

Quinnipiac receives Carnegie Community Engagement certification

By **COOPER WOODWARD**
Associate Sports Editor

Quinnipiac University was recently awarded the 2026 Carnegie Community Engagement Certification, recognizing it for excellence in community engagement.

The certification is awarded yearly to colleges and universities across the United States. This year, Quinnipiac joins 237 other higher education institutions in recognition of their commitments to uplift neighboring communities throughout their local population.

“Receiving the classification affirms that Quinnipiac has demonstrated a deep, evidence-based, institution-wide commitment to meaningful, reciprocal partnerships that serve the public good,” Vice president for Academic Innovation and Excellence Annalisa Zinn wrote in an email to *The Chronicle*.

The classification recognizes universities that cement civic responsibility and public impact into the framework of their institution. For Quinnipiac, the recognition highlights service-learning initiatives, community-based research projects, health outreach efforts and civic engagement partnerships across the greater Hamden area.

“This distinction affirms the belief that higher education has both an academic and civic responsibility,” Zinn wrote.

Quinnipiac is one of several Connecticut colleges earning recognition for community engagement this year. Central Connecticut State University and Fairfield University were also awarded the distinction in the 2026 cycle.

Zinn emphasized that the achievement belongs not just to the university, but to the surrounding region as well.

“Both communities should feel proud because the classification celebrates shared work and mutual investment,” she wrote. “Quinnipiac earned this distinction not in isolation but through authentic collaboration with Hamden, North Haven and the region.”

While the classification is valid through 2032 the university is already focused on maintaining and strengthening their current efforts.

“Long-term success in sustaining the classification means ensuring that community engagement remains deeply woven into the university’s mission, culture, academic programs, and student-led ini-

tiatives. It requires continuous assessment, strong and reciprocal partnerships, and demonstrable impact in the community,” Zinn wrote.

Quinnipiac provost Debra Liebowitz further explained what the certification means to the University.

“This recognition reflects the daily work of our faculty, staff and students work that strengthens learning, supports our region and advances the public good,” Liebowitz said in an interview with *Connecticut By the Numbers*. “This designation underscores that community engagement isn’t an initiative at Quinnipiac, it’s embedded in who we are. Creating opportunities for our students to make a difference is, indeed, a vital part of their learning and one reason they are so well-prepared for their careers.”

Furthermore, Zinn states the implications of maintaining the recognition past 2032 for Quinnipiac.

“Sustaining the classification long-term reflects a university where community engagement is not a set of programs but a defining characteristic of institutional identity,” she wrote.

Quinnipiac students share thoughts on the university's snow removal procedures

By **NATHAN ROJAS**
Staff Writer

From Feb. 22-24, a severe blizzard hit the East Coast, with some states receiving as much as 41 inches of snow, according to the *New York Times*, impacting daily life for many schools, colleges and universities, including students at Quinnipiac University.

In preparation for the expected snowstorm, Quinnipiac held virtual classes Monday Feb. 23. How the university handled the snow left students with mixed feelings.

Sofia Dowd, a first-year entrepreneurship major said that facilities began removing snow around 1 p.m. Dowd felt this was late compared to when facilities started removing snow during the blizzard that hit Quinnipiac only a couple weeks earlier.

“I was thinking that they would do it in the morning, but they just weren’t quick to it at all,” Dowd said.

However, not all students agree with Dowd’s statement. Some felt that, considering the amount of snow, facilities did a good job.

“I thought they did a pretty good job clearing out the main roads,” Zakaria Merzou, a senior computer science major, said, referring to the paths on the Mount Carmel Campus.

Sierra Ross, a first-year advertising major, agreed with Merzou’s statement.

“I’m grateful for all those shovelers out there, because I know it’s not an easy job,” Ross said.

Despite her sentiments, Ross felt that facilities could have done a better job of shoveling.

Many students also felt that facilities should have done a better job at salting the paths, considering the excessive amounts of ice.

“I live in Eastview, so there was some ice outside the building and... I almost fell a multitude of times,” Jodie Terry, senior biomedical sciences major, said.

Ross and Dowd agreed with this statement, mentioning that it was “icy” after the storm.

In addition to having virtual classes on Feb. 23, the university also issued multiple parking advisories during the days leading up to the storm.

“In anticipation of the upcoming snowfall expected on Sunday, February 22, and Monday, February 23, parking rules and regulations will be temporarily revised,” One Stop wrote on Feb. 22. “Beginning at 2 p.m. on Sunday, February 22, student vehicles may only be parked in one of the following locations: York Hill Garage, North Lot – east side by tennis courts, Whitney Lot, Westwoods Lot, Whitney Village Lot and Eastview Lot.”

An update for the first advisory was sent on Feb. 23 telling students to leave their vehicles parked in their current locations and listed approved areas for students to park. This list included the original set of locations from the first advisory.

Later that same day, another advisory was sent out to students.

“All student vehicles parked in the North Lot must be relocated to the Hilltop Lot to accommodate snow removal operations,” Quinnipiac One Stop wrote. It was then later corrected stating that all vehicles may be moved beginning at 8 a.m. and that no vehicles were to be moved before then.

This advisory also mentioned that normal parking rules and regulations would go back into effect starting 10 a.m., Feb. 24.

One last advisory was sent out Feb. 24, detailing where students should park on the York Hill Campus.

However, students found the time for relocation to be an inconvenience.

Terry mentioned that while students were able to park in the North Lot, facilities were actively plowing in that area, making it dangerous and chaotic for students to do so.

With winter winding down, students should expect to see a few more snow falls during the semester.

PETITION from cover

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feel like they do not think the office truly helps,” Constanza said.

This has been well received overall by students, faculty and staff, even before the petition.

“This proposal has been endorsed by the Black Student Union, Organization of Latin American Students, International Student Association, Indigenous Student Union, Asian Student Alliance, Women’s Empowered, Disability Student Union, Survivor Advocacy Alliance, Students for Social Justice, Gender Sexuality Alliance, Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services Quinnipiac Chapter, QU Women’s Health Organization, Women in STEM and Alpha Delta Pi,” Constanza wrote in both the proposal and in email correspondence to the Office of Inclusive Excellence.

Constanza began communicating with Tom Ellett, Quinnipiac’s chief experience officer, in November, who they say is “unhappy” about their pursuit of this matter.

Constanza met with Ellett multiple times throughout the last semester, advocating for the OVA.

Ellett expressed that he did not see this as a problem on campus.

“While it may appear we are not supporting you by not agreeing to your proposal, we do not see the issue the same way you do,” Ellett stated in an email to Constanza.

He believed students were well aware of how to access the university’s resources.

“The number of reports generated in this past semester and not hearing concerns from others on this topic, would illustrate that this may be very isolated,” he wrote.

Ellett argued that since he didn’t hear about it from other students, he can’t say it’s systemic.

Patricio Jimenez was named the permanent Title IX coordinator in 2024, following the office seeing a turnover of four different coordinators within 14 months.

He also raised concerns in November about the financial aspect of the OVA. He pointed out that there may be financial difficulties in executing the plan.

In response, Constanza provided a plan to combat these setbacks, which they said would require minimal financial investment. This included “train(ing) the CARE team in victim services so they are well-versed in what to do... Clearly communicate to students that CARE is the first point of contact for these

types of concerns... Develop a peer-based victim-services system.”

Ellett disagreed with the claims about CARE.

“The CARE staff are trained in these matters and are clear in the policy and protocols for referrals to Title IX and other offices as appropriate. They involve those as needed in the process,” Ellett wrote.

While Ellett told Constanza that CARE was appropriately trained and did not need it, the CARE staff itself was supportive of it, according to Constanza.

“They very much believe the school needs it, especially as Title IX is not under OIE anymore,” they said.

As previously mentioned, Ellett cited financial restrictions as a reason the OVA could not be formed. Constanza believed the response regarding financial concerns to be “ridiculous.”

“Tom in our conversations had asked me if I wanted to raise tuition due to this idea. This is a very common response for a lot of students’ ideas to improve the school. I respectfully told him that I do not think this (will) do that,” Constanza said in a statement to *The Chronicle*.

The OVA would have a staff of one person.

“Budget constraints is very common to not support a student’s ideas. However, I will not believe this until I see proof of these budget constraints. In addition, I can not take that seriously has the school’s investment spending has increased from 50 million to 58 million. The school’s revenue has also increased,” they said, referencing the University’s 2023-24 fiscal year 990 tax documentation.

In January, Ellett informed Constanza that the university would not be adding an OVA.

“John and I held a meeting with all stakeholders to share your proposal and concerns,” Ellett said in an email to Constanza. “While some thought we could review our communications and also look to meet semesterly as a group to discuss any potential issues that aren’t easily resolved, there was universal sentiment, that we do not need the office you are suggesting.”

Ellett was notified a month prior, in December, by Constanza that they were still pursuing this.

“I will be back in touch in early Spring once we have student feedback,” Constanza informed Ellett in an email.

Despite the “numerous conversations that have been had via email/in person regarding a victim advocacy position at QU,” according to

Ellett, he denied knowing about the petition.

Constanza, who formerly served as Identity Senator for the SGA, began this as their official initiative. Following their resignation, they’re continuing this project independently.

Constanza used social media to recruit volunteers to help collect signatures. They collected physical signatures as opposed to electronic ones, to show that students were talked to in person.

While they had more inside volunteers, they had five volunteers petitioning, Fulton being one.

“Title IX is mostly centered around the legal pursuits of the school and punishing wherever it can,” Fulton said. “However, it doesn’t follow through to support its students.”

Students have been concerned that Title IX hasn’t been as responsive as it should be and that the office has been facing a backlog of cases.

“It says a lot,” Fulton said, “I think it will fill the gaps that Title IX fails to repair... They lack in the department of actually helping victims. They’re more about trying to keep things down under wraps so that the school can function as usual.”

The university disputed this assessment, saying the Title IX process is structured to ensure fairness and thorough review.

“Some Title IX cases require additional time to adjudicate because of their complexity and the need to ensure a fair, thorough and impartial process for all parties involved,” a university spokesperson said.

They also rejected suggestions that the office prioritizes the university’s interests over those of students.

“While this can be frustrating, it does not indicate a backlog of cases,” the spokesperson said. “Any suggestion that the Title IX Office prioritizes the university’s interests over the well-being of students or members of our campus community is simply false. The office’s central focus is on adhering to federal regulations and institutional policy while ensuring the safety, dignity, and equitable treatment of those involved in every case.”

At the time of publication, Constanza has obtained 593 signatures, with the goal being 2,000.

“The continuously increasing amount of signatures, the common opinion that Title IX does not really help or support our students, and support from staff should be enough evidence that an Office of Victim Services should be created,” they said.