



Press Release  
March 9, 2015

#### STUDENTS TO CELEBRATE ALAMOSA TOBACCO FREE PARKS ON KICK BUTTS DAY

Areas of all parks in Alamosa will soon be designated as tobacco-free, culminating a movement that started in 2010.

Ortega Middle School Get R!eal Coalition, under the leadership of faculty advisor Cynthia Valerio, petitioned the City of Alamosa in the fall of 2010 to prohibit tobacco use in Alamosa Parks and Recreation athletic facilities, playgrounds, and assembly areas. City Council adopted a resolution to that effect in October, 2010; but funding for purchasing and installing signs was inadequate, as tobacco tax monies were shifted to balance the Colorado budget.

Fast-forward to 2013, when tobacco prevention funding was re-established in Colorado, making it possible for the community of Alamosa to revisit the initiative and move toward installing the signage.

On March 18, which is designated as "Kick Butts Day" 2015, installation of Tobacco-Free signs will begin. Kick Butts Day is an annual event for youth across the United States to conduct tobacco awareness events in their communities. Ortega Middle School Students Against Destructive Decisions (OMS SADD) members and others will meet at Carroll Park to pick up tobacco paraphernalia and hang the first of 30 signs in and around City Parks and Recreation areas and the two Alamosa County Parks. Partners will gather for a picture with the first installed sign at 3:30 pm before tackling the pick-up. Prohibition of tobacco usage in these areas is a step to creating a tobacco free environment that serves to protect the health, safety and well-being of all.

Tobacco use results in \$133 billion each year in medical costs and currently one in five deaths in the US is tobacco-related according to the CDC.

The tobacco industry spends over \$8.8 billion annually, over \$24 million each day, promoting its products to new, young customers (Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids factsheet). The young people participating in the Alamosa tobacco-free areas project are sending a statement that they resist this targeted advertising and refuse to be a replacement for the previous customers of the tobacco industry.

The City of Alamosa, Alamosa County, Get R!eal Coalition, OMS SADD, San Luis Valley Health, Alamosa County Public Health Department and ASU Nursing Student Fallon Crowther all contributed to this important step toward a healthier Alamosa community.