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Susquehanna University Opts to Embrace the Dog Days

Center for Academic Success Introduces iPaw Collaborative Program

SELINSGROVE, PA – 11/20/2023 – Susquehanna University’s Center for Academic Success has chosen to show the university’s commitment to student well-being by introducing the iPaw Collaborative, a program that integrates therapy dogs into campus life.

The three new therapy dogs, Tilly, Jimmy, and Tyrus, are handled by faculty members, making Susquehanna one of the first universities in Pennsylvania to have staff-owned dogs integrated into the campus community.

Using results from the Healthy Minds survey published earlier this year, the National Education Association claims, “the majority of college students (more than 60 percent) meet the criteria for at least one mental health problem—a nearly 50 percent increase since 2013.” Since the introduction of the therapy dogs, a student survey indicated that 76% of students enjoyed seeing the dogs on campus, attributing their presence to happiness, stress reduction, social connection, and thoughts of home and comfort.

The dogs wear orange and maroon vests as their uniform, and when they aren’t visiting classrooms or events they host their office hours in the Paw Pad, an extension of the university’s Hawk Hub located in the Degenstein Campus Center.

Susquehanna University is a private liberal arts college in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania. The university is known for its mission to be a future-ready institution, where nobody goes unnoticed, and everyone stands out. The campus community strives to be welcoming, accepting, and culturally aware, embracing all backgrounds and perspectives and encouraging students to “Be Impossible to Ignore.”

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