

JACK SPIEGEL/CHRONICLE

# Construction blocks only accessible entrance to three residence halls

pg. 2



KENNY SUN/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

## OPINION P.4: Ye or nay?

Contributing writer Joe Baske laments the descent of Ye’s public persona, which is reaching near cancellation



JACK MUSCATELLO/CHRONICLE

## ARTS & LIFE P.6: Rep. Sims shares story

Pennsylvania state’s first LGBTQ state representative spoke to Quinnipiac students about diversity in politics



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## SPORTS P.11-12: Family Ties

How Turkish twins Damla and Yagmur Gunes have become standouts for Quinnipiac volleyball

# National student loan relief provides hope for QU students

By **KRYSTAL MILLER** and **DANIEL PASSAPERA**

Two months ago, President Joe Biden announced a student loan relief plan that would erase a sum of federal student loans from borrowers. On Oct. 17, the application to apply for loan cancellation became available, providing a sense of relief for many students at Quinnipiac University.

The program promises \$10,000 in debt cancellation for individuals who earned less than \$125,000 in 2020 and 2021 in income. Families who earned under \$250,000 in those years would also qualify.

Recipients of Pell Grants, grants for students in financial need at the government’s discretion, qualify for an additional \$10,000 in relief.

Nearly 4,000 undergraduate students at Quinnipiac represent over \$26 million in federal student loans, according to data from the United States Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics.

Amber Hill, a junior law in society major, works two work-study jobs and is a Pell Grant recipient. Hill said it’s “almost impossible” to pay the price for a degree, especially in the law field, but with this relief, she estimates her federal loans will be cut in half.

With a university-wide increase in tuition for this academic year, the total cost of attendance at Quinnipiac’s School of Law ranges from \$71,000 to nearly \$80,000 per year.

“I can focus on my studies more and not worry as much in the year 2026 or 2027,” Hill said. “When I’m ready to go into the workforce, I don’t have to worry as much about working towards paying off my debt, I can worry more about housing and stuff like that.”

Elizabeth McGrann, a graduate business administration student, said she’s been waiting since the summer for the federal student debt relief application to open and has encouraged others to apply as well.

“I think that this is definitely a step in the

right direction to making education much more accessible to everyone and take away a barrier a lot of people have to actually get a higher education,” McGrann said.

The fate of the debt relief remains uncertain following multiple national lawsuits from Republican lawmakers. On Oct. 21, the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals temporarily suspended the relief effort by halting debt discharge following a lawsuit by six GOP-led states.

At least four states in the lawsuit claim the loan debt relief program causes “imminent harm in the form of lost tax revenue,” the lawsuit reads.

In response to the lawsuits, U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona addressed concerns about the lawsuit in a video posted on Twitter Oct. 22.

“We promise to fight and protect you from baseless lawsuits trying to stop us from providing you debt relief,” Cardona said in the video.

Hill said the politicians attempting to block this relief effort are “out of touch” and can’t relate to students in financial need.

“They don’t understand what the people benefiting from this are experiencing,” Hill said.

McGrann said she has roughly \$80,000 of federal loans which will take her years to pay back and many other students are in a similar position, so this program being shut down would not be a smart move by the government.

“I understand people’s anger with it, and the effect it’s going to have on taxes and things, but at the same time I think it was necessary to actually help students who are in debt, start their actual careers and lives,” McGrann said.

Despite the ongoing legal battle, the relief application is available through the U.S. Department of Education until Dec. 31, 2023.

The Biden Administration recommends applying for the relief before the end of the

See **STUDENT DEBT** Page 2



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Sidewalk construction temporarily shuts down accessible entrance to three residence halls

By CAT MURPHY  
Staff Writer

A construction “oversight” resulted in a temporary closure of the only accessible entrance to three of the residence halls located on Quinnipiac University’s Mount Carmel campus, said Sal Filardi, vice president for facilities and capital planning.

The sidewalk stretching from Bobcat Way to the Complex courtyard underwent construction between Oct. 18-21. The construction, which is now completed, shuttered the section of the walkway which encompassed the ramp in front of Perlroth. The ramp provides the only accessible route to Sahlin Hall, Founders Hall and Bakke Hall.

Filardi told the Chronicle that the sidewalk outside the Complex underwent construction to replace damaged sections of the walkway that posed a potential safety hazard to pedestrians.

“The sidewalk itself was a safety issue,” Filardi said. “While yes, (the construction) closed the ramp for a little bit, before they closed the ramp, it was a tripping (hazard).”

Although the university planned to replace the damaged sections of sidewalk over the summer, Filardi said the paving crew had been delayed and was unable to complete the sidewalk repairs until this month.

“It’s really, ideally, a project that we would want to do in the summertime,” Filardi said. “But we couldn’t get the pavers in that timeframe.”

Paul Ashton, a sophomore film, television and media arts major, who has mobility challenges that limit his ability to use stairs, called the ramp closure “inconvenient.”

“It’s better for me in terms of my comfort and actual mobility to just use a ramp for the most part,” said Ashton, who lives in a first-floor accessibility suite in the Complex. “I usually prefer sticking to the sidewalks if I can, just because it’s more consistent for me walking.”

Ashton, who has a metal rod in his leg that he said gives him a slight limp, said he



JACK MUSCATELLO/CHRONICLE

A sign advising handicap students to enter Complex residence halls through Perlroth, was posted at the sidewalk construction site Oct. 19, but students who do not live in Perlroth cannot enter through the locked doors.

was not notified about the sidewalk construction beforehand and was forced to take the stairs while the ramp was closed.

“They knew, probably, that there are people in these accessibility suites,” Ashton said. “Obviously, they didn’t check with any of us.”

Filardi confirmed that the university’s grounds crew blocked off the ramp on Oct. 18, without first determining if any students in the Complex residence halls had accessibility issues. The incident was “a little bit of an oversight,” Filardi said.

Section 36.403 of the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design states that any alteration that may impact the accessibility of a facility “shall be made so as to ensure that, to the maximum extent feasible, the path of travel to the altered area and the restrooms, telephones, and drinking fountains serving the altered area, are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs.”

The grounds crew placed signs around the construction site Oct. 19 that indicated the availability of “temporary handicap access through Perlroth.”

However, neither set of Perlroth’s doors were unlocked to establish an accessible route between the Complex residence halls and Bobcat Way, Filardi said. As a result, the entrances to the Sahlin, Founders and Bakke residence halls were only accessible via stairs for the majority of the week while the ramp underwent construction.

Ashton said he assumed he had misunderstood the signs when he could not access Perlroth.

“Those doors were never open when I saw them,” Ashton said. “I figured there was just something I was missing.”

Filardi, who said he was not initially made aware of the timing of the decision to repave the damaged sidewalk, said the grounds crew had been eager to begin construction once the backordered paving crew arrived.

“It was just a little bit of a mix up,” Filardi said. “The pavers were delayed getting here and they just got overzealous to get (the sidewalk) done as quickly as possible.”

Once the accessibility issue was brought to his attention, Filardi said he advised the grounds crew that they should have verified if there were any students in the Complex residence halls who required access to the ramp prior to shuttering it.

Filardi said he did not intend for the grounds crew to place signs in front of the blocked off sidewalk suggesting that students could pass through Perlroth.

“Well, no, they can’t go through Perlroth because the doors are locked unless you live in Perlroth,” Filardi said. “I know that—I felt they knew that too.”

Ashton acknowledged that he was glad the university had made the sidewalk outside his building safer, in turn making it more accessible, but he pointed out the irony of the situation.

“They had to remove the accessibility to allow it to be accessible,” Ashton said.



JACK SPIEGEL/CHRONICLE

With roped off ramps due to sidewalk construction, students with mobility disabilities are forced to take the stairs outside of Complex residence hall.

**STUDENT DEBT** from cover  
.....  
year as student loan payments will resume for the first time since being halted during the height of the pandemic.  
The application requires basic personal information including, name, Social Security

number, birth date, email and phone number. Federal Student Aid notified student borrowers who have information on file that action is not required for the relief but recommends filling out the application for quicker debt cancellation via email.  
With the burden of student debt weighing on the lives of college students, the re-

lief efforts are providing a sense of hope for those looking toward the future.  
“It is [the relief] helping the student that knows what they want to do, knows exactly how much they’re gonna be in debt, and doesn’t have the means to make hundreds of thousands of dollars to pay it off,” Hill said.



# QU faculty welcome students into their homes for Thanksgiving

**By JACKLYN PELLEGRINO**  
Copy Editor

Quinnipiac University faculty and staff will open their homes this Thanksgiving season to provide students with a festive meal and share their knowledge about the culture surrounding the holiday through the university’s revived Thanksgiving Host Program.

Students will have the opportunity to stay in the home of a faculty member on any day between Nov. 23-27, including Thanksgiving Day on Nov. 24. According to the Microsoft Forms application, students and faculty must apply by Nov. 10. The Department of Cultural and Global Engagement will match students with a faculty member beginning on Nov. 18, on a first come first serve basis.

The Thanksgiving Host Program has run in the past, but “was on pause” because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Sarah Driscoll, director of international student services said.

The program is targeted toward international students, but any undergraduate or graduate student can participate. According to the Microsoft Form, faculty members are asked to provide transportation for international students who are participating.

Driscoll said the host program is a community-based program.

“Some international students will be staying on campus during Thanksgiving break, so it gives them an opportunity to experience a Thanksgiving celebration,” Driscoll said.

In an email statement to the Chronicle, Driscoll wrote that international students make up 2.2% of the student population and there are currently 153 international students enrolled at Quinnipiac.

Driscoll said the Thanksgiving dinner is something that international students may have seen in movies or TV shows that they are excited to try.

“It’s an opportunity for them to do that as well as our faculty and staff that live locally,” Driscoll said. “It’s a chance for them to really engage with students outside of the classroom.”

Karla Natale, associate vice president of community partnerships, signed up to host a student to provide more context about what the Thanksgiving holiday is like. She said it will also be a great opportunity for her family.

“I’m excited to have the opportunity,” Natale said. “I’m glad that this program exists

and I hope more people sign up for it.”

Natale signed up for Nov. 25, when she said her family and the student will be going to pick out her family’s Christmas tree, decorate it and have a Thanksgiving meal at her house.

“Instead of not having a place to go that week or that weekend, they’ll be welcomed into a warm home, with a lot of people that are excited to talk to them, and they’ll benefit by learning a little bit more about how we handle the tradition and more about a culture other than where they came from, where they originate from,” Natale said.

Ann Marie Godbout, administrative assistant to the dean of the School of Nursing, signed up to host on Thanksgiving Day this

year, but said she has signed up in the past, but wasn’t able to participate because there weren’t enough interested students.

Godbout said she comes from a big family, but they are now spread throughout the country so “the more the merrier.”

“Everyone (in Godbout’s family) are wonderful people, and everyone is interesting and fun to talk to, and everyone is interested, so I think there will be really great conversation, and my daughter is also a Quinnipiac student so they can make a new friend as well,” Godbout said.

Khushi Agnish, a senior behavioral neuroscience major and international student from India, has taken part in various Thanksgiving programs run by DCGE over the past three years. This year she signed up for the Thanksgiving Host Program.

Agnish said during her freshman year in 2019 there was not much going on, her sophomore year was during the COVID lockdown, but her junior year she said Driscoll and her team organized several events and she went to dinner at President Judy Olian’s house.

“I think it’s a really great opportunity, (to) maybe meet some more faculty members, and it just helps you feel at home sometimes, when everyone’s gone home and you’re just sitting like what do I do next,” Agnish said.

Agnish said she has never been to Thanksgiving dinner and that she wants to get to know another faculty member better.

“For professors hosting an American Thanksgiving it’ll be like an experience of actually how Thanksgiving is, probably the other students who might attend with me get to know them better as well,” Agnish said.

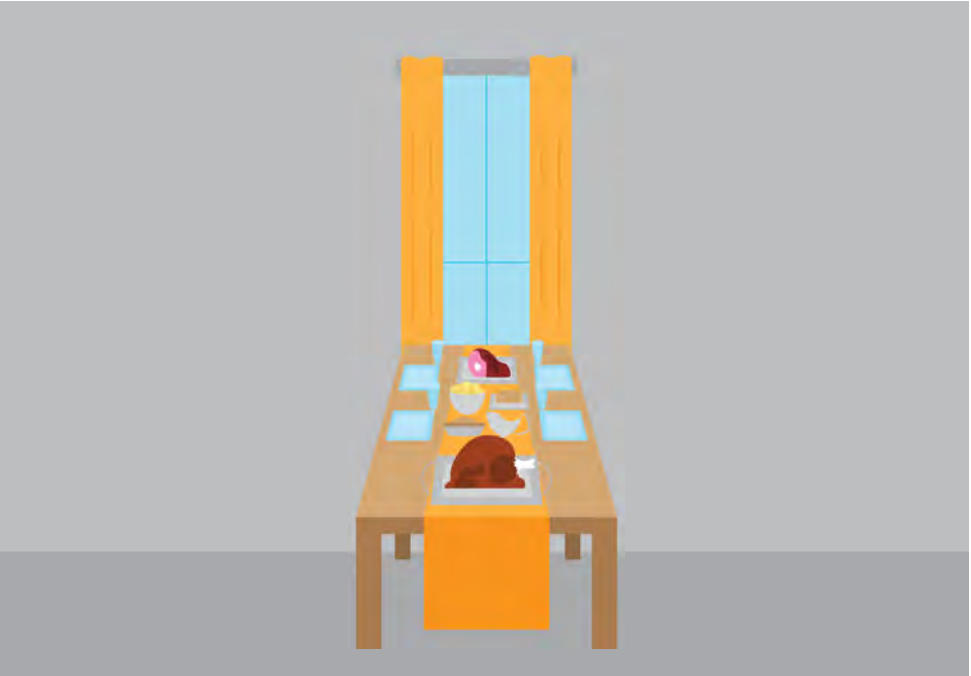


ILLUSTRATION BY SHAVONNE CHIN

# AIDS Memorial Quilt displayed at QU during LGBTQ History Month

**By CARLEIGH BECK**  
Contributing Writer

Quinnipiac University’s office of Community Engagement displayed AIDS Memorial Quilts in the Arnold Bernhard Library and the Edward and Barbara Netter Library from Oct. 17-21 in recognition of LGBTQ History Month.

The AIDS Memorial Quilts are a way for those who died from HIV to be remembered, with many family and friends contributing to the quilt. Most of the quilts were created in the 1990’s when the virus was at its peak, according to HIV.gov.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, AIDS stems from the HIV virus, which attacks the immune system. AIDS is the third and most severe stage of HIV, and most people who have AIDS survive three years with the virus.

The AIDS crisis disproportionately affects the LGBTQ community. According to the Human Rights Campaign, 55% of Americans with HIV are gay and bisexual men, though the group makes up just 2% of the entire U.S. population as of 2017.

Junior health science studies major, Emily Bartlett, one of the presidents of Quinnipiac’s Gender Sexuality Alliance club, emphasized the importance of the AIDS Quilt in a statement to the Chronicle.

“It is very nice to see that these individuals’ stories won’t be forgotten and are able to be shared with many different communities, including our own here at Quinnipiac,” Bartlett wrote. “It warms my heart that so much time and dedication has been

put into a great cause for those individuals and their loved ones, and also that Quinnipiac got the chance to showcase a part of our community.”

Robert Young, a public service librarian at Arnold Bernhard Library, helped bring the memorial quilts to Quinnipiac.

Young said he came out as gay in the 1980s, around the beginning of the AIDS epidemic. Through his membership of an inclusive church in New Haven, Young said he has known more than a dozen men who have battled AIDS, many of whom died from the virus over the years. He said this was one of the factors that inspired him to bring the quilts to Quinnipiac.

“College students today aren’t aware of the Memorial Quilts. They just don’t know about it,” Young said. “I thought it was important history to remember.”

In addition, Young pointed out the many correlations between AIDS and the COVID pandemic. Young said both crises have brought people together.

“I think it’s important to just remember how this pandemic was responded to and how people came together as a community. It could be a model today when we’re dealing with similar types of situations,” Young said.

Vincent Contrucci, director of community engagement, also helped bring the AIDS Memorial Quilts to campus. Contrucci is the faculty advisor for the Chronicle. He also pointed out more similarities between the AIDS epidemic and COVID, saying that the government’s inactions caused the death of thousands.

“It (the Memorial Quilts) presence requires us to understand its history, to reflect ton the systems and cultural biases, biases that allowed the pandemic to reach such proportions in the US and abroad,” Contrucci said. “It also challenges us to recognize and reflect on the slow response to this most recent pandemic. . . the similarities that exist between the two pandemics separated by nearly 40 years are eerily similar. Fear, disinformation, bias and hatred.”

Contrucci, who requested the quilts to be sent to Quinnipiac through the National

AIDS Memorial, notes that the AIDS epidemic is not over yet.

“(People) think that (AIDS) is a thing of the past, when the AIDS epidemic continues to this day,” Contrucci said. “There were over 30,000 HIV diagnoses last year, and that’s only those who got tested, who knows how many more.”

For more information on the AIDS Memorial Quilts and the HIV/AIDS Crisis, visit the National AIDS Memorial website at [aidsmemorial.org](http://aidsmemorial.org).

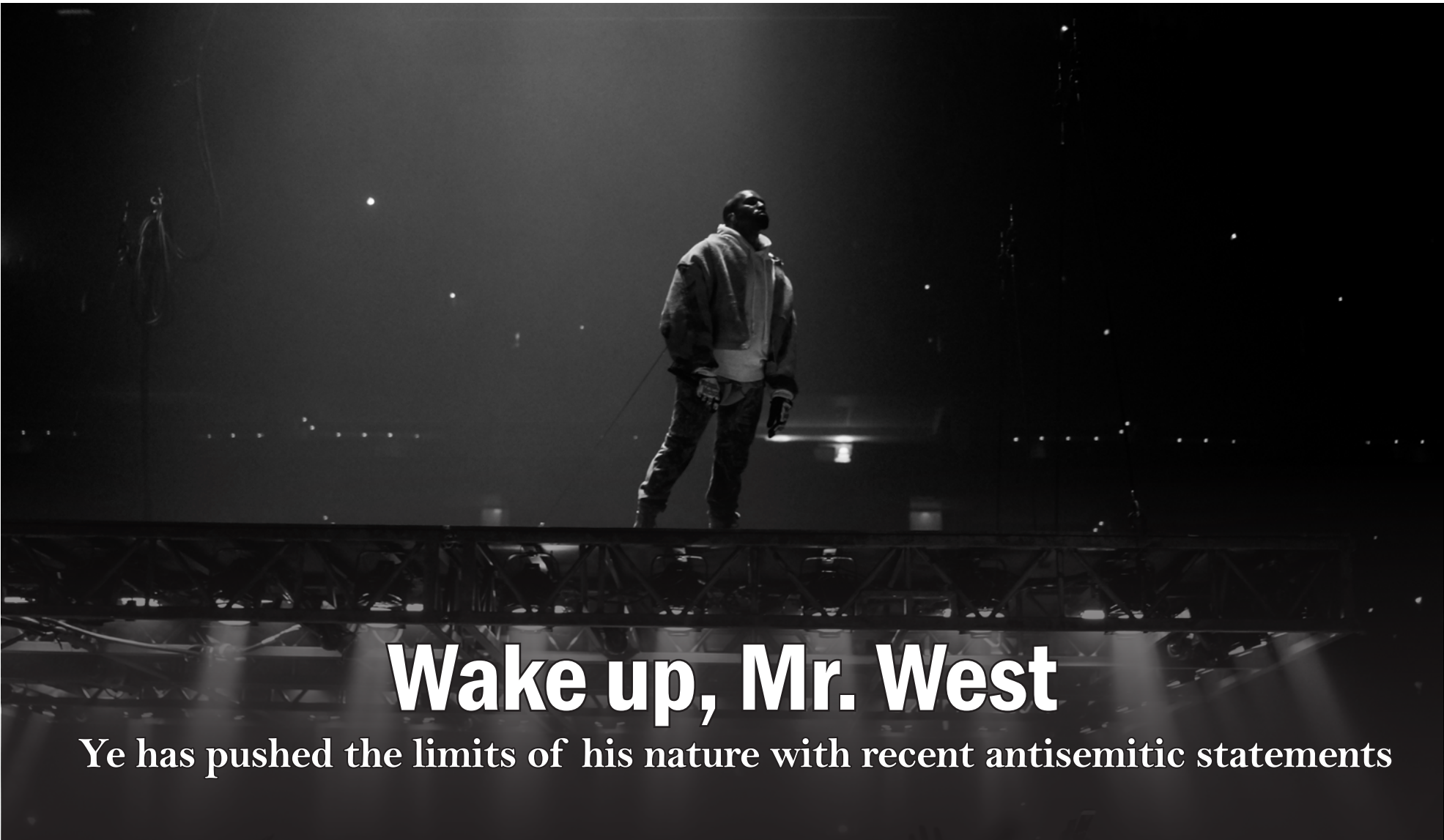


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY VINCENT CONTRUCCI

The AIDS Memorial Quilts displayed in two of the Quinnipiac University libraries Oct. 17-21 honor those who died from the disease.



# Opinion



KENNY SUN/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

**By JOE BASKE**  
Contributing Writer

Ever since his rise to musical stardom, Ye’s antics have always been bombastic and erratic in nature. In recent years, however, such stunts have veered down a dangerous and disturbing path.

On Oct. 7, the rapper, commonly known as Kanye West, posted several controversial Instagram posts in which he claimed that the criticism thrown his way by fellow industry veteran Diddy had been prompted by Jewish influence. Diddy had originally spoken out against Ye after he was pictured at a Paris fashion show in a black t-shirt that read “white lives matter” on its back.

Ye’s words were the catalyst for a temporary Instagram suspension only a few days after he had announced his evidently short-lived return to social media. In response to the ban, the tone of West’s antisemitic remarks morphed from suspicious to threatening.

“I’m going death con 3 on JEWISH PEOPLE,” the rapper wrote in a since-deleted tweet. His attempted use of the improperly-phrased “DEFCON 3” misnomer made the underlying threats embedded within his words alarmingly unsubtle.

And while this certainly isn’t Ye’s first time in the hot seat, it may be the most significant of his career blunders thus far.

Over the years, West established himself as an industry standout for his blunt, tell-it-like-it-is attitude that shamelessly challenged social norms and the practices of the late 2000s. His entire public identity was built off of a frenzy of public stunts ranging from gut-busting at best to rude at worst, most of which possessed progressive undertones. For many consumers, it was easy to write off his erratic nature for an easy laugh.

Sure, there might’ve been some bumps in the road that forced some members of his fanbase to recoil in shame, but that was all part of the process. Ye wasn’t so much an influencer as he was a fascinating, unpredictable spectacle of a man that the public couldn’t help but admire from afar. He was embraced for his shamelessness and openness. He was realer than all those other ce-

lebrities. Mr. West was perfectly imperfect. And that’s what made him non cancelable.

Not even an enthusiastic Donald Trump endorsement campaign in 2018 did so much as leave a dent in Ye’s base. Yes, Trump’s rampant antagonization of foreigners, which stood in stark opposition to Ye’s decades-long commitment to the pursuit of his forward-thinking desires. And yet, to the rapper, none of this mattered; the thrill of embodying the aesthetic of “the media’s villain” was too simply too irresistible.

Nonetheless, as a late-to-the-game teenager only then starting to dip my toes into the boundless world of hip-hop, I witnessed firsthand the balancing act Ye fans found themselves forced to endure during this puzzling era of the artists’ career.

I watched as hoards of Ye fans almost instinctively suited up for battle and once again stuck it out amidst countless attacks against their commander in chief. After years of bearing controversy after controversy, many had grown so numb to the procedure that they never took the time to properly analyze the severity of the events at play.

Six years later, the man whose introduction to the right-wing pipeline was nonchalantly written off as just another quirky and inconsequential phase is now threatening the lives of Jews to possibly the most mainstream base of viewers such ideas have ever been exposed to.

To those on the outside, West’s abrupt transformation may appear perplexing. In reality, not too much about him has changed. Ye isn’t principally progressive or conservative; he’s principally opposed to the accepted. In my opinion, it is a classic case of a man who has conflated contrarianism with supposed free-thinking.

In response to his aforementioned social media censorship, the rapper has recently purchased Parler – a far-right social media platform – where he undoubtedly plans to bury himself deeper within an echo chamber comprised exclusively of the nation’s worst people.

But recent critiques from Trump suggest that the rapper may even struggle to gain acceptance among Parler’s audience base.

In conversations confirmed by The Rolling Stone, Trump described Ye as “too crazy” and in need of “help.”

Although I wonder if Trump’s words were likely nothing more than a desperate attempt to appeal to his loyal Jewish supporters, the twisted hilarity of Trump – an individual I find to be more bombastic and outspoken than Ye himself — still advising him to pump the brakes is too surprising to be overlooked.

And the outcomes of the rapper’s actions are growing more apparent with each day he continues to violently tumble down the alt-right pipeline. On Oct. 22, an antisemitic hate group embraced Ye as an unofficial brand ambassador, draping signs that read “Kanye is Right About the Jews” over a bridge on a Los Angeles freeway.

In essence, it doesn’t matter whether Ye strutted up to a swarm of TMZ cameras on Oct. 14, and proclaimed that he “doesn’t hate the Jews.” Even a band of hooligans can detect the hateful implications in the rapper’s words and conclude that his confession is a lie. If they can do it, it shouldn’t be too hard for those who have supported him over the years.

Sure, Ye has always been outspoken and hilariously misinformed, but never before have we seen his pattern of erratic outbursts lead to such devastating outcomes for both himself and those who unfortunately find themselves ruthlessly and obsessively antagonized by him.

It is said that actions speak louder than words, and yet, the words of an orator can inspire endless action. Don’t allow a distinguished discography

force you into downplaying the severity of the events at hand.

It probably won’t happen now, but there comes a point when even the most diehard Ye fans must come to terms with the fact that the line must be crossed somewhere. Only time will tell where and when they’ll finally take that step, but regardless of when they do, it appears inevitable that this is the way things will have to end.

Welcome to Ye’s next chapter. This one might not be too fun.

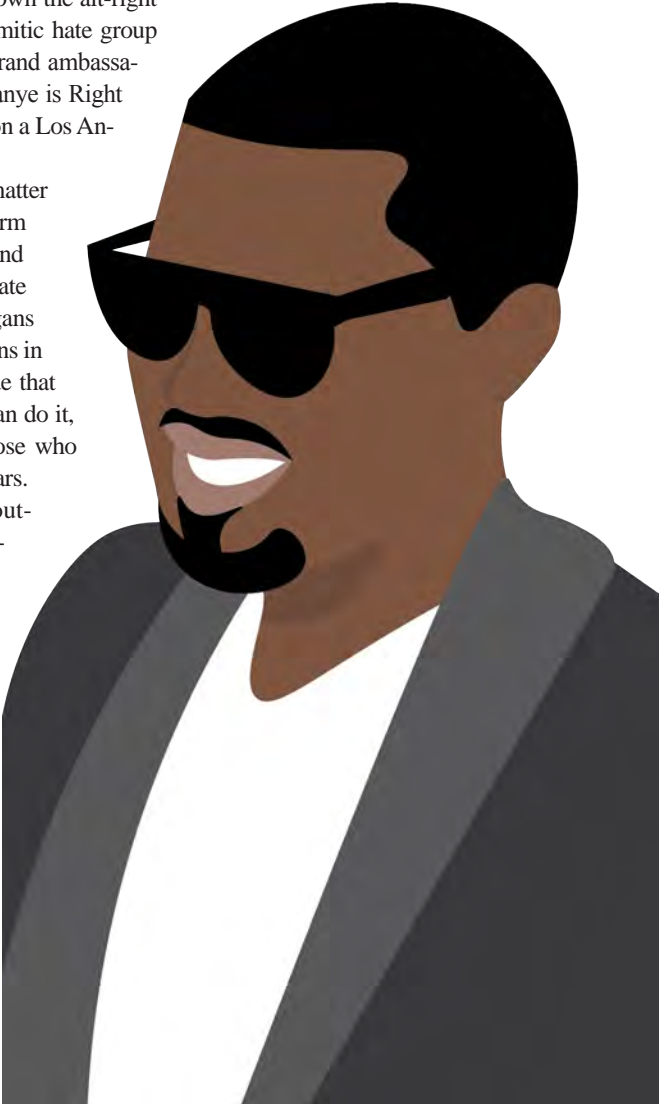


ILLUSTRATION BY SHAVONNE CHIN



# Opinion

## Quiet quitting needs to cut it out

By **A.J. NEWTH**  
Staff Writer

Are you an overachiever?

For many college students, the answer is yes. The college environment pushes students to do their best, whether that be in classes or extracurriculars. But what about when it comes to the workplace?

Quiet quitting is a trend where employees are doing the bare minimum at work, a rebuttal of the tendency to go above and beyond in the workplace. It is the belief that once a shift ends, workers simply go home and disconnect from the office as opposed to staying late or bringing work home, according to the U.S. News & World Report.

The biggest argument for introducing quiet quitting into the lives of employees is that work-life balance is important, and workers should stop putting their whole lives into their jobs. Even though Americans are statistically working less than they did in the past, with the average work year shrinking by more than 200 hours, the U.S. still worships “workism” and it is draining all employees alike, according to The Atlantic.

The idea of quiet quitting is just a mere excuse for laziness in the workplace and life. It’s foolish for individuals to spend their whole lives working hard to get to a place they feel accomplished, only to decide that’s where the hard work ends and is substituted for the bare minimum. People who participate in quiet quitting are throwing away years of struggle only to be average and regular in their jobs instead of extraordinary.

As a college student, I find this notion unimaginable. My peers here at Quinnipiac University live off of the concept of overachieving and becoming the best. I find that everything in college is a competition in one way or another, so the thought of pulling back and not putting in the effort has never crossed my mind.

I understand that work-life balance is important. Americans are working longer than anyone else in the industrialized world, with less vacation time, longer days and later retire-

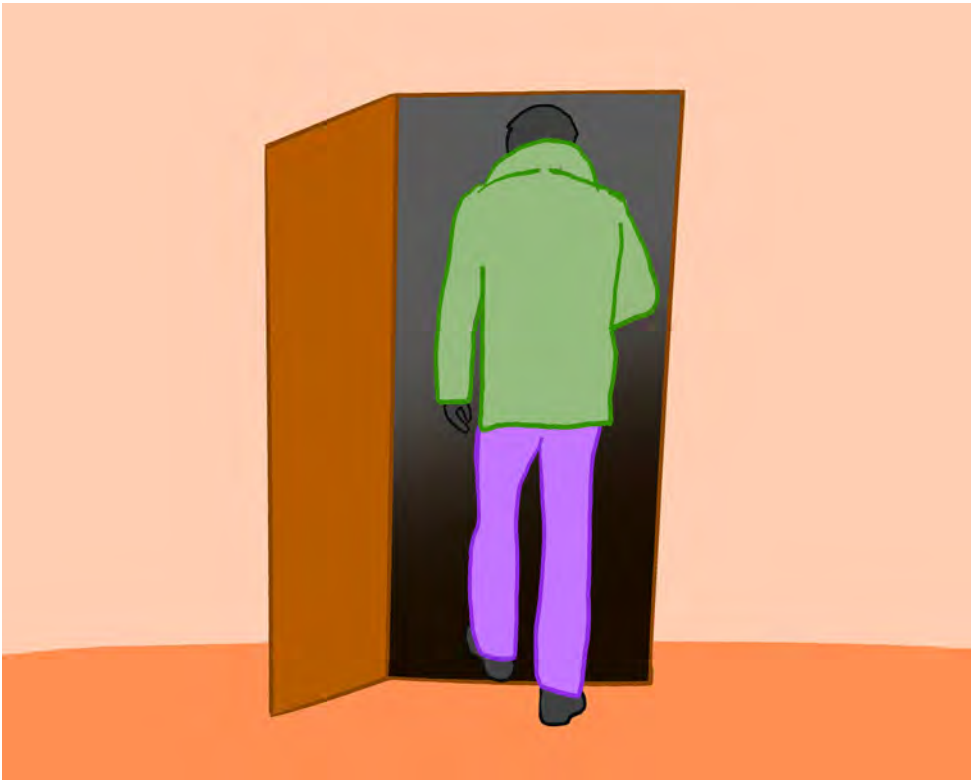


ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX KENDALL

ment. We see the effects of overworking in our society through road rage, workplace shootings and a rising number of children placed in daycare as well as a demand for afterschool activities for children whose parents work late hours, according to ABC News.

It’s no lie that Americans are over-stressed and overworked. A survey by the Bureau of Labor statistics in 1999 revealed that 11 million Americans in the workforce reported working over 59 hours per week. Overworking can take a big toll on mental health, which is why work-life balance has become increasingly popular in society as a movement to educate workers on the importance of knowing there is life outside of the office.

I think it’s possible to maintain a positive work-life balance while still overachieving in a work environment. Some ways to achieve this balance are exercising and meditating, allocating time correctly and refocusing the structure of your life. All of these can

be done while still doing exceptional work in the office, according to Forbes.

Companies have witnessed this change in motivation when it comes to their workers, and they have moved to put mechanisms in place to prevent burnout, according to Entrepreneur. But are the boards of directors, CEOs and top managers really looking out for the employees on significantly lower levels than them? Are company heads really doing enough?

Work-life balance is not the only reason for quiet quitting, which begs the question, is this trend at the fault of the employers? My advice to managers and CEOs who struggle with quiet quitting in their workplaces is to step back to see the full picture of the work environment they have created. Are employees being treated well? Is the benefits package sufficient for the work they’re doing? Maybe if employers actually paid their workers on the basis of abilities and accomplish-

ments, employees would be less inclined to disconnect from their jobs.

In recent years, there has been a visible change in the workplace. Fewer people are inclined to work, more people choosing to stay home while others choose to travel instead of finding a stable job, according to Time. This is the result of a global pandemic.

The pandemic served as a turning point for many workers in America. A combination of the ability to work from the comfort of home and stimulus checks, as well as the fear instilled from how quickly life can change, COVID-19 left a lasting impact on the workforce. Employees are reconsidering what matters to them, and quiet quitting is a simple way to put other things first in life instead of work, according to NPR.

If you’re considering quiet quitting, at that point it’s better to quit altogether. Although employees are not disengaging from their core tasks, quiet quitters refuse to go above and beyond them. This can be detrimental for companies because refusing to go beyond the call of duty destroys any competitive advantage among other companies. It’s less stressful for a business to cut its loose ends than maintain a workspace where every worker is psychologically disconnected, according to Harvard Business Review.

The reason I find quiet quitting so difficult to understand is that I would never stop putting effort into something I love. The only explanation I have for quiet quitters is that they are in the wrong industry and are unhappy, or their employers are treating them poorly. I look forward to my goals and working hard to achieve them because I know I’m working towards something I enjoy, otherwise I wouldn’t be doing it.

No company wants a workplace of miserable employees who stop putting in the effort. While choosing to quiet quit, workers increase the workload for colleagues who continue to exceed expectations. Many would view this as unfair, but on behalf of the overachievers, I say bring it on.

### Bobcat Buzz



### Update failed

By **AIDAN SHEEDY**  
Copy Editor

Last week, Quinnipiac University ended construction on its new outdoor seating and lounge area for the renovated Echlin Center. Unfortunately, I think this addition to the building is an eyesore. It’s out of place and looks sloppy. This idea of modernizing detailed buildings like the brick building of the visitor’s center is just another example of why we have to stop trying to change every building.

The new electrical awning looks like a giant tanning bed, and it’s especially bright at night. As I walked to my night class recently, I was blinded. The structure is out of place as the sunset on the Quad was ruined by a cheap remodel.

Just because it’s new, doesn’t mean it’s good.

The Arnold Bernhard Library is undoubtedly the symbol of Quinnipiac.

Why do you think that is? It’s because original buildings are visually appealing, detailed and preserve the authenticity of their surroundings.

The library clock tower was actually constructed differently than it appears today. For decades, the library tower had a metallic Seattle Space Needle-like point that symbolized the heights at which students could soar, according to the university’s website. In popular culture in the mid 20th century, it was common to picture a sleek, metallic, even robotic city with flying cars. To me, that seems like what the university was going for during the original construction.

In 1996, construction on the tower began. The result is the beautiful, tall structure we see today. I consider this a demodernization project. The university abandoned the futuristic look and resorted to a more tradi-

tional, antique look that has stood the test of time.

It’s features like the library clock tower that truly showcase the beauty of our school. If the university really wanted to showcase the prettiest places on campus for prospective students, they shouldn’t have added something so new to the visitor center. I don’t see any prestigious universities branding themselves as “new.”

Before we have new details on our buildings, why don’t we use that money to restore their original beauty instead? Part of the reason I was drawn to this school was the secluded village feel of the quad and dorms. It’s upsetting to me that the school feels that they need to modernize everything. I think we need to appreciate the details and little things like the old-style architecture that make this campus so unique.





JACK MUSCATELLO/CHRONICLE

# Pennsylvania State Rep. advocates for diversity in politics

By **KATIE LANGLEY**  
News Editor

When Pennsylvania State Rep. Brian Sims was 11 years old, he told everyone he wanted to be a “feminist lawyer” when he grew up. What he didn’t predict is that he would climb the ladder as a civil rights attorney and go on to advocate for LGBTQ Pennsylvanians in the State House of Representatives.

Sims spoke at Quinnipiac University’s Mount Carmel Auditorium in a co-sponsored event hosted by the Quinnipiac Democrats and the Gender Sexuality Alliance on Oct. 18. Sims has served as the representative for Philadelphia’s District 182nd for 10 years, as the state’s first openly gay statewide elected official.

Paul Cappuzzo, president of the Quinnipiac Democrats and a senior political science and economics double major described Sims as a “firebrand”: a radical

agitator in politics, according to the Oxford English Dictionary. Cappuzzo said it was an easy decision to bring Sims in to speak during LGBTQ History Month.

“I really hope that students were able to identify with things that he said, whether it be his story, whether it was when he came out, or the politics,” Cappuzzo said.

In addition, Cappuzzo said it was particularly memorable that Sims gave up his seat when running for Pennsylvania lieutenant governor earlier this year, though it is not required. Sims instead supported Deja Alvarez, a transgender Latina woman who lost the 2022 democratic primary for the party’s nomination.

“I really hope that people learned and were able to take away the sense that politics isn’t always about power, doing things for your own self in a self help way,” Cappuzzo said. “You can also be the

bigger person; you can also go ahead and relinquish that power.”

Sims’ time in office is coming to an end with the Nov. 8 Pennsylvania General Election, having run an unsuccessful primary campaign for lieutenant governor earlier this year. Sims lost the Democratic nomination in June to Rep. Austin Davis. Looking back at his career and early life, Sims shared advice about allyship with Quinnipiac students.

“There is something within the privilege structure called the privilege within privilege,” Sims said. “It turns out if you have a particular type of privilege, other people who share that privilege with you are more likely to hear you combat that privilege than the people who are the negative recipients for that privilege.”

This idea led Sims, a white, cisgender man, to stand up for women’s and transgender rights issues and racial equality. Throughout his time in office, Sims has supported policies such as equal pay, gun regulation, energy sustainability, comprehensive sex education and a ban on gay conversion therapy.

“I went there to play football and I think I knew the moment that I got there that I had made a good choice for football, I might not have made the best choice for closeted me,” Sims said. “This was a school in the middle of nowhere that didn’t have the Gay Straight Alliance. It didn’t have an LGBTQ group. It had nothing.”

In his senior year of college, Sims was voted captain of his football team. He told the audience about losing a national championship and subsequently coming out to a friend– the quarterback of his football team– during a trip to his twin brother’s college.

“He just stops me, looks me up and he goes, ‘Yo Sims, are you gay?’” Sims said. “... I had been wondering for four years when my roommates would figure out how gay I am. Like, I’m gay. I’m really gay. Like in my best days, I’m especially gay.”

Sims came out to the rest of his football teammates and his parents, both of whom offered him support and acceptance. After becoming the first openly gay college football captain in NCAA history, Sims went on to attend Michigan State University College of Law.

Sims said that he had no interest in running for office until he heard about a transphobic comment from then-incumbent democratic Rep. Babette Jones, who had been in office for 28 years at the time.

During his first bid for office in 2012, Sims raised about \$250,000 and won his election by just 253 votes. Since then, he has been touting the utility of diversity and the power of allyship.

Sims closed out his speech by telling students, “I want all of you to run for office.”

He implored the crowd that young people are the future of inclusive politics, which he said makes him optimistic about what happens next.



JACK MUSCATELLO/CHRONICLE

**Pennsylvania Rep. Brian Sims encouraged future politicians to use their privilege to support others during a speech at Quinnipiac on Oct. 18.**



# QU’s Women Empowered holds breast cancer awareness event for Yale New Haven Hospital patients

By DAVID MATOS  
Arts & Life Editor

Pink streamers decorated the walls while songs by influential women like Taylor Swift and Beyonce echoed Quinnipiac University’s Carl Hansen Student Center Piazza at Women Empowered’s annual Breast Cancer Awareness Event on Oct. 19.

Quinnipiac’s WE chapter held a night full of cookie decorating and card-making for breast cancer patients at Yale New Haven Hospital in observance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

“This is an event to bring more awareness to people struggling with breast cancer, and we wanted to support them in any way we could,” said Jennie Coleman, a sophomore 3+1 applied business major and WE president.

According to the American Cancer Society, there were over 3,000 new cases of breast cancer in Connecticut women in 2019, the highest number of new cancer cases within the state. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in eight women will develop the form of cancer in their lifetime, making it the most common cancer in the U.S.

“I would say that awareness is the first step to progress because the more people are aware, the more people will donate or step up,” said Emmaleigh Halbert, a junior health science studies major and WE event coordinator. “We have a wonderful health science program here, and the more people that are interested in this topic, we can have more progress to solving the issue and helping people who are suffering with (breast) cancer.”

Kylie Ameika, a sophomore nursing major and chair of inter-organizational relations for WE, came up with the idea to host a breast cancer awareness event and send letters to breast cancer patients. Her mother, who works at Yale New Haven Hospital on the Yale Saint Raphael’s campus in the outpatient surgery unit, knows doctors and nurses who work with breast cancer patients. After the event, Ameika gave the letters created by students to her mother who then brought them to patients.

“We had that connection and realized that would be a great idea to just send letters over there, and because I can’t even imagine what they’re going through they need some sort of support,” Halbert said. “I mean, obviously, they have their family. But seeing that people in the community, and Quinnipiac students are there for them — we thought that was a great idea.”

Aside from hosting this event, WE’s director of marketing, Emma Williams, a junior 3+1 film, television and media arts major, is utilizing Instagram to bring more awareness to the cause through a social media campaign.

“She has created a few different posts,” Coleman said. “One of which includes facts about breast cancer, and then also a link to (American Cancer Society) where people can send their donations for people with breast cancer.”

Students who came out to the event wrote letters in colorful ink with powerful messages like “stay strong” or “Pink is my power color” for breast cancer patients



DAVID MATOS/CHRONICLE

**Quinnipiac Women Empowered president Jennie Coleman, a sophomore 3+1 applied business major, writes a letter for a breast cancer patient at breast cancer awareness event on Oct.19.**

while enjoying free pizza from Eli’s Brick Oven Pizza and decorating cookies purchased from BJ’s Wholesale Club to enjoy or take home.

“I came out here to support females that are struggling with breast cancer and to have fun with my roommates,” said Zoey Nadal, a first-year 3+3 health science studies major in the physical therapy program.

One of the other highlights for students at the event was the all-female playlist curated by WE secretary Rebecca Huyck, a first-year interdisciplinary studies major, who wanted to create a soundtrack to spotlight women from a

multitude of different backgrounds and cultures, like Doja Cat and Lady Gaga, for example.

“I definitely wanted to focus on songs made by female artists and especially female empowerment,” Huyck said.

Caitlin Bradshaw, a first-year interdisciplinary studies major, alongside her friends Alex Casale, a freshman occupational therapy major, and Ava Mills, a first-year nursing major, attended the event to encourage breast cancer awareness.

“It’s a very good event for awareness and I know people that have breast cancer, and some that have passed away,” Casale said.

# Learning to embrace yourself to be the best you

By RYAN RAGGIO  
Staff Writer

It took me 20 years to finally recognize that being myself is acceptable whether it’s how I act, my interactions with women, how I choose to dress or not comparing myself to others. When I figured out who I was, I became a more authentic version of myself.

During my first year at Quinnipiac University, I tried not to care about what others

thought of me. This mantra never stuck with me because I was too self-conscious and had always struggled with being my own person. It may not have looked like it, but when I walked around in public I was extremely insecure. I’d show up to class sweating because I thought people who saw me were judging me in every possible way.

There were a handful of times when I’d be standing in front of my closet looking for

something to wear for a minute round trip to the Bobcat Den. I made the extra effort for nothing. I was stressing myself out because I was nervous about what others would think if I showed up with slides and messy hair. Now as a junior, I dress more comfortably when I go out.

When I met new people I would put on a standoffish attitude to look cool. In reality, I seemed like a douchebag. This relates most to my interactions with women. I would act like my friends that seemed like they easily attracted women. In contrast to the tough-guy persona, I actually felt anxious and insecure. To cope, I put on a metaphorical mask to hide my real personality as a defense. This worked temporarily, but when it came time to meet the real me, women were surprised or felt I was too much. Because of my prior experiences with rejection, I threw on this mask to hide and hope it’d hurt less.

After doing some self-reflection, I realized that there is no point in hiding my true self and that trying so hard to be someone I’m not is a waste of time. My brother’s friend recommended the book, “Dating Sucks, But You Don’t,” by Connell Barrett. One of Barrett’s main points was about rediscovering self-confidence. It opened my eyes to what my parents had been telling me for years, to be myself.

The irony of this is that I don’t like to read, but I was desperate for answers. I learned that embracing your qualities and showcasing them to others is what creates authentic relationships. I’ve struggled with

overthinking and having anxiety about what others thought of me. After breaking away from that torment, I feel free.

I’ve played baseball my entire life. My coaches, teammates, family and friends have asked me the same question, “Who do you see yourself as?” I’d aim to remain humble with my answer by choosing a player who I think I perform like a speedy outfielder with great defense and solid contact. However, I always aspired to be a home run hitting superstar. Secretly, I believed I could be like those kinds of players, such as Yankees outfielder Aaron Judge, Angels outfielder Mike Trout or Phillies outfielder Bryce Harper. I constantly daydreamed about myself hitting a walk-off home run in a championship game. If I failed in an at-bat where the team needed a clutch hit, the aftershock of failing hurt tremendously. It took me years to finally realize, I’m not that guy. I’m not a home run hitter. My mission is to get on base, steal bags and score runs. Once I accepted it, I saw failing as a moment to learn from because I knew that I wasn’t trying to overdo anything and be someone I wasn’t.

Now in my junior year of college everything has changed for me. I don’t care about what others think of me and my anxiety has become easier to ignore. I still try to be a role model for my younger friends and I do care about what my friends think of me, but it’s not controlling my life like it was when I was a first-year student.



ILLUSTRATION BY SARAH HARDIMAN



# Photos: Falling for the foliage at QU



JACK SPIEGEL/CHRONICLE



JACK MUSCATELLO/CHRONICLE



JACK SPIEGEL/CHRONICLE



JACK SPIEGEL/CHRONICLE



JACK MUSCATELLO/CHRONICLE



JACK SPIEGEL/CHRONICLE



# Taylor Swift’s ‘Midnights’ redefines melancholy

By **KATIE LANGLEY**  
News Editor

We can all remember the sleepless nights when rumination and worry, past relationships and new ones, shattered expectations and newfound excitement kept us from closing our eyes. And Taylor Swift just put it all so effortlessly into words.

Amid re-recording her first six studio albums, Swift released her tenth studio album, “Midnights” on Oct. 21. The album’s 13 songs and seven “3am tracks”– surprise releases dropped at 3 a.m. after the original songs – tell the story of 20 sleepless nights throughout Swift’s life.

The album kicks off with a handful of Lorde-esque pop bangers. In the first track, “Lavender Haze,” Swift delves into the difficulty of maintaining meaningful relationships while coping with the momentous public scrutiny of fame, a theme that Swift has been returning to for years.

The second track, “Maroon,” is like “Red’s” older and sultrier sister. In this song, Swift looks back on a previous relationship. No longer is this relationship defined by the color red; it’s “so scarlet it was maroon.”

The influence of Bleachers frontman and Swift’s longtime producer and co-writer Jack Antonoff is tangible in dreamy synth lines and screamable bridges in songs like “Lavender Haze,” “Maroon” and “Midnight Rain.” Antonoff also produces songs for Lorde, as well as artists like Lana Del Rey and St. Vincent, both of whom worked with Swift on “Midnights.”

Once again, the Swift-Antonoff team owns pop music.

Moving on to the record’s lead single, “Anti-hero,” Swift once again dives deep into her insecurities. As lead singles go, this track has great radio potential. Swift is a master at crafting depressing lyrics to catchy, optimistic beats. However, one thing I’ve always admired about Swift is her ability to write subtly about self-doubt and doomed overachievement, in tracks like “Mirrorball.” Though poignant, “Anti-hero” is a bit too flashy for me.

The long-anticipated Lana Del Rey collab comes in the fourth track, “Snow On The Beach,” a song about falling in love with someone when you don’t expect it. It’s a dreamy song, fitting perfectly into Del Rey’s dreamy voice. I only wish we got more of Del Rey, who only provides backing vocals in the chorus. “SOTB” was a perfect opportunity for a “Nothing New” (feat. Phoebe Bridgers)-style double-female duet, surprisingly, Swift didn’t take that chance.

One of the most nostalgic tracks on the album is “You’re On Your Own, Kid.” The



song describes Swift’s teenage self and her rise to fame at such a young age – the people she left behind, the childhood she missed, her persistence and self-reliance. The bridge perfectly sums up what it’s like to devote your whole life to a dream and give her “blood, sweat and tears” for notoriety.

Moving to my favorite song on the record, “Question...?”, Swift describes a fling that she wishes she fought harder for. This song, unlike the rest of the songs on the album, uses strictly she/her pronouns. Swift has been known to use the literary “male perspective” in her past in songs such as “Betty” and “Dorothea,” but as a queer Swift fan myself, it is comforting to have a song that feels like I can relate to and hold as my own.

“Vigilante Shit,” “Bejeweled” and “Karma” are grouped together in my brain under a tab called “bad bitch songs,” sounding like they came straight out of the “Reputation” era. These three tracks are perfect for drawing on a cat eye before going out with your friends on a Friday night.

In a complete change of pace, the most tender song on “Midnights” is “Sweet Nothings.” With a lullaby-like piano intro and heartfelt lyrics written by Swift and boyfriend Joe Alwyn– under the name William Bowery– this song perfectly encapsulates the sanctuary of a gentle love in a loud world. “Sweet Nothings” shows the incredible extent of Swift’s poetic ability with lines like “to you I can admit, that I’m just too soft for all of it.”

Unfortunately, I can’t cover every song on “Midnights,” each complex and layered in its own right. However, there’s one “3 a.m. track” that I have to mention.

“Would’ve, Could’ve, Should’ve” makes Swift’s absolutely heartbreaking ballad “Dear John” seem like child’s play. In this song, Swift looks back at the relationship that inspires “Dear John”– when she dated John Mayer at 19 when he was 32. With the knowledge of age, Swift says, “give me back my girlhood, it was mine first.” She recognizes how the relationship changed her as a person forever and returns to the idea that Mayer should have known better than to pursue a very young girl.

Although sonically opposite from previous albums “folklore” and “evermore,” “Midnights” feels like the fitting next installment in the Swift timeline. Personally, the album is special to me because I feel like I grew up with Swift. It’s meaningful to imagine Swift looking back at the feelings that inspired past songs, both the beautiful and the ugly.

## ‘The Car’: Driving into the new Arctic Monkeys album

By **CASEY WIEDERHOLD**  
Contributing Writer

The last time Arctic Monkeys drove alternative music fans crazy, it was 2018. The rock band made their return to music and released its seventh studio album “The Car” on Oct. 21, the same day as Taylor Swift’s tenth studio album “Midnights.” This brought some competition as to which album I would be listening to first, but naturally, I honored my alternative rock side and chose Arctic Monkeys.

I’ve been a fan of the U.K. band since its 2013 album “AM,” so I was excited to hear the new music they were putting out for the world. The popular band previously released singles

“Why’d You Only Call Me When You’re High?” and “Do I Wanna Know?” quickly became some of my favorite songs. I’ll admit I had high expectations for “The Car” since their previous album “Tranquility Base Hotel & Casino” from 2018 was not at the top of my rankings.

After a second listen to “The Car,” I can advise on whether this album deserves a listen.

“The Car” opens with the lead single “There’d Better Be A Mirrorball” and I was not overwhelmed with joy hearing it. I already heard the single during its initial release, so I knew what it sounded like. By the time the album was released, I heard the song

enough times to know that at first, I loved it, but then it got old after listening for a while. When the single was first released, I thought it fostered similar sounds to “Star Treatment” from “Tranquility Base Hotel & Casino.” The opening chords sound similar, but not in the sense that lead singer Alex Turner is sampling his own songs. This song would constitute a skip from me.

The next two songs “I Ain’t Where I Think I Am” and “Sculptures Of Anything Goes” could not be more different. “Sculptures Of Anything Goes” brings the listener back to 2013 when “AM” was released and Arctic Monkeys was solely focused on performing more alternative rock-styled music. I consider “I Ain’t Where I Think I Am” to be another skip of the album.

“Jet Skis On The Moat” takes on a more psychedelic approach. There are no resemblances to other Arctic Monkeys songs. It’s not a track that I would consider overlooking, though this song is better off becoming the backing track to a late-night study session.

The fifth track of the album, “Body Paint” is a steady-paced song. This is the second song to have string instruments as a larger part of the song’s musicality. I also enjoyed the guitar usage. This song was released prior to the album, and it was one that I had on repeat.

When Turner writes the music for his songs, most of the lyrics make sense. I cannot say the same for the title track, “The Car.” It’s very safe to say I will not be listening to this song. The song starts with acoustics, an aspect of music I highly enjoy. However, in this track, the song could have gone without it. It feels out of place on the album since it is the only track to be featured with what I would call a “woody” type of feeling.

The lyrics written by Turner for the next song “Big Ideas” made more sense. Most of the songs on this album feature string instruments, giving it an orchestral sound, far different from the usual rock that audiences heard in the past.

The eighth song titled “Hello You,” is similar to “Body Paint.” The phrase “hello you” is repeated four times, but it feels longer due to the musical breaks between the “hellos.” This is one of the longer tracks on the album and it shows. For starters, the track is the third longest on the album, running at four minutes and five seconds. The track itself is played at 169 beats per minute, which is considered to be a faster tempo. It’s ironic that something played so fast can sound and feel so slow. I felt tired after listening to “Hello You,” and I was ready to say goodbye.

“Mr Schwartz” is a song I did not expect to enjoy. The track sounds familiar in a way that reminds me of the Billie Eilish song “Billie Bossa Nova.” The track gives a feeling as though I want to get up and dance with someone.

The final track to the album “Perfect Sense” made perfect sense to be the last track. The song uses a larger build-up of string instruments throughout, as well as the drum set becomes gradually louder. The end of the song suddenly fades out as Turner sings the lyrics, “If that’s what it takes,” bringing the album to a close.

With the new album, I went in with high expectations and those expectations were not met. I loved listening to the album, but I prefer the older, more rock-sounding music. If you’re looking for something good for studying, I recommend this album. I found a few skips, mostly on songs that I expected to not enjoy. The album was worth the wait, but not worth picking over Taylor Swift.



ILLUSTRATION BY AMANDA RIHA



Scores  
&  
Schedule

Wednesday 10/19

WSOC won 5-1 vs Manhattan  
MSOC tied 0-0 @ Manhattan

Friday 10/21

WXC 7th of 10 @ CCSU Mini Meet  
FHOK lost 4-3 @ Villanova

Saturday 10/22

MHOK lost 4-0 @ Maine  
MSOC won 4-0 vs Saint Peter's  
WSOC won 2-0 @ Saint Peter's  
RUGBY won 31-17 @ LIU  
VB won 3-1 vs Canisius

Sunday 10/23

MHOK won 6-2 @ Maine  
FHOK won 2-0 vs No. 24 Penn  
VB won 3-0 vs Niagara

Monday 10/24

GOLF T-4th of 16 @ Lehigh Invitational

Tuesday 10/25

GOLF 3rd of 16 @ Lehigh Invitational



SEPT. 19  
AIDAN SHEEDY/CHRONICLE

Wednesday 10/26

MSOC @ Mount St. Mary's 5 p.m.  
WSOC vs Mount St. Mary's 2:30 p.m.

Friday 10/28

FHOK vs Providence 3 p.m.  
MTEN @ Connecticut State Championships  
WHOK vs No. 8 Cornell 6 p.m.

Saturday 10/29

MSOC vs Canisius 2 p.m.  
MTEN @ Connecticut State Championships  
MXC @ MAAC Championships  
WXC @ MAAC Championships  
WHOK vs No. 4 Colgate 3 p.m.  
RUGBY vs Mount St. Mary's 1 p.m.  
VB vs Fairfield 1 p.m.

Sunday 10/30

MTEN @ Connecticut State Championships  
FHOK vs Sacred Heart 12 p.m.

Wednesday 11/2

MSOC @ Niagara 2 p.m.

Championships are not won in October  
Weekend struggles in Maine don't define MIH



CAMERON LEVASSEUR/CHRONICLE

Quinnipiac men's hockey fell to No. 6/7 in this week's national rankings.

By CAMERON LEVASSEUR  
Sports Editor

If you asked anyone who would hand Quinnipiac men's ice hockey its first loss prior to the start of the season, their answer probably would not have been Maine. Matchups with the likes of North Dakota and Boston College looked like the big tests on paper, but it was the Black Bears who were the first team to shut down the six-time Cleary Cup champions.

Maine played its best hockey of the year Saturday night, while the Bobcats played their worst, translating to a 4-0 loss after 60 minutes. Quinnipiac's game rhythm was out of sync all night. Miscues all over the ice made for an ugly game to watch and low effort in the third period allowed the Black Bears to walk over them.

"Maine was really good," head coach Rand Pecknold said. "(They) took away time, space and were physical. We struggled to get out of our own way ... the guys know they didn't play well, we just talked about preparing better for games."

On Sunday, the Bobcats flipped the script. The mistakes were still present, but they were able to execute when it mattered. Four second-period goals on nine shots dug the Black Bears into an unrecoverable hole and allowed Quinnipiac to leave Orono with the series split and its dignity intact.

It wasn't the play of Maine junior goaltender Victor Ostman that stymied the Bobcats, it was their shot placement. On Saturday, it seemed as if every shot they took was directly at the body or pads of the Swedish-born goaltender.

Sunday was the opposite. Quinnipiac picked apart Ostman in transition with missiles over his shoulders.

The mark of a good team is being able to capitalize on opportunities when they're handed to them, even when other facets of the game aren't going its way. The Bobcats were able to do that Sunday.

"We made plays and finished our chances," Pecknold said. "(Saturday) we didn't finish our chances."

Debatably the biggest loss of the series for Quinnipiac wasn't on the scoreboard. Graduate student defenseman and team captain Zach Metsa left the opening game after taking a high hit late in the third period.

Metsa didn't dress the following day and Pecknold had no update on his condition following the game. The Delafield, Wisconsin, native has three points in five games this season and is coming off a season where he garnered all ECAC Hockey First Team honors and finished third among NCAA defensemen in scoring.

Taking his place on the top pairing was graduate student Jacob Nordqvist, who alongside a newly healthy Jake Johnson make up a duo of experienced graduate transfers for the Bobcats.

Another summer addition, sophomore forward Collin Graf, is making noise as well. The Union transfer had a multi-point performance on Sunday against Maine and sits just below point-per-game pace after six games.

Both of his goals this season have been scored from around the left faceoff dot, each as a quick release or one-timer off a cross-ice pass. If the Bobcats can harness Graf's goal-scoring ability from that position, they should be able to elevate their capacity to convert on the power play from what it was last season.

While not an ideal loss for Quinnipiac to have on its record, championships are not won in October. Regardless of whether they swept this series, there would still be things to mend. Getting shutout by a Hockey East bottom feeder just accentuates those aspects of the Bobcats' game and serves as a wakeup call that no team in the current NCAA landscape will be a pushover.

"Six games in, it's been a rollercoaster," Pecknold said. "We've got to grow up a bit and mature and bring it every night."

Maturing and learning from mistakes is a direct product of losing. When a talented team like the Bobcats endures regular season struggles, more often than not their resolve is strengthened as a result. How Quinnipiac closed this series suggests it's on that track.

That's not to say they won't lose games to inferior opponents or face adversity down the road, but it does mean they're growing as a team. There's a reason the season is five months and nearly 40 games long.

The Quinnipiac team that we're seeing now is not the same one that will take the ice come the postseason. Every loss, every setback, is a chance to get better and move toward the "team identity" that Pecknold mentions after nearly every game.

When you're the No. 3 team in the country, you have a target on your back, and the Bobcats learned that this weekend. Every team they face wants the glory of dethroning a national powerhouse. Finding the ability to play through that and win regardless creates a battle-tested squad that can prove that title on the big stage.



JACK SPEIGEL/CHRONICLE

Graduate student defenseman Jake Johnson returned from an injury on Oct. 14, against then-No. 3 North Dakota.



# Playing towards their ‘A’ game

## Defense, depth are the keys to the Bobcats’ redemption tour



PEYTON MCKENZIE/CHRONICLE

The Bobcats clinched a top-2 seed in the MAAC after its 2-0 victory against Saint Peter’s on Saturday.

By **BENJAMIN YEARGIN**  
Associate Sports Editor

When a team loses, it often tells you more than a win. That axiom is true for the Quinnipiac women’s soccer team too.

The team’s first loss came against a Yale Bulldogs team that simply outplayed them. The Bulldogs were crossing balls in off both wings, exposing holes in the Bobcats’ defense.

Next, on Oct. 15, Quinnipiac lost in MAAC play to the Iona Gaels 1-0 on a header from senior forward Sofia Giamanco. In both of those games, the Bobcats outshot their opposition, but couldn’t outscore them.

Defense is something that head coach Dave Clarke feels the team must improve upon before the conference playoffs begin, with Quinnipiac already clinching a top-two seed in the tournament after its 2-0 victory over Saint Peter’s on Saturday.

“We could be that team that just goes forward and attacks, attacks, attacks,” Clarke said. “At some point in time we have to clean up the defending so that it doesn’t become an issue.”

Offense has clearly not been an issue, with junior forward/midfielder Rebecca Cooke leading the team in points by a landslide with 44, exactly double than the next closest, junior forward Courtney Chochol.

Cooke also leads Division I in goals with 19 and Chochol is tied for third in the NCAA with 11 assists.

The rise of senior midfielder/defender Olivia Scott as of late has affirmed a belief Clarke has held: she’s the best player in the MAAC. Scott scored twice against Manhattan on Oct. 19, and once against Saint Peter’s last Saturday.

Those three all are integral pieces to the machine that is Quinnipiac women’s soccer, but everyone knows the rule: Defense wins championships.

On top of that, the Bobcats are a deep team that can rely on multiple players to get first-team level production.

“We have a long bench with players that we trust to get on the field,” Scott said. “It’s also good getting starters off and rest because the minutes add up in the end.”

Manhattan’s one goal on Oct. 19, came from sloppy defensive play leading. Junior forward/midfielder Sami Derrico navigated through it like a Lamborghini on an empty highway, leading to the Jaspers’ first and only goal on the day.

Because of the offense’s potent production, I would grade the performance an A-, but Clarke knows from his experience in the classroom that if you can reach for higher standards, do it.

“If you’re an A student writing a B+ paper ... study and get the A,” Clarke said.

What Quinnipiac could do better defensively is handling the balls coming from the wings. Junior goaltender Sofia Lospinoso has been excellent this year, sporting a stellar 1.08 goals against average this year. But on those crosses, she can’t be afraid to use all 5-foot-6-inches of her to punch the ball away or make the aggressive play.

The defense could also play slightly more compact, making it tougher for opponents to enter and put pressure in the box.

The Bobcats have one more regular season game against Mount St. Mary’s on Oct. 26, and the newly adopted team in the MAAC currently sits at seventh with a 2-4-3 conference record. If Quinnipiac wins that game and Fairfield loses its game against Iona, the Bobcats will claim the No. 1 seed.

With the first seed in the conference, Quinnipiac will earn home-field advantage, which offers a myriad of benefits for the Bobcats.

Quinnipiac absolutely has the talent to win the conference just as long as its defense tightens up and puts pressure on its opponents. The Bobcats don’t want to leave this season with that familiar, bitter flavor that they left Monmouth with last year — disappointment.

**GUNES SISTERS** from Page 12

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of the world,” Robinson said on Sept. 30. “She’s got great confidence, really great thoughts about making everything better, not just volleyball, but the world and in life.”

Robinson also touted Yagmur as a prime example for the type of people he looks for during the recruitment process.

“This is how you build and then maintain a high-level program,” Robinson said. “We can get better athletes sometimes, but if they’re not great people, I don’t want them.”

It was that impression that led to the sisters earning their way into the starting lineup, sharing the court in Division I volleyball much earlier than either expected.

“I mean, if I was not injured on my right shoulder, I’m pretty sure I would play more,” Yagmur said. “But I was not expecting that until I came here.”

“I wanted to play so bad,” Damla said. “But I didn’t expect to play, especially in preseason matches or pre-conference matches. So when coach Kyle gave me my time to play, I was like, ‘OK,

now it’s time for me to show up.’”

As of publication, Damla leads the team in assists with 568 and service aces with 28, while Yagmur is third on the team in digs with 180.

For a team that has as bright a future as the Bobcats, the Gunes sisters will look to be at the forefront of the program’s succeeding leadership.

The balance between Yagmur’s quiet confidence and Damla’s fiery competitiveness will be crucial. The players who currently hold that balance, senior hitter Aryanah Diaz, junior middle blocker Lexi Morse and graduate student middle blocker Nicole Legg, will likely all be gone by the end of the 2023 season.

For any other squad, those losses may be alot to overcome. But for Quinnipiac, the Gunes sisters will be around to make sure their future is stronger than their past. They would give nothing less for their loved ones back in Turkey.

“They’re really proud,” Damla said. “They watch all our matches even though the time difference is seven hours. They miss us, but they’re proud of us.”



PEYTON MCKENZIE/CHRONICLE

Quinnipiac volleyball is 6-7 in MAAC play and are currently on a four-game winning streak.





PEYTON MCKENZIE/CHRONICLE

# ‘They miss us, but they’re proud’

## The journey from Turkey to Division I starters

By MICHAEL LARocca and ALEX MARTINAKOVA

It’s common to say that a team is like a family. Whether you are on the field, ice or court, you are surrounded by the people who have your back no matter what. A team is a family in every sense, except maybe blood relation.

Unless, of course, you are fortunate enough to share your passion with your twin.

That is the case for Quinnipiac volleyball’s freshmen hitter and setter Yagmur and Damla Gunes.

The Turkey natives came to Hamden three months ago from their hometown of Bursa, and in that short amount of time have already managed to make a name for themselves. Despite being freshmen, they both made the team’s starting lineup, breaking double-digit assists and digs more often than not.

Even though the sisters used to be swimmers as kids, both knew their passions were located elsewhere.

“We have a big cousin; she is like a sister to us,” Yagmur said, referring to their cousin, Esen Kiran. “She was playing volleyball at that time and we grew up playing together in the garden.”

“The first time I watched volleyball I was five, six, maybe smaller,” Damla said. “I looked at it and I went, ‘I’m going to play that sport.’”

The twin sisters were approached by head coach Kyle Robinson in November 2021, and had fully committed to the Bobcats by the following January, choosing Quinnipiac over several other options.

“When we talked to coach Kyle we really liked this place better, we really liked his coaching,” Yagmur said. “And we talked to the girls on the team, and they were more welcoming than the others.”

The sisters moved six time zones away from their home, achieving their goal of studying abroad, a dream they have been chasing through high school.

By coming to America, the Gunes’ also were able to vicariously live out the dreams of their father, Murat, who had played basketball during his athletic career.

“My dad always said to us, ‘Go do the thing that I wasn’t able to do,’” Damla said. “The America thing was on our mind, but my dad pushed for it.”

Adjusting to life in the United States has presented challenges

for the pair, which made becoming a part of the team a challenge in and of itself.

“We were kind of shy,” Damla said. “We didn’t know when to talk. We didn’t want to say the wrong things, or if they would understand what we meant.”

There were also adjustments to be made when it came to the sport specifically. Back in Bursa, Yagmur and Damla’s club season with Nilüfer Belediye SC lasted six to eight months. Despite the NCAA season being significantly shorter, they felt a difference.

“The schedule we’re on right now, it’s busy,” Yagmur said. “It doesn’t feel like nothing (compared to the club team schedule).”

The cultural differences in volleyball between the two countries have also been a point of emphasis for the sisters as the season has gone on.

During Quinnipiac’s five-set loss to Marist on Oct. 5, Damla faced those differences head-on, resulting in her passionate play-style showing out in spades.

“I personally love competition, but I do not love when somebody just yells in my face,” Damla said after the match. “In volleyball, we have a net so that you don’t contact people. You turn your back and cheer ... and sometimes they were cheering at us. So I was like, ‘OK, if you’re gonna play like that, I’m gonna play like that.’”

Despite being twins, one would have a hard time telling them apart just from the first glance. Not only are they fraternal, but their demeanors differ both on court and off. While Yagmur tends to be more reserved and calm, Damla is loud and outspoken. It’s a dynamic the sisters shared their whole lives, and one that ties into their game play.

“Back home, coaches always used to tell other setters to be louder,” Damla said. “I was always loud, but I love the way I am, because as a setter, I lead a team in a way.”

While Yagmur may be quieter, her competitive fire is evident regardless.

“Me being quiet on the court does not mean I don’t get emotional,” Yagmur said. “I like to watch the game and be concentrated on the opponents.”

It was their personalities that helped them stand out on a Quinnipiac volleyball squad that also boasts four other freshman recruits. And from the beginning, those personalities made an impact on those around them, especially Damla’s.

“I believe at some point, (Damla)’s going to be the president



PEYTON MCKENZIE/CHRONICLE

Damla (left) leads Quinnipiac with 568 assists and Yagmur (right) is third on the team with 180 digs.