Daily Life

ROUNDTABLE: Quavo must-listens for UCONNIC



UCONNIC is finally here! After weeks of speculation, the Student Union Board of Governors (SUBOG) announced Quavo as the event's headliner on March 30, accompanied by Noah Richardson, Tweed Sugar, DJ Meow and DJ Rytm. The rapper and record producer earned plenty of fame as the frontman for the hip-hop group Migos but has collaborated with artists like Justin Bieber, Liam Payne and Post Malone. In preparation for this year's UCONNIC festival, the Life section has come together to name the Quavo songs they think students should listen to ahead of time.

Maleena Muzio, Associate Life Editor, she/her/hers, maleena.muzio@uconn.edu

I am not well-versed in Quavo's music and am most familiar with his biggest hits from the group Migos, as well as his many popular features, such as in the late singer Liam Payne's 2017 hit "Strip That Down."

That being said, my favorite Quavo song is a collaboration and is probably no surprise to anyone who knows me: "Tough" by Lana Del Rey and Quavo. Del Rey is no stranger to collaborating with rap and hip-hop artists, and the 2024 southern-inspired pop-rap single did not disappoint. I first heard the song live at Fenway Park in June 2024 when it made its live debut with both artists on stage at Del Rey's show.

The music video for "Tough" also contributes largely to my love for the song. Quavo and Del Rey have beautiful chemistry, and the video romanticizes the everyday life of an American couple with traditional Del Rey aesthetics, plus an added hip-hop influence that shines through in the outfit choices of the pair. It is simply a well-done blend of two distinct genres.

Ayyan Tamjeed, Staff Writer, he/him/his, art24001@uconn.edu

You should listen to some Migos songs to learn about Quavo before his UCONNIC set. If you haven't already, hits like "Bad and Boujee," "Versace" and "Motorsport" are great songs that can help one get acclimated with the trap sound Quavo likes to deal with.

Quavo's singsong chants in "Bad and Boujee" are almost hypnotic, and Metro Boomin's sparse production gives them space to breathe. For a chorus that's just the word "Versace" repeatedly, the way Quavo delivers each "Versace" with subtly different intonations never gets boring. "Motorsport" also highlights his heavy use of ad-libs, which can add texture to whatever he's singing if needed.

As for his solo material, "Rocket Power," the album he released in dedication to the late Migos member Takeoff, sounds pretty good. While it can drag at points because it's 18 tracks long, there are some diamonds to be discovered. The opener "Fueled Up" departs from his trap sound to incorporate more elements from rage music, and the spaced-out production makes for a different vibe than his Migos work. While still subdued, it was a lot more in your face.

Jaylyn Davis, Staff Writer, she/her/hers, iue25001@uconn.edu

Before hearing about UCONNIC, I had no clue who Quavo was. Because of that, I have little knowledge of him and his music. However, I recently listened to some of his songs, and a few of them became my favorites.

One Quavo song I recently listened to was "New Trip." This is Quavo's newest song, and I like listening to it when I study or do homework. I enjoy the song because, while it's hard to decipher the lyrics, it has a very swift tempo that keeps me awake when I become unmotivated to do my work. I feel like "New Trip" would be an excellent song for Quavo to perform at UCONNIC since its rapid tempo will keep attendees animated.

Another Quavo song I cherish is "I'm the One." DJ Khaled originally wrote this tune, but it features Quavo in one of its verses. Because Quavo isn't the original artist, it unfortunately cannot be played at UCONNIC. However, I really love this song because it's catchy, uplifting and contains messages about true love and intimidations that many University of Connecticut students can relate to.

Sarah Cartagena, Contributor, She/her/hers, sarah.cartagena@uconn.edu

I'm sure most people have heard Quavo's ad-libs throughout various popular songs, mostly from the 2010s, and don't even know it was him! During his time in Migos, Quavo served as the frontman and primary songwriter. After the group's disbandment, he has mostly been a featured artist.

In my favorite song by him, he was featured alongside Migos and Frank Ocean in "Slide" by Calvin Harris. Come on, that song is just stacked with talented artists! I have no doubt that it was my number one listened-to song back in 2017, and it played on practically every radio on the road. All the artists that collaborated on the song hit their peak during the late 2000s, so hopefully we'll hear Quavo sing his ad-libs and rap verse at UCONNIC.

Anothewr song that features Quavo that I've had on repeat since the UCONNIC announcement is "Know No Better" by Major Lazer, featuring Travis Scott, Camila Cabello and Quavo. This is another song from the golden age of music that was the late 2010s and is addicting to listen to. It's the perfect song for a hot beach day or even a stroll on campus!

If you're heading to UCONNIC this weekend, have tons of fun and don't forget to yell out the famous ad-lib: "QUAVO!"

Meet the DJs for UCONNIC 2026



DJ Meow mixing music for The D0g Pound. DJ Meow will perform at UConn's UCONNIC festival today. PHOTO COURTESY OF @GMEOW.MP3 ON INSTAGRAM

by Elijah Polance
STAFF WRITER
HE/HIM/THEY/THEM
elijah.polance@uconn.edu

This year's iteration of UCONNIC, the annual music concert held by the Student Union Board of Governors (SUBOG), is finally upon the University of Connecticut and its surrounding community.

With American rapper Quavo as the headlining artist, along with indie artist Noah Richardson and UConn-based rock band Tweed Sugar as openers, there's a lot to be excited about. But not to be overshadowed are the student DJs that will play at the start of UCONNIC and between each artist's set.

DJ Meow, the alias of eighth-semester English and communications student Gabby Doctor, and DJ Rytm, the alias of eighth-semester real estate and urban economics student Aminieli Hopson, already have a history of memorable performances and collaborations at The Dog Pound. With their distinct, complementary approaches to DJing, they both said they will work together to make UCONNIC a night to remember.

DJ Meow

Doctor's introduction to DJing stemmed from dissatisfaction with the music selection at house parties during her freshman year, she said. When she attended parties, she said she got bored by hearing the same music over and over.

"It started off as my frustration, and then it turned into a want to maybe not educate, but, like, open people's horizons on new music because it gets very mundane around here," Doctor said.

Doctor took it upon herself to learn how to DJ over the summer in 2023, between her second and third semesters at UConn. While she stayed on campus to work for the Department of Residential Life, she bought her own starting equipment and taught herself the basics through practice and YouTube videos.

Doctor played her first show at the Kathmandu Kitchen & Bar in spring 2023, during her fourth semester.

"Most of your skills I feel like come from practicing," Doctor said. "So you're downloading music and then... you're practicing like your transitions and how to move throughout the music."

Underground electronic music, specifically melodic techno, along with house, rap and electronica are Doctor's favorite genres to work in. She said she tries to expose her audiences to music they wouldn't hear from their familiar streaming playlists.

To expose more people to different music, Doctor began organizing her own shows called "Annuit" at The Dog Pound during her sixth semester in spring 2025. They feature Doctor as DJ Meow — a name that stems from her love of cats — and other local DJs with distinct styles and genre approaches.

"With each show the attendance grows and grows, which makes me super happy," Doctor said. "I use that to showcase student performers, and again, put people onto new music."

UCONNIC will be the largest event Doctor has performed at so far, and she said it will come with unique challenges. While she usually searches for music that fulfills a specific vibe before a set, UCONNIC will have a larger audience than she's used to performing for.

Since there will be more people, it means having to be more open when it comes to the kinds of music selected and more considerate about how the audience will react to them, she said.

"I'm stubborn and I really like doing things my own way and having 100% creative feel freedom, but I understand that's not how it works all the time," Doctor said.

Doctor said that UCONNIC attendees should still expect a set that gets everyone energized and dancing before the openers take the stage. One of her strategies to get the audience in the mood is to play a funny sound clip at the start of the set.

"If I find a good soundbite, especially something recent that everybody knows, it's always nice to connect with them on that level," Doctor said.

DJ Rytm

Unlike the local inspiration that drove Doctor's interest in DJing, Hopson got into the hobby while on a different continent. Hopson was doing his spring 2025 semester abroad in Sweden when he participated in a program that taught him about DJing and let him volunteer to be one.

Hopson said he was always making playlists for others when he was younger and grew up learning the saxophone, piano and drums, which gave him experience with music theory. He saw the DJ program as an opportunity to bring these musical interests together.

"They were looking for people to play more of Afro and global sounds," Hopson said. "And because of my background, I was able to take some of the music that I grew up making those playlists and actually turn it into something where a lot of international students on the exchange experience could also hear their music while also mixing it with Swedish music."

While Hopson got a lot of experience from the program in Sweden, he said learning was intimidating because he did not have his own equipment and was in a foreign country.

"It took a lot of like flexibility and adaptability to meet people who had equipment, build a strong enough relationship with them that they trusted me, whether or not it was to borrow or even just practice with them, and learn from them because everybody approaches it differently," Hopson said.

The transition to DJing in the U.S. was also difficult because he lacked his own equipment to practice and perform with, Hopson said. Eventually he saved up enough for his own equipment and began performing at venues like The Dog Pound and semi-formal events at UConn in fall 2025.

The adaptability and cultural diversity Hopson navigated in the environment where he started DJing influenced how he approaches DJing now. He said he sees DJing as a unique opportunity to use the familiar elements of internet culture to bring in global culture so that everyone feels represented.

Hopson often works with Doctor and performs at her Annuit shows. He said that working with her has helped him find ways to make music that people might not know seem more familiar.

"There was a time when we were playing more of that Afro-reggaeton sound, and for a lot of students who aren't as familiar with it, they were familiar with the song 'Hot Wings' from 'Rio,'" Hopson said. "And so just to sort of create that familiarity and sing-along energy, we threw that in, didn't know if it would work, and it ended up being a home run."

Hopson said he hasn't performed at an event as big as UCONNIC before. He said he's been meeting with Doctor beforehand, where they have gone through a list of over 80 songs submitted by students and considered the best songs to play in the downtime between artists performing. Hopson said his style is more structured while Doctor goes more with the flow, which complements each other.

"What students can expect is to jump around, sing a lot [and] a few dance breaks here and there, hopefully more than less," Hopson said. "There's also two going to be some of those familiar sound bites that we'll sort of sprinkle in between."

The Performance

Doctor and Hopson secured their position as the UCONNIC DJs by filling out an interest form sent out by the SUBOG Concert Committee. Kaitlyn Nigborowicz, the concert chair for SUBOG's Concert Committee, wrote that over 10 DJs applied to perform in an email statement.

"DJ Meow and DJ Rytm both have strong prior experience performing at UConn and have played sets together before," Nigborowicz said in an email statement. "They bring great energy and are also very easy to work with."

Both Doctor and Hopson said they would not have believed that they would DJ for UCONNIC when they first came to UConn. In fact, they both weren't sure about filling out the application form, but they decided it would be worth pursuing before they graduated.

Hopson said he recommends that everybody pursue the side quests that come up, as it could always lead somewhere unexpected.

"I'm still just so honored that this happened and that we're able to do this as our last semester and sort of share this moment with UConn," Hopson said.