



2014 Coaches' Challenge Team Kansas

For Immediate Release: August 1, 2014

The Annual Coaches' Mentoring Challenge Expands with Support from MENTOR and the Big 12 Conference *Ten Big 12 Coaches and Four Big Ten Coaches Now Participating*

(Topeka, KS) – MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership and the Big 12 Conference are joining the Coaches' Mentoring Challenge to expand the reach and presence of this successful campaign to connect youth with caring adult mentors. MENTOR's recent report, *The Mentoring Effect*, found through a nationally representative survey of young adults 18-21 that mentoring is linked to improved academic, social and economic prospects. As just one example, at-risk young adults surveyed who had a mentor while they were growing up were 55% more likely to be enrolled in college than those who did not have a mentor. The report also found that one in three young people will grow up without having a mentor.

“By connecting young people with caring adults we provide them with a powerful asset to achieve success in all aspects of their lives,” said David Shapiro, CEO of MENTOR. “Coaches are mentors both on and off the field and they are uniquely positioned to motivate fans to become mentors. We are grateful for the commitment of those involved and the energy brought by the Big 12 support and new coaches joining the challenge.”

“Students in elementary, middle and high school represent our next generation of leaders, and mentoring is proven to prepare youth for excellence, effort and achievement,” said Bob Bowsby, Big 12 Conference Commissioner. “The Coaches' Mentoring Challenge is an opportunity for our programs and their fans to support youth through mentoring.”

The Coaches' Mentoring Challenge is an annual campaign to connect more youth to mentors that began with Coach Tom Osborne at the University of Nebraska and Coach Bill Snyder at Kansas State in 2008. Within six years, coaches from Big 12 and Big Ten schools in Iowa, Michigan and Minnesota joined the challenge and rallied nearly 9,000 new volunteers in 2013, alone.

All of the coaches in the Big 12 are challenging fans to volunteer as mentors to youth in their communities. The Coaches' Mentoring Challenge kicks off on August 1st and runs through November 30th, with final results being released during the first week in December.

“Mentoring is a cost-effective and proven intervention that gives communities and individuals a way to support their young people,” said Cheri Faunce, Kansas Mentors Director. “We are thrilled to have MENTOR and the Big 12 Conference join our campaign efforts this year, and look forward to seeing how many Kansans take the challenge and become a mentor!”

To find out more or to join the Coaches Challenge contact Kansas Mentors: 785-368-6211, mentor@ksde.org, www.KansasMentors.org.

#

Kansas Mentors • 900 SW Jackson St., Ste. 106, Topeka, KS 66612
(785)368-6211 • Fax (785)296-7933 • cfaunce@ksde.org

