



Better Communities. Bigger Dreams. Brighter Futures.

BILL SNYDER, CO-CHAIR

For Immediate Release:
January 5, 2011

Nicolette Geisler
785.296.8447, ngeisler@ksde.org

MENTORING PROGRAMS ACROSS THE STATE CELEBRATE JANUARY'S NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH

Kansans encouraged to join in the festivities by signing up to mentor

[Topeka, KS] – January 5, 2011 – Kansans are being encouraged today to volunteer to mentor as part of January's National Mentoring Month, a campaign that highlights the crucial role played by mentors in helping our young people achieve their full potential.

This year's campaign is "Help Them Get There. Be a Mentor." General Colin L. Powell, a spokesperson for the campaign states, "Our nation's future depends on what we do today to prepare our young people for productive and fulfilling lives. All of us need to get involved to help kids stay focused and stay in school. We must become a Nation of graduates. One way for you to help is to volunteer as a mentor."

Research has shown that mentoring has a significant economic and social impact; reducing youth drug abuse and violence while greatly enhancing a young person's prospects for graduating high school and leading a healthy, productive life.

To promote National Mentoring Month and to encourage all Kansans to volunteer, Kansas Mentors will participate in a reception to honor Martin Luther King Day of Service (MLK Day), being hosted by the Kansas Volunteer Commission. The reception will highlight public service programs in Kansas and raise awareness of the importance of service on MLK Day. The reception will follow the MLK event led by Governor Brownback and hosted by the Kansas African American Affairs Commission, scheduled from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church (817 SW Harrison).

MLK Day of Service is an ideal opportunity to highlight the importance of mentoring and to encourage all Kansans to make this federal holiday a "Day on, Not a Day off" by signing up to mentor. "I challenge all Kansans to become a mentor," said Coach Snyder, co-chair of Kansas Mentors. "Whether it is an hour over your lunch or one evening once a week, serving as a caring role model to a young person will likely be one of the most rewarding and worthwhile investments you will make."

Kansas' celebration of National Mentoring Month joins a national effort spearheaded by the Harvard School of Public Health, MENTOR, and the Corporation for National and Community Service. Kansas Mentors is currently partnered with over 175 mentoring programs serving 86 Kansas counties. The organization is committed to providing every young Kansan access to a caring and quality mentor through recruitment, awareness, and training efforts.

To learn more about mentoring and ways to get involved, visit the Kansas Mentors website at www.KansasMentors.org or call their office at (785) 296-8447.

###