

UTRGV TRiO SSS

Alternative Spring Break Activity Alpaquita Ranch Monte Alto, Texas

**Date of Activity:
Wednesday, March 15, 2023**

Post-Activity Reflections

This experience provided an educational and safe alternative Spring Break experience for 36 participants. Participants were considered to attend this opportunity after expressing interest and sharing their hopes to learn. We considered their participation in our program, academic performance, and goals moving forward in their journey to success. There were more than 50 participants who expressed interest, 43 made the final list, and 36 actually attended. This was a local trip and the cost associated was not as high as it would have been if it were not local and if other major expenses were needed (lodging, transportation, etc.).



During the activity, participants learned about the safety and care of alpacas. They also learned some important facts about the animals and some of their history. Participants also spent some time taking care of the alpacas and other farm animals by feeding them, cleaning out their stables, and walking them throughout the property. The owner also provided demonstrations on the process of sheering, dying of the fur, and the many uses of the products. The owner also provided an inspirational review of his journey in establishing the alpaca farm and the many components he is responsible for as the owner of the farm. Overall, the participants who attended took many valuable lessons from this activity and many would like to return to the farm to volunteer, attend their events, and care for the animals.



“What I learned on this trip was incredible. I learned that there are only two types of alpacas because of their fleece one is called the huacaya and the other is the suri. I also learned that they shear their fleece once a year before spring ends, so in the middle of May, so that alpacas don’t get hot during summer, since they can have up to 10 pounds of fleece. I also learned that alpacas don’t like people to be behind their blind spot, if not they can kick you or even spit on you. I had so much fun on this trip.”

Karla Gonzalez, Nursing major

“My experience at the Alpaca Ranch was great! I was able to walk an alpaca named Serenade and take cute pictures. They even had a demonstration on how they take the alpaca fur and take it to be made into yarn and then make it colored naturally.”

Julissa Rivas, Math major

“Although we are all working towards a degree in something we would enjoy doing, sometimes finding our happiness in something else will allow us to enjoy life a lot more. Despite this being my first ever field trip with TRiO I loved making memories with everyone as a group and learning many cool things about alpacas.”

Flor Puentes, Exercise Science major



“This was a really peaceful and happy experience with lots of laughs, there is beauty in the natural world that gives back as good as you treat it such as the care of the alpacas.”

Samuel Zavala, Computer Science major



“Marleen Salazar – Something I enjoyed about the Alpaquita Ranch is being able to experience something new with other TRiO members and learning some mini facts about alpacas.”

Marleen Salazar, Political Science major

