

YOUTHWIRE

— Impact Starts Here —



**American
Red Cross**

Youth & Young Adults

Hearts in Action: Red Cross Volunteers Spread Kindness

APRIL 2025

Latest from Youth Leaders



Welcome to the April edition of YouthWire! 🌸 As we step into spring, we're reminded that this season is all about growth, renewal and action—and there's no better time to channel that energy into your Red Cross service.

This month, members of the National Youth Council came together in Nashville, Tennessee for their annual meeting—and it was nothing short of inspiring. From thoughtful discussions on growing youth engagement to planning exciting initiatives for the year ahead, the weekend was filled with energy, reflection and purpose.

If you're looking to grow as a leader and make an impact on a national scale, we'd love for you to join our team. The National Youth Council is now accepting applications for new

Volunteer Spotlight Makenzie Patzke



Makenzie, founder and president of the first high school Red Cross Club in Alaska – the West Anchorage High School Red Cross Club

Makenzie Patzke is a freshman at West High School in Anchorage, Alaska. Stepping into high school, Makenzie sought service opportunities that blend her aspirations for studies in the medical field with community building and engagement.

members to begin their term this fall. Don't miss this opportunity to help shape the future of youth involvement at the Red Cross—apply and bring your voice to the table!

This season, and always, youth leadership is what drives us forward.

Apply to Join the National Youth Council!



Are you ready to take your Red Cross involvement to the next level? Applications are now open for the National Youth Council: a team of dedicated youth and young adult volunteers who represent Red Cross youth across the country. The Council is made up of 15 youth members and supported by two adult advisors, working in close collaboration with the Youth and Young Adults team at National Headquarters.

As a Council member, you'll have the unique opportunity to:

- Lead national initiatives that elevate youth engagement
- Collaborate with Red Cross regions across the country
- Strengthen the voice of youth within the organization

This is a remote, volunteer-from-home opportunity, with occasional travel and a strong focus on local regional involvement. Eligible applicants will have at least two years of Red Cross experience and a deep passion for furthering the mission both locally and nationally.

Applications are open now through May 27 at 11:59 PM ET. Apply [here](#).

Having not found a club that filled this niche, she reached out to the local Red Cross region and took the leap of creating the first high school Red Cross Club in Alaska.

Makenzie leads the West Anchorage High School Red Cross Club as president and has engaged the club to raise hundreds of dollars for disaster relief, support disabled veterans over the holidays, engage in a community food drive, and raise student awareness for cardiovascular health. One of her favorite experiences was touring the Alaska Fisher House while leaving cards and treats in veterans' stockings, meeting children, and learning the different ways veterans are supported in the community.

Makenzie's early experiences with the Red Cross Club motivated her to take on projects of greater scale. Along with the Red Cross Club, she'll be working on a spring fundraising project to provide measles and rubella vaccines and will be concluding the school year with a community blood drive. Makenzie hopes the foundations of a Club that bridges the gap between students and the humanitarian and medical efforts of the Red Cross will create engagement over the course of her high school career and beyond.

Reach out to YouthInvolvement@redcross.org with any questions and keep an eye out for [@americanredcrossyouth](https://www.instagram.com/americanredcrossyouth) on Instagram for further opportunities to learn about the Council.

Real Talk, Real Impact: Allyship in Action



In 2022, the American Red Cross launched Allyship in Action, a powerful month-long celebration designed to elevate the importance of active allyship and foster a more inclusive and culturally competent community. Inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Letter from Birmingham Jail, the initiative emphasized that allyship means addressing inequities and creating lasting change.

We invite you to take part in another month of inspiring events, thoughtful conversations, and valuable learning opportunities. These sessions are designed to provide you with the tools and perspectives needed to better understand those around you and serve diverse communities with empathy and respect — because allyship speaks louder than words.

Don't forget to subscribe to the [DEI Events & Observance](#) calendar in OneSource to stay informed about upcoming Diversity, Equity, and inclusion (DEI) events!

Volunteer Spotlight Mattie Spence



Mattie, founder and president of the Whitney Young Magnet High School Red Cross Club

Mattie Spence, a sophomore at Whitney Young Magnet High School, is the founder and president of her school's Red Cross Club. Inspired initially by the opportunity to earn her babysitter certification, Mattie soon discovered the broader mission of the Red Cross and became passionate about making a difference in her community. She recruited like-minded students to join the Club, sharing a common goal of promoting the values of the Red Cross and helping others.

As president, Mattie leads her Club in various community-focused initiatives, such as volunteering at the Chicago Marathon

#ImpactStartsHere Video Challenge



Thank you to everyone who helped spread the word and participated. Over 30+ videos were submitted from across the country, and the winners have been chosen. Click on the winner's name below to view their video:

- 1st Place Individual Award – [Caleb Alarcon](#) (Pacific Islands Region)
- 1st Place Club Award – [Whitnall Red Cross Club](#) (Wisconsin Region)
- 2nd Place Club Award – [Academy of Health Sciences Red Cross Club](#) (National Capital and Greater Chesapeake Region)
- 3rd Place Club Award – [Stevenson Red Cross Club](#) (National Capital and Greater Chesapeake Region)

and the Red Cross regional headquarters. She emphasizes education about disaster preparedness, personal safety and community engagement. Currently, the Club is working on a public health unit, where they are exploring ways to address local health needs. Mattie's recent CPR instructor certification has also enabled her to plan CPR classes at her school, providing students and Club members with critical life-saving skills.

One of Mattie's most memorable experiences was leading a card-making event for veterans in honor of Veterans Day. With over 30 students involved, the Club created more than 60 heartfelt cards to thank veterans for their service. The experience not only allowed Mattie and her Club members to connect with veterans but also reinforced the importance of giving back to those who have served the country.

Her motivation to continue volunteering comes from the knowledge that she is part of a global movement to improve lives, whether through education, volunteering, or simply making a difference in her local community. Looking ahead, Mattie is excited to pursue more opportunities to expand her impact, particularly through public health initiatives and further leadership roles within the Red Cross.

New Babysitting & Caregiving Course and App



For the first time since 2008, we have revamped our babysitting training to offer new features after extensive market research by the Training Services department. We have found that parents and teachers believe in in-person babysitting training, and babysitters getting certified are interested in activities! New features include:

- Hands-on practice (e.g., diapering, holding and feeding babies)
- Video-based guided discussions
- How to stop severe bleeding
- Pediatric CPR and AED training add-ons for certification

Our babysitter training certificate is valid for **10 years**.

Additionally, the **CHILD CARE APP** makes learning easy with quizzes, certification tracking and features for managing babysitting details and schedules. Note: Red Cross won't be keeping any of that data.

3 Ways to Download the CHILD CARE APP:

1. Visit **redcross.org/apps**
2. Text **CHILD CARE** to **90999** to download
3. Search **American Red Cross: Child Care** in the App Store/Google Play store

Do you know a volunteer who has gone above and beyond to make an impact in their community? Nominate them [here](#) so we can recognize their hard work.

April Monthly Focus: National Volunteer Month



April is National Volunteer Month!

First made official in 1991, this month is all about celebrating the incredible contributions of volunteers—like YOU! We recognize the power of service that fuels our mission every day—from staffing blood drives to responding to disasters and teaching lifesaving skills. Thank you for your time, passion, and impact!

For questions, contact marie.manning@redcross.org.

Sickle Cell Fighters Scholarship Program



The [American Red Cross Sickle Cell Fighter High School Scholarship program](#) is a student scholarship program that will reward schools that successfully collect blood from donors who are Black, supporting the goal of helping sickle cell patients by diversifying the blood donor base.

By participating in the Sickle Cell Fighter High School Scholarship Program, you can help build a stronger community now, and for many years to come.

The top ten high schools in the country that host at least one blood drive and collect the most productive units (minimum of 50) from donors who self-identify as African American this school year, will be awarded a \$5,000 scholarship.

Representatives from your school will determine the scholarship recipient based on Red Cross recommended criteria:

- Student must be enrolled as a high school student at an accredited state educational facility.
- Student must utilize the scholarship to continue their education at an accredited two-year, four-year or professional trade school.
- Student is actively engaged in supporting the Red Cross sickle cell initiative by helping inspire members of the Black community to give blood.

Expand Your Knowledge



World Immunization Week (April 24–30):

Learn about the Measles & Rubella Initiative (M&RI) and join the Vaccinate a Village campaign to help end preventable diseases worldwide.

Sound the Alarm Campaign:

Help install smoke alarms and promote fire safety—because preparedness saves lives.

Wildfire Season Prep:

Wildfire season runs from May through October, and now is the perfect time to get prepared. Take action this April by learning how to protect your home, plan an evacuation route, and stay informed in the event of an emergency. Learn how to protect your community before wildfire risks peak.

Blood Donors Needed



Recent weather events are impacting blood and platelet donations. This spring, we need to emphasize the constant need for donations.

Our Biomedical Services team has rolled out new spring social media messaging with fresh designs and donor incentives.

- **May 1 – 18:** Donate blood and get a \$20 e-gift card to a merchant of your choice
- **May 19 – 31:** Donate blood for a limited-edition Red Cross solar lantern, while supplies last
- **July 1 – 14:** Donate blood for an exclusive pair of American Red Cross x goodr sunglasses, while supplies last – save lives and look good!

What is YouthWire?

Created by your National Youth Council, YouthWire is a monthly e-newsletter containing important Red Cross youth volunteer opportunities, stories and resources for youth, young adults and youth champions. We always want to highlight great stories and hear about what awesome things are happening in your region!

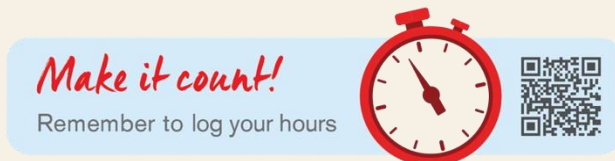
Let us know what's new for you!

Questions about youth volunteering with the American Red Cross? Email YouthInvolvement@redcross.org.

Get Social and Share!

Share YouthWire with your peers and invite them to [subscribe](#).

Log Your Hours on Volunteer Connection!



Help us tell the story of youth & young adults' incredible impact by submitting a [spotlight form](#) today.

Need Volunteer Connection support? Check out these helpful [guides and video tutorials!](#)



If you no longer want to receive YouthWire, please click here to [unsubscribe](#).