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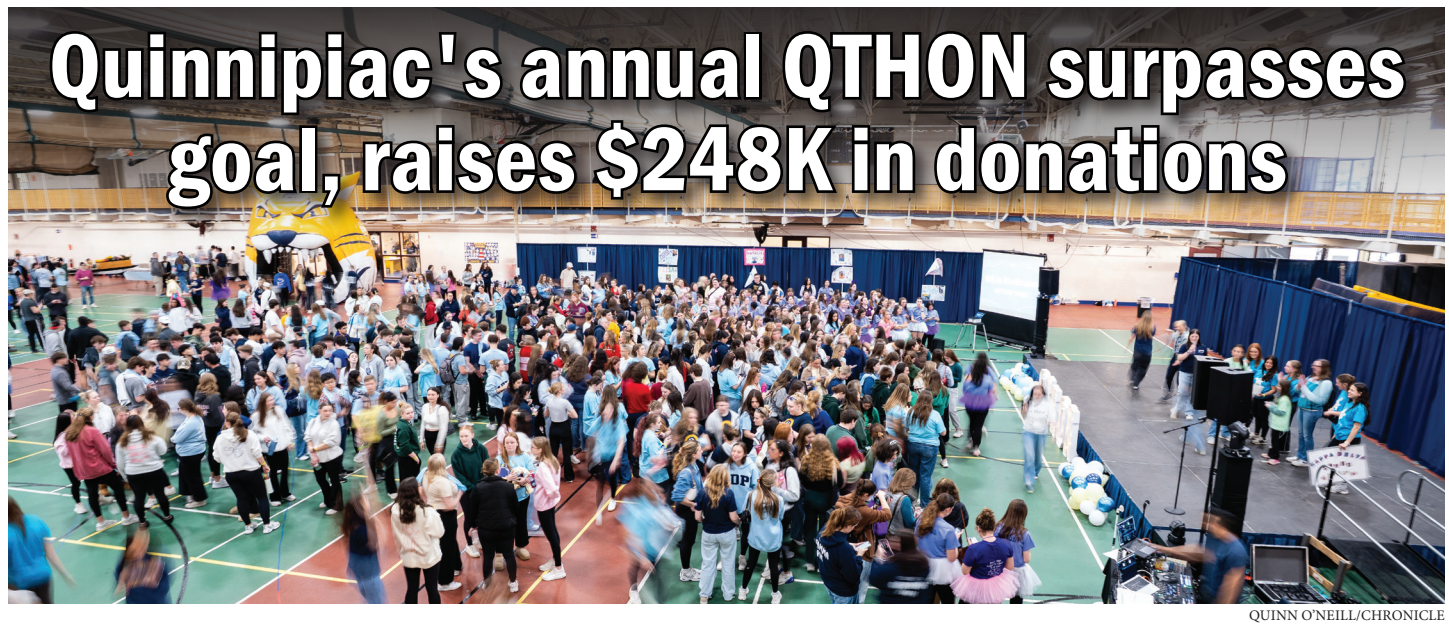
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Quinnipiac's annual QTHON surpasses goal, raises $248K in donations



QUINN O'NEILL/CHRONICLE

By CHLOE GRANT
Copy Editor

Quinnipiac University welcomed the children of Connecticut Children's Hospital with open arms at this year's student-run philanthropy organization, QTHON Saturday, March 21. Members of the Quinnipiac community spent the day, noon through 6 p.m., fundraising money and rallying for the kids who can't.

Each year, QTHON collaborates with Connecticut Children's Hospital to raise money and awareness of childhood illness with a dance marathon. The event is held as a way of allowing students to "connect with and honor patient families, play games, enjoy entertainment, fundraise and reveal our annual fundraising total," at the end of the event, according to The Connecticut Children Foundation.

The day commenced with an opening ceremony where upwards of 1,500 students and community members, according to NEWS8, anxiously awaited the arrival of this year's QTHON participants, each dubbed with the title of Miracle Child.

QTHON Executive Director and senior occupational therapy major Sarah Springer opened with remarks about the significance of the event, which was then followed by group dancing as attendees waited in anticipation of the Miracle Children's arrival.

"I hope QTHON continues to bring both tangible support and lasting hope to children and families facing childhood illness," Springer wrote in a statement to The Chronicle. "Beyond the funds raised, it's about reminding them they are not alone. An entire community is standing beside them, fighting with them, and believing in them. At QTHON, we carry the lanterns. We shine the beacons. We light the way, so no child's spark is ever lost to illness."

Moments later, the children and their families were guided through a tunnel of attendees and were met with clapping and smiling faces as the day kicked off.

Over the span of the six hour event, each Miracle Child was welcomed with open arms and led around by a different Quinnipiac Greek Life organization for the entirety of the event.

Throughout the day, the kids participated in activities such as charades, a talent show and a dance competition. They would later culminate their day free of hospital beds and waiting rooms with the Circle of Hope Ceremony. Attendees formed a large circle around the Miracle Children and their families and the kids were able to have their hospital bands cut from their wrists.

The emotional moment closed with the Miracle Children making their way around the circle, and doing the same to the "hospital bands" attendees received at the beginning of the day, a tear jerking moment for everybody.

"As a future occupational therapist, I dance for my future patients," Springer wrote. "I dance so that every child has the chance to chase their dreams and share their talents. I dance for a brighter future and for the kind of childhood every child deserves. I dance to raise awareness for childhood illness, and I dance in the hope that one day, no child will have to spend a night in a hospital bed."

Senior accounting major Matthew Miller had the opportunity to be a part of this year's QTHON dance marathon as a part of his fraternity, Tau Kappa Epsilon. Miller was placed with the task of guiding his fraternity's Miracle Child, Carter, throughout the day of festivities and he couldn't be more honored to do so.

"The highlight of QTHON for me was meeting the Miracle Child…Seeing his face today, and seeing all the smiles that he's given and all the excitement that's been going through has really made this a really good experience," he said.

With TKE raising over $1,300 alone, and the help of donors everywhere, this year's QTHON event was able to raise $247,768.90, exceeding their goal by nearly $47,000 and surpassing last year's totals.

As the event came to a heartfelt and teary eyed close, Quinnipiac alumnus and parent of Miracle Child, Carter, Matt Chella expressed his deep gratitude for the excellent care and support he has received from Connecticut Children's since his son's birth in 2019. He emphasized the importance of QTHON and the impact events like it have on children like Carter.

"This particular QTHON is very special to me, being an alumni here and having my boys participate and just have so much fun with young college students who are raising so much money and doing so good," Chella said. "I love that."



TYLER MIGNAULT/CHRONICLE

The QTHON management team reveals the total number of donations at the end of the event, this year collecting a record $248 K.



QUINN O'NEILL/CHRONICLE

Members of Greek Life organizations hold signs for their Miracle Child.



QUINN O'NEILL/CHRONICLE

Miracle Child Spencer N. runs through the crowd.



TYLER MIGNAULT/CHRONICLE

The management participates in a morale dance during the marathon.