

## Cumby's Project Celebration a 'huge success'

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Cumby High School's first Project Celebration was hailed as a "huge success" with 85 percent of the juniors and seniors invited purchasing tickets for the event, an after-prom party designed to keep prom-attendees entertained and off the roads in a fun way that did not involve alcohol or drugs.

This year's Junior Class Prom Committee voted to start a new tradition of safe and fun partying that would build lasting memories for all who attended. About 85 percent of the juniors and seniors invited purchased tickets to the event. Of the 63 tickets sold — 50 to juniors and seniors, 13 to guests — there were only three no-shows, according to Megan Petty, party organizer and junior class sponsor.

The event was held at the Texas A&M University-Commerce Recreational Center and featured a mechanical bull, an inflatable obstacle course, outdoor swimming pool, movie room, volleyball, racquetball and an array of snack food. Each student also walked away Sunday morning, April 13, with a door prize; prizes ranged from \$5 gift cards to a 32-inch TV and a Galaxy Tab 2.

"In small towns, there is not much to do after prom that doesn't involve getting in trouble," said Megan Petty. "Traditionally, prom night is one of the most dangerous nights for kids in this area. There's underage drinking, driving, and illegal use of drugs. I'm proud that the kids wanted to change tradition and find another way to continue their prom festivities."

Project Celebration features a combination of education and lock-in events conducted by educators, parents and community partners to help keep students safe and alcohol-free throughout the school year and especially during school-related celebrations.

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"It was so much fun," said CHS senior Tyler McCrary. "I had a great time playing basketball, climbing the obstacle course, and making memories. It was neat —no .... it was narly. Totally narly."

"It was a blast. I wish I wasn't a senior. I totally would go again next year," senior Carmen Montoya said. "This is something that the school needs to continue doing."

"I had an amazing time. I'm glad that we decided to do it, and I am really grateful for the hard work that the organizers put into making the event happen. We were skeptical at first but once we got there, it really was great," admitted junior Alex Sawyer. "I can't wait to go again next year!"



Despite being exhausted from the all-night event, Petty said she was already planning next year's event, which will possibly be an after-graduation event in addition to, or instead of, a project prom.

"It took a lot of hard work and effort to pull this event off, especially not having done it before. However, seeing the kids enjoy themselves, and more importantly, knowing that they were safe all night, made it worth it. I can't wait for next year's event. It will be bigger and better!" the junior class sponsor said.

In addition to the lock-in, the school also hosted a Shattered Dreams demonstration earlier in the week to alert students to the dangers of drinking and driving.