News

DOZENS OF DEMONSTRATORS GATHER OUTSIDE NEW HAVEN CITY IN PROTEST AGAINST THE WAR WITH IRAN



People protesting a U.S.-Iran war in New Haven, Conn. The United States recently engaged with Iran, even though the government denies that we are officially at war. PHOTOS COURTESY OF @SCENESBYVIVA ON INSTAGRAM

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Demonstrators and community leaders surrounded New Haven City Hall on March 1, chanting and waving signs in opposition to the current U.S. military airstrikes and conflict in Iran.

Different chants were shouted from the steps of City Hall as speakers addressed the crowds through microphones.

"Raise your voice, take a stand, no more war on Iran!" they said.

Drivers passing downtown New Haven occasionally honked in support as demonstrators waved their signs and fists in a call to end the conflict.

Following months of preparation and military threats, President Donald Trump authorized "Operation Epic Fury"on Feb. 28. Community organizers were able to mobilize outside the city hall within a day to protest the war in Iran.

The White House framed the operation as a defensive measure in a public statement addressing the American people. Trump said the strikes were to counter threats emerging from Iran.

"Our objective is to defend the American people by eliminating imminent threats of the Iranian regime," said Trump during his statement to the American people.

Many attendees came not only to oppose the escalation of the military conflict, but also to express concern surrounding the effects of war. Speakers mentioned a recent American airstrike that had hit a girls' school, killing over 100. Participants advocated against the impacts of American imperialism.

Organizers framed the protest as part of a larger movement in organizing citizens of the United States. Speakers from several activist groups addressed the crowd, including members from the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL), the Democratic Socialists of America and the ANSWER Coalition.

Andrew Rice, a Democratic congressional candidate for Connecticut's 3rd District who is challenging State Rep. Rosa DeLauro, said the U.S.'s extensive spending on foreign conflicts reduces resources and funding for domestic programs such as free healthcare and public education.

Rice said every dollar that is spent overseas takes away resources and impacts communities all across the country, while the benefits from the conflict only reach powerful interests.

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Norm Clement, a community leader who has been associated with the PSL in New Haven for 18 years, called for organization and the unification of the American people. He also argued against Trump's justification for the airstrikes.

"I don't know about you, but I didn't wake up feeling like Iran was going to attack me," said Clement. "Who is benefiting? It's not benefiting me and my neighbors and my community."

Phill Campbell of Artist Against Apartheid and the PSL urged audiences to remain committed to their interest beyond just the demonstration.

"Commit to building that art of struggle, commit to expanding that creative process of liberation, commit to continuing that beautiful piece of art called freedom," Campbell said.

As the demonstration continued into late afternoon, demonstrators gathered around the city hall listening to speakers within the communities. Organizers encouraged attendees to stay engaged in conversations about U.S foreign policy and to continue participating in community efforts beyond just this single protest.

HUSKYTHON BREAKS RECORD, RAISES OVER $2.2 MILLION

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The University of Connecticut held their 27th annual HuskyTHON dance marathon on Saturday, March 7, raising a record-breaking $2,223,439.67 for the patients and families at Connecticut Children's.

HuskyTHON is a yearlong student-led fundraising effort that ends with an 18-hour dance marathon from 6 a.m. to midnight. This year, the marathon was held at the UConn Volleyball Center on the Storrs campus.

In addition to breaking fundraising efforts, HuskyTHON surpassed its record of participants with over 4,800, nearly one hundred more than last year, according to Paige O'Keeffe, vice president of communications for HuskyTHON 2026. This makes it the highest number of participants for a Children's Miracle Dance Marathon in the U.S. this year.

"The amount of work that we put in is a lot, but it always is worth it when we get to those moments and see the reactions from our participants and how much fun they're having," O'Keeffe said.

O'Keeffe is one of 32 students on the management team who work closely to organize fundraising and lead the event.

Participants create teams with their student organizations to fundraise and spend the marathon with a Connecticut Children's patient. This year, 27 patients, ranging in age from five to 16, attended with their families and shared their stories.

Jordyn Ty was eight years old when she attended her first HuskyTHON as a Connecticut Children's patient in 2020. Now, six years later, she started a JonaTHON at her high school. JonaTHON, a part of HuskyTHON that works with K-12 schools across the state to plan, implement and fundraise at their schools, raised a total of $38,286.42 this year.

"This is what makes me want to be a student at UConn," Jordyn said. "They raise so much money and it's for such a good cause, so I just want to come back every year."

Jordyn was six days old when she had her surgery at Connecticut Children's. Bethany Ty, Jordyn's mom, said she remembers it like it was yesterday.

"It's amazing getting up on stage, looking out into the crowd, and seeing how many people are here and why they are here, and knowing that, in some small part, it's not directly for Jordyn, but it's for kids like Jordyn," Bethany said. "It reminds me of how far we've come and how far all these other kids will have the opportunity to come because of what's going on right now."

Students can participate through a variety of levels, whether it be a dancer representative, captain, morale leader, rising leader, dancer or volunteer, which all have unique responsibilities and fundraising minimums.

Maria Ditota, a sixth-semester actuarial science major, is on the morale team which works before the day to learn the morale dance, a 10-minute choreographed dance that the management team leads each hour on stage.

Ditota said HuskyTHON is one of the best things she has chosen to be apart of. She said next year she wants to get "headbanded," which means raising $2,600.

"My favorite part is seeing the family's reactions to their child having just a great day," Ditota said. "I think that's the best thing to see. They get to see their kid like be the star for the day."

All students have different reasons for participating in HuskyTHON. For some, their reason is personal experience. JP Capodanno, an eighth-semester actuarial science and finance major, said his sister spent a lot of her childhood in the hospital, which is why he chose to get involved.

"I knew coming to UConn that it was an organization that I wanted to get involved in [in] order to continue to support those who are going through similar difficult times," Capodanno, who has been doing HuskyTHON since his freshman year, said.

Capodanno has been on the morale team for three years and has been headbanded the past two.

"Everyone at UConn has very different backgrounds, but we're all gathered together here to combat the similar cause and childhood illness, to be able to create a better world where kids don't have to suffer," Capodanno said.

Edie Carson, a sixth-semester digital media and design major, said she hit her minimum of $250 as a dancer. This year was her second year doing HuskyTHON.

"It is just such a heartwarming experience, and you're surrounded by the most positive people that make the 18 hours go by so quickly," Carson said.

Sunrise Yoga and Zumba kept participants moving in the morning, and a performance by Tweed Sugar kept everyone dancing in the evening. Student acapella and dance organizations performed in UConn's Got Talent, a yearly segment of the night where participants watch and the children give them scores, similar to the national TV show America's Got Talent.

Around 11 p.m., everyone prepared for the Circle of Hope, where participants stand in a large circle and cut off their hospital bands, symbolizing the difference they made just before the big reveal of how much money was raised.

"The Circle of Hope is just so special because everyone in the room joins hands together," O'Keeffe said. "You truly see that we all come together and we all sort of create this together, so it's a really special moment for all of us."

Over the past 27 years, HuskyTHON has raised more than $17 million for Connecticut Children's, the only health system in Connecticut that is 100% dedicated to kids.



UConn's 2026 Huskython event, raising over $2 million. The event is held yearly for childhood cancer research. PHOTO COURTESY OF HUSKYTHON

The Daily Campus

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