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**Kansas Mentors Announces Gold Star Program Recipient**  
*Mentoring program ensures safe mentoring relationships*

TOPEKA, Kan.—Kansas Mentors (KM) is pleased to announce Compeer, a program of the Mental Health Association of South Central Kansas as a recertified Gold Star program recipient. The Kansas Mentors Gold Star program was developed in an effort to provide a safe and effective mentoring environment for the youth of Kansas. This program recognizes mentoring partners across the state who have committed to maintaining high standards and best practices to ensure a quality mentoring experience.

“Recognition as a Gold Star program communicates to the state an organization’s commitment to quality mentoring. The process to become a Gold Star program is not simple. It requires an immense amount of documentation to prove the organization is adhering to quality, safe, and effective mentoring practices,” Cheri Faunce, Director of Kansas Mentors said.

“Compeer Mentoring matches caring, qualified adult volunteers with adults and children in need of supportive friendships to improve their quality of life by reducing isolation, loneliness and the stigma of mental illness. Program participants show improvement in their self-esteem, social skills, academics and interpersonal relationships. Compeer is very pleased to be in our fourth year as a Kansas Mentors Gold Star program,” Patty Gnefkow, Director of Compeer, Wichita, KS,” said.

*Kansas Mentors is currently partnered with more than 175 mentoring programs serving all 105 Kansas counties. The organization is committed to providing every young Kansan access to a caring and quality mentor through recruitment, awareness and training efforts. For more information visit Kansas Mentors at [www.KansasMentors.org](http://www.KansasMentors.org).*

*Kansas Mentors is a program of the Kansas Volunteer Commission and is housed within the Kansas State Department of Education.*

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