

The nation's first multicultural sorority chooses Quinnipiac for its next chapter

By **AVA HIGHLAND**
News Editor

Built on empowerment and community, the nation's first multicultural sorority, Mu Sigma Upsilon Incorporated, is expanding to Quinnipiac University. The University of Connecticut's MSU is working with Quinnipiac to be the next chapter in the state.

Founded in 1981, MSU is a national organization with 70 chapters across the country, with UConn's being the only one in Connecticut, according to their website.

"We recognize that diversity isn't just race or anything, but it's everything, religion, creed, how you grew up, your culture, things like that," UConn marketing major and MSU member Elviany Quiroz said.

Across the 70 chapters, the national organization has 1910 sisters with over 120 ethnicities.

MSU sets itself apart from other Greek organizations by being built on diversity, rather than evolving over time.

"While other Greek organizations are and continue to grow more diverse, our organization foundation is based on diversity and our sisters embrace multicultural ideals and interests," according to their website.

MSU also follows three main goals: academic excellence, unity amongst all women and to be active in the university and community.

UConn's MSU has collaborated with Quinnipiac in the past, which is one of the reasons the university appealed to UConn MSU expansion. Being in close proximity for more future collaborations also drew them to Quinnipiac to create another "support network."

"We want to empower more women here in Connecticut, and we've been wanting to expand to Quinnipiac for a while, so we're really excited to start our process into having our another chapter over there," Quiroz said.

MSU hosts several events and activities to align with their goals, including study night, community service, as well as Stepping and Strolling.

"Stepping is to pay homage to African American sisters, that cultural heritage, and then strolling is more of a dance form, kind of like synchronized dancing," Quiroz said.

MSU is "noted as the first multicultural organization to embrace traditions of stepping," according to their website.

Currently, UConn MSU's biggest goal is to increase their presence and garner more interest.

UConn's chapter held a "Ladies Night Informal" via Google Meet Wednesday, Feb. 25, at 7 p.m. for Quinnipiac students interested in joining MSU. Students will hear from both active members and alumni who also play a large role in expanding the organization.

While still in the early stages, UConn MSU is eager to expand its network and community to Quinnipiac.

"I haven't been able to express how excited

everybody is about trying to expand to Quinnipiac," Quiroz said.

In the future, MSU at UConn looks to expand further across Connecticut as well.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY MARIELYS VELEZ

Mu Sigma Upsilon at the University of Connecticut is working to expand the sorority across the state, starting with Quinnipiac University.

Quinnipiac candidates for Masters in Teaching receive 50% reduced tuition through internship experience

By **ALEXANDRA MARTINAKOVA**
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Quinnipiac University students pursuing a Masters in Teaching in the School of Education receive reduced tuition and internship placement help to ensure full experience, regardless of their Bachelor's degree.

While the help that the university offers to its graduate students with internship placements has been a staple of the program, the newer addition is the aforementioned tuition offset.

"The idea is simply that in order to become a highly qualified teacher, you really need to experience the full arc of the calendar year in school," said Anne Dichele, dean of the School of Education. "The school district who hires the resident pays Quinnipiac a stipend amount of money to be utilized as the offsetted tuition."

For the last three years, the degree is also a registered apprenticeship program through the Department of Labor, only one of the 14 in the state.

"RA (Resident Assistant) Programs enable and energize more employers to participate and provide them access to larger talent pools that

have been trained for entry-level to management positions, thereby meeting industry demands and reducing unemployment rates across the country," according to its website.

In order to be certified, according to Connecticut Education, all candidates admitted must hold a valid Connecticut teaching certificate and a minimum cumulative grade of B- for all undergraduate courses.

Quinnipiac's MAT is usually a 15-month long program, shortened if a student is enrolled in the 4+1 program to only three semesters, instead of five.

The school partners with about 20 different school districts in Connecticut and ensures every single placement of every student, providing in return workshops on campus and pay for those teachers that work as mentors.

Currently, the program has a 98% successful job placement rate.

"We want the highest quality experience for our students," Dichele said. "It's not a formal vetting but we really want to be sure that if we're

placing students in a district, that they are getting a year of really quality support."

The tuition offset that the students receive by being enrolled in this internship/residency part of the graduate program is a set stipend that the school sets each year, and is based on the program the students are in, as the university offers MAT in Secondary, Elementary and Special Education.

These programs typically run around 45-52 credits for completion.

"A typical master's degree, if you think of it in terms of cost of credit and number of credits, usually it's around \$30,000," Dichele said. "Right now the amount of tuition offset is at \$15,000."

Credits for these programs run from anywhere from around \$750 to \$1,000, so the \$15,000 offset runs as high as 50% of the entire tuition, excluding any additional costs.

Another bonus that comes from the internship is that quite a number of students end up with permanent placements following their graduate year.

"The schools actually hire them, they're in-

terviewed by the school district and then they will call us back and say 'We want this person,'" Dichele said. "I can tell you that many of our residents tend to be hired."

Despite popular belief, the +1 year is open to students with any Bachelor's degree, as long as they have the desire to teach.

"If you're interested in becoming a teacher, particularly in the STEM fields, which we desperately need out in the high school, the opportunity to get your master's degree with almost no tuition, a year of experience, it's right there for you," Dichele said. "If you're not sure what you want to do after graduation, now's the time to come and talk to us, because you could walk right into this program in July, be done the following September and be in your own classroom."

Students in this program typically attend courses at Quinnipiac at night, two or three times per week depending on what certificate they are going for and work in their own classroom for the full week.

QUINION from cover

First year health sciences major Abigail Murphy shared what she thinks students would like to see at Quinnipiac.

"Either a new healthy dining station or just more options," she said. "Because a lot of students have expressed the need for healthier foods and stuff that fuels our bodies."

This led to talk of ensuring transparency and trust in financial decisions with students at Quinnipiac and debate about where tuition money is truly being spent.

"There has to be a relationship of trust (between) the students (the) faculty and administrators and vice versa, in terms of thinking about how we use our resources. I think a couple of things here," Hardin said. "Helping students understand the principles we use to make budget decisions. Because we have a set of principles that we use to make those budget decisions and to help our students better understand our overall financial picture."

Students also expressed concern with acces-



OLIVIA MASTROMARINO/CHRONICLE

Quinnipiac University Provost Debra Liebowitz discusses concerns students express during the annual State of the Quinon on Feb. 18.

sibility and inclusivity on campus, with questions about increasing the number of elevators and about gender-neutral bathrooms, which there is an apparent lack of, especially in older facilities.

"I know we're always thinking about (how we) retrofit things or do things. But where the buildings were set up to have gender specific bathrooms only, that's hard to change," Liebowitz said.

On the topic of accessibility, there is rising frustration on campus about the bridge behind the Imagard Tator Residence Hall, which has been out of order and gated off to students for several months now. With members of the audience sharing how the roadblock has made it increasingly difficult to get around on campus, the administration reassured that they will be following up with an engineer on the rebuilding status.

Following a brief discussion, The State of the Quinon came to a close with a raffle drawing students were able to enter prior to the event. Active audience members received additional tickets with every question they asked the panel.