



## Is a Satire Movie a Reality in Our Lives?



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Section Editor—

"Four for you Glen Coco. You go, Glen Coco" exert from Mean Girls.

Christmas season to the students at Alamosa High School means many new things going on in classes before the much needed break. With tests, assignments, and finals going on in each of the classes, the Christmas season is a stressful thing. Though there are many things happening which confuses and stresses students, opportunities still arise to make the most of the end of the semester. So, this year, Alamosa High School has provided the students and staff a different outlook to the very stressful season, that is finals week.

Much of the activities that happens at the high school happens at the beginning of the school year or towards the end, for example, homecoming and prom.

However, this year, student council decided to bring new ideas, giving students a slight break from all that is going on. The activities are a break for students, whether in preparation for the event, or the week that it happened. Even during this time, students try their hardest to continue studying. This can affect

their mental health, resulting in their focus to not be solely on passing their exams. These problems are an interference to their success and how well they do on the finals.

So, instead of allowing the students to continue struggling on their own, the school provided something a bit different this year. Student council decided to start a candy drive to raise money for the organization in Alamosa called Tu Casa. This was also a way for students to distract themselves from all that is going on in the school.

The school began selling the candies on the last week before finals, allowing the students to send the candies where they would be delivered to classes on Monday, December 18. They sold the candy for two dollars each, allowing the students to give and receive the candies from their friends.

When students bought the candy grams for their significant other, friends, or their favorite teachers, it often placed the friends who did not receive a candy gram against those who were giving the candy grams away.

This became a parallel event in the high school with the scene from the movie, Mean Girls when one of the friends does not receive a candy cane. This created a similar feeling the friends went

through during that scene from the movie.

A friend may not receive a candy gram, and in a state of confusion and anger, they begin to spill all the secrets which were entrusted to them by those giving the candy. This ends up creating an irreparable problem within them. As ironic as it sounds, it often happens. The gift of receiving a candy gram from a friend is often a reminder that they are indeed friends. So, through a different point of view, it begs the question. Is this fundraiser for students' benefits or is this creating a problem within friend groups? The realization does set in when talking about the stress happening in students' lives. Finals have come up quickly for the students.

Many students, especially the upperclassman struggled with the finals in their college classes as well as those at the high school. Even if it may seem that this is the job of the students, it became a burden for many. Student council at the Alamosa High School realized the struggle, wanting to give the students, and teachers a break, as well as something to look forward to. So, if this fundraiser is a good thing, why do many object to it?

Well, for starters, certain students oftentimes did not have the money to pay for the candy grams. They may be

struggling financially in their houses, or they simply feel it is inopportune to spend money on candy which can be found at grocery stores for much cheaper. This is in no way saying student council was asking for too much.

Other times, especially when the friend groups are too large, those in the friend group may not have given everyone in the group a candy gram, leaving some friends to feel left out.

However, this fundraiser can be an example of something good and fun students participated in. For example, this activity could have been eye-opening, just like in the movie, to see who is your true friend. Giving a candy gram to a friend showed the giver that the receiver is in fact their true friend. This could have been used as an opportunity to distract the students at Alamosa High School from their responsibilities, though not to the point where it became a problem.

This distraction allowed the students to gather their thoughts, allowing them to see their situation in a different manner. This could be a way for students to give their teachers a change in how they see their class. For instance, the class they are in may be a rowdy one, distracting the teacher as well as the rest of

the students. This could be a way for the students to give the teacher a form of apology.

Not only could this be a distraction, but it could be a way to unite one another. Like in the end scenes of Mean Girls, all the girls at the school were able to come together and solve the issue which arose during the school year. As strange as it sounds to connect a movie to real life, problems do arise, and often.

This could be a way for the students in the friend groups to come together and fix their differences. Though this time of year is one of the hardest ones for students, it served as a way for students to connect with each other, distracting themselves, and showing their gratitude to those who have stood by them through the entirety of the school year so far. With finals and all the assignments going on, the opportunity student council gave the students at Alamosa High School is an amazing thing for everyone to get out of their heads for a bit.

Christmas season is one of the nicest time of years. Why only allow it to be good outside of school? The opportunities are endless when it comes to different perspectives on life during school.

Remember, the correlation between the movies and real life is often true.

## The Impact of a Supporter, Tom Hays



Raelee Alonzo  
Co-Head Editor—

Here at AHS, our school is beyond grateful to have such great staff members.

"I'm absolutely loving every minute of it," said Tom Hays, Alamosa High School's Mental Health Counselor. He has been with AHS for six years and feels fortunate to have been hired with the district when the new position was added.

Hays worked for the Division of Youth Services for 32 years before moving to the Valley 11 years ago.

"Mr. Lavier and Mr. Cleveland provide me with the most incredible support and freedom; teachers are wonderfully responsive and open when I approach them about students, Kristaly and Carol in the front office are just jewels and blessings who always seem to celebrate someone or something, which keeps us in good spirits. My partners in the counseling office- Alexi, Elisha, Heidi and Whitney- are just so comfortable to be around and competent in

what they do, they make me better! Sounds like I'm on the stage accepting the Oscar, but the real deal is that we don't do this work in a vacuum, in isolation; we need other people. From my perspective, the biggest challenge at AHS lies in helping students overcome the myths, stigma, perceptions, beliefs, fears and crappy experiences that surround the counseling profession; that sounds like a lot, but it's happening- in small ways day by day, year by year, bold steps through our new "Minds in Shape" student-led project," he commented.

The project was created by senior Brock Benton, with his teammates Sienna Gallegos, Olivia Tuioti-Mariner, and Aaron Ramirez. The goal of the project is to make students here at AHS feel comfortable talking about their emotions. With this, Tom states that students finally feel, "heard, validated and understood."

Mental and emotional health is a major issue in teenagers and according to Hays, "The fact is that, as part of the human condition, 'we all got

something going on' at some level- sometimes all it takes is a friend who will be there and listen, or a parent/caregiver who comforts and understands; but once in a while we feel confused, overwhelmed or trapped, and need to bounce thoughts and feelings off someone who "gets it", truly listens, has a bit deeper insight, and is able to help students sort out and make sense of the puzzle pieces that are too jumbled up and fuzzy when they stay in your head."

Hays explains how having a companion is so important at all ages but especially in high school. The Minds in Shape project is here to support and most importantly make students feel comfortable when talking about their emotions.

He states, "When students feel heard, validated and understood, some intriguing things begin to happen- they sense a glimmer of hope, can get through most days with better emotional regulation, and begin to develop a sense of 'I got this.' The "Minds in Shape" team is meeting the challenge at AHS by shatter-



Photo By: Minds in Motion

**MINDS IN MOTION-** Tom Hays and his team pose for the camera. This group impacts students' needs!

ing the stigma around mental health, making students aware of available services, and creating easy access to counseling."

Even though it can be super scary talking about your emotions, it can also be extremely beneficial, especially if you have a supportive team like Tom Hays and the Minds in Shape group.

With all of his great ideas in mind, Hays is such a wonderful addition to the community at AHS. Having a

universal supporter like him is truly a privilege.

He states that he is inspired by, "...the things that provide me with a deep sense of wonder, hope and belief that there is life beyond ourselves, life beyond our death, life that had to be created- the design of our world, the idea that the sun rises every morning, sets every evening, no matter where you are in the world, the shape of our planet and believe that it will somehow do it again tomorrow."