

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Coaches' Mentoring Challenge Expands with Support from MENTOR and the Big 12 Conference

15 Current and Retired Coaches from Big 12 and Big Ten Conferences Now Participating

(Boston, MA) – [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 ages 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. These benefits to youth ultimately strengthen our communities and our nation.

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're 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 University 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.

In 2014, all ten of the Big 12 football coaches are joining the effort. All of the coaches are challenging fans to volunteer to mentor youth in their communities. Many of the coaches in both conferences are also teamed up with one of MENTOR's affiliate [Mentoring Partnerships](#) and other nonprofit partners.

2014 Coaches' Mentoring Challenge Roster

Big 12 Teams

- Coach Paul Rhoads, Iowa State University with the [Iowa Mentoring Partnership](#)
- Coach Bill Snyder, Kansas State University with [Kansas Mentors](#)
- Coach Charlie Weis, University of Kansas with [Kansas Mentors](#)
- Coach Bob Stoops, University of Oklahoma with the [Boren Mentoring Initiative, Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence](#)
- Coach Mike Gundy, Oklahoma State University with [Boren Mentoring Initiative, Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence](#)
- Coach Art Briles, Baylor University
- Coach Gary Patterson, Texas Christian University
- Coach Kliff Kingsbury, Texas Tech University
- Coach Charlie Strong, University of Texas
- Coach Dana Holgorsen, West Virginia University with [Volunteer West Virginia](#)

Big Ten Teams

- Coach Kirk Ferentz, University of Iowa with the [Iowa Mentoring Partnership](#)
- Coach Tom Osborne, University of Nebraska (Ret.) with [Nebraska TeamMates Mentoring Program](#)
- Coach Bo Pelini, University of Nebraska with [Nebraska TeamMates Mentoring Program](#)
- Coach Jerry Kill, University of Minnesota with [Minnesota Mentoring Partnership](#)
- Coach Lloyd Carr, University of Michigan (Ret.) with [Mentor Michigan](#)

Coach Mark Farley, University of Northern Iowa is also participating with the [Iowa Mentoring Partnership](#).

The Coaches' Mentoring Challenge kicks off on August 1st and runs through November 30, with final results released during the first week in December. www.CoachesMentoringChallenge.org

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