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Campus Police Adding Therapy Dog to Personnel

Known affectionately as Archie, this therapy dog will help officers respond to student and community mental health needs

The University of Minnesota Morris Campus Police Department is getting a new addition: a therapy dog. Known affectionately as Archie, he will help officers respond to student and community mental health needs.

As mental health crises on campus and in the community increase, the University of Minnesota Morris must find creative ways to improve student wellbeing. The first of its kind at a Minnesota college, this program responds to the needs of UMN Morris students in a way that is unique to the campus culture: a relationship-based, student-centric solution.

Research shows that interaction with a therapy dog reduces blood pressure, lowers stress, stimulates memory, and more. Archie will help students build positive relationships with Campus Police while overcoming barriers to graduation and future success. He also will help Campus Police provide mental health resources and victim advocacy throughout the Morris area.

“Archie will assist our department in bringing a greater level of service to the population we serve, on campus and in the community,” says Lieutenant Rob Velde, UMN Morris Police Department. “Therapy animals prove to be excellent tools to help people in need. And who doesn’t like to pet a dog, no matter their situation or mood?”

Archie begins training later this spring. When he is certified, he will be part of the Morris Let’s Thrive program. Morris Let’s Thrive is a holistic campus initiative infusing evidence-based mental health and wellbeing practices, skill building, information and resources into UMN Morris students’ curricular and co-curricular life. Learn more at students.morris.umn.edu

This program is made possible thanks to the private giving support of donors and friends.