KC Board selects engineering firm to design new pedestrian bridge

Kilgore College trustees heard presentations Sept. 14 from construction firm representatives about possible designs for a new campus pedestrian bridge.

The former bridge, which allowed students to safely cross Hwy. 259 since 1970, was struck by an 18-wheeler this past year, causing irreparable damages. It was removed, and a crosswalk system was installed by the Texas Department of Transportation.

Halff Associates, a construction and engineering consulting firm, presented “very preliminary renderings” of possible bridge designs to the board.

“This preliminary process is a fairly iterative process. We start big and we narrow down ideas. We find things we like and things that we don’t like, and mostly what we want to find for you is a bridge that you guys like,” said Michael Medford with Halff Associates. “This is going to be your bridge. We want this bridge to suit the needs of the college. We want the bridge to be something that is pleasing. That is a landmark and a marquee project for the college.”

The company had compiled a preliminary engineering report to give to trustees, which would include possible designs and some cost estimates based on feedback from KC staff and local stakeholders.

Because U.S. 259 has been designated a freight route, the 16-foot clearance of the previous bridge is no longer acceptable by TxDOT.

The new minimum height for the bridge is 19 feet, 6 inches. Also, since the bridge was constructed in 1970, before the implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the new structure is required to include additional accessibility features to comply with the act.

Cost estimates and a bidding process for the construction of the new bridge will come over the next several months.

Simpson named TSF artistic director

For the first time in 35 years, East Texas’ only professional theatre has a new artistic director.

KC has hired Texas Shakespeare Festival veteran Meaghan Simpson to lead the organization following the Aug. 31 retirement of its founding artistic director, Raymond Caldwell.

Simpson stepped into her new role this month after coming on board in 2013 as TSF’s associate artistic director and associate casting director.

She was initially hired to join the acting company in 2009 and has since served as an actor in more than 20 productions.

Matthew Simpson, an 11-year company member whose position is supported by the TSF Foundation, will continue to serve as director of development and associate artistic director. Managing director John Dodd will remain in his role facilitating the festival’s daily operations.

Clements gifts $100,000 to benefit KC athletics

Noted local philanthropist and KC alumnus Mike Clements has a motto that he distinctly stands by: “When life becomes about everyone else and not about you, great things can be accomplished.”

Clements fully embraces this motto with a gracious gift of $100,000 to Kilgore College athletic programs to benefit student-athletes.

A portion of the funds will supplement The Lane Johnson Athletic Performance Center project which is set for construction this semester on the Kilgore campus.

“We are so grateful that Mike has stepped forward to make a transformational gift that will have a lasting impact on our student-athletes for years to come,” said Dr. Brenda Kays, KC president. “Our primary mission will continue to afford our student-athletes the best possible academic and athletic experience during their time as Rangers, and in order to continue to do so, contributions such as this are vital for us to achieve those goals.”

Clements, owner of Energy Weldfab, has a long and proud partnership with the college that began in 1974 when Mike met his late wife, Amy, while attending classes at KC.

We are beyond grateful to Mike for this gift to our athletic department,” said Jimmy Rieves, athletic director. “His generous and selfless gift will allow student-athletes to have an exceptional college athletic experience.”

KC employees who go “Above & Beyond”

Amy Reed

“Our switchboard operator Amy Reed has the perfect personality for her job. Always willing to go the extra mile, she consistently helps students, parents and visitors alike with any questions that they may have. I’ve witnessed her helping numerous people and offering helpful suggestions and great customer service to ease the minds of anyone who comes in contact with her.”

-Kendra Williams
Improving the student experience at KC

Dr. Brenda Kays

I am pleased to tell you about an exciting development at KC titled, “Improving the Student Experience.” It is not a new initiative, but rather a continuation of our Guided Pathways journey. In 2019, we launched our eight-week terms at KC. It took the entire college to plan and implement that launch. The student success data proves that your work and your colleagues’ work produced great dividends for our students. We continue to see evidence that the transition to eight-week terms increases key student performance metrics, leading toward what we hope will be a steep jump in graduation rates!

With the success of our eight-week terms to buoy our spirits and springboard us into action, it is now time to turn our attention to the student experience. The student experience is the term that we use to indicate how we connect with students and then assist them in successfully enrolling at KC. We define that period as running from the junior year in high school through the end of the first semester of enrollment at KC. It is our chance to proactively map out what a positive experience can and should look like, and then work toward making that ideal experience a reality. Our students deserve it.

While I believe, similar to our eight-week conversion experience, that ultimately the work will involve the entire organization, we will have a core team of individuals leading the change. That core team of individuals will be divided into four workgroups. The workgroups include: business processes, communication (external and internal), Ranger Registration (student onboarding) and continuing education. I sincerely appreciate all of these individuals and their willingness to lead us forward.

The composition of those four groups includes:

**Business Processes:**
Dr. Mike Jenkins, Chair
Dr. Reggie Bazzle
Taylor Fleet
Chris Gore
Jackie Kelley
Kristi Powers
Donny Seals, Student Success Council

**Ranger Registration, Student Onboarding:**
Dr. Staci Martin, Chair
Dennis Cilborn
John Colville
Ebony Dennis
Dawn Jones
Alex Knox
Ronda Lee
Jennifer Quine
Dr. William Stowe
Dr. Ginger Dennis, Student Success Council

**Communication, External & Internal:**
Dr. Brenda Kays, Chair
Manny Almanza
Jessica Bickham
Callie Blakeley
Amanda Jackson
Mary Martin
Rachel Stallard
David Whitfield
Jase Graves, Student Success Council

**Continuing Education:**
Dr. Mike Turpin, Chair
D’Wayne Shaw
Larry Brooks
Jana Campbell
Dr. Sandra Carroll
Estonia Graves
Rob Horn
Sandra Ruddell

Note that the entire Student Success Council will work in parallel with the group working on advancing the student experience and that the chairs from the council each have membership in a workgroup. The first meeting is 1:30 p.m. Monday, Oct. 12. The full group will meet every two weeks for a report/discussion of the interim weeks’ workgroup progress.

Stay tuned for more details/data, enjoy the cooler weather, and since it is October... Happy Halloween!

Until next month,
On-Campus Calendar

2, KC Football scrimmage, 10 a.m., football stadium
10, KC Softball Round-Robin, The Ballpark at KC Commons
11, KC Football scrimmage vs. TJC, 10 a.m., football stadium
19, KC Football scrimmage vs. Southern University in Shreveport
23, KCEPT Graduation, 4 p.m., Dodson Auditorium
23, Basic Police Officer graduation, 10 a.m., Dodson Auditorium
25, KC Softball Round-Robin, The Ballpark at KC Commons
27-31, KilGORE Film Festival, Dodson Auditorium

What is the QEP and How Does it Affect Me?

Fall 2020 marks the beginning of the second year of the five-year implementation of Write Your Future, the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for Kilgore College. Kilgore College designated three strategies to accomplish this goal of enhancing student writing:

1. Implementation of a Grammar Boot Camp integrated into all sections of English 1301
2. Establishment of Writing Studios, concrete and virtual, staffed by professional tutors to coach developing writers
3. Presentation of professional development and support to faculty to hone already embedded and contextualized writing assignments throughout the core curriculum

The following is the schedule for courses to be phased-in to the QEP:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Semesters</th>
<th>Courses Included in QEP Rollout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fall 2019/Spring 2020</td>
<td>English Composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fall 2020/Spring 2021</td>
<td>Language, Culture, Philosophy and EDUC 1300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Fall 2021/Spring 2022</td>
<td>History, Government, Social and Behavioral Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Fall 2022/Spring 2023</td>
<td>Creative Arts, Life and Physical Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fall 2023/Spring 2024</td>
<td>All courses with a writing component</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to this schedule, during the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters, instructors of the following courses will be provided professional development regarding writing assignments:

- ENGL 2322, 2323, 2326, 2332
- HIST 2311, 2312, 2321, 2322
- PHIL 1301, 2306
- EDUC 1300

The students in these courses, as well as all English composition students, will have access to the Writing Studios on both KC campuses, as well as free use of the online tutoring service, Tutor.com.

Please note that students will only have free access to Tutor.com by accessing it from the link in their qualifying Blackboard courses.

While all other courses are not yet included in the QEP rollout, all KC faculty and students can access the printable resources available on the Writing Studio webpage at any time (www.kilgore.edu/writing-studios). Another resource designed to assist faculty in sharing ideas regarding writing strategies is available in Blackboard.

Write Your Future – QEP was established as a repository for faculty to document best practices and lessons learned. This site may be accessed through any faculty Blackboard account under Organizations. Faculty members may contribute to this forum by emailing the director at the address below.

More information or questions? Please refer to the QEP webpage (www.kilgore.edu/qep) for any questions regarding the QEP, or contact Karen Dulweber, Director of the QEP and Writing Studios, at kdulweber@kilgore.edu.

DATA: Did you know?

KC awarded 1,117 associate degrees & credit certificates* of completion for the 2019-2020 year. This is a 12% increase over the prior year.

* Excludes CE certificates

Data provided by the KC Office of Institutional Planning
FedEx services offered at KC Bookstore

FedEx drop-off services are now offered to the general public at the Kilgore College Bookstore on the Kilgore campus. As part of the FedEx onsite program, customers can drop off pre-packaged and pre-labeled FedEx Express or FedEx Ground shipments. Items can also be brought in without labels for shipping. The bookstore, located in the Devall Student Center, offers a wide variety of apparel, electronics and merchandise.

“This is exciting for us as a bookstore to offer this service not only to the Kilgore College community but to the city of Kilgore as well,” said Kenton Beal, bookstore manager.

For more information, visit the KC Bookstore website: www.kcbookstore.com.

KilGORE Horror Movie Festival Oct. 26-31

KC looks to put a bit of a scare into visitors, as it will host the second annual “Kil-GORE Horror Movie Festival” Oct. 26-31 at Dodson Auditorium on the Kilgore campus. For KC students, admission is $10 per student (seven films) with single movie passes available for $2 per student. For non-KC students, admission is $20 for a week pass and $4 for a single film.

Social distancing guidelines will be administered and face coverings are required. Attendees who bring a donation for the KC Student Food Pantry will receive a single movie pass. Dodson Auditorium Manager Ethan Herring organizes the event.

“We feel like Halloween movies offer a little something for everybody and the diversity of movies that get the most votes should reflect that,” Herring said. “The main goal is to create a fun environment for our students and the community to sit and enjoy the movies.”

For movies that have a streaming option, it will be $5 for a single access online link that will play during the slotted time. A movie will be shown each day at 7:30 p.m. with a matinee set for 2 p.m. on Saturday. To vote for movies you’d like to view, CLICK HERE.

COVID-19 CONFIGURATION

Returning to campus for the fall has meant traversing a new path for all of us. As students, faculty and staff have adjusted to the new normal of remote learning, social distancing and masking up, campus classrooms have adapted as well.

Meghan Potter, KC theatre instructor, manages the technical aspects of the student productions. She spent much of her summer preparing for her students’ return by finding ways to keep them safe and still fulfill the course’s learning objectives — such as teamwork.

(Left) Table tops are covered in old lighting gels for easy wipe-down after each use. Upholstered chairs have been swapped out for plastic ones, which are easier to disinfect. Computers and light boards are now limited to a single user who logs in and out after each use for accountability and cleanliness.

(Right) Individual racks hold Personal Protection Equipment. A bin catches safety glasses, gloves and ear muffs, as well as tools, after each student’s use. Potter sanitizes the equipment at the end of each day. Small buckets (bottom) allow students to gather the supplies they will need without going back to the bins and touching extra items.

Take a virtual tour with us as we look at some of the improvements Potter has made to keep her class going; then share your tips with us. We will highlight the work you are doing to keep students and employees safe in future newsletters.

(Above) Meghan Potter, KC theatre instructor, surveys the work from the lighting booth. Much of the room has been arranged to allow for social distancing.