The Challenge Begins

August 1, 2014 marks the beginning of the 7th Annual Coaches’ Challenge for Kansas Mentors and many other participating states. For the past six years, college coaches at an increasing number of institutions, who know first-hand the impact of mentoring, have demonstrated their commitment to closing the mentoring gap by participating in the Coaches’ Challenge. This campaign began as a friendly competition between Coach Tom Osborne at the University of Nebraska and Coach Bill Snyder at Kansas State University, with the goal of rallying new volunteers for mentoring programs in their communities and states. Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Oklahoma and West Virginia have since joined the efforts. During the 2013 Coaches’ Challenge nearly 9,000 new mentors stepped up. Through this effort, participating coaches and universities have made meaningful contributions to the communities they call home.

2014 Coaches’ Challenge

In 2014, the Coaches’ Challenge has expanded with the support of the Big 12 Conference, who has signed on to endorse the campaign. In addition, MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership has provided a national platform, and will be keeping score at www.coachesmentoringchallenge.org.

The Goal This Season

15,000 new mentors signed up during the Coaches’ Challenge months!!!

Participate in the 2014 Coaches’ Challenge

By connecting young people with caring adults we can provide them with a powerful asset to achieve success in all aspects of their lives. Together we can strengthen our teams, our college campuses and our communities. You can participate in the annual Coaches’ Challenge campaign by requesting free marketing materials through Kansas Mentors, submitting numbers each quarter, challenging local college and high school teams to get involved as mentors, hosting recruitment events, nominating a match to attend a KU or KSU football game, and much more. Do you need ideas for how to leverage the Challenge? Contact KM Director today, or check out page three of the KM Connection.
MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership is proud to facilitate the Collaborative Mentoring Webinar Series (CMWS) in partnership with the CMWS planning team. Through ongoing planning and evaluation of the latest developments in the field, the team delivers a webinar each month focused on strengthening mentoring practice, sharing new resources, and helping the field put research into practice. Kansas Mentors has joined the CMWS planning team this year—so help us represent our state well by participating in these FREE monthly webinars!

The network of twenty-six mentoring partnerships works to strengthen the mentoring field by offering trainings to practitioners, promoting quality standards for mentoring programs, and increasing the local mentoring resources. This webinar series offers a free, accessible platform for Mentoring Partnerships and other technical assistance providers to share their expertise with the field.

Webinars are help monthly on the 3rd Thursday from 12:00-1:15 CST.

Webinars are FREE and online. Links to register for the upcoming webinar, with full descriptions and panelist information, are posted in the month leading up to the webinar. Check back periodically as plans for each month are finalized!

Next Live Webinar: August 21, 2014, Tackling the Stigma: Mentoring Youth With Mental Health Needs

In our society, people of all ages oftentimes feel stigmatized because of a mental health issue. This shame and discomfort can be equally as applicable to young people facing other normal developmental challenges. Stigma may also result in not seeking treatment or any kind of help. It is estimated that 13-20 percent of children ages 8-18 living in the United States, up to 1 out of 5, experience a mental disorder in a given year. And many more are at risk. Since only about half of these youth who need services receive appropriate help from mental health professionals, there is a great need for others to step in and help. Mentoring can be an effective intervention for children and youth facing mental health disorders—as long as it’s done right.

Do you think this population doesn’t apply to your mentoring program? Join us to learn more about what mental health disorders can look like in young people and how you might be overlooking crucial signs, as well as ways to support mentors whose mentees may be facing some of these issues. In our conversation, we will feature experts and practitioners in the field of mental health and mentoring, including Jennifer Kriebel, National Director of the YMCA Reach & Rise program. We will be discussing best practice examples, research and resources to tackle the stigma associated with mentoring youth who have mental health needs. Please bring your questions and concerns to this interactive webinar session!

Register here!!!

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

2014 KM Recruitment & Retention Mini-Grant Grantees Announced

Congratulations to the 2014 KM Recruitment & Retention Mini-Grant grantees. Mini-grant funds will give mentoring programs the opportunity to extend Coaches’ Challenge outreach efforts to close the mentoring gap and develop innovative strategies and trainings to retain existing mentors, in an effort to ensure that young Kansans are receiving high quality mentoring services.

Kansas Mentors granted out close to $10,000 in mini-grant funds to the following mentoring programs:

- Anthony-Harper, Runner Buddies Program
- Basehor-Linwood Mentors and Carecats
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Douglas County
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Franklin County
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Salina
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Flint Hills
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Topeka
- Compeer Mentoring
- Kansas Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Reno County Communities That Care
- Youth for Christ–MATCH
- Youth Horizons
- YWCA–Girls on the Run of Topeka
Gold Star Program

Updates

The Gold Star process has been formalized in an effort to offer applicants increased technical assistance throughout the process. Please find below our new and improved Gold Star process.

Steps to Attaining Gold Star:
1. Contact KM Director to discuss interest and develop MOU
2. Fill out Gold Star Registration Form
3. Fill out the Benchmarks Checklist that matches your mentoring program model
4. Include documentation for each Benchmark in an organized manner and submit to KM
5. KM Director and/or peer review committee will review the application
6. Applicant will participate in a clarification questions phase
7. Upon review of the clarification questions, KM Director will write a Recommendations & Review form
8. Program will either be approved for Gold Star or given a list of areas for improvement

Please email mentor@ksde.org to see how we can work together to get you qualified!

SAFE Training Offered at Conference

Registration is open and workshops are listed for the 2014 Kansas Conference on Service & Volunteerism. This year’s conference will once again boast a fantastic Mentoring Track.

During the conference, we will be hosting a three-hour (or two-part session) SAFE: Prioritizing Youth Safety with Research-Based Mentoring Screening Practices training. SAFE consists of content that is designed to assist youth mentoring and youth serving organizations in strengthening their assessment and monitoring practices to screen out potential child sexual abusers. When recommended tools are processes are followed, youth-serving organizations show their commitment to the safety of youth in their care, allowing them to have positive and effective mentoring relationships. Keeping our youth safe requires more than just running background checks! There are only six certified SAFE trainers in the country, so we are humbled and thrilled at the opportunity to offer this training to you during our annual conference!

Register today, and catch the $50 early bird price!

Coaches’ Challenge Materials

Did you forget to order your 7th Annual Coaches’ Challenge supplies and materials? We have ordered additional materials, should you program need them. Just contact the KM Director at mentor@ksde.org to submit your materials order. Additionally, you can find all Coaches’ Challenge documents by clicking on the link in the box on the left or below, and/or by visiting the KM website.

Nominations are due by August 1, 2014 for the KSU Game!!!!
Nominations are due by August 8th for the KU Game!!!!

Coaches’ Challenge Dates: August 1—November 31, 2014