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Teen Inspires Fellow Students To Make Valentines For The Seriously Ill

A Valentine's Day project organized by a Potomac teen will be delivering 16,000 homemade cards to people across the D.C. area on Tuesday.

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Patrick Kaufmann, 14, of Potomac works with students at EasySpanish123, a D.C. area school owned by Patrick's mother, Rosario Allauca Castillo, to make Valentine's Day cards for seriously ill children and adults. (EasySpanish123)

POTOMAC, MD — A Valentine's Day project organized by a 14-year-old who lives in Potomac, Maryland will be delivering thousands of handmade valentine cards on Tuesday to seriously ill adults and children across the Washington, D.C. area.

Patrick Kaufmann, a ninth-grader at the Washington International School in D.C., started the project in 2021 when he organized classmates to make a few dozen valentines for a local nonprofit that provides assistance to sick children and adults. In the second year of the project in 2022, Patrick organized students at several schools in Maryland, D.C. and Virginia, culminating with about 3,000 Valentine's Day getting made by the students.

For Valentine's Day 2023, Patrick succeeded in expanding the project to 16,000 cards made by students at 62 schools across the D.C. area.

The boxes of cards were delivered to about 70 hospices, nursing homes, care facilities, hospitals, including Children's National Hospital in D.C., in the days leading up to Tuesday, Feb. 14, Patrick's father, Roy Kaufmann, told Patch.





A young student makes Valentine's Day cards as part of a project organized by Potomac teen Patrick Kaufmann. (Valentines By Kids)

The hospitals, nursing homes and care facilities will have special Valentine's Day events where the cards will be distributed, or residents will get the cards brought to their rooms during the day.

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Patrick also has started sending cards to police and fire and rescue personnel, with a goal of making more valentines for first responders in 2024.

With all the cards packed in boxes and ready to be delivered to the hospitals and care facilities, the Kaufmann's home in Potomac has felt like a FedEx distribution facility over the past few weeks, Roy Kaufmann said.

Patrick, who is an avid ice hockey player with the Montgomery Youth Hockey Association, came up with the idea to make Valentine's Day cards in 2020 as part of his volunteer work for [Food & Friends](#), a local charity that helps people with cancer, HIV, AIDS and other serious illnesses by putting together meal packages.





Homemade Valentine's Day cards at the Potomac home of Patrick Kaufmann, 14, are ready to be delivered to care facilities across the D.C. area. (Valentines By Kids)

Both Patrick and his father had been volunteering at [Food & Friends](#), an organization that prepared and home-delivered 1.2 million healthy meals in 2022. Patrick learned that Food & Friends wanted to include cards with the meals they delivered to seriously ill people, so Patrick saw that need as an opportunity to help.

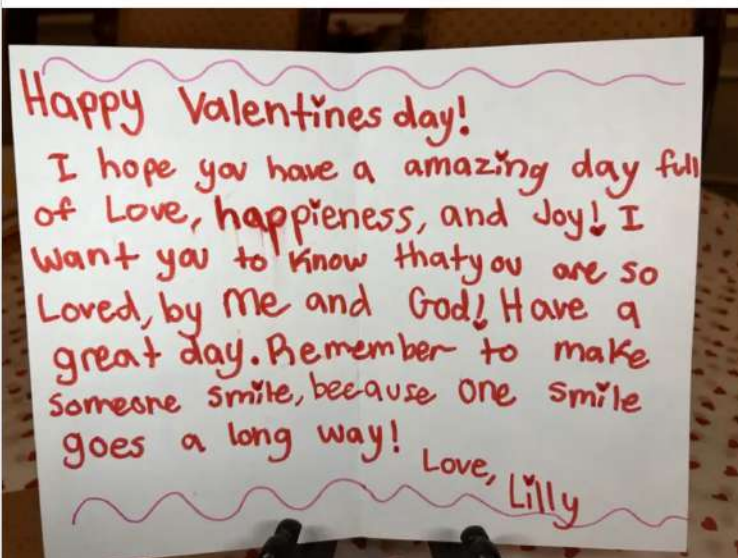
Patrick now has a website called [Valentines By Kids](#), where he encourages people to make Valentine's Day cards.

On his website, Patrick explains that he delivers cards to area hospitals and nursing homes. "So, please, if you have a child in school or if you have a connection with a school, take a moment now to send a note to the school to encourage them to participate! My biggest challenge has been to get the message through to schools," he said.

Now that Valentine's Day 2023 has arrived, Patrick will start thinking about next fall, when he hopes to recruit even more schools to participate in his Valentines By Kids project.

Schools interested in participating in Valentines By Kids can visit [Patrick's website and sign up](#) to get involved in the project. Patrick will then contact the schools in fall 2023 to reconfirm and help them get started on making the homemade valentines.

Scouts, churches and other groups [are also encouraged to sign up](#) to make Valentine's Day cards for hospitals, hospices and charities in the D.C. area.



One of the Valentine's Day cards made by a young student as part of a project organized by

Potomac teen Patrick Kaurmann. (Valentines By Kids)

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