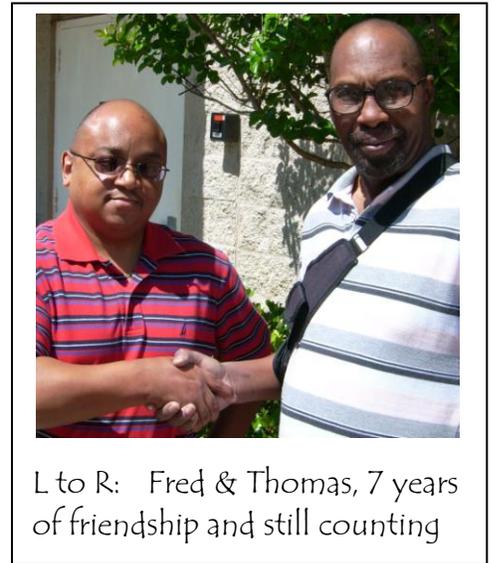




A LOT IN COMMON

Fred Foster joined the MHA as a volunteer in the Compeer program in 2005. Once his friendship with Thomas began to take hold, he no longer really considered himself a volunteer. "The best thing I can probably say about Thomas is, he's a lot like me," said Fred in a recent interview. "He's a good listener and he's very thoughtful when we talk."



L to R: Fred & Thomas, 7 years of friendship and still counting

One of their favorite places to spend time together talking (and eating) is the House of Pizza. Fred says "the subs are to die for." They talk every week and get together 1-2 times per month. Fred, who provides technical support with Wells Fargo adds, "We just get together to 're-boot' and catch up." They are both fans of Law & Order/SVU and have several sitcoms in common.

Thomas says of Fred, "I can't imagine being without him. We can be there for each other to give advice or when you just need someone to talk to." Thomas shared that having Fred to call when he was grieving the loss of his father was particularly important. "Fred really helped me through it." The pair is another great example of the Compeer slogan, "Making Friends, Changing Lives."



The Mental Health Association of Central Carolinas' Compeer Program serves adults in mental health recovery through its core service: one-to-one supportive friendship. Through this matched relationship, Compeer friends meet once /week or every other week for one hour for one year – most last longer. Meetings occur in natural settings using natural supports (i.e., enjoying a walk together, meeting for coffee, playing checkers or tennis, exploring a library). Based on the time-honored tradition that the support of friends is healing, the Compeer program is "making friends and changing lives." The program is considered a best practice for recovery by the American Psychological Association.

Compeer achieves measurable results:

- Our volunteer mentoring relationships build self-confidence and independence.
- Our program saves precious health-care dollars by reducing hospitalization costs.
- All those involved in our programs – the people we serve, volunteers and therapists – give us outstanding effectiveness ratings, ranging from 94-100% satisfaction

To learn more about becoming a Compeer volunteer, call 704-365-4830, visit the [Compeer page](#) or e-mail the Compeer program at mha@mhacentralcarolinas.org.

www.mhacentralcarolinas.org