and most of all, there’s fat bears.

So if you don’t like sports, why not try getting in the competitive spirit for Fat Bear Week? I promise it’ll be a heavy-hitter.

Miss Americana and the Football Prince: Talking about Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce

By ZOE LEONE
Arts & Life Editor

In case you just recently woke up from a coma, permanently broke your phone or just happen to live under a rock, Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce are dating.

The story starts when Swift was still on the U.S. leg of her The Eras Tour. On July 8, Kelce was spotted in a suite at Arrowhead Stadium, his home turf as tight end for the Kansas City Chiefs, enjoying the concert. At the time, no one batted an eye. A football player taking in one of the most famous musical artist’s concerts at his home stadium? Likely place for him to be.

Things took a turn, however, on July 16, when a new episode of the Kelce brothers’ podcast, “New Heights” dropped. Travis Kelce explained that he was upset that Swift was not meeting anyone before or after the show the night of his concert, because, in keeping up with The Eras Tour tradition, he had specifically made her a friendship bracelet. Upon pressing from his brother, Jason, who plays for the Philadelphia Eagles (Swift’s home team), Kelce revealed that he had, in fact, made Swift a bracelet with his phone number on it.

For the next month, things mostly seemed like a cute little joke of Kelce’s crush on Swift. Some thought he was delusional, as Swift had yet to indicate that she even knew the situation was occurring.

All of that would change on Sept. 24.

Kelce had told interviewers that he invited Swift to come to the Chiefs’ game against the Chicago Bears, but that the ball was in her court. Suddenly, the game was the first thing on everyone’s lips. The world wanted to know if Swift was going to be at the game.

And it turned out, she was. Footage of Swift in the Kelce box quickly spread through social media like wildfire. She was seen, in a Chiefs outfit, cheering on Kelce alongside his mother and friends for the duration of the game. Attendees, and ESPN itself, soon began posting videos of his teammates waving up at her and the pop star posing with signs in the crowd featuring her and Kelce’s name on them.

The sheer amount of content that was produced from that game could span several essays. But when Swift and Kelce left the game — the latter in a 1989-named denim set — all in smiles in his convertible, it was clear that this had officially turned into something.

Since that first game, public relations statements, the entirety of the NFL answering questions about the relationship, a dinner featuring several wives of other Chiefs players and a win against the New York Jets with Swift herself front and center in the Mahomes’ box only further cemented the Swift-Kelce relationship.

The real question is, why do we care?

There’s the obvious answer, which is that Swift has once again reached unparalleled levels of fame. Everyone cares where she’s going and what she’s doing, and for many, who she’s doing it with. The fact that the “someone” in this case just happens to be a two-time Super Bowl champion certainly doesn’t hurt either.

But it’s a lot more than that.

When you think of your average Sunday Night Football watcher, it’s hard not to conjure an image of a straight, white American man. The kind of man who has been not just passively, but enthusiastically making fun of Swift and her fans since the earliest days of her career.



Stereotypical? Most definitely. But true? Just perhaps.

But now Swift and Kelce are together. Two icons in their own right, both absolutely beloved in their respected fields. And while I, like many other life-long Swift fans who have had our interests pulverized at the hands of the most boring and obnoxious men you could possibly imagine, thought for sure that this would only be a clash of cultures — it’s actually proven to be the exact opposite.

Sales of Kelce’s official jersey increased by nearly 400% after the Sept. 24 game. Not only did the NFL telecast draw in 24.3 million viewers (around 7.6 million more than the average game), but the largest audience demographic watching was women ages 12-17 and 18-49, a nearly unheard of feat for a NFL game.

And for Swift’s fans who may not have

the widest knowledge of the game, many football fans have proven willing to help, and vice versa. Looking at the comments on social media posts about the two will show sports enthusiasts explaining 10-day contracts and Swift fans giving the lore behind song references.

Even the Kelce brothers have joined in on the support. During their most recent episode of “New Heights,” the duo answered questions from Swift’s fans about football. Some of the questions were basic, and as two All-Pro NFL players, they could’ve easily brushed them off and been condescending. Instead, they took the time to answer as best they could, giving thorough answers and never once poking fun.

Only time will tell if Swift and Kelce are built to last. But I think it’s safe to say this couple is a touchdown for the “Red” kingdom.

Take a look into the future at the SPB Psychic Fair

By KRYSTAL MILLER and ZOE LEONE

Students gathered in the Carl Hansen Student Center piazza in anticipation for a glimpse into their future, while picking out which crystals best suited their desires and choosing which tea set the mood best.

The Student Programming Board hosted a free Psychic Fair on Sept. 28, in which upon entry students picked which of the three psychics they wanted a reading

from, and received a ticket with a number indicating their place in line.

“So I did the traditional palm reader and the traditional tarot card reader, but I also added a handwriting analyst,” said Jaylene Guerra, a senior marketing major and the SPB traditions and community chair. “I’m excited to see how that plays out.”

Guerra said that the psychic fair has been occurring yearly for as long as she has been

a student here, but every year the traditions and community chair adds their own spin on the event. She said the unique aspect of the event is how it brings in a new audience compared to other events and is a chance to meet new people.

“It gets a lot of people here and it’s not something you would think that would, because obviously bingo (events) get people out there,” said Guerra. “But it’s a whole different type of person that’s coming to this event.”

Guerra began the process of planning the event in May by talking to companies about the featured psychics, planning the activities and decorations and assigning jobs.

For some attendees the event was pure fun, but others came looking for a little help from their spiritual guides.

“I wanted to get some guidance for where my life is going,” Jessica Clark, a senior media studies major, said. “I’m graduating soon, so I wanted to come here and get a free reading.”

Clark, who received a tarot reading, explained that she’s passionate about spirituality and tarot cards. As a reader herself, she was impressed with SPB’s dedication to the fair.

“It’s really well organized,” Clark said. “Everyone’s doing a really great job. They have handwriting analysis, I never would have thought about that before. That’s really cool.”

While students waited for their reading

of choice, attendees participated in activities at tables around the piazza. One station was a make-your-own dream journal, which gave students the option of decorating the books with stickers such as cats, crystals, potions and other similar themed items.

The personalized crystal bags included a choice of small colorful stones that attract energy such as good luck, emotional healing and happiness. The tea and honey station had tea bags laid out organized by flavor. Members of SPB also took polaroids of students against a psychic-themed backdrop.

Danielle Burney, a first-year political science major, sat in a chair sipping ginger tea while waiting for a tarot card reading.

“I already collect crystals and I was told there’d be other ones,” Burney said. “Plus I’m making it a plan to go to all the (SPB) events.”

According to Guerra, this year’s SPB events have been pulling more than 100 students each, and the psychic fair was no exception. The event drew in students from a variety of majors and years, who participated in the activities for nearly three hours.

While Timothy Glover, a sophomore marketing major in the 3+1 program, was enjoying the different activities while waiting for his reading, a different motivation brought him to the psychic fair.

“My girlfriend wanted to go to get our palms read,” Glover said. “It’s pretty chill. Good vibe.”



QUINN O'NEILL/CHRONICLE

Anna Villineau, a sophomore political science and mathematics double major, has her palm read by Adam Latin at the Pychic Fair on Sept. 28.

The WGA strike has come to an end. What now?

By CHARLOTTE ROSS
Contributing Writer

After much debate between the leaders of the Writers Guild of America and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers this past week, the WGA has officially voted to end its strike, bringing the nearly five-month-long conflict to a close.

Besides having to watch reruns of the “Tonight Show” and hearing news of the strike on TV, I didn’t really experience any major differences to my day-to-day life. To me, it feels like strikes are a regular occurrence in the media that usually resolve themselves within a couple of weeks. So what made this one so different from the rest?

The WGA currently holds 11,500 members who write content for films, television shows, news broadcasts and online media shown all around the globe. As viewers, we often don’t account for all of the work that goes into bringing media to our screens, but the simple reality is that if the people behind the scenes can’t work, the cameras don’t roll.

I wasn’t fully knowledgeable of all the reasons behind the strike, and I especially wasn’t aware of the fact that several popular streaming services, such as Netflix, Disney and Warner Bros., were failing to work with the WGA amidst it all to reach a solution.

Many shows expecting new seasons have been stalled due to the strike, such as national favorites like “Stranger Things,” “Abbott Elementary,” “Billions” and “The Last of Us,” to name just a few.

However, the aspect of the strike that attracted the greatest national attention was not the famous corporation names involved,

but perhaps the strike’s longer-than- average duration. According to Cornell’s Labor Action Tracker, the majority of strikes in 2022 lasted less than five days. The WGA strike, on the other hand, halted production for a whopping total of 148 days.

The close to five-month-long strike was spent advocating and picketing against the lack of compensation from streaming companies rerunning episodes and the unprotected threats artificial intelligence poses to scriptwriting. The strike led to the loss of approximately 37,700 film jobs, and cost the California economy an estimated \$2.1 billion.

Amid the bustle of our daily lives, we can so easily rely on the presence of our comfort shows just waiting for us one simple click away. However, the WGA strike brought to light the true harm streaming services put on screenwriters’ careers, while much of the American public continue on with their lives and poor streaming habits.

For those of us that don’t have jobs in screenwriting or reside in California, or even for those just hearing of the strike for the first time today, there is still work that can be done on your part.

The deal allows for increased compensation for writers and new minimum staffing requirements based on episode counts, while also barring the use of AI for new or rewritten material aired by studios. WGA leaders voted to end the strike, allowing writers to return to work this week and encourage the implementation of the conditions that were reached. The deal is set to be ratified by union members in the upcoming week, who will be able to vote on

it from Oct. 2-9.

The lives and issues of our working population deserve more support from all of us, from large scale corporations to even our friends and neighbors. Each of us play a vital role in the media today, as we each rely and interact with it as part of our daily lives.

Writers deserve the chance to be properly recognized for the work they produce, and we must ensure that as a nation, protests advocating for the fair recognition and salaries of our workers do not persist this long without compromise again.

So sign petitions, donate to foundations working for a change and stand with families that were put out of work in both the WGA strike and the SAG-AFTRA strike as well. Tell your friends and family about the situation at hand, and demand that the deal will be implemented and properly followed.

For the sake of our community members working behind the scenes and our nation’s love for cinema and entertainment, don’t overlook the people behind the camera that make this work possible — the world would be a boring place without them.



FABEBK/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Members of the Writers Guild of America picket in New York City on May 10, nearly four months before the end of the writers’ strike.

'The Creator': An ironic tale of AI integration

By JACK MUSCATELLO
Digital Managing Editor

Artificial intelligence has taken off at a rapid pace in the last year, initially overtaking writing assignments in the classroom before expanding into a jack-of-all-trades in online creativity. Like it or not, it's here to stay.

In "The Creator" — an original sci-fi tale sneaking into Hollywood's wasteland of sequels and reboots — AI has gone on even further to establish itself as a species equal to humanity. As you can imagine, chaos ensues.

"The Creator," released on Sept. 29, begins with an explosion. Los Angeles has been nuked, millions have died and the aforementioned AI is to blame. But unlike ChatGPT, this artificial intelligence has evolved to become its own ecosystem of robots living peacefully among human beings. After the bomb, that peace evaporates into a decades-long world war.

The film's forward-thinking stance on AI, its potential and how it can be integrated into our world is a surprising pivot from the negative connotation the topic holds in real life. As executives from leading AI labs warn of a dangerous future ahead, "The Creator" offers up something different.

As a question, the film boils it down to this: what if AI doesn't evolve into a complete existential nightmare, instead opting to correct the imperfections of human existence?

Amid the carnage surrounding that question is ex-soldier Joshua, played by John David Washington, who grieves the death of his pregnant wife Maya while isolating himself from the ongoing war. After the AI is discovered to

have a superweapon powerful enough to wipe out humanity's last defense system, Joshua is pulled back into the fight and tasked with destroying it.

The style of the film's action, led by writer-director Gareth Edwards ("Rogue One," 2014's "Godzilla"), embraces a low budget run-and-gun approach that still encapsulates the story's epic scale. While Hollywood greenlights bloated budgets for the next superhero sequel without hesitation, Edwards leans on his mere \$80 million price tag to explore the visually rich world of Earth in 2070.

Alongside the action, the plot of "The Creator" moves quickly, ushering Joshua from one set piece to the next with almost no time to breathe. The lightning-quick pace breezes through some of the film's loftier ideas about AI and the more essential backstory for Joshua and Maya, one of two emotional foundations for the entire story.

The second, and arguably more successful one, arrives in the form of Alfie, played by nine-year-old Madeleine Yuna Voyles. In her first-ever screen credit, she excels in the role, bouncing off Joshua's quiet demeanor as a memorable sci-fi child prodigy.

The pair's chemistry makes the film work well even when its narrative falters, developing Alfie from just another "simulant" — the film's term for a robot with a human face — into a fleshed-out and satisfying daughter figure for Joshua's broken spirit to latch onto.

If that dynamic sounds familiar, think this year's "The Last of Us" adaptation set 50 years from now.

Considering its similarities with the above

influence, the film's storyline for the duo welcomes few surprises. As a melting pot of '70s science fiction classics and gritty war cinema, the script's narrative revelations can be spotted 30 minutes away. Nonetheless, the mysteries behind the nuclear blast, the war itself and Voyles' exact purpose in the whole story are interesting.

They're just not as engrossing, or as shocking, as they should be.

This issue of familiarity thankfully stays away from the visuals, which are a shining achievement throughout. Alongside Edwards, cinematographers Greig Fraser ("Dune") and industry newcomer Oren Soffer embrace a stripped-down approach to their filmmaking on the project.

Throughout principal photography, Edwards and the crew scaled down to the bare essentials, traveled to dozens of beautiful locations and shot each scene on the mere \$4,000 Sony FX3, which could be bought right off the shelves at Best Buy. For anyone looking to enter the industry, that fact is undoubtedly inspiring.

Box office tentpoles from Disney and the like consistently cost over \$200 million to produce. The fact that an original work of science fiction made for less than half that price can look more impressive is incredible. The industry's bloated slate of intellectual properties is still fun at times, but the refreshing sight of borderline DIY techniques on the big screen is a welcome one.

In all, "The Creator" marks an intriguing point for the film industry in 2023. Mere days after the WGA struck a deal to limit AI influence on new scripts, the story introduces an ironically positive



ILLUSTRATION BY SHAVONNE CHIN

image of robots coexisting with humans. At a time when the industry's mass production of franchise films appears to be suffering financially, the film's independent mindset highlights how cheaper technical methods could be the next best thing.

Though the film's own financial success remains to be seen and its optimistic display of artificial intelligence may not hold up with time, "The Creator," like its many AI characters, has generated more than enough reasons to give it a chance.

Which show cooked more?

'Breaking Bad'

By ETHAN HURWITZ
Sports Editor

"Breaking Bad" is the greatest television show I have ever watched. The storytelling, the cinematic artwork, the visuals—nothing will ever come close. I wish I could rewatch it again for the first time. But that's not why we're here, so why is it better than "Better Call Saul?"

It starts with the cast, especially Bryan Cranston's main character, Walter White. The cancer-riddled science teacher-turned-meth dealer becomes one of the screen's most prominent figures, aided by young junkie Jesse Pinkman, the two became iconic. Throw in Walter's wife, Skylar White, drug kingpin Gustavo Fring, problem solver Mike Ehrmantraut and Drug Enforcement Administration agent (and Walter's brother-in-law) Hank Schrader and you have a well-rounded group of important people to follow.

Throughout the five seasons, you watch White slowly go through a metamorphosis: he starts timid, quiet, reserved. By the time you reach the end of the saga, he's not afraid to kill people, kidnap or do evil things he wouldn't imagine doing just two years prior. It's a beautiful case study on the deterioration of the human mind and spirit, showing how one would do anything when they are pushed to the brink of survival.

The writing was intertwined with the story so well that the series has become legendary. You see the slow decay of White's psyche and moral compass.

Episodes, especially in the tail end of the fifth and final season, are fast-paced, leaving viewers on the edge of their seats. It's all about the dramatic ending of White's meth empire and the consequences that follow.

"Better Call Saul" is amazing, there is no denying that. The reason the sequel works so well is that you already know the characters. However, in "Breaking Bad" the viewers are treated to shootout scenes in the middle of a southwestern desert, then juxtaposed

against a calming scene in a baby's bedroom. It's the action and the storytelling — even when it's drastic — that makes Vince Gilligan's work of art truly shine brighter than his successor.

But that's just it. It's a counterpart to the original. It's a lazy argument, but there's truth in the notion that there is no "Better Call Saul" without "Breaking Bad." Bob Odenkirk's portrayal of Saul Goodman/Jimmy McGill is only truly accentuated by his previous performance as "Breaking Bad"'s comedic lawyer.

The world that was created just sets the stage for "Better Call Saul" to come out years later. The two shows work hand-in-hand, but it's hard to truly watch "Breaking Bad" and not crown it the king. It's aged wonderfully and will only continue to set the standard for television.



ILLUSTRATION BY KLARA DHANDILI

'Better Call Saul'

By ZACHARY CARTER
Staff Writer

OK, hear me out. Yes, "Breaking Bad" set the precedent, allowing these shows to exist in the universe that they do. Without "Breaking Bad," there is no "Better Call Saul" — that is a given. But under the surface, it's not crazy to think that Bob Odenkirk and the supporting cast have so much more to offer on an entertainment basis than what meets the ordinary eye.

Both shows offer an extraordinary plot, but the reason why the story of "Better Call Saul" outlasts its counterpart is for one crucial reason — the viewer knows what is going to happen. In most cases, these grounds would call for a lapse in the argument. But this show is not a typical

case. The viewer knows that eventually Jimmy McGill will crumble and the persona of Saul Goodman will take over. What invigorates me as the watcher is the process in which that happens.

Following the conclusion of "Breaking Bad," Goodman finds himself a gloomy manager of an Omaha, Nebraska, Cinnabon under the new name Gene Takovic. What we don't know is how this comes to be, or if Takovic's past will ever catch up with him. The series of events leading to Goodman's demise are calculated, yet riveting — and the viewer can only watch in suspense as the story unravels.

This brings me to my next point — the characters. The likes of Kim Wexler, Nacho Varga, Howard Hamlin, Lalo Salamanca and Chuck McGill join already-iconic characters like Goodman and Ehrmantraut to create a cast that is so rich in depth that the storylines flow within the show so easily. Gilligan uses these characters and their lives to develop riveting themes — good versus evil, corruption, addiction and an astounding look into the human psyche — in ways that "Breaking Bad" also excels with, but not to the extent of its predecessor.

It is a crude argument to say that one show is better than the other because it has a more enjoyable plot or likable characters — criteria that ultimately relies on subjectivity. But it is the themes developed throughout the show that places "Better Call Saul" on its rightfully earned pedestal.

Gilligan put the world on notice with "Breaking Bad." With "Better Call Saul," he was able to refine his art, rework crucial, minute touches and seize the opportunity to cash in on a goldmine of a universe in Albuquerque, New Mexico, that captivates millions.

Pecknold: ‘It’s a tall task in terms of what we lost’

MEN’S HOCKEY from 12

NHL interest for all three. This will undoubtedly be each of their last years at the collegiate level, but for now they represent the most whole piece of the Bobcats’ championship core.

“I wanted to play with Graf and Lipkin again,” Quillan said. “There’s also some other stuff to prove in the league, I think I can make the next jump ... just (wanted) to get another year under my belt before I make any decisions.”

The only other forwards that dressed in the title game that remain on the roster are the then-third line of junior Christophe Fillion, sophomore Victor Czernekianair and junior Cristophe Tellier.

This line shuffled considerably over the course of last season, most often replacing Fillion with the now-graduated Desi Burgart, but settled into the above combination after a strong NCAA Regional and presumably will continue this season.

From here the blueprint becomes murkier, as Quinnipiac has to replace two entire forward lines from the championship team.

“We’re excited to defend our national championship, but I think it’s a tall task in terms of what we lost,” Pecknold said. “It’s a lot right now in the month of September. I think we’ll get better as the year goes on once we integrate (the new players) into our identity and our culture.”

The Bobcats have to replace a prototypical Quinnipiac second line of Burgart, Skyler Brind’Amour and Ethan de Jong. This group fully fit the system of complete hockey that Pecknold preaches. They did the little things right: being hard on pucks, getting into lanes, disrupting plays with good stickwork and physicality, which ultimately led to turning defense into offense.

Cornell grad transfer Zach Tupker looks like the ideal replacement at center for this line. At 6-foot-1-inch and 197 pounds, he fits the same physical mold as Brind’Amour. He was a nominee for the ECAC Hockey Defensive Forward of the Year Award in 2022-23, an award Brind’Amour took home. And while he might not quite be at the same level as Brind’Amour at the faceoff dot, Tupker was the second best faceoff man for the Big Red last season, at just over 55%.

Sophomores Anthony Cipollone and Timothy Heinke make sense on the left and right wings on this line, respectively.

Each is poised to step into a greater role after playing less than 15 games apiece last season. Heinke has the physical presence at 6-foot-1-inch and 194 pounds, but both possess the necessary sandpaper to wear opponents down and make an impact on the offensive end.

The fourth line also promises to be youthful, as is the entire team. Freshman Mason Marcellus is the likely choice at center, with freshman Andon Cerbone on the left wing and senior Ohio State transfer Travis Treloar on the right.

Marcellus and Cerbone were each bonafide stars in the USHL and share complimentary styles of play. The former’s elite vision and the latter’s speed and evasiveness could lead to noteworthy production in their first collegiate seasons.

Treloar produced in all of his three seasons with the Buckeyes, notching 20+ points as a freshman and a junior and bringing an element of speed and skill as an outlet on the opposite wing. As an added chemistry bonus, his two full junior seasons in the USHL were spent with Lincoln and Chicago, the clubs Marcellus and Cerbone played for, respectively.

Sophomore Alex Power and freshman Matthew McGroarty project to be the two extra forwards, while graduate student CJ McGee, who typically plays defense, acts as a swiss army knife that can play the wing if need be.

DEFENSE

Predicting defensive pairings for this team is a little like trying to hit a bullseye blindfolded, but I’m going to do it anyway.

Graduate student and team captain Jayden Lee will man the top pairing, but his partner remains a question mark.

Lee spent most of the back half of last season alongside McGee, but played with sophomore Charles-Alexis Legault when McGee suited up as a forward. He also played significant minutes with senior Iivari Räsänen during the first half of the season.

All of those combinations are plausible, but also none of them may be correct. To me, Legault seems like the most likely option, to pair a right-hander with Lee, who is also right-handed but accustomed to playing the left side.

Legault, who was a fifth-round selection by Carolina in this summer’s NHL Draft, will take on a bigger role in his second collegiate season, building off the experience of a national championship campaign and an NHL development camp.

Assuming Legault takes the spot on the top pairing, the bottom four will be some combination of Räsänen, McGee, senior Cooper Moore and junior Davis Pennington, the latter two transfers from North Dakota and Omaha, respectively.

My best guess slots Räsänen with Pennington on the second pair for the offensive upside and then Moore and McGee to round out the group.

Sophomore Jake Martin, a Wisconsin transfer, as well as freshmen Chase Ramsay

and Nicky Wallace, are the three extra defensemen in this scenario.

GOALTENDERS

Quinnipiac’s goaltending situation is very reminiscent of 2021-22. That year, the Bobcats were beginning life without Keith Petruzzelli, the reigning ECAC Goaltender of the Year and Hobey Baker top-10 finalist who started every game the previous season.

On the roster was Notre Dame grad transfer Dylan St. Cyr, who’s senior season with the Fighting Irish was his only campaign as a starter to that point. Alongside him was a budding freshman named Yaniv Perets.

Two historic seasons later, the Bobcats have to move on from Perets, who earned all the same accolades as Petruzzelli and more.

Now on the roster is BU senior transfer Vinny Duplessis, the projected starter, who was stellar in 25 appearances over three seasons backing up Drew Commesso with the Terriers. Alongside him is freshman Matej Marinov, a top-three netminder in the USHL last season, going 21-4-2 in the regular season with a .917 save percentage and 2.36 goals against average.

Perets and St. Cyr split much of the first half slate two years ago, before the former took over the No. 1 role down the stretch.

“It’s tough to replace Perets,” Pecknold said. “Vinny is really good. He’s had some success at BU, he’s older, he’s won the Beanpot, and then we really like Matej too. He had a great season in the USHL last year, so we’ll kind of let them battle out a little bit. Maybe we’ll split them early.”

The one constant between the two teams is Noah Altman – then a freshman, now a junior with two minutes of playing time to his name and cult hero status in Hamden.

SCHEDULE ANALYSIS

For the first time since 2018-19, Quinnipiac scheduled an exclusively East Coast non-conference slate this season, an 11-game lineup that’s poised to be stronger than a year ago and with a much lighter travel load.

“There’s a trade-off, whether you have the travel or not,” Pecknold said. “I thought it was a lot of great bonding on the North Dakota trip... and then I thought the Belfast trip was outstanding from a cultural standpoint... so we have to make sure we bond as a group this year.”

The Bobcats will make the rounds against all four Beanpot competitors, facing Boston College (Oct. 7), BU (Nov. 22) and Northeastern (Jan. 6), with ECAC games against Harvard scheduled for Nov. 4 and Feb. 2.

Each is an opportunity to learn how to contain game-breaking, NHL-bound talent, like Cutter Gauthier and Will Smith of BC, and BU’s Lane Hutson, that Quinnipiac doesn’t see from many conference opponents. This will prove to be vital experience come NCAA Tournament time.

Back-to-back series with New Hampshire and Maine in late October add to the schedule’s Hockey East flavor. Maine is the premier opponent of the two. The Black Bears shutout No. 1 Quinnipiac in Orono last October en route to a surprisingly successful season and look to take the next step this year with one of the country’s top recruiting classes.

UNH will more than likely contend for the bottom spot in the conference, but that was said about Maine last fall, fanning the flames for the upset. It also pits the Bobcats against former teammate Jack Babbage, who transferred to Durham after his freshman season with Quinnipiac in 2021-22.

A home-and-home with AIC in October and a late December matchup with Holy Cross make up the Atlantic Hockey portion of the schedule.

AIC’s four-year reign as Atlantic Hockey champion came to an end last season, but the Yellow Jackets have retooled and are set for a comeback campaign in 2023-24.

Holy Cross nearly turned a seventh-place regular season conference finish into an NCAA Tournament appearance in 2022-23 and look to build off that this season. It’s the sixth straight season Quinnipiac will play the Crusaders, who are led by third-year head coach and former Bobcats’ associate head coach Bill Riga and top scorer Liam McLinskey, a transfer from Quinnipiac.

The other two non-conference games are against LIU on Dec. 9, and either against UConn or Sacred Heart in the CT Ice Tournament championship or consolation game on Jan. 27.

The biggest dates in the ECAC slate are the two previously mentioned games against Harvard, a series against Colgate and Cornell in mid-November and January, games against Clarkson on Feb. 10 and March 1 and the rivalry game against Yale at M&T Bank Arena on Nov. 11. It’s the first time since the 2017-18 season that Quinnipiac will host the Bulldogs prior to the start of the new year.

No ECAC team got significantly better in the offseason. In fact, many got worse, potentially opening the door for another dominant regular season by the Bobcats after a 20-2 in-conference record last year.

Quinnipiac accomplished its ultimate goal last season. As the puck drops on a new campaign this Saturday, the question becomes: what’s next?



12 players from Quinnipiac men’s hockey’s national championship-winning roster are no longer on the team, with eight signing pro contracts.

Aidan Sheedy/Chronicle

MEN’S ECAC
HOCKEY PREVIEW

Teams are ranked in the order Sports Editor Cameron Levasseur voted in the men’s ECAC Hockey Media Poll. To read full writeups on every team, visit quchronicle.com/sports.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12

Black bears don’t bite
Women’s ice hockey shows offensive, defensive prowess
in season-opening sweep against Maine



AIDAN SHEEDY/CHRONICLE

Freshman forward Kahlen Lamarche celebrates after notching her first career point during the Bobcats’ 5-1 win over Maine on Sept. 30.

By COLIN KENNEDY
Associate Sports Editor

No. 8 Quinnipiac women’s ice hockey took to the ice this weekend to play meaningful hockey for the first time since March. Although much of the roster remains the same from last season’s NCAA Tournament run, several new players shined in its season-opening sweep of Maine.

The Bobcats used their speed, depth and top-tier talent to handily defeat the Black Bears. Yes, it’s way too early to be punching tickets to the national tournament, but the Bobcats looked similar to the team they were last year — showing once again that it isn’t crazy to have title aspirations.

Of course, dreaming of raising another banner in Hamden begins with the performance of graduate student goaltender Logan Angers. The sixth-year net-minder was stellar against the Black Bears, only allowing one goal throughout the weekend. She’s picking up right where she left off at the end of last season.

“I just said to our coaches, ‘How good is Logan?’,” head coach Cass Turner said following Friday’s 3-0 win. “I know our team, they just trust her a ton. We’re so grateful to have her back, and it’s nice to see her play so well in our first game of the season.”

The Winnipeg, Manitoba, native was calm, cool and collected all weekend in net, especially in Saturday’s contest, stopping 29 shots, including a breakaway save against Maine senior forward Rahel Enzler. The save came with the Bobcats holding on to a 2-1 lead and on the power play, stopping a momentum-shifting short-handed goal for Enzler.

Quinnipiac exhibited the trust it has in Angers through its offensive play. The Bobcats were constantly pushing the puck up the ice and using their speed to create odd-man scoring opportunities.

Getting up the ice was emphasized in preparation for the weekend series.

“We like to play fast ... get that

puck moving quickly,” Turner said. “So whether it’s a stretch pass, or we’re just creating space ... we want to get north quickly.”

Quinnipiac’s pressing speed led to a constant attack in Maine’s zone, hurling 69 total shots at the Maine goaltenders, eight of which found the back of the net.

Several newcomers also made their presence known during the weekend. Both graduate student forward Julia Nearis and sophomore forward Emerson Jarvis came onto the scene with high anticipation.

Fortunately for the Bobcats, everything went according to plan.

Nearis, the former BU captain, found the back of the net on a breakaway attempt during Friday’s 3-0 win.

“It’s been a lot of fun ... It’s been a lot of hard work,” Nearis said. “I’ve been very grateful to be a part of it. Cass expects everybody’s best everyday and I’m looking forward to keeping it going.”

The transfer tandem teamed up in Saturday’s 5-1 win when Nearis sauced a pass over to the Ohio State transfer, Jarvis, who drilled a shot for her first goal in Hamden.

“They’re both impressive in their own ways,” Turner said. “They play the game differently. Emerson really got her feet moving today ... Julia just has great patience and a knack for the net. We’re excited to have them.”

But despite the final scores, the Black Bears battled throughout the weekend, especially in the early stages of game two when they took a 1-0 lead.

Playing Maine in the season’s opening weekend was by design, and has been for the last three years. The Black Bears forced the Bobcats to get their competitive juices flowing early and often.

“We play Maine every year for that reason,” Turner said. “They’re a team that is going to compete incredibly hard and we want to play games like that so that we can figure out what we’re made of and keep getting better and ready for conference.”

Now it wasn’t all smooth sailing this past weekend. Graduate student forward Alexa Hoskin went down with what appeared to be a serious lower leg injury in the first period of Saturday’s game. Hoskin was carried off the ice without putting any weight on her lower left leg, and received further medical attention from paramedics in the arena tunnel.

With Hoskin potentially missing significant time, Quinnipiac will have to count on its depth to replace her production on both ends of the ice. Senior forward Sophie Urban filled Hoskin’s role of top-line center following the injury and will likely remain in that position.

Turner is confident that Urban, who has experience all over the ice, will be able to help fill the void that Hoskin is leaving.

“Urban last year or the year before, she played defense, center, split wing ... She’s confident to go wherever we need her to go, and she’ll make players better,” Turner said. “She’s just a gritty, tough, good defensive player.”

Junior forward Veronica Bac also saw a significant increase in her playing time following Hoskin’s injury.

“(Bac) has a lot of confidence with the puck,” Turner said. “She’ll make big defensive plays for us too.”

Looking ahead to the next couple of weekends, the Bobcats will have a set of series against New Hampshire and Providence before ECAC Hockey play begins on Oct. 20. The Wildcats also swept their weekend games against Saint Anselm and Saint Michael’s, while the Friars open their season this weekend.

February and March are still quite a ways away. For these Bobcats, the focus has to remain on stringing good weekends like these together. All the pieces are there for another great season in Hamden, with all the possibilities in the world for more.

“This is a group that wants really big things,” Turner said. “So this is exactly what we wanted this weekend.”



AIDAN SHEEDY/CHRONICLE

Quinnipiac men’s hockey preview

By CAMERON LEVASSEUR
Sports Editor

For the first time in its 48-year program history, Quinnipiac men’s hockey will take to the ice at M&T Bank Arena this weekend as defending national champions.

But with that title comes a target on the Bobcats’ back. Every team wants to dethrone the king, and more often than not, someone does. Only three schools have won back-to-back titles since the turn of the century, most recently Minnesota Duluth in 2018 and 2019. If the Bobcats want to become the fourth, they have to once again harness a team-oriented culture while fostering significant growth in the team’s young talent.

ROSTER BREAKDOWN AND LINE PROJECTIONS

A lot has changed since that fateful night in Tampa six months ago. 12 players who lifted the NCAA Championship trophy have moved on. Eight signed pro contracts, two entered the transfer portal and two began their life after hockey.

That leaves the Bobcats with a lot of holes to fill on their line chart, across every position.

FORWARDS

Head coach Rand Pecknold refuses to use the designations of first, second, third or fourth lines to the media, insisting that all of his lines and pairings are created equal. But for the sake of this story’s organization, I will do the opposite.

Up front, Quinnipiac’s top line of sophomore Sam Lipkin, junior Jacob Quillan and junior Collin Graf remains completely intact, despite serious

See **MEN’S HOCKEY** Page 10

When will the clock strike midnight?

Quinnipiac volleyball’s undefeated start to MAAC play seems too good to be true

By MICHAEL LAROCCA
Opinion Editor

Nearly a full calendar year ago, Quinnipiac volleyball began a historic stretch of dominance. The Bobcats have been 17-1 in MAAC play since October of last year, their only loss coming in straight sets at home to Fairfield in October 2022. After that loss, the Bobcats won seven-straight matches, resulting in their first-ever conference title.

Miraculously, that win streak has continued well into this season. Quinnipiac presently sits at 6-0 in the MAAC, tying the 2016 team for the best start to conference play in program history.

After witnessing the Cinderella story, there’s only one question that has not been asked: When is the clock going to strike midnight?

That 6-0 record may look really pretty on your newspaper or computer screen, but it took a lot of ugly moments to get there.

It took coming back from a 2-0 set deficit against Marist on Sept. 23. It took a 32-30 victory in the fourth set to clinch a win over Iona on Sept. 30. And it took a grueling five sets to take down Manhattan on Oct. 1, a team picked to finish last in the preseason coaches’ poll.

Frankly, this team is not playing any different than it did in 2022, when it started its MAAC schedule a dismal 2-7. The team knows it. They can get better.

“The other teams are always coming for us,” sophomore setter Damla Gunes said. “We’re actually the hunted team now. So we should have expected (poor play) like this ... but I’m glad that we didn’t give up.”

However, for the Bobcats, things are just going their way more often, and their reward is atop of the MAAC standings.

This team has the potential to keep steam-rolling its way to 13-0 if it wants to. The next major test in front of it is a match 30 miles down the Merritt Parkway against Fairfield this Friday.

The Stags handled the Bobcats in the 2022 regular season, winning all six sets played by an average of nearly nine points. This year, the 5-1 Fairfield Stags are right behind the Bobcats, their only loss coming in five sets to Marist. Quinnipiac will need to bring everything it has to win this match, but if it does, it is reasonable to assume that the rest of MAAC play will be smooth sailing.

The team has too much talent to fail, despite the shaky starts.

Offensively, countless weapons have emerged as the season continues. The two biggest surprises have been sophomore hitter Yagmur Gunes and freshman hitter Leilani-kai Giusta.

Yagmur is in the midst of a breakout campaign where she is averaging 3.1 kills per set, up from 0.76 in 2022. Giusta is making an impact as well, averaging 3.32 kills per set on .169 hitting. The pair combined for five weekly awards in the month of September. Yagmur won two player of the week honors and Giusta won two rookie of the week awards and one player of the week.

However, the pairing has been overshadowed recently by the return of sophomore hitter Ginevra Giovagnoni, who missed some time with a recurring abdominal injury. Since her first game back on Sept. 23 against Marist, Giovagnoni has accumulated 72 kills and 43 digs, first and second on the team respectively over that span.

With Giovagnoni consistently in the lineup, Robinson is now forced to manage his talent more closely. Giusta did not miss a set during the matches where Giovagnoni was injured. However,

since Giovagnoni’s return, Giusta only played in eight of the 18 total sets the team went through.

“We’ve got so many people at the position that I didn’t want to bring (Giusta) in at all,” Robinson said after the Bobcats’ win over Iona on Sept. 30. “Because we have them, I would like to have a fresh hitter every match we play. Someone who’s hungry. Someone who (is healthy) and is ready to go out and get after it.”

The final curiosity regarding this squad is the near absence of junior libero Fa’avae Kimsel Moe. After being the team’s primary libero during her freshman and sophomore seasons, Kimsel Moe’s role has been usurped by graduate student hitter Aryanah Diaz.

This roster move is confusing. Diaz now has her abilities on the court limited by the position she plays. During previous seasons,

she was both a consistent offensive threat and defensive unit, but now she is just on the defensive end. Diaz is playing well in that spot, but she should be allowed to be the all-around excellent player that she is.

Kimsel Moe has been relegated to a rotational role, coming in to serve for players like senior middle blocker Lexi Morse. She has not played very well, letting balls get by her and sending serves right into the net, but it’s difficult to blame her. Coming in for maybe three plays every set or two does not equate to a player who will be engaged and ready to dominate in the game.

Even with the confusing roster management and shaky play on the court, this team still has not faced the ultimate consequence of losing a match. The clock is ticking on this team, but it’s not midnight just yet. It’s probably closer to 11 p.m.



TYLER RINKO/CHRONICLE

Head coach Kyle Robinson is leading the Bobcats to their best MAAC start since 2016.