

#SPREADINGTHELOVE



@KHSkindness Boosts School Spirit

ATOWN FULL OF HOR-MONAL teenage girls. Multiple Twitter accounts devoted to tweeting slanderous rumours about said girls. An administrative team disappointed in their school's behavior.

Sound like a sick twist on *Mean Girls*? Unfortunately, this was not the case in early December when gossip accounts began attacking Kirkwood's student body.

In light of these activities, more than ten students were inspired to create compliment accounts to fight this negativity. @KHSkindness was the first to hit Kirkwood.

"There were so many mean accounts going around Twitter targeting specifically people at Kirkwood," @KHSkindness* said. "It was really hard to see all these negative things about my peers being tweeted, so I thought, 'why put all that effort in tearing people down when you can

tell them something really great about themselves?' It doesn't take any more effort, I feel like it's probably easier, and nobody's feelings can get hurt by a compliment."

Being the first compliment account came with challenges.

"It was harder than it sounds. The biggest challenge was saying compliments that were specific to each person, not something that you could just throw somebody's name in a blank," @KHSkindness said.

"We're blessed with great people, so I just would look at them and think, 'Well what qualities do they have that I wish I had? What do they need to hear or deserve to hear?'"

During their stint as @KHSkindness, they realized the true effect words have on people.

"After everything that happened this summer and the beginning of this school year, I started cherishing every little thing about my friends.

"You don't know what words mean to others until they are gone. Let everyone know how much you love them."

- @KHSkindness

The things we miss about Adrienne (Meckes): her laugh, her personality. What if someone had told her that? You never know," @KHSkindness said. "You don't know what words mean to others until they are gone. Let everyone know how much you love them because you don't know how quickly it can be taken away from you. Every person we come in contact with is struggling with more than we are, so why not be nice to others?"

@KHSkindness also saw no difficulty in deciding to keep their identity a secret. "I don't want to give it away because that takes the magic out of the secret. Everyone has different judgements of different people. Maybe if they knew who it was, they'd take the compliment a certain way," @KHSkindness said. "Coming from an anonymous source, they have no prior judge-

ment as to where it's coming from or what context it's in."

By staying anonymous, @KHSkindness was able to continue tweeting compliments while improving their own mindset.

"That's the fun of it. I was only in charge of it for a couple days, but for those days all I thought about was all the good qualities of people," @KHSkindness said. "It changed my whole mindset and attitude because it's so much easier to find the negative in people, but when you look for the positives, it makes you feel better about everything. Once you see how little one tiny, minuscule, less than 140 character [act] can change someone's day, or even week, you kind of start thinking, 'Wow, why don't I do that more often?'"

story by Claire Hubert design by Alyssa Pope photos by Brynn Davis and Kelley Ludbrook

*Names kept anonymous

from the Twitter feed Favorite Accounts

» "@Youareloved4 seemed more genuine and they [tweeted] at an appropriate time. They were really accurate to people's personalities."
- Sierra Acker, sophomore

"I think @KirkwoodKindness was the best because it was really thoughtful and genuine. I feel like they were deeper than some of the other ones that gave out random quotes. It was like the person actually knew all of the people they tweeted."
- Nancy Bowers, junior

"@urstalked because it was the funniest. It's just an awkward Twitter and people were caught off guard so their faces were funny in the pictures."
- Emily Bearfield, junior

"@urstalked, the concept of somebody walking around the school taking a picture of someone is just awesome. It makes school a little uncomfortable, but you can't tell me that's not awesome."
- Darien Middleton, junior



Sierra Acker, sophomore

@urstalked Creeps on KHS



The bell rang throughout KHS, and in a whirlwind, 1,700 teenagers were released into the hallways. Most days, kids spent the time dodging notoriously slow walkers. However, from Dec. 10-20, they had a new obstacle to dodge. An anonymous Twitter account, @URstalked, would take pictures of passersby and tweet them without the subject knowing.

"I was kind of freaked out at first. Obviously, it was another student, but it was still weird because I had no idea who it was," Adam Scott, freshman, said. "But as there were

more pictures of random kids, I thought it was harmless." While it was creepy to some, others were able to find the humor in the bizarre trend. "I was a little confused at first, but after I saw all the other pictures, I thought it was funny how they were going around taking pictures of different people," Andrew Lowe, sophomore, said. "I've had people tweet pictures of me taken in the hall before, though. It's funny, but it's weird when you don't know who the people are. That's why this one was a little creepy."

from the #birdnest



You matter.
You are good enough.
You are loved.
Ainsley Eisenhart (@ainsleezy)
"You are the kind of girl that walks in happy everyday no matter what. You enjoy every second of your life and it never goes unnoticed" 12/9/12

You matter.
You are good enough.
You are loved.
Claire Swehla (@veneSWEHLA)
"You never fail to put someone in laughter. You excel in life as it is. And you have a place in everyone's heart. You are loved" 12/9/12

You matter.
You are good enough.
You are loved.
Murphy Frain (@smurph_dirty18)
"You are so chill, you're not afraid to show who you are and you just go with the flow." 12/8/12

You matter.
You are good enough.
You are loved.
Alec Coronado (@A_corn23)
"You are such a gentleman. You are easy to talk to and your friends could not go on with out you. You are so loved!" 12/8/12

You matter.
You are good enough.
You are loved.
Jake Poupard (@jipoops4)
"You are your own individual, and that is what makes you so important. You bring cheer and smiles to people's lives." 12/8/12

You matter.
You are good enough.
You are loved.
Gino Visconti (@genemachine10)
"You are so flexible when other people can be hard to deal with. You surround yourself with good people." 12/8/12

You matter.
You are good enough.
You are loved.
Elizabeth Neu (@neu_girl!)
"Wish I could say I know you better! But I promise you are loved. Keep smiling." 12/7/12

You matter.
You are good enough.
You are loved.
Elyssia Ryan (@ElySEEYAA)
"You are an awesome person! You treat others like you would want to be treated, and it is noticed! I promise you are loved!" 12/7/12

@Youareloved4 Reaches Out to St. Louis



After a long day of mind-numbing classes, Allison Hubbard, sophomore, was ready to finally go to bed. As she pushed her AP US textbook off her bed, her phone buzzed. The screen lit up with a little bird inside a blue box. A Twitter notification.

"@ALL_uneedisluv: your beauty stands out. You're smart, outspoken, and have a personality. You are so loved!"

"It felt like it was a genuine compliment," Allison said. "It made me feel a part of a strong, supportive community. I think that's what makes these accounts so nice."

@Youareloved4* was created Dec. 6 to combat negativity the creator had been noticing around Kirkwood and the rest of the St. Louis area.

"I would go through Twitter and see sad and upsetting tweets," @Youareloved4 said. "I saw @KHSkindness, but I wanted to do it more because I knew people from other schools. I wanted it to be a St. Louis thing. My account isn't just for Kirkwood; my caption says 'Bring-

ing acts of kindness all throughout Saint Louis."

With such a large audience to cater to, @Youareloved4 had to find ways to combat the challenge of complimenting so many people.

"Even if I didn't know them, I wanted to at least say something nice about them. If I met someone, I would try to follow them on Twitter and then in a week or two I'd tell them what I liked about them," @Youareloved4 said. "I'd try to say as much as I possibly could, even if I didn't know them that well. I said, 'Your friends would die without you' a lot. It might sound insincere, but it's true. Every person has one person in their life that would just ache if they were gone. I'm just trying to show people they will always be people who love them regardless of what they do."

The message of unconditional love was a constant theme of @Youareloved4's tweets.

"People make mistakes over and over again. [People] need to realize even if they make mistakes they're

still a good person. They should always keep being who they are because we're human," @Youareloved4 said. "People are always going to love you. People get caught up in the negative stuff. I feel like everything's becoming less and less positive. Kirkwood is a great place to be around because you know if one person falls down, everyone [supports] them. But for everyone to get back up is really difficult."

In difficult times, @Youareloved4 provided a means to get back up. However, like @khskindness, they wanted zero recognition for their work.

"My goal was being able to see people feel good. It was great just to see people smile. Sometimes, I'd get to see people read them and watch their reaction," @Youareloved4 said. "I like keeping it anonymous because I don't want credit for it. I don't want a thank you in the hallway. With the society we have, people think everything is for attention. I want people to know what I said was sincere."