

MEET THE EDITORS

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Alexandra Martinakova

MANAGING EDITOR
Gina Lorusso

MARKETING DIRECTOR
Emily Adorno

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Tyler Mignault

NEWS EDITOR
Ava Highland

OPINION EDITOR
Lillian Curtin

ASSOCIATE OPINION EDITOR
Joanna Farrell

ASSOCIATE ARTS & LIFE EDITOR
Sophie Murray

SPORTS EDITOR
Claire Frankland

ASSOCIATE SPORTS EDITORS
Emily Marquis
Cooper Woodward

DESIGN EDITOR
Katerina Parizkova

SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR
Elisabeth McMahon

ASSOCIATE SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR
Taylor Huchro

MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTION EDITOR
Quinn O'Neill

ASSOCIATE MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTION EDITOR
Harper Ferraro

ASSOCIATE PHOTOGRAPHY EDITORS
Rylee Lee
Lily Zahka

COPY EDITORS
Anthony Angelillo
Amanda Dronzek
Chloe Grant

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

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

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


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


**SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING ON
QUCHRONICLE.COM**

JOIN US

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

CONNECT

 @quchronicle/@quchronsports

 @quchronicle/@quchronsports

 @quchronicle

 @quchronicle



TYLER MIGNAULT/CHRONICLE

By **ADRIANA CERBONE**
Staff Writer

For National Distracted Driving Awareness Month, The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) announced a statewide distracted driving enforcement campaign and public awareness initiative at Hartford Police Department.

Law enforcement agencies and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) partnered up for the "Put the Phone Away or Pay" campaign. Throughout April, distracted driving enforcement will be enhanced.

For the campaign, officers around the state will have a specific focus on identifying and punishing drivers with bad habits such as texting or calling.

CTDOT will highlight the extreme dangers of distracted driving and encourage drivers to stay focused on the road.

Three thousand two hundred and seventy-five people were killed in 2023 due to distracted driving crashes. Just in Connecticut alone there were 5,202 crashes due to distracted driving in 2023. This resulted in 12 fatalities and 78 injuries, according to NHTSA.

CTDOT encourages all drivers to practice safe driving by not letting distractions take over.

Five tips they mention to avoid distracted driving is pull over if you need to make a call/text, ask your passenger to help manage navigation/ sending messages, avoid checking your social media, limit interaction with in-vehicle technology (start music before your drive) and use your iPhone's "Do Not Disturb While Driving" feature or just simply silence your phone to reduce temptation.

Department of Public Safety Chief Tony Reyes explained what Quinnipiac will do to take distracted driving seriously.

"On campus, our Public Safety officers patrol daily and address distracted driving and

unsafe vehicle operation as part of their regular responsibilities," Reyes wrote in an email to The Chronicle. "Their presence and engagement help support a safer environment for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers across all three campuses."

According to Reyes, the Hamden Police Department has secured a grant.

"I also want to share that the Hamden Police Department recently secured a state grant dedicated to combating distracted driving," Reyes wrote. "As part of that initiative, they've been conducting targeted enforcement throughout the city, including in the areas surrounding our campuses."

About 25% of Quinnipiac undergraduate students either live off campus or commute.

Senior marketing major Laine Dimartinis explains the importance of distracted driving awareness month, especially for young drivers.

"There are many distracted people on the roads who tend to prioritize answering the phone, texting, eating and other activities while behind the wheel instead of being more aware of their safety and the safety of others," Dimartinis said. "I think there needs to be more awareness around this issue."

Dimartinis expresses how the problem stems from everyone's addiction to their devices.

"Everyone is addicted to their cell phones," she said. "I think mobile devices are a major distraction when driving, whether that's changing music, answering phone calls, texting or using social media."

She explains how the workforce is constantly answering business calls or emails while driving and believes the issue needs to be "reinforced" so distracted driving doesn't continue.

She also believes that Hamden and Quinnipiac University should take this month seriously.

"I think teachers should be told to have a quick conversation with their students to ad-

dress the topic and spark conversation," she said. "Your life and someone else's life are far more valuable than sending a text message."

On the first day of distracted driving awareness month, there were two crashes alone on the Merritt Parkway. Both crashes involved car fires and one was fatal.

In the first crash, a woman veered off the road and collided with a tree. The passenger died at the scene and the driver was brought to Norwalk Hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

It is possible the driver was distracted, leading her to serve off the road.

A state trooper stopped to investigate this crash. The police vehicle was parked on the parkway to block any traffic.

The trooper was not in the cruiser when another vehicle sped into the cruiser, making it catch fire. The driver was taken to Stamford Hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

These crashes occurred by exit 13 in New Cannan and shut down a part of the Merritt to clear both scenes.

Distracted driving is a serious safety issue.

First-year occupational therapy major, Gabby Assignon, also believes social media is the biggest issue.

"The biggest distraction for drivers is 100% our phones," she said. "On multiple occasions I've seen people watching TikTok's or Instagram reels while driving and texting and driving is also incredibly dangerous. I once had someone compare texting and driving to you driving with your eyes closed and I found that to be incredibly eye-opening."

Assignon explains how, as a commuter, she sees people not using turn signals and texting and driving regularly.

"I find this to be a problem for the obvious reason that it's dangerous, as I previously mentioned, it to be very inconsiderate," she said.

Student petitioner calls on Chartwells to 'bargain in good faith'

By **AVA HIGHLAND**
News Editor

With contract negotiations coming up, a student-led petition, "Quinnipiac Students Stand with Our Dining Workers: Support a Fair Contract for USW Members" created March 24, urges fair agreements for Quinnipiac University's dining service staff.

At the time of publication, the petition reached 481 signatures.

The petitioner highlights that the United Steelworkers (USW) are essential to the community across Quinnipiac's three campuses.

"They keep us fueled for classes, events and late-night study sessions," the petitioner wrote.

The petition starter's name is now anonymous and did not respond to The Chronicle's attempts for comment.

The petitioner calls on both Chartwells and Quinnipiac administration for change. Chartwells did not respond to The Chronicle's attempts for comment.

Chartwells is urged to "bargain in good faith and meet these reasonable demands" and the university is to "encourage a swift, positive res-

olution that prioritizes worker well-being and campus harmony."

Negotiations for dining service workers remain between Chartwells and its employees.

"The university does not comment on negotiations between Chartwells and its unionized employees," Associate Vice President for Public Relations John Morgan wrote in a statement to The Chronicle.

The request for fair agreements includes four demands: "Living wages that reflect the rising cost of living in Connecticut, affordable, quality healthcare benefits, stable scheduling and hours to support work-life balance and respectful working conditions with no retaliation for union activity."

The petitioner notes the benefits of reaching said fair agreement.

"A fair contract means happier, more supported workers - better service, higher morale and a stronger dining experience for all students. We pay significant meal plan fees and deserve food services run by valued, fairly compensated staff."

Several students shared comments on the pe-

tion in support of dining workers.

"A lot of these workers care so much and are so passionate about their job, but don't get the treatment that should be reciprocated from the school," a supporter wrote. "It seems as if these workers care more than the school that we pay so much to attend. They recognize the change that needs to be made and don't get the respect they deserve."

Others shared similar sentiments about the staff displaying a clear enjoyment for their jobs.

"I love the staff in the cafeteria, they are genuinely so kind and happy to serve us," another student wrote. "My two favorites at Grilled always show up with a smile on their face in the mornings."

While contract negotiations approach for current Chartwells employees at Quinnipiac, there are currently 10 positions open at the university, hiring immediately.

"The dining hall worker(s) always have the best interest of the students, and deserve to be treated better instead of being replaced," a student wrote.