

PIMA OTA El Paso Students and Faculty in the community

Mr. Rico Duran has an above-knee amputation and has not been able to enter or exit his home since his surgery 3 years ago. Mr. Duran was introduced to faculty in the Pima OTA Program in order to offer recommendations for home modifications and to evaluate his overall functional level. Upon completing his home evaluation, it was determined he would need a ramp to prevent a fall occurrence while entering and exiting his home. As luck would have it, Katherine Lawson, OTR, LMSSW, Ph.D., had been contacted by her neighbor who wanted to donate a ramp he had built for his father. Dr. Lawson informed her neighbor that we had a student at PIMA who needed a ramp. The neighbor offered to take the ramp apart and deliver it to the student's home. So now, we needed manpower to build this ramp.

Eugena Gonzalez, OTR, Ph.D., sought student volunteers to help with this project and was able to enlist help from not only students but a community OTR and a contractor. On July 22, 2023, Dr. Gonzalez (Pima OTA Program Director) along with 5 OTA students (Priscilla Estrada, Javier Ortega, Andres Perez, Mikel Adame, and Daniel Valdivia), 1 community OTR (Alexa Ortega), and a contractor (Francisco Estrada) came together to fabricate a ramp for a PIMA Medical Assistant Student (Rico Duran). The weather was brutal (105 degrees), but they were able to complete the ramp in one day. Rico is now able to enter and exit his home without the fear of falling. This will also impact the severe depression Rico experiences due to his difficulty entering and exiting his home safely since the accident.

I applaud this group effort and all the work that went into this endeavor. We are now assisting Rico with his ADLs and he reported he has a new outlook and appreciates all the people who have impacted his life.

Katherine Lawson, OTR, LMSSW, Ph.D