



News

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Cal Poly's Annual PolyHouse Project Will Renovate Home of Disabled 9-Year-Old

SAN LUIS OBISPO – For the past six years, Cal Poly's industrial and manufacturing engineering project management class has completed a home renovation service project to help a local family or individual struggling with issues related to disabilities.

[The Todd Family](#)

The Todd Family - Photo by Cal Poly student Ryan AQUI

This year, the PolyHouse team will renovate the Nipomo home of Simon and Ruby Todd. The couple's 9-year-old son, Caleb, has achondroplasia dwarfism and hydrocephalus. Caleb has endured more than 13 brain surgeries, and the medical bills are straining the family's finances. Further, both parents were recently laid off from their regular jobs. The Todds are working part-time to make ends meet. While the family makes every possible accommodation for Caleb, his physical limitations hinder him from doing very basic life tasks.

The PolyHouse team is working to improve the safety and comfort of the Todd home. The students will add an ergonomically designed bathroom for Caleb, address the crowded living situation and storage space, provide a yard more suitable to Caleb, and offer monthly cost reduction techniques.

The project involves 28 students, six weeks of planning, six days of construction, and a \$160,000 fund raising goal, including donations of cash, building materials and other assistance for the repairs and home improvements.

The PolyHouse team plans to unveil the renovated home to the Todds at 2 p.m. May 23.

The class is posting a blog on its project Web site to provide updates on its progress. In a recent post, team member Michelle talks about the value of the PolyHouse experience from a student perspective: "What we are learning is amazing," she wrote. "I have learned about how planning and execution, combined with a determined group of like-minded people, can accomplish amazing work. I think that this will be the best experience of my time at Cal Poly."

To read more, visit <http://polyhouse.wordpress.com/>.

Faculty adviser Liz Schlemer said the PolyHouse class aims to give students hands-on experience planning and managing a technical project that involves fundraising, scheduling, supply management, team recruitment, resource allocation, time and cost budgeting, risk assessment, task coordination, project monitoring and post-project assessment.

Schlemer's project management students come from a variety of backgrounds, including business, engineering management and industrial and manufacturing engineering.

Central Coast businesses and construction companies give the Poly House project tremendous support. For information on the project and a complete list of supporters, see <http://polyhouse.wordpress.com/>.

Note to the press: If you would like to visit the site to cover the work in progress or the project unveiling, contact Matt Lazier in the Cal Poly Public Affairs Office at 805-756-7109 or mlazier@calpoly.edu for the address.

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