Therapy Dog Thursday

College Connection

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As students in a graduate program, we often find ourselves stressed out with upcoming exams and deadlines. To cope with the stress, some students join intramural groups or others seek comfort from their family and friends. However, this can be difficult with a busy schedule or when home is thousands of miles away. There are others like myself who use a different outlet provided by our school - Therapy Dog Thursday.

Therapy Dog Thursday is an event that is organized by a Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science’s (RFUMS) faculty, Beth Friedman. Once a month, Beth organizes the meetings with these cuddly pups from Our House of Hope Rescue. This rescue organization was founded in 2007 and is led by a wonderful woman, Lisa Krinninger, who is the Executive Director. Currently all of the dogs in this organization are living with foster families and are available for adoption. For a few hours that day, the dogs join us for a time filled with belly rubs and scratches behind the ear. Each visit we are always joined with new furry faces and once in a while, we get to meet the occasional rabbit. This organization also fosters and rehabilitates a variety of different animals such as gerbils, squirrels, and turtles. This program serves as a great way for these animals to socialize and to find prospective homes. It is also a great resource for animal lovers or those who find comfort in cute and fluffy four legged friends.

The first time I visited these pups, I was in my first year at RFUMS. I was still acclimating to graduate school life and was stressed out due to having to commute two and half hours every day to school. Therapy Dog Thursday fit right into my busy schedule, since it was offered on campus and during convenient hours around lunch. I was able to walk right over to the area where these pups sat during my break and instantly, I was untroubled with the stresses of school and commuting. All the dogs are so friendly and well behaved. I was met with wagging tails and lots of kisses. I sat there with the dogs and made my rounds to pet each one. I paid particular attention to a scruffy black dog that reminded me a lot of my cousin’s dog I grew up with, that recently passed away. I sat there for the remainder of the hour petting her and forgetting the laundry list of things I had to do. Fellow classmates and students from other professional programs joined me that day for the company of these sweet dogs. Therapy Dog Thursday is a great way to help students unwind and get away from our hectic schedules. Somehow, just a simple visit from these furry friends can uplift the spirit, which is why I choose to continue to stop by when I can.

I am currently in my second year in pharmacy school at RFUMS. I no longer have the stress of commuting since I have moved closer to campus, but school is still as hectic as the previous year. I stop by to visit the dogs whenever I can, even if it is for a few minutes. Since moving closer to campus, I have had to leave my own dog at home which gives me a lot more reason to continue to visit these dogs. This organization has helped me as well as countless other students and faculty by finding comfort in these friendly pups.

This program has been very well received since it began three years ago. A recent survey about the program was conducted and demonstrated positive impact on current and former students. Therapy Dog Thursday has been able to help brighten days, while helping us destress from school, and cope with missing our own furry babies.
waiting for us at home while we attend school. There is something soothing about visiting these animals which truly make them therapy dogs. I look forward to many more Therapy Dog Thursdays and I hope that other schools will consider adopting a similar program as well.

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