Dec. 17, 2013

**Dead Week dog day was a big success**

Sac State put on the dog Tuesday, Dec. 10, with its Puppy Therapy Day, a happy, stress-relieving distraction for students juggling deadlines for projects and papers – and facing final exams.

More than 400 students mingled on the University Library Quad with friendly canines named Chou Chou, Ringo, Meka, Darcy, Ramona, Luca and Wyatt, and their handlers from Lend a Heart Lend a Hand Animal-Assisted Therapy.

Despite the day’s chilly temperatures, the dogs and their humans spent four hours on campus – and the students kept coming, stopping by to pat the pooches and give them big, warm hugs.

Sac State’s Student Health and Counseling Services and the campus Active Minds chapter teamed up with Lend a Heart to bring four hours of furry stress relief to campus.

“It will give students a minute or two to forget about everything and, hopefully, put a smile on their face,” Lend a Heart team leader Kim Robinson said before the event. “Some students may be missing their dog or other pet they had to leave behind at home, and this gives them a chance to connect to an animal.”

The therapy dogs ranged in age from 2 to 7.

Sac State professor emeritus Nancy Kalish, Chou Chou’s owner and a volunteer with Lend a Heart, expects the group to return to campus this spring to cheer up frazzled students once again facing finals.

“The students really embrace this type of event,” says Rikka Venturanza, a health educator assistant with Sac State’s Health and Wellness Promotion. “We try to support them at this stressful time.”

For media assistance, contact Sacramento State’s Office of Public Affairs at (916) 278-6156. – Dixie Reid