

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CUKC Students “Paws and Relax” with Therapy Dogs on Campus



Finals week and the week leading up to the final exams can be some of the most stressful times college students encounter each term.

As Cleveland University-Kansas City (CUKC) students prepare for final exams, therapy dogs will be on campus to offer stress relief. Studies show that as few as 12 minutes spent with a dog can help to lower blood pressure, reduce anxiety, and improve lung function. Petting dogs has been shown to release mood-elevating hormones such as serotonin, prolactin, and oxytocin.

The public is generally aware of unhealthy ways to cope with stress, such as using medications, caffeine, or energy drinks to get through challenging experiences. Fewer people know that interacting with therapy dogs is more than just having fun. It's a conservative, non-pharmacological, and effective way to improve health.

Inviting therapy dogs to campus during finals supports student health and wellbeing in alignment with the University's mission to promote health, wellness, and vitality. Therapy dogs are trained to provide psychological or physiological support for individuals and may visit schools, daycares, and rehabilitation centers.

Therapy dogs from the non-profit organization, Pets for Life, started coming to campus in August 2018 after receiving an invitation from the CUKC Ruth R. Cleveland Memorial Library team. CUKC instructor, Dr. Shannon Vandaveer also participates by bringing her therapy dog, Scout, to campus for the students to interact with during finals week.

About [Cleveland University-Kansas City \(CUKC\)](#):

Cleveland University-Kansas City (CUKC) is a private, nonprofit, healthcare-focused university. Founded in 1922 by the Cleveland family, Cleveland University-Kansas City (CUKC) is a recognized leader in chiropractic and health sciences education. [10850 Lowell Ave. Overland Park, KS 66210](#)

For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact Jennifer Matascik, CUKC director of communications, by email or at 913-424-0126. Scout will be in the CUKC community center on Tues. 4/23/19 from 10am-12pm and Wed. 4/24/19 from 1pm-3pm.

Resources:

<https://www.pawsforpeople.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Benefits-of-Pet-Therapy-Annotated.pdf>
<https://www.uclahealth.org/pac/animal-assisted-therapy>
<http://ajcc.aacnjournals.org/content/16/6/575.full>