

M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship

2023–24 Year in Review

The M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship celebrated a momentous year, highlighted by several new events and collaborations. Other highlights included our annual pitch competition with \$6,000 in prize money awarded to student entrepreneurs to help them launch their own businesses, as well as several other special events.

The M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship empowers and connects students, staff and faculty across all of Quinnipiac's schools and academic disciplines to pursue their entrepreneurial ventures. We accomplish this by catalyzing students and faculty from all disciplines and backgrounds to help promising entrepreneurs learn ways to turn their ideas into practical businesses and uses.

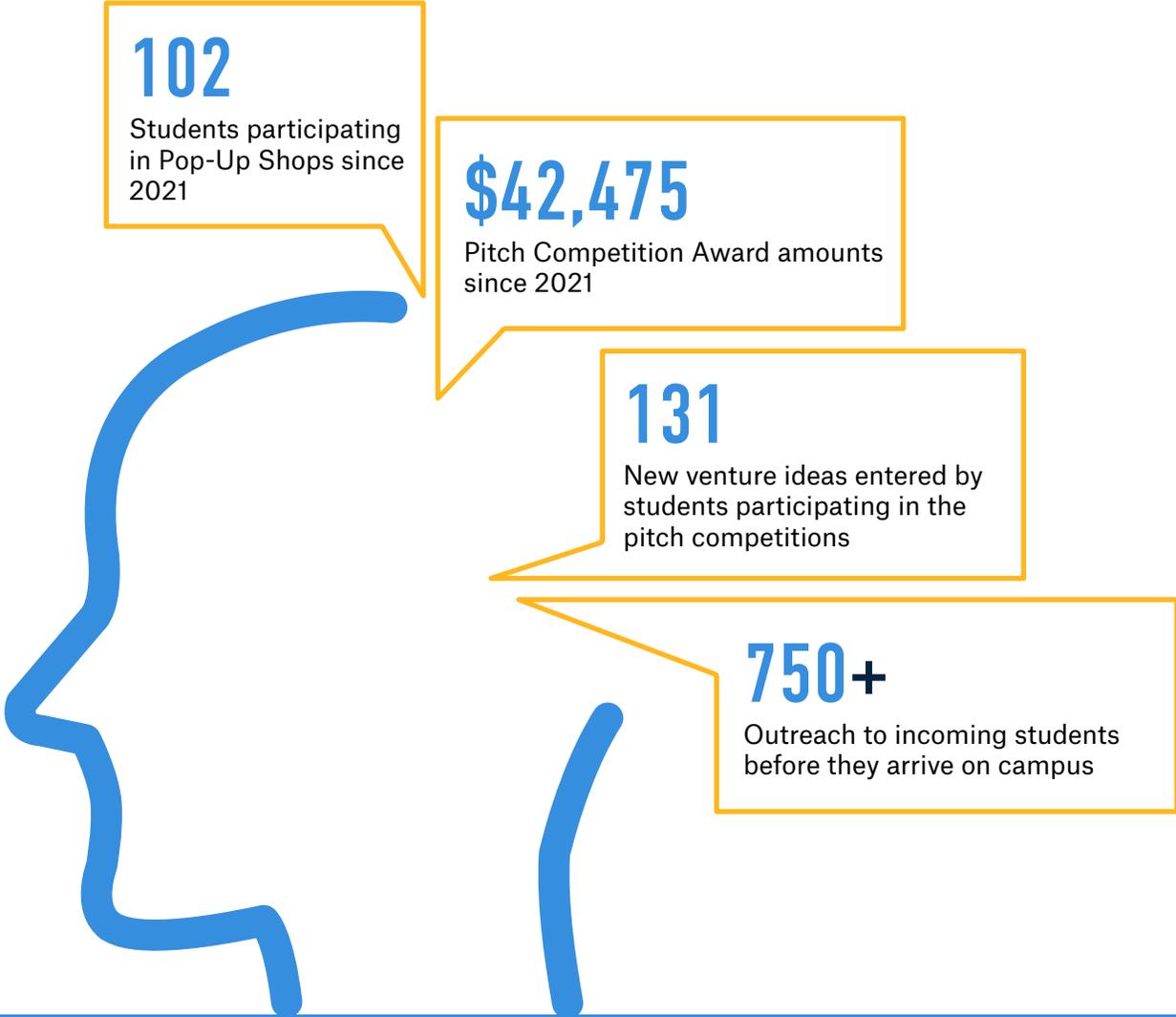
We support faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, alumni, mentors and other internal and external partners of the university. Our relationships with successful entrepreneurs and business owners outside the QU community enable us to connect our students with the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem in the region and country and enhance the economic development provided by small to mid-sized businesses that are fundamental to a successful economy.

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Quinnipiac
UNIVERSITY



102

Students participating in Pop-Up Shops since 2021

\$42,475

Pitch Competition Award amounts since 2021

131

New venture ideas entered by students participating in the pitch competitions

750+

Outreach to incoming students before they arrive on campus

Turning Ideas into Impact

The M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, under the leadership of Patrice Luoma, PhD, center director and professor of entrepreneurship & strategy within the School of Business, is a collaborative resource for students, staff and faculty across all of Quinnipiac's academic schools. The center offers **advisory services** and **workshops** in legal, finance, research, marketing, design, business plan development and **startup mentoring** to help catalyze all types of innovative business, social, sustainable and artistic ventures.

Academic Year Highlights

FALL 2023 EVENTS & INITIATIVES

Student Business Pop-Up Shops

September 21, October 7 & December 5

Student Business Pop-Up Shops were held three times during the fall semester, giving students the opportunity to promote and sell their products or services. Student Pop-Up Shops create visibility for student entrepreneurs and an opportunity to showcase their brands.



Student Business Pop-Up Shops

Pop-Up Shop & Speaking Engagement Celebrating Women Entrepreneurship Week

October 18 & 19

In celebration of Women Entrepreneurship Week, the M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship proudly hosted Mckenna Haz '21 for a pop-up shop and a speaking engagement detailing the growth and trajectory of her eco-friendly sports apparel brand, SEAAV Athletics. The company, which Haz pitched as part of an Introduction to Entrepreneurship class during her first year at Quinnipiac, makes sustainable athletic wear with recycled materials. SEAAV's products are made with post-consumer plastics, and with each purchase, the company removes one pound of waste from the shoreline.



Celebrating Women Entrepreneurship Week

Speaker Event: Mckenna Haz

October 18

Mckenna Haz '21 started her business in her Quinnipiac dorm room. During her two-day visit, she spoke to a group of students in the Innovation Hub where she shared the inspiring story of her entrepreneurial journey, and how she grew her company. Haz shared lessons learned about starting a business in college. She credits several professors at Quinnipiac for helping her build a strong foundation for her success. Her professors helped her with her business plan and her pitch, traveled to business competitions with her and opened the door to their connections.



Speaker Event: Mckenna Haz

Quinnipiac University Fall Elevator Pitch Competition

November 15

The second Quinnipiac University Elevator Pitch Competition offered students from all majors the opportunity to pitch their new venture ideas to a panel of judges. The elevator pitch introduces students to the experience of pitching a social or business venture in 90 seconds. Cash prizes were given to all who pitched at the event. This year, 13 students representing 10 disciplines pitched their ideas in business and social impact categories. The fall elevator pitch helps students develop such diverse skills as public speaking, creativity and confidence.



Fall Elevator Pitch Competition

The Collegiate Entrepreneurs Organization (CEO) Pitch Competition and Annual Conference

November 2-4

Five QU students and adviser Patrice Luoma, PhD, attended the Collegiate Entrepreneurs Organization Annual Conference and pitch competition. Students learned tips about running a student CEO chapter from guest speakers and watched the CEO pitch competition.

Collegiate Entrepreneurs Organization - QU Chapter

The M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship sponsors the QU Chapter of the Collegiate Entrepreneurs Organization. Patrice Luoma, PhD, is the club adviser. In addition to the annual conference, the club met twice monthly throughout the year. Several guest speakers came to Quinnipiac to speak for events. Mike Votto, chairman and CEO of Votto Vines Importing; Fred Welk, director of business education & communications at Community Economic Development Fund; and Dan Bubniak, professional EOS implementer at EOS Worldwide participated. The club also held a trivia night and co-hosted pitch competition workshops and activities for ideation and business startup.



Collegiate Entrepreneurs Organization QU Chapter

SPRING 2024 EVENTS

Sip & Shop - A Pop-Up Shop and a Festive Event Celebrating Black History Month and People of Color Who Own Small Businesses*

February 3

The M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship together with the M&T Bank Center for Women and Business hosted the third Sip & Shop event on the Mount Carmel Campus in celebration of Black History Month. Over 50 local small businesses owned by people of color participated in the event and the event was attended by over 700 guests. This was a family-friendly event with live music and a DJ, featuring Black artists and food trucks owned by people of color providing the surrounding community with an opportunity to shop from participating vendors.

Quinnipiac Students Win Second Place in the Providence College Michael Smith Business Ethics Case Competition

February 2024

The center was pleased to sponsor four QU students — Adam Zujewski, Evan Croteau, John Cichonski and Jacob Iby — in the Providence College Michael Smith Business Ethics Case Competition. The team was advised by Kyle Trusch, assistant director of student experience in the School of Business. This year's case centered on artificial intelligence regulation, prompting students to consider its ethical implications. More specifically, the team was challenged to evaluate the problems associated with AI chatbots, directly connecting their work to ethical theories. Judges evaluated the students based on content, delivery, persuasiveness, ethical soundness of recommendations, and how teams respond to questions. The team won second place, earning a prize of \$1,200.

E-Fest Competition

April 2024



Russell Jackson III, a senior entrepreneurship and innovation major, attended e-Fest® in downtown Minneapolis at the Schulze School of Entrepreneurship. He is the co-founder of Fluid Sports Tech, which was created to benefit student-athletes' mental health.

E-Fest is a three-day experience that features entrepreneurship workshops, networking and competitions with cash prizes.

He participated in a pitch slam, interviews and an innovation challenge where teams created a new pitch idea. After pitching Fluid Sports Tech in front of a panel of judges, he placed in the top 20 nationwide out of 150 teams that had applied.

Jackson and co-founder Mia Johnson were selected to attend e-Fest in April from a pool of over 150 online submissions and nearly 400 students representing 79 universities. Fluid Sports Tech emerged as a standout, securing a coveted spot among the top 25 finalists for e-Fest 2024. This remarkable achievement is a testament to the dedication, talent and hard work exhibited by both the students and their advisers, Patrice A. Luoma, PhD, and David Tomczyk, PhD.

Throughout the competition, Johnson and Jackson showcased exemplary problem-solving skills, strategic thinking and resilience in the face of challenges. Their innovative approach to tackling real-world problems with creativity and professionalism was truly impressive. Fluid Sports Tech achieved remarkable success, earning the Schulze Entrepreneurship Challenge Top 20 Team; and Jackson was part of the team that took second place in the Innovation Challenge and a total prize of \$2,750 for their outstanding performance. This recognition not only highlights the exceptional abilities of the students but also underscores the invaluable guidance and mentorship provided by Luoma and Tomczyk. It further solidifies Quinnipiac University's reputation as a school of excellence.

*Collaborative event across both M&T Bank Centers

Guest Speakers



Stacy Smith Walsh
AVP of Corporate Legal Operations at Travelers
March 19

The M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship in partnership with Travelers Insurance Company hosted Stacy Smith Walsh, AVP of corporate legal operations at Travelers.

Smith Walsh gave a presentation on Optimism, Resilience, and Innovation to law students at Quinnipiac School of Law highlighting the importance of innovation in law. The presentation explored how optimism and resilience are related to successful innovation. Attendees learned how these psychologically based strategies and approaches can inform and energize innovation objectives.



Greg Glynn '04
Founder of Pliable Marketing
March 26

Greg Glynn, a QU alumnus, shared how he created a company for athlete branding.

Glynn talked about what an athlete brand is and examples of how athletes across the country are building their athlete brand. He discussed how each athlete can separate themselves from their competition by identifying the things that make them unique.

Glynn shared stories of athletes that his company, Pliable Marketing, is working with, including several QU athletes, who are using their name, image and likeness to improve their personal brand and position themselves for success during and after their athletic career. Glynn talked about sports marketing, including the opportunities for athletes and marketers to build meaningful relationships through their networks.

Corporate Innovation and Entrepreneurship Speaker Series

Spring 2024

In collaboration with the newly appointed Carlton Highsmith Chair for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Mostafa Analoui, PhD, the center co-hosted several speakers. Experts from various fields came to campus to talk to students about corporate innovation and entrepreneurship.



Marty Guay
VP, Business
Development,
Stanley Black &
Decker Inc.



Mark Maybury
VP for
Commercialization,
Lockheed Martin



Adam Norwitt
CEO, President and
Director, Amphenol

Student Business Development Grants

April 2024

In partnership with Student Affairs, the M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship put out a call for applications for startup or development funds for student businesses. Thirty students applied and \$4,925 was awarded to 21 students in amounts ranging from \$150-\$300. The center is highly appreciative of the support from Student Affairs (Matt Kurz and Monique Drucker) to QU student entrepreneurs.

Workshop on Designing Micro-Credentials

April 4

The Lifelong Learning Advisory Council (LLAC) offered a workshop on designing micro-credentials specifically for faculty and staff working with students on projects and events that are associated with the M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, although faculty members from all departments and disciplines were welcomed.

Spring QU Launchpad Pitch Competition

April 24

The Spring QU Launchpad Pitch Competition is the center's showcase event of the year, in which students from all disciplines across campus are invited to submit their new venture ideas. The center offered a series of workshops that focused on the topics of: Ideation & Customers, Understanding Financials & Valuation, and Creating the Pitch Deck & Pitching Essentials. Additionally, the students were offered pitch practice sessions with mentors.

Several stages of competition included the initial application, semi-finals and finals. Ten selected semifinalists presented internally to three judges. This session served to help participants prepare for an effective pitch and to get supportive feedback and tips on how to enhance the overall pitch and value proposition of their business.

Five finalists moved on to the finals on April 24 and pitched to a live audience and a separate panel of judges: Nancy Dudchik, president of the Hamden Regional Chamber of Commerce; Jordan Lue, investments associate at Connecticut Innovations; and Frank Micalizzi, regional president of M&T Bank. The M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship awarded cash prizes to winning businesses totaling \$6,000.

Semifinalists and their ventures

Trey Chometa FINALIST

CT Mold Remediation Specialist

Meghan Crocetto FINALIST

Project Dance - Innovating Dance Competitions

Russell Jackson FINALIST

Fluid Sports Tech - Supporting Athlete Mental Health

Jake Fitzpatrick and Forrest Paradise FINALIST

Self-Opening and Closing Toilet Seat

Aashman Verma FINALIST

Ruby's Creation - Semi Artificial Jewelry Rental Model

Haktan Ceylan and Omar Saad

"Petrichor" - venture name, "Head2Toe" - original fashion magazine

Sophia Marlas and Ashley Sarelli

Green Greek - consignment of fraternity/sorority apparel

Daniel Velek

International Tennis Camps

Ari Wolf

Time Sensitive - Eco Friendly and Sustainable Clothing Brand



Jordan Lue
Investments
Associate,
Connecticut
Innovations



Frank Micalizzi
Regional President,
M&T Bank



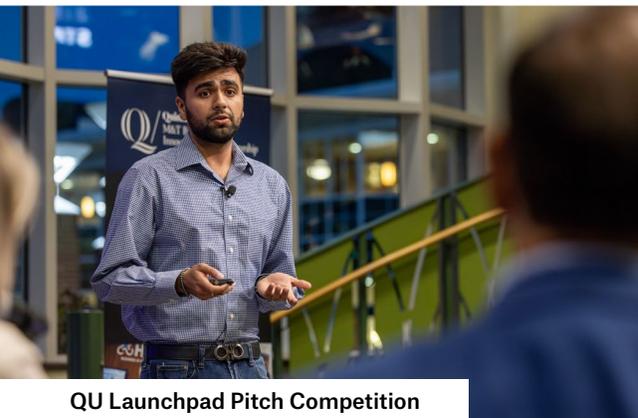
Nancy Dudchik
President, Hamden
Regional Chamber of
Commerce



Sip & Shop



QU Launchpad Pitch Competition



QU Launchpad Pitch Competition



Student Business Pop-Up Shop



QU Launchpad Accelerator Program - Second Edition

Student Business Pop-Up Shop and Development Grants

May 1

In partnership with Student Affairs, the M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship co-hosted a Student Business Pop-Up Shop on the Quad to give students the opportunity to sell their products or services ranging from jewelry, clothing and sports supplements to posters, arts and crafts. Each semester, the students take advantage of this opportunity to take the initiative and sell their products or services. Students and peers come to shop or support their fellow students creating a tight-knit community filled with creativity and passion.

QU Launchpad Accelerator Program (QLAP) - Second Edition

May 20–June 7

The QU Launchpad Accelerator Program (QLAP) is designed as a “launchpad” to help student teams launch their product, invention, game, service or other business into the marketplace.

The accelerator ran in a hybrid model. The meetings focused on helping students with their business ventures. Teams were provided with business mentoring, recommendations and support throughout QLAP. Those who successfully completed the three-week program were eligible for grants to help continue the launch of their businesses. QLAP was led by Prof. Dave Tomczyk.

Five student teams participated in QLAP this year: two multi-person teams and three single-person endeavors. The teams worked in 48-hour sprints, setting goals for all of their members, reporting out on their work each session, and getting feedback from the mentors, Tomczyk and Jake Sturrock ('23, MBA '24). In addition, teams met with outside mentors on a range of topics, from financing to marketing to strategic planning. Each team made significant progress on their business, whether it was developing a video game and launching their business, or planning out further innovations for their dance convention.

Faculty Training for Incorporating Entrepreneurship Content in Any Course

May 8

This workshop was one of many efforts and initiatives by the center to promote its resources available to all QU faculty, presented by Patrice Luoma and Mostafa Analoui. They shared an overview of why innovation and entrepreneurship is important to all students and the center resources available to support faculty in teaching and their students.

Recruitment of the Next Student Leadership Team of On the Rocks Pub

April 2024

The M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship helped to recruit the next leadership team for On the Rocks Pub, a student-run business on campus.

Other Opportunities

Innovation & Entrepreneurship Certificate

This certificate is available for undergraduate students as well as alumni and community members. The certificate requires four courses: three or four I&E courses, with the option for the fourth course to come from your degree program.

OpenOcean Platform

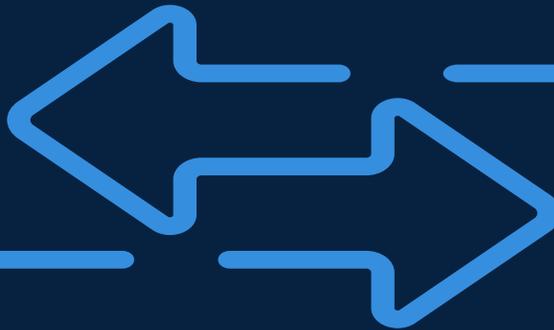
Students are invited to join our innovation and entrepreneurship networking platform, OpenOcean. This platform is used to link students, student founders and mentors. The platform also has a learning tool that can guide you through the process of creating a new venture.

Pitch Competition Participation Outside of QU

Students participated in the Global Student Entrepreneur Awards (GSEA) where Zach Hochberg took home third place, and e-Fest® where Russell Jackson was one of the top 20 finalists.



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Entrepreneurship



The M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship is proud to align with Quinnipiac University's Innovation Hub, an initiative that provides students with a uniquely collaborative and interdisciplinary opportunity by bringing together the university's innovation ecosystem. The M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship will continue to deliver robust programming and ample resources. The Innovation Hub serves as a runway to the workplaces and jobs of tomorrow, a place where students work with their peers from different backgrounds and interests toward a common goal. These shared experiences and relationships will prepare our students to collaborate and innovate with colleagues from multiple departments, divisions and locations — all across the world.



Leadership Team



Patrice Luoma, PhD
Director for M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship
Professor of Entrepreneurship & Strategy



Hanna Hejmowski
Director of Operations for M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship
Part-Time Faculty

2024 Faculty Innovation Fellows

Our faculty innovation fellows promote entrepreneurship and innovation within their respective disciplines and schools to facilitate and encourage interdisciplinary innovations and impact creation.

Sarah Lawson, Assistant Professor of Biology

John Reap, Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering

Rahul Anand, Associate Professor of Medical Sciences

Announcements

Mostafa Analoui, PhD, has been appointed director of the M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. As director, Analoui will focus on several key priorities, including expanding Quinnipiac's innovation ecosystem through external collaborations with corporations, small businesses and community organizations. He will also work to enhance hands-on workshops that promote multidisciplinary collaboration, develop programs designed to support faculty members, and grow the network of mentors and executives.

Analoui's appointment follows Patrice Luoma, PhD's term as center director and her announcement of plans to retire after 28 years at Quinnipiac. Luoma led the center's growth into a university-wide catalyst for innovation and entrepreneurship through collaboration with faculty fellows from across the university's nine schools and colleges. She also offered cocurricular experiences for students across campus.

Professor Dave Tomczyk has joined the team as faculty coordinator of pitch competitions. In addition to teaching several classes and mentoring student entrepreneurs, he has been instrumental in leading the planning and execution of our annual pitch competitions.



For questions about the M&T Bank Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, contact:

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