December graduation will be held virtually due to COVID-19 pandemic

As with most other events during the pandemic, KC graduation this month will look a little bit different. Graduates who were set to walk the stage in the spring (2020), summer or fall have been invited to participate in a combined graduation set for 5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 11, in Dodson Auditorium.

The event will be livestreamed (link will be posted online soon) for friends and family to view the event live.

Only the graduates, KC Board members and KC administration will be in attendance.

Face coverings will be required and CDC guidelines will be enforced.

Employees will have option to attend spring convocation via Zoom

Spring convocation for employees is set for Jan. 11, 2021, in Dodson Auditorium, but employees will have the option to view the convocation via Zoom.

“With the seating limitations due to COVID-19, we cannot seat everyone in the auditorium,” said Tony Johnson, director of HR. “Be on the lookout for an email from our department with a Survey Monkey link to let us know if you prefer to attend convocation via Zoom or face-to-face.”

Bennie Brown retiring after 51 years of service to KC

After 51 years of teaching at KC, Bennie Brown will retire her red marking pen at the end of December. Bennie requested, in place of a retirement party, that we honor her teaching legacy with an endowed student scholarship. To make this student scholarship a reality, we need everyone to support us with whatever you can give.

Please consider making a tax-deductible contribution to the Bennie J. Brown Scholarship today — $25, $50, $100, $250; all gifts add up.

Bennie began her teaching career at KC in 1969. Bennie held the Chair of Language Development before returning to the classroom full time. She has been a true friend, a colleague, and a mentor to students, faculty, and staff across KC.

An endowed scholarship in the KC Foundation is $15,000; that is just 150 gifts of $100. Think about the math, and give today.

Together we can make this happen!

Workforce Solutions East Texas opens Access Point on Kilgore campus

KC is pleased to partner with Workforce Solutions East Texas (WSET) to open a permanent Access Point located in the Student Support Building.

Access Point locations, which are open to the public, are service locations for job-seekers to receive on-site assistance.

The WSET Access Point on the Kilgore campus is open each Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. These sites have WSET resources where job-seekers can register for www.WorkInTexas.com, receive assistance with job searches, register for professional development workshops and access additional career resources.

“We are extremely proud to partner with Workforce Solutions East Texas to provide this needed access point for our students and community members. It is a win-win for both Kilgore College and the city of Kilgore,” said Dr. Brenda Kays, KC president.

“This is such a positive addition to the Kilgore campus, allowing easy access for those who are seeking to use their education to enter living-wage careers.”
My Utmost Gratitude

Today I find myself at a loss for the appropriate words to express my gratitude. As I reflect on the last nine months, the critical element that stands out is the dedication demonstrated by faculty and staff in such unprecedented times and often without warning or proper tools. I can’t begin to adequately express the depths of my gratitude and my pride in the fact that I am allowed to work beside educators who don’t hesitate to give their all for students.

While we won’t entirely be on the other side of COVID-19 with the dawn of 2021, at least there appears to be a light at the end of that very dark and long tunnel. I know that we will still face challenges during the spring semester and possibly beyond. However, after the performance of KC faculty and staff over the past nine months, I am confident that we will rise to the occasion, no matter the task.

Speaking of lights at the end of tunnels, you have each been a beacon of hope for our students. Students who were searching for the normalcy associated with hearing a lecture where COVID-19 wasn’t mentioned. Students who received a CARES Act check to cover unexpected out-of-pocket expenses. Students who lost jobs and family members at the cruel hand of the virus. Many students looked to each of you and your light to help navigate a multitude of uncertainty and grief.

Our faculty did a fantastic job transitioning into the remote environment. In just days and supported by eLearning staff, department chairs and deans, the college performed an amazing 180-degree turn. Everything became 10 times harder and took much more time and effort. Our faculty never wavered in the desire to serve students. Countless hours were spent before, during, and are still being spent today to take care of those students who entrusted us with their future. It seems paltry to say compared to the effort you invested, but thank you. My heartfelt gratitude to each of you for what you have accomplished this year!

Our staff did an excellent job working remotely yet serving students at the same time. The College’s operations could not cease while we still had students enrolled who needed help with financial aid, making a payment, getting a transcript, accessing technology, finding a tutor or a friendly ear. Every task became 10 times harder and took much more time and effort. Our staff never wavered in the desire to serve students. It seems inadequate to say compared to the effort you invested, but thank you. My heartfelt gratitude to each of you for what you have accomplished this year!

Our administrators and staff tapped to perform essential functions and stay on-campus were also phenomenal. Umpteen hours were invested in plodding through the new virus landscape with no rulebook, the only certainty being uncertainty, and questions met with more questions and scrutiny. Regular job duties did not cease with these new tasks at hand; extra duties were just added to the already burgeoning load. Yet these administrators and staff persevered and created a plan still being honed weekly. The efforts of Ranger Reopening and the countless versions of “the plan” will continue to be exercised into 2021. This plan likely will serve as a blueprint for the future in many ways. It seems insufficient to say compared to your dedication and the effort you invested, but thank you. My heartfelt gratitude to each of you for what you have accomplished this year!

I hope that each of you will have a wonderful holiday filled with those things that you cherish most. If ever a team deserved a break and the chance for a much-deserved rest, it is our team. You each rose to the challenges that 2020 brought to us. I join our students in a big round of applause for one and all.

Until next time, 

Dr. Brenda Kays

Faculty & Staff Reports

Katie Owens, government instructor, analyzed the 2020 elections on election night on CBS-19 TV and explained how the results could affect the 2022 elections. Watch the segment online.

College News

Campus mail, receiving now part of Procurement Services team

As part of a reorganization to increase efficiency and service to the campus, the campus mail and receiving department is now a part of the Procurement Services team. Procurement Services has relocated to the receiving facility on Choice Street. Thus, this effort ties requisitioning, purchasing/ordering, receiving, delivery, and accounts payable functions together in one cohesive effort and in one location. For any questions about mail service or package receiving/delivery, please feel free to reach out to Betsy Hansard at (903) 983-8105.

Discounts offered at KC Bookstore

The KC Bookstore would like to help you get started on purchasing your holiday gift items. All clothing and gift items are 25% off through Dec. 13. Stock up on Ranger gear for the family or for yourself. Also, the bookstore is offering flat rate shipping through FedEx for $10, offered online and in-store. KC faculty and staff can also show their employee ID to receive an additional 10% off. The additional discount can only be taken in-store only. For more information, visit www.kcbookstore.com or contact Kenton Beal, bookstore manager at (903) 988-7517 or kbeal@kilgore.edu.

KC mourns loss of Read, Dugger

Barbara Read

Barbara Read, former KC English instructor, passed away Nov. 9 at age 84. Mrs. Read was married to Wally Read, former KC Band director, who passed away in January of 2017. Graveside services were held Nov. 14 at Craig Cemetery with Dr. Raul Benitez officiating.

Richard Dugger

Richard Dugger, former KC Accounting instructor, passed away Nov. 17 after a long, courageous battle with cancer. He began his 38 years of dedicated service to KC in 1982. In lieu of flowers, a memorial gift in Richard’s name may be sent to the KC Foundation for a scholarship for a business student. Go to giving.kilgore.edu/give-to-a-scholarship and select “Richard Dugger Fund.”

Follow Dr. Kays on Twitter!

#KCBreandaKays
On-Campus Calendar

Dec. 7, Outstanding requisitions must be approved by end-of-day.
Dec. 8, Last day for Purchasing to place orders to be received by Dec. 11
Dec. 9-10, Final Exams
Dec. 10, Cafeteria closes at 6 p.m.
   Residence halls close at 10 p.m. (graduates may spend the night)
Dec. 11, Grades due at 10 a.m.
   Campuses close at 2:45 p.m.
   Graduation, 5 p.m. (livestreamed)
Dec. 14, December Mini classes begin
   KC Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom
Jan. 4, All offices reopen
Jan. 11, Spring Convocation (Dodson Auditorium or Zoom)
Jan. 12, Final Registration for Spring 1 & 16-week terms, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Jan. 15, Campuses close at 2:45 p.m.
Jan. 18, Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday (campuses closed)
Jan. 19, First class day for Spring 1 & 16-week terms
Jan. 19-20, Schedule changes, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Jan. 23, Lady Rangers vs. Grayson College (home), 2 p.m.
   KC men’s basketball (home) vs. Blinn College, 4 p.m.
Jan. 28, Lady Rangers vs. South Plains College (home), 5 p.m.
Jan. 30, KC men’s basketball (home) vs. Panola College, 4 p.m.

DATA: Did you know?

Fall 2020 Credit Headcount: 5,100
Quarter 1 2020 CE Headcount: 1,316*

*As of 11/16/20

With COVID-19 infection, hospitalization and death rates rising, we owe it to our students, colleagues, friends, families, and ourselves to be diligent in following guidelines for minimizing the risk of infection. If you have to self-quarantine at home please be cognizant of the fact that you must remain home during that period of time to protect others from potential exposure.

- Stay home if you are sick.
- Wear a face covering at all times while at work, unless you are alone in a private office.
- Wear a mask correctly (over nose and mouth).
- Stay at least 6’ from others (even when outdoors).
- Be cognizant of what you touch, and wash your hands frequently.
- Avoid crowds, confined spaces and areas that might have poor air circulation.
- Christmas festivities and traditions will present additional challenges to remaining healthy. Please minimize the risk of spreading germs.

With COVID-19 cases on the rise, please be safe during the holidays

The Rangerettes will host the tenth annual Christmas show Dec. 12-13 at the LeTourneau University Belcher Center in Longview.

The Broadway-style show, “Christmas Extravaganza 2020,” is being moved to the Belcher Center this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We felt moving the show this year to a larger venue was our best option to maximize the audience size while maintaining proper social distancing,” said Dana Blair, Rangerette director. “It’ll be a wonderful way to kick off the holiday season.”

This year’s show will feature the world-famous Rangerettes with guest performances by the Kilgore High School Hi-Steppers; Elite Dance Center, under the direction of Katie Quinn and Lexie Drennan; In-Step Dance Co., under the direction of Amy Mims; and the Longview High School Viewette officers, under the direction of Debbie McGowan.

David Berryhill will be the host with special guest appearances by Santa Flavious and Joshua the Elf.

Shows will be held at 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12; and 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 13.

Tickets are $20 each and all seating is reserved.

For more information or to reserve tickets, click here.