

The Power of **Pebbles**: How a 14 lb. dog changed a campus!



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MONTCLAIR
STATE UNIVERSITY

NJ HIGHER EDUCATION
**MENTAL
HEALTH
SUMMIT**
24

Timeline of the Emergence of Therapy Animals:

- **1790's** (Mainstream AAT)– Earliest documentation of humans working with animals for therapeutic needs. In the UK where those who were mentally ill cared for small animals in a garden facility.
- **1867** (Mainstream AAT)– Treatment center in Bielefeld, Germany started using animals as a form of therapy.
- **1877** (American Humane Society; History)– American Humane Society founded. This is the first organization in America to work towards protecting children and animals.
- **1944-1945** (Mainstream AAT)– American Red Cross launches new program. This program uses animals for veterans in rehab at Army Air Force Convalescent Hospital in Pawling, New York.
- **1969** (Path INTL. History)– North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA) is formed. This association helps foster therapeutic riding for disabled people.
- **1977** (Mainstream AAT)– Center on Interactions of Animals and Society launches research to understand the bond between human and animals. Located at the University of Pennsylvania Veterinary School.
- **1977** (Pet Partners History)– Delta Society is founded. This organization is created to educate and further positive human and animal relationships.
- **1990** (American Disabilities Act of 1990)– American Disabilities Act created. This act defined those with disabilities legal rights and includes services animals and their requirements.



Meet the First Known Therapy Animal: *Smoky*

- Smoky's work as a therapy dog began in 1944 when a soldier found Smoky in new Guinea. The pup stayed with the soldier, who eventually came down with dengue fever and he was sent to the 233rd Station Hospital in New Guinea.
- The soldier's friend smuggled the little dog into his hospital ward to keep him company.
- The nurses observed the positive effect that the little dog had, not only on the soldier but on the other patients in the hospital.
- Her demeanor brought other soldiers comfort during their time in the army hospital.
- Dr. Charles Mayo (of the Mayo Clinic) was at the 233rd and after seeing the impact of Smoky, had nurses and doctors take Smoky on rounds with them
- After the soldier recovered, he and Smoky visited other veteran's hospitals to bring comfort to those suffering.
- Smoky passed away in 1957, but was honored by the U.S. War Dogs Association and a statue memorializing her was erected in



Let's start from the beginning:

First University to have a “live” Dog as a Mascot:

- Yale University in late 1880's
- Infamous “Handsome Dan's” have been part of Yale's culture on campus since 1889
- *Handsome Dan XIX* has been at Yale since 2021



The Emergence of Pet Therapy (animal-assisted therapy)

- 1960's began the **formal pet movement in mental health care**
- Researchers began to study the relationship between humans and animals, and documented that the “bonds between humans and animals can be mutually beneficial, enhancing both species’ physical health and **reducing stress**, among other benefits” (Maloney, 2023)
- Freud’s use of his dog in therapy was translated in the mid 1900’s, and supported by the findings of Levinson that use of **AAT had clinical results that increased the impact of talk-therapy** and other forms of mental health treatment, particularly in the areas of **depression and pain management**.



The Emergence of Pet Therapy (animal-assisted therapy)

- In 1989, the **Delta Society**, a group focused on animal education, invented a certification program to ensure the proficiency and success of animals providing AAT
- Neuropsychology began to reinforce the use of AAT
 - UCLA studies beginning in the late 1990's showed the presence of animals in therapy (as well as animals as pets) released **serotonin, prolactin and oxycontin** - all hormones that can play a part in elevating moods. The research also found that this type also provides comfort, lowers anxiety and reduces loneliness.



Emotional Support Animals (ESA's)

- Began with the passing of the American with Disabilities Act in 1990—allowed persons with disabilities to bring service animals with them into public places:
 - **Service Animals:** a dog (and in some cases, miniature horses), trained to assist a person with a disability, which could be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.
 - Hearing dogs, seeing eye dogs, epilepsy dogs
- **ESA's:** animals not trained to provide a person with a specific service (and not covered under ADA) but provide comfort to an individual mainly in their residence.



Fair Housing Act

- **Fair Housing Act** (*FHAct Section 504*) began as Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 and is meant to protect renters with disabilities from landlord discrimination.
- **1988** included use of ESA's in housing as part of what is protected under the FHA.
- A **2014 court ruling** determined that colleges and universities must comply with the FHA and allow all residential students who "qualify" for an ESA to have one in university housing with little to no paperwork or restrictions.
- Since COVID, the **number of ESA's on colleges campus has nearly quadrupled.**



The Coming of Pebbles

- Like all institutions, Montclair State University began seeing a **rise in mental health issues**, particularly in the area of depression and anxiety, preceding and post-COVID.
- For the past 10+ years, both CAPS (Counseling and Psychological Services) and the Office of Health Promotions hosted **therapy dog and mini-horse programs** that were so popular that often there were lines 200 students deep to wait and visit with an animal on campus



The Vision

- With the release of the book **Canines on Campus**, a cross-divisional team began looking into how we could not only host our own therapy dog on campus, but incorporate **a sense of belonging and school spirit** by having a “live” pupscot (we already have a very popular Red Hawk mascot) that could live on campus, be visible at events, work with our students who exhibit emotional distress, and help students feel a sense of “home” by having a campus pet



The Mission Begins

- **The quest for a “pupscot” began with presentations and approvals:**
 - President (wanted a cat)
 - General Counsel
 - Risk Management
 - Residence Life
 - University Communications
 - Athletics
 - CAPS
 - Health Promotions
 - Student Health Center
 - Facilities



The Mission Begins

- **Next—who would care for the pupscot and where would they live?**
 - Professional staff member from Residence Life offered to be the full time care taker
 - Back-up person also needed to be designated



The Nitty Gritty

- **Who pays for the Pupscot?**
 - Began **with crowdfunding and donations** from SDCL division staff to purchase dog
 - Residence Life portioned off **budget dollars** for food, necessities, and medical care
 - **Mental Health Grant from OSHE** assisted in paying for:
 - Basic puppy training
 - Medical needs
 - Therapy dog training
 - **Contracts** needed to be created
 - Caregivers
 - Trainer
 - **Compensation** for caretakers
 - **Insurance and indemnification**



How do you select a “Pupscot”?

- **Selection process**
 - Researched types of dogs that excel at being Therapy Dogs:
 - Labradors
 - “Doodles”
 - Took into consideration size of dog and size of living environment
 - Committee member had adopted Mini-labradoodle from local breeder
 - Breeder had recent litter of puppies
 - **CUNUNDRUM:**
 - “Adopt Don’t Shop”
 - Pebbles story....



Naming the “Pupscot”

- **Naming process**
 - Students associated with “**Team Rocky**” (our Student Communication department that focuses on school spirit and connection) chose the name “Pebbles” as a “**chip off the block**” from our beloved Mascot, Rocky the Red Hawk
 - Nothing to do with The Flintstones (generation gap!)
 - Began brand campaign before Pebbles even arrived on campus
 - **Gotcha Day: February 16, 2023**



Introducing Pebbles to Campus

- **Initial Introductions**
 - Began slowly with appearances on campus at smaller events
 - Created a “**Team Pebbles**” of students who trained with a dog trainer to understand how to manage a puppy and acclimate her to a university setting
 - Brought her to multiple events to **expose** her to all types of students, staff and faculty
 - 1st Birthday Party was a hit!
 - Admissions Events
 - Let her **explore** different areas on campus to begin comfort
 - Began **immediate training** with dog trainer ✓



Social Media Campaign

- **Social Media Team**
 - Instagram posts and stories
 - Own postings as well as with Rocky the Red Hawk



pebblesredhawk

Following ▾

Message



47 posts

2,730 followers

55 following

Pebbles she/her/hers

pebblesredhawk

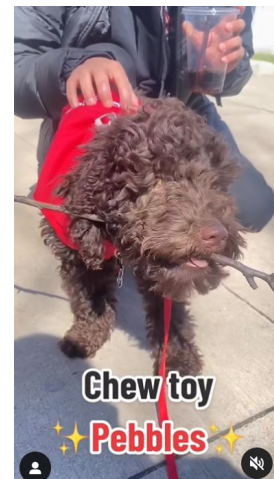
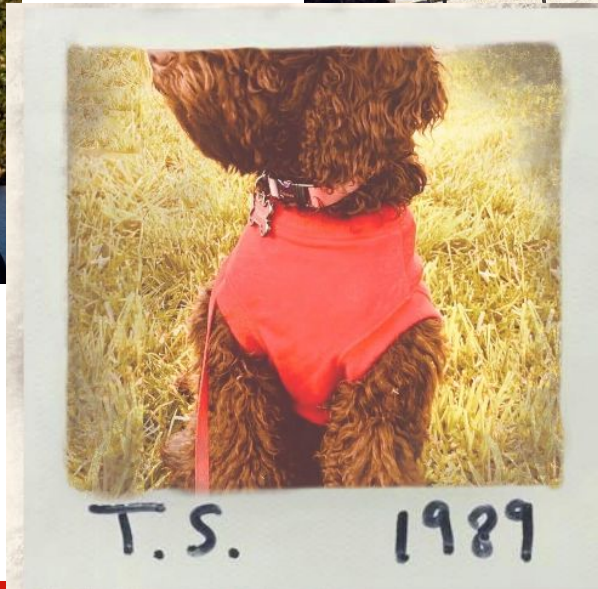
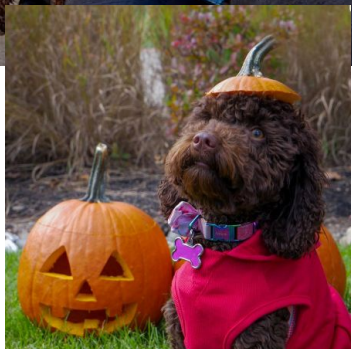
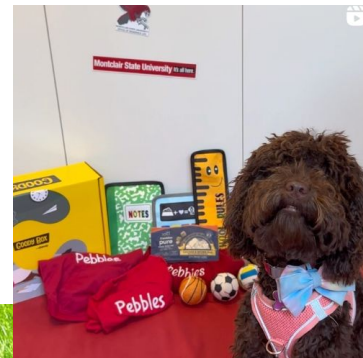
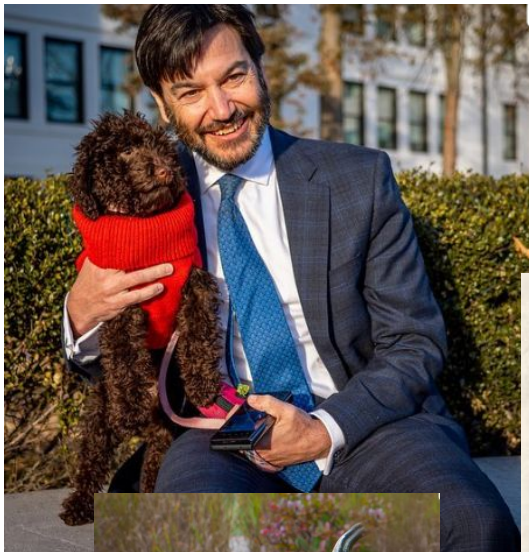
Mini labradoodle and official pupscot of @montclairstateu

#RedHawkPride

linktr.ee/pebblesredhawk



Social Media Campaign



Some Recognition...

MARKETPLACE
Search For & Place Classifieds

northjersey.com

News Bergen Passaic Sports HS Sports Advertise Obituaries eNewspaper Legals 54°F

EDUCATION

Montclair State University has a new member, Pebbles, an emotional support dog



Tariq Zehawi

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Pebbles, an emotional support dog, is greeted by students at Montclair State University in Montclair, NJ on Monday Nov. 27, 2023.

news12
NEW JERSEY

<https://newjersey.news12.com/montclair-state-university-students-meet-pebbles-the-schools-new-therapy-pup-scot>

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Meet Pebbles The Puppy

written by Emma Caughlan • 10 months ago



WCBS
NEWSRADIO
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MONTCLAIR
STATE UNIVERSITY

Student Development and Campus Life

Impact of Pebbles on the Montclair State Community



karinamclard I've never been happier to see a picture in my life



leatorppey I love youuuuuu ❤️ 🤗 🤗 🤗

15w 1 like Reply



mollycolligan love u pebbles 💕 💕

6w Reply



alicia_k_gadek she's adorable!! 🥰

15w Reply

- **Students** have described her as “life changing”, “like being at home”, “best thing on campus”, “seeing her makes me day, week and month!”
- **Faculty/staff report** visits with Pebbles makes their time on campus happier and more fulfilling
- **Prospective parents and students** are very excited when she attends Admissions events, saying this was the only campus they saw a dog and it made them feel like they belonged on campus



denalitheshepard you're so slay pebbles

15w 1 like Reply

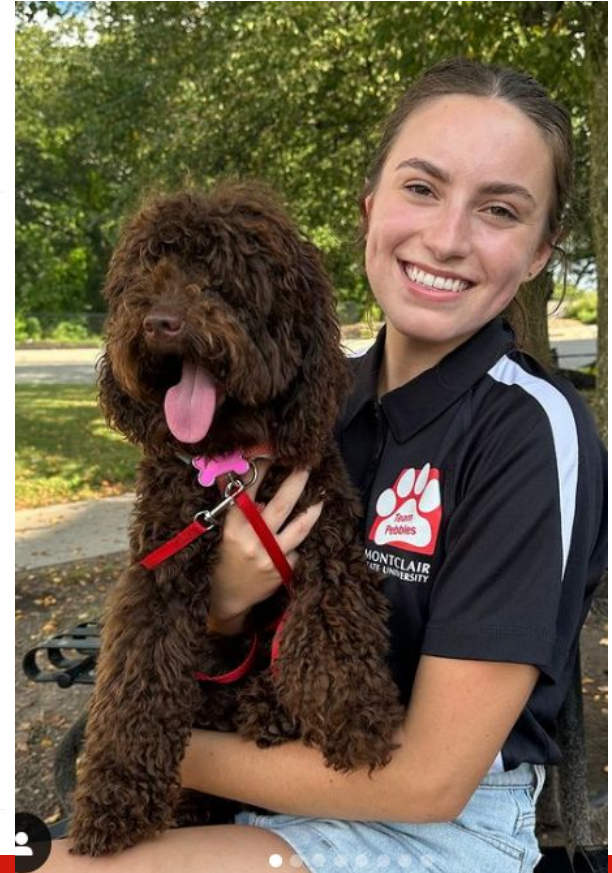


rooster.martin Our queen ❤️ 🐶

28w 1 like Reply



entyce53 It was a pleasure getting to canoodle with this doodle 💜

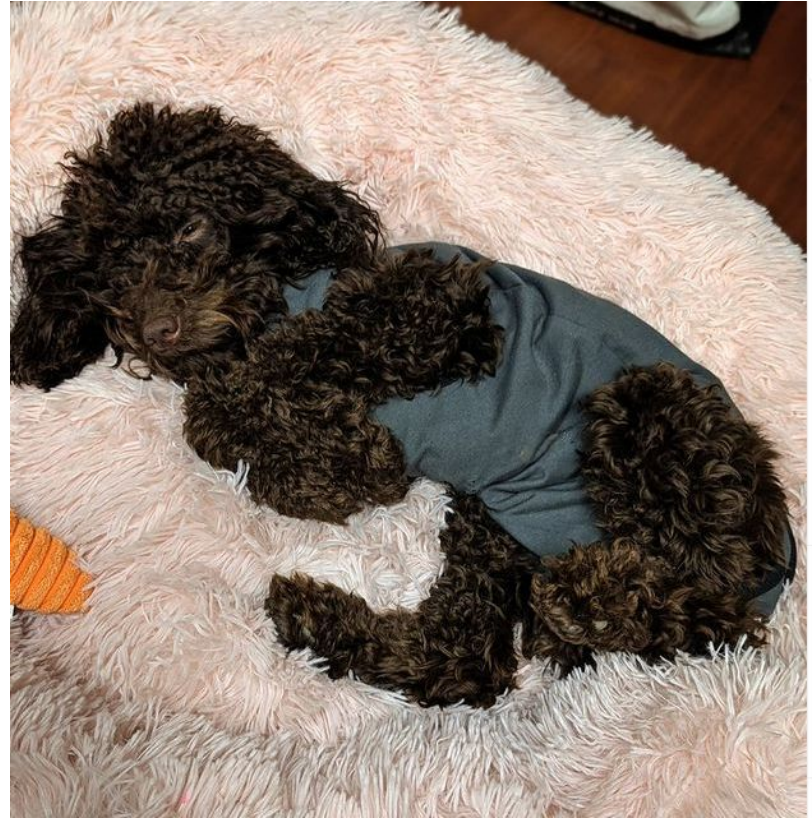


Role of Pebbles on Campus for 2023-24

- **Expansion of Duties**
 - Continue to **attend basic puppy training** (must complete 3 levels in order to qualify for Therapy Dog Training)
 - Continue **scheduled and surprise appearances** on campus
 - Ability to **“schedule” Pebbles to visit organizations and offices**
 - **Referrals** by CAPS, CARE Team, Residence Life and Student Health for specific visits for students in need
 - Students can **schedule small group sessions** for a Pebbles visit
 - **Pebbles will be visit with students/staff who are impacted by emergency incident when appropriate**



Questions?



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