



Wounded Soldier Demonstrates Prosthetic Arms at New Minneapolis Center

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Ramon Padilla gripped the golf club, checked his stance and swung. He wasn't at a championship golf tournament. He wasn't even on the green. He was in an office, playing for an attentive group of young children who are missing a limb, just like Padilla. The kids are part of a support group for child amputees and their parents called, "Little Fins." Padilla met them at Advanced Arm Dynamics in Maple Grove to show the kids how he uses a variety of prosthetic arms to do everyday activities.

"I hold my kids' hand," Padilla told them. "I have a little baby boy, I change his diaper, I tie my own shoes. I play the game of golf. I still play baseball. I still hang out with my friends and have a good time."

Four years ago, all those activities he once did with ease were put to the ultimate test. Army Staff Sergeant Padilla was serving in Afghanistan in July of 2007 when a rocket propelled grenade hit him, cutting off his left hand and severely injuring his brain. He received care at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and met with specialists from Advanced Arm Dynamics, a national prosthetic company that fitted him with a prosthetic and helped him adapt to life without a limb.

Although he is now retired from the U.S. Army, Padilla still works with disabled veterans and civilians. He came to the new Maple Grove facility to encourage young amputees and their parents to utilize the center and take full advantage of the different types of prosthetics they offer.

The Advanced Arm Dynamics center is a rare resource for amputees. While you can receive prosthetic limbs from places like Shriner's Hospital and Gillette Children's Hospital, Pat Prigge with Advanced Arm Dynamics says those facilities cater to many different kinds of disabilities. Prigge adds that the majority of cases treated in general prosthetic clinics are lower extremity. Advanced Arm Dynamics deals solely with upper limb prosthetic rehabilitation. The company has five different centers spread out throughout the country. The Maple Grove location opened in March.

"Literally, there's only about probably about 30 people in the United States that specialize in just upper limb prosthetic care and we actually happen to employ about eight of those around the country," says Prigge.

The center has a lab, where specialists custom create patients' limbs. Specialists also use the space to help people figure out how to utilize the different prosthetics.

Prigge worked with Padilla at Walter Reed. Today, they're working together to encourage people to take advantage of the same opportunities Padilla has experienced thanks to the therapy and equipment he received from Advanced Arm Dynamics.

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