Groundbreaking is May 3 for Roy H. Laird Regional Medical Health Sciences Education Center

A groundbreaking for the state-of-the-art Roy H. Laird Regional Medical Health Sciences Education Center will be held 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, May 3, at 1612 S. Henderson Blvd. in Kilgore.

This first-of-its-kind community college health sciences facility will be unique, serving patients of Kilgore and surrounding East Texas communities in an environment that utilizes clinical students from nursing, physical therapy assistant, occupational therapy assistant, and medical imaging programs.

CHRISTUS Good Shepherd, the Roy H. Laird Memorial Hospital Foundation, the City of Kilgore and Kilgore College will be collaborating on the development, to be called the Roy H. Laird Medical Center.

The project includes new teaching and lab space for the college, as well as a potential expansion of CHRISTUS Good Shepherd’s footprint near the existing Emergency Center.

“Once completed, this state-of-the-art facility will greatly impact not only our healthcare students, but the medical community as a whole,” said Dr. Kays, KC president. “We are thankful for the partnerships with CHRISTUS, the Laird Foundation and the City of Kilgore to elevate the future of healthcare in our region to a new level.”

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KC revises Friday hours for summer

Dr. Brenda Kays announced that KC campuses will shorten Friday work days beginning May 16.

From May 16 to July 15, the college will follow regular work hours Monday-Friday (7:45 a.m. to 5 p.m.) but shorten Friday work days (7:45 a.m. to noon).

HR Director Tony Johnson emailed all employees FAQs to help employees navigate this revised schedule in the timekeeping system.

“If you have any questions, please reach out to your VP, dean or supervisor. “I hope you enjoy this well-deserved pause to our normal work schedule,” Kays said. “Thank you for all you do for KC and our students!”

KC employees who go “Above & Beyond”

Brigida Romano

I would like to commend Brigida Romano (KC recruiter, technical programs) for her swift actions when my mother had a medical event on Feb. 22 in Parks Fitness Center. When Brigida saw my mom was in distress, she immediately assessed her condition and dialed 911. She remained on the phone with the operator while relaying information from the operator to me and relayed info to the EMTs when they arrived. Two days later, she made a point to check in with me at the fitness center to ask about my mother’s condition. I truly appreciate her assistance and passionate response to assist my mom.

-Tammy Kirkland

AEP Foundation Emergency Response Training Facility unveiled at police academy

KC’s East Texas Police Academy held an open house April 29 for the newly renovated classroom facilities made possible by a $190,000 grant from the American Electric Power (AEP) Foundation. The grant was used to fund the classroom renovations and to purchase two new police training sport utility vehicles. The renovated classrooms were renamed as the “American Electric Power Foundation Emergency Response Training Facility.”

“The East Texas Police Academy has an incredible training program, and SWEPCO is proud to support it with an American Electric Power Foundation grant to enhance classroom facilities and purchase new training vehicles,” said Mark Robinson, SWEPCO External Affairs manager in Longview.

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Above: Brigida Romano, KC recruiter, technical programs, cuts the ribbon to unveil the newly renovated facility.

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Putting Community in Community College...

Very seldom do we have the opportunity to be a part of a project partnership that produces a “win” for each partner. However, that is exactly how I would describe the impact of the Laird Hospital project. Tomorrow (5/3) at 10:30 a.m., the partners involved in this project will be conducting the ceremonial ground-breaking. The City of Kilgore, the Roy H. Laird Memorial Hospital Foundation, CHRSTUS Good Shepherd, and Kilgore College are all on the agenda to provide attendees with a message of welcome. I am also certain that each of the partners will be talking about how this project will benefit their respective entities.

For Kilgore College, it means a state-of-the-art facility where our Health Sciences students will have the opportunity to learn and practice their skills. It means ample classroom and office space to accommodate existing programs, faculty and staff. The new facility also will allow for growth and new programming.

For CHRSTUS Good Shepherd, it means expansion of their footprint. The hospital will continue to run the emergency room at the facility, which will also be getting a “facelift” during the construction process. Additionally, CHRSTUS will be relocating their physical therapy clinic to this site and adding a multiple practitioner clinic.

For the City of Kilgore, it means not having to maintain an aging facility to current medical specifications which is a costly undertaking. It means that the city and the Kilgore Economic Development Corporation have one more tool in their economic development toolkit to attract business, industry and residential construction to Kilgore. The new facility will also send a clear picture to those who travel Highway 259 that Kilgore is a vibrant city and as the Chamber of Commerce states, “a great place to live, learn, work and play!”

For the Laird Memorial Hospitality Foundation, it is a way to honor Annie B. Laird's contribution to the City of Kilgore. It is a way to continue the Laird family's legacy and impact. The Laird Foundation's partnership is an investment in the visionary leadership of the Laird family and their desire that access to medical care would always be available to Kilgore and surrounding area residents.

I believe that as we've been talking about this project to various groups and individuals across the region that they have commented that this was such a great project and they could definitely understand the benefits to all of the partners involved. However, what resonated with me was how often they brought up the security of having local access to medical care as being paramount. I can understand that many small hospitals, especially in rural areas, have had to close their doors. I believe that the synergy that has developed through this process will provide that access. I also believe that it underscores just how important the community college is to the communities it serves. I believe that this project underscores and reminds us that not only are we focused on student success at KC, but on community success. If it is a good thing for students and a good thing for our community, it is a good thing for KC!

If your schedules will allow, I hope that you will come out for the ground-breaking ceremony tomorrow. A special shout-out to Merlyn Holmes the Executive Director of the Foundation/her staff and the KC Foundation Board of Directors. Both have worked tirelessly and continue to work hard to aid in fund-raising and awareness-raising for this impactful project.

Until next month,

Dr. Brenda Kays
KC president

FOLLOW DR. KAYS ON TWITTER! @KCBrendaKays

Michelle Sullivan (English instructor) was nominated as “Most Influential Teacher” by one of her Henderson dual-credit seniors. As part of the award, Sullivan will speak at the Henderson ISD’s Tradition of Excellence banquet in May.

Ebony Allison-Dennis (Director Instructional Student Support) met with Perkins directors from various community colleges and facilitated Talking Session 2: Medium Institutional Perspective – Strategic Conversations on Improving the Self-Identification Process for Students with Unique or Special Circumstances (aka Perkins Special Populations).” The group had an opportunity to (1) discuss how to promote awareness of services, (2) converse about challenges in assisting CTE students with unique or special circumstances, and (3) discover ways to improve the self-identification process for available services.

Ebony Allison-Dennis will also co-present this month with Patricia McGee-Welch (San Jacinto College) at the 2022 National Association Career & Technical Education Information (NACTEi) Leadership Conference. The presentation will cover the topic of “Working Together to Help Students with Unique or Special Circumstances (Perkins Defined Special Populations).”

Tina Rushing, program leader and Jennifer Quine, instructor with the Substance Abuse Counseling Program hosted the first KC Conference on Addiction April 22. More than 120 attendees received CEUs on topics including Harm Reduction in Action: Keeping Our Clients Safe presented by Kim May, LCSW-S, Professional Self-Care in the Age of Overwhelm presented by Christy Collins, LCSW and The Neuroscience & Genetics of High-Risk Behavior by Crystal Collier, PhD, LPC-S. There were vendors from 8 local agencies including Oceans, One Love Longview, MTC, and SHRET. SAC Sophomores currently in their internship class assisted with the conference. We appreciate everyone who helped make this event a success and we look forward to hosting an even bigger conference next year!

Truehumor.com has named the month of May “Jase Graves Month” and is featuring some of his recent columns. Graves is the department chair of the Language Development department.
**On-Campus Calendar**

2-4, Hurst NCLEX Exam, Devall Ballroom, 7:30 a.m.  
3, Hospital Groundbreaking, Laird Memorial Hospital, 10:30 a.m.  
4, Grand Canyon University Recruiter, Devall Hallway, 10 a.m.  
5, Title IV Training, Zoom, 9 a.m.  
   Cinco de Mayo Celebration, Lee Mall/Mike Miller Plaza, 11 a.m.  
6, Sigma Kappa Delta Induction Ceremony, Devall Ballroom, 6 p.m.  
7, Music Honors Concert, Van Cliburn Auditorium, 3 p.m.  
9, Rangerette Awards Tea, McLaurin Building, 5 p.m.  
   New women’s basketball coach press conference, McLaurin Bldg, 9:30 a.m.  
12, Cafeteria Closes at 6 p.m.  
   Residence Halls Close at 10 p.m.  
   Nursing Pinning and Graduation, Dodson Auditorium, 10 a.m.  
   Upward Bound Spring Banquet, Devall Ballroom, 6:30 p.m.  
13, Graduation, Dodson Auditorium, 2 & 6 p.m.  
   KC PTA Pinning Ceremony, Devall Ballroom, Noon  
14, Men’s Basketball Tryouts, Masters Gymnasium, 1 p.m.  
20, Campuses Close at Noon  
21, KC Twirling Tryouts, Masters/Carpeted Gym, 8 a.m.  
27, Campuses Close at Noon  
30, Memorial Day, Campuses Closed  
31, Upward Bound Orientation, Devall Ballroom, 6:30 p.m.

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**FACULTY & STAFF REPORTS**

Congratulations to David & Sarah Whitfield who are now grandparents. Their son’s son, Princeton Whitfield, was born March 20 and weighed 4 lb., 11 oz. Although he was born prematurely, he is out of the hospital and doing well. David is KC’s network administrator for Unified Communications and Sarah teaches chemistry.

Austin Ferguson, son of Michael Ferguson (criminal justice instructor and Public Services department chair) was featured on the TV show, “John McGivern’s Main Streets.” Austin was interviewed because he is the carillonneur, a position he has held since 2017 at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn.

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**COLLEGE NEWS**

**Student food pantry in need of items**

The KC Student Food Pantry is once again in need of donated items. Items needed include: canned meat, snacks bars, soups, oatmeal, Pop Tarts or cereal. You can also donate personal care items such as laundry soap or deodorant, etc. For additional information, call or come by to visit Amy Reed (switchboard operator) at (903) 984-8531. Food pantry donations can be dropped off at the Visitor Center in the Devall Student Center.

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**DATA: Did you know?**

According to the latest THECB Accountability Report, 88.8% of KC students were reported “working or enrolled” in Texas within one year after earning a degree or certificate from KC. This is higher than the overall “working or enrolled” rate for Texas medium-sized community colleges, which is 87.5%.

Data provided by:  
KC Office of Organizational Effectiveness and Excellence

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**Career Trees debuts on Kilgore.edu**

Sheri Burlingame is pleased to share the Career Trees link that is now on KC’s website thanks to funding by the rootED Alliance Grant. The link directs visitors to the Career Tree Forest where 55 programs are represented in individual links. Each tree, created by KC instructors, presents a “menu” of careers at different educational levels for prospective students/current students to peruse and research. You’ll notice Career Tree posters in each building on campus. They have also been distributed for placement at local high schools. Career Trees provide an added layer to KC’s Career Pathways and advising services.

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**Birthdays**

| MAY |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | 5-4 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Olivia Moore |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Dorothy Puckett |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Zachary Carnes |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Nikki Runnels |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Kimberly Ellgass |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Jason Robbins |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Michael Henry |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Beverly Taylor |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Charlotte Poe |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Bonnie Gale |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Donna Davis |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Tina Rushing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Karen Dilday |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | David Whitfield |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Jenna Cruz |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Mary Martin |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Dana Blair |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Doris Johnson |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Delinda Spencer |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Cassidi Jacobs |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Ursula Dyer |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Travis Moore |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|     | Larry Guerrero |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
KC Spring Dance Concert set for May 7

KC dance students will display their broad range of dance skills at the annual spring dance concert set for 7 p.m. Saturday, May 7, in Dodson Auditorium. The concert will offer a variety of dance styles and techniques taught by the KC Dance Department. The choreography is a collaboration of the students and instructors: Angela Aulds for ballet and modern dance and Shelley Wayne for tap and jazz. Tickets are $10 for the general public and $5 for students with KC identification.

Construction of the Center will be funded in part by a $2.5 million Economic Development Assistance Grant, revenues from the Center, and funding from the Hospital Foundation. The original hospital building opened more than 70 years ago and served the Kilgore area until 2007. Since then, the campus has hosted a variety of tenants.

“This expanded facility will establish a graduate ‘pipeline’ to help address the nationwide, ongoing challenge of finding and recruiting qualified health science professionals,” said Jim Gaton, Vice President – Operations, CHRISTUS Good Shepherd Health System.

“The Center will also provide a location for continuing education for staff members at CHRISTUS facilities and CHRISTUS Trinity Clinic locations in Northeast Texas.”

“We are excited about this facility and the potential it holds for the patients of this area and the students at Kilgore College to provide a phenomenal, integrated health care campus in the heart of Kilgore,” said Todd Hancock, President and Chief Executive Officer, CHRISTUS Good Shepherd Health System.

“We are thrilled about the possibilities this presents for training the next generation of health care professionals, expanding access to care and rebuilding a new state-of-the-art facility.”

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Did You Know?

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month:
- Guam is a territory of the USA. https://www.history.com/news/how-the-united-states-ended-up-with-guam
- In 1978, a joint congressional resolution established Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week. The first 10 days of May were chosen to coincide with two important milestones in Asian/Pacific American history: the arrival in the United States of the first Japanese immigrants (May 7, 1843) and contributions of Chinese workers to the building of the transcontinental railroad, completed May 10, 1869. In 1992, Congress expanded the observance to a monthlong celebration that is now known as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/resources/aapi-ff.pdf

Older Americans Month:
- More than 10,000 “baby boomers” turn 65-years-old every day.
- There are more than 55,000 seniors over age 100, and by 2050 the number of “centenarians” is expected to top 600,000. This is roughly the population of Vermont.
- About 65 percent of all “baby boomers” say they plan to work past age 65.
- For more information: https://mountainempirelegal.com/10-fun-facts-senior-adults-honor-upcoming-national-older-americans-month/

Jewish American Heritage Month:
- Ruth Bader Ginsburg was the first Jewish person (and woman) to lay in state.
- Doug Emhoff is the first Jewish spouse of a US president or vice president.
- Louis Brandeis was the first Jewish SCOTUS.
- Abraham Nemeth, who was Jewish, invented Nemeth Braille Code for Mathematics and Science Notation in 1946, helping people without sight be able to read, write, and solve complex math problems.
- Ruth Marianna Handler was more than the president of the toy manufacturer Mattel, a job rarely held by women – she also was the inventor of the Barbie doll. She was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1970, about ten years into her business, and was frustrated by how hard it was to find a good post-mastectomy prosthesis. She decided to make her own, and then went on to found a prosthesis manufacturing company called Ruthton Corp.

Mental Health Awareness Month:
- 51 million people experienced mental illness in 2019.
- One-in-5 adults and 1-in-6 children experience mental illness each year.
- Only about 45% of those with mental illness seek treatment.
- For more information (or to seek help), visit https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/Awareness-Events/Mental-Health-Awareness-Month

Information provided by the KC Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee