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**Governor signs proclamation declaring January as
Kansas Mentoring Month**
Kansans encouraged to make a difference by becoming a mentor

TOPEKA, KS – Governor Sam Brownback signed a proclamation on January 4, 2012 declaring January as Kansas Mentoring Month to recognize the importance of mentoring and to encourage more Kansans to serve as mentors in their communities.

Mentoring matches from YouthFriends Basehor Linwood and Winfield 4-H Tech Wizards were in attendance, along with Kansas Mentors Advisory Council Members representing Communities in Schools, Kansas Big Brothers Big Sisters, Juvenile Justice Authority and Kansas Mentors, the state's mentoring partnership.

“I encourage all Kansans to learn more about mentoring,” said Kansas State head football coach Coach Bill 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.”

Research shows that mentoring has long-term benefits on youth by increasing their chances of high school graduation and college attendance and decreasing the likelihood of substance abuse and other risky behaviors.

“Ensuring the success of our youth is not only valuable to the kids, but also to our state's economy and workforce,” said Nicolette Geisler, Director of Kansas Mentors. “We are thrilled that Governor Brownback has chosen to highlight mentoring and Kansas Mentoring Month in this proclamation and hope that it brings awareness to the many benefits of mentoring.”

To learn more about mentoring and ways to get involved, visit the Kansas Mentors website at www.KansasMentors.org.

Kansas' celebration of Mentoring Month joins a national effort spearheaded by the Harvard School of Public Health, MENTOR and the Corporation for National and Community Service. To learn more visit: www.nationalmentoringmonth.org

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