



KC CONNECTION

Official Employee Newsletter of Kilgore College



MAY 2025

KC Board election results: Steele and Johnson win contested races

BOARD OF TRUSTEES ELECTION



Bagley



Johnson



Steele

The May 3 Kilgore College Board election concluded with **Jason Steele** and **Jeanne Johnson** winning their respective contested races. **Janice Bagley** retained her seat unopposed in the South Zone (Voting Unit #1, Place 7). These vote totals are unofficial and will not be finalized until the official canvass is conducted on May 14 at 4 p.m. on the second floor of the McLaurin Administration Building.

North Zone (Voting Unit #2, Place 8) – Jason Steele vs. Larry Woodfin:

Jason Steele – 317 votes

Larry Woodfin – 119 votes

Central Zone (Voting Unit #3, Place 9) – Jeanne Johnson vs. Ruth F. Williams vs. Verenice Ordorica:

Jeanne Johnson – 654 votes

Ruth F. Williams – 273 votes

Verenice Ordorica – 222 votes

RADICAL HOSPITALITY

KC employees who go “Above & Beyond”

Lacey Crawford

It is a privilege to recognize the outstanding achievements of Lacey Crawford, Pharmacy Tech Instructor at KC. Lacey was recently honored by the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board for her significant contributions to the review of Mosby's Pharmacy Technician, 7th Edition. Her dedication and expertise earned her a place in the textbook as an official reviewer.



CRAWFORD

Since the launch of the Pharmacy Tech program in 2018, Lacey has been a cornerstone of its success. She consistently embodies radical hospitality with respect and inclusion for both students and colleagues.

KC is fortunate to have such a passionate, hardworking and dedicated educator on its team. Lacey Crawford's contributions continue to inspire, uplift and set a high standard for the profession.

- by Jennifer Halton, Workforce Development Specialist

KC Launches IMAGINE 2.0 Initiative to Transform the Student Experience

IMAGINE 2.0

Redefining the Student Experience

KC officially launched its IMAGINE 2.0 initiative with a kickoff event on May 1, followed by a Student Experience Workshop on May 2. These events mark the beginning of an ambitious, college-wide effort to completely reimagine the student journey—from initial contact with KC through graduation.

The IMAGINE 2.0 initiative is focused on creating a more seamless, engaging, and student-centered experience. By examining every aspect of the student lifecycle, KC aims to enhance satisfaction, streamline services & foster student success.

Representatives from CampusWorks, a nationally recognized consulting

firm specializing in higher education transformation, were on hand to guide the kickoff events. CampusWorks partners with institutions to improve operations, optimize technology & create strategies that place students at the center of decision-making. Their team will collaborate closely with KC employees throughout the IMAGINE 2.0 process—from early brainstorming to final implementation.

As part of their role, CampusWorks will assist in upgrading the college's ERP software & lead training sessions to ensure employees can fully leverage the new tools. These improvements are designed to make campus operations more efficient & responsive to students.



ABOVE: KC student Anyla Herbert presents her group's vision of the ideal student experience at the IMAGINE 2.0 Workshop. Photo by Manny Almanza/KC

INNOVATION... YEAR SEVEN!

In December, I announced that the Board of Trustees once again approved \$60,000 to support innovation at Kilgore College. The only requirement was for faculty and staff to submit a grant application—and they delivered! This year, there was a notable increase in applications, each filled with creative and impactful ideas. The Innovation Committee had a tough job reviewing them all.

Applications were due in January, and reviews were conducted in February. All selected applicants have been notified and are launching their projects, which must be completed by August 31, 2025. Please join me in congratulating this year's KC Innovators:

Matthew Gayetsky

- ✓ Create personalized AI training for faculty and staff.
- ✓ Launch a continuing education course on AI that is the first of its kind in the East Texas.

Tanton Johnson

- ✓ Equip the Automotive/Diesel Technology labs with new computers & diagnostic tools.
- ✓ Improve student access to service data and hands-on training.

Meghan Potter

- ✓ Purchase MacBooks with industry-standard entertainment software.
- ✓ Align course offerings with local universities and give students practical experience for careers in entertainment.

Philip Parnell

- ✓ Pilot a student social media "influencer" to showcase KC student life.
- ✓ Tap into the 93% of prospective students using social media to boost KC's online presence.

Karl Riley

- ✓ Provide IT students with computer kits for hands-on disassembly and repair.
- ✓ Enhance job readiness and strengthen East Texas' tech workforce.

Manny Almanza

- ✓ Invest in portable, professional video and audio equipment.
- ✓ Enable high-quality broadcasts and expand KC's ability to highlight its community.

Tammy Wright

- ✓ Install touchscreen kiosks in Kilgore and Longview Testing Centers.
- ✓ Streamline scheduling, payments, and advising appointments for students.

Wishing you all a phenomenal summer! I hope you have plans for restorative rest and relaxation. It was an exciting and fast-paced school year, and we will build on the success you drove this year as we launch Fall 2025! Thank you for all that you do daily to support our students and their success.

Until next time,

Brenda
Dr. Brenda Kays, KC President



FOLLOW DR. KAYS ON TWITTER!
@KCBrendaKays



Dr. Brenda Kays

Moore named Director of Auxiliary Enterprises

Kilgore College is proud to announce **Olivia Moore** as the new Director of Auxiliary Enterprises, effective March 1. In this role, she will provide strategic leadership and financial oversight for several key departments, including KCEXcel, RangerPRINT, the East Texas Oil Museum, Rangerette Showcase, Campus Stores and Dodson Auditorium. Olivia brings a strong background in management, operations, and sales—from national brands to her entrepreneurial ventures and service at KC.

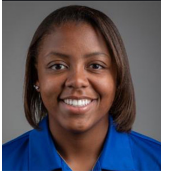


MOORE

Williams, Aulds honored in ETX View's 40 Under Forty

KC congratulates head softball Coach **Amber Williams** and dance professor **Angela Aulds** for being named to ETX View Magazine's 2024 "40 Under Forty" list.

Williams was recognized in the African American Community category for her leadership and impact in athletics, while Aulds was honored in the Arts & Culture category for her contributions to dance education and the performing arts. Their achievements reflect the excellence and dedication found throughout the KC community. [Read more on ETX View](#)



WILLIAMS



AULDS

Blue Star Gala: a HUGE Success!



The KC Foundation's inaugural Blue Star Gala was a resounding success, raising \$177,563 to support the construction of the Ranger Achievement Center. Held March 22 at the Maude Cobb Convention Center in Longview, the event brought together more than 600 attendees for an evening of celebration and giving.

Highlights included 24 title sponsors, 71 sold tables, and 109 auction items. Guests enjoyed a truck raffle, games, and performances by the Rangerettes, Faith Copeland, and KC Connection. KC faculty, staff, and students volunteered throughout the evening, making it a true community effort. Executive Director **Merlyn Holmes** expressed gratitude to the entire KC community for helping make the college's first-ever gala a memorable and impactful evening. [VIEW EVENT PHOTOS](#)

VIEW NEW CALENDAR ONLINE

With the inception of the college's new website, all on-campus events can be [viewed online by clicking here](#). If you are sponsoring or hosting an event and it is not on the calendar, please [email Judy DeRoven](#) so she can add it to the online calendar.

COMING
ATTRATIONS

Birthdays

MAY 2025

5/01 - Caitlyn Jimerson	5/13 - Laney Urban
5/04 - Olivia Moore	5/14 - Donna Davis
5/04 - Dorothy Puckett	5/20 - Karen Dilday
5/5 - Zachary Carnes	5/20 - David Whitfield
5/5 - Michelle Benton	5/21 - Jenna Cruz
5/06 - Kimberly Ellgass	5/22 - Mary Martin
5/07 - Jason Robbins	5/22 - Jennifer Williams
5/09 - Beverly Betts	5/23 - Kara Sharman
5/10 - Stacie Ervin	5/23 - Dana Blair
5/11 - Charlotte Poe	5/24 - Robert Byrd
5/12 - Bonnie Gale	5/24 - Warren Egerton
5/13 - Craig Doyle	5/29 - Travis Moore

JUNE 2025

6/02 - Lori George-Richard	6/13 - Michael Palafox
6/02 - Trisha Herrick	6/17 - Tanton Johnson
6/03 - Mario Cantu	6/18 - Kelly Ansley
6/03 - Natalie Wade	6/18 - Janet Sledge
6/04 - Danny Darden	6/19 - Quinn Ponder
6/04 - Curt Hill	6/19 - Tracy Skopek
6/05 - Cynthia Fernandez	6/19 - Kenneth Struggs
6/05 - Joseph Kirchhoff	6/21 - Kelsey Phillips
6/05 - Joseph Lewis	6/23 - Raquel Perez
6/05 - Johnny Zackary	6/24 - Kathleen Yglesias
6/6 - Schlunda Reese	6/25 - Amber Paredes
6/07 - John Dodd	6/26 - Amanda Hall
6/08 - Jessica Jester	6/27 - Stephanie Freed
6/08 - Lori Solley	6/29 - Jackie McDonald
6/10 - Kristi Kleinig	6/30 - Tammy Wright

JULY 2025

7/01 - Claudia Carter	7/16 - Alana Bills
7/01 - Shaunda Kwiatek	7/17 - Jason Berglund
7/01 - Scott Reinert	7/17 - Yvonne Bethune
7/03 - Stephen Harvey	7/17 - Robin Romano
7/04 - Elizabeth Leamon	7/17 - Ernest Shaw
7/05 - Natalie Bryant	7/17 - Susan Yellott
7/05 - David Jamison	7/19 - Rhonda Ainsworth-Ellington
7/06 - Andrea Gauthier	7/20 - Jordan Collard
7/06 - Forester Nicks	7/24 - Jana Campbell
7/7 - Jennifer Bray	7/25 - Jaclyn Magness
7/08 - Reagan Silvey	7/26 - Tony Addie
7/09 - Leigh Kirby	7/27 - Fred Peters
7/09 - Jeremy Thomas	7/27 - Courtney Pruitt
7/10 - Cole Kruger	7/29 - Rachel Ford
7/13 - Deborah Metcalf	7/30 - John Colville
7/15 - Karl Riley	

AUGUST 2025

8/02 - Lori Truman	8/19 - Callie Blakeley
8/04 - Stephanie Arriola	8/19 - Julie Leming
8/06 - Brigida Romano-Ryan	8/20 - Jamie Allsop
8/07 - Heather Fitch	8/21 - Kristen Stovall
8/8 - Jorge Cisneros	8/22 - Meaghan Simpson
8/10 - Judith Deroven	8/24 - Peter Cunningham
8/10 - Cody Edwards	8/26 - Richard Jones
8/10 - Jerri Saenz	8/27 - Tashauna Morris
8/11 - Karen Dulweber	8/28 - Danielle Aguirre Johnson
8/11 - Nicole Jimmerson	8/28 - Asheraka Kirkwood
8/11 - Martha Woodruff	8/30 - Pauline Bryant
8/16 - Michael Jenkins	8/31 - Maria Martinez
8/17 - Tracie Marshall	8/31 - Debbie Williams
8/18 - Alejandro Castillo	

Johnson Voted Best of East Texas by Kilgore News Herald Readers

Kilgore College History Professor **Brian Johnson** has been named Best KC Instructor by readers of the Kilgore News Herald. This recognition reflects his outstanding dedication to student success, engaging teaching style & commitment to academic excellence.



In Memoriam

Belinda Sue Tice, affectionately called Bindy, was born Aug. 16, 1965, in Waterloo, Iowa. She died Feb. 23, 2025, at the age of 59, in Dallas. She was a dedicated TRIO professional who devoted 29 years to advocating for educational access and student success. Her commitment to TRIO students transformed countless lives, ensuring that education remained a pathway to opportunity for all.



Bindy Tice

Milton Maxwell Hattaway, II passed away on Monday, Feb. 17, 2025, surrounded by his family at the age of 80. Milton was a member of St. Luke's Methodist Church for more than 50 years. He worked at KC as Head of Grounds Maintenance at Kilgore College for many years, and after retirement, took joy in working part-time at the Ranger Cafe.



Milton Hattaway

Jon Rowe passed away April 9 surrounded by his cherished family. He was 58 years old. Rowe had faithfully served on the KC Board of Trustees since June 2018. During his tenure, he was a dedicated advocate for students and a committed supporter of the college's mission.



Jon Rowe

Robert Sprouse passed away on May 3 at the age of 90. Sprouse was a dedicated member of the KC faculty, teaching computer science from fall 1969 until his retirement in spring 1993. Known for his passion for technology and his commitment to education, Sprouse played a key role in shaping the college's early computer science program.



Robert Sprouse

Dean Shaw honored with statewide excellence award

During the annual TACTE Conference April 3 in Grapevine, **D'Wayne Shaw** (Executive Dean of Professional and Career Education) received the prestigious Lindle Grigsby Excellence Award, recognizing his outstanding leadership in Career and Technical Education (CTE).

This competitive, statewide award is presented annually to one exceptional CTE leader, nominated by peers and selected by the TACTE board. Dean Shaw was nominated by multiple individuals across Texas, highlighting his impactful work at Kilgore College and his leadership at the state level.

Most notably, he chaired the stakeholder workgroup for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, leading the development of the new Career and Technical Education Guidelines, a major update to the previous statewide instructional framework. Learn more about the award at tacte.org.



Rad Sci students represent KC at state conference

Radiologic Science students from Kilgore College recently attended the Texas Society of Radiologic Technologists (TxSRT) 94th Annual Meeting & Educational Symposium, held at Tarrant County College in Fort Worth.

The event offered students the opportunity to network with professionals from across Texas and gain valuable insights into the future of the radiologic science field. Their professionalism, dedication, and enthusiasm stood out throughout the symposium.



PHOTO ABOVE: With emerging leaders like these, the future of radiologic science continues to shine brightly.

Explore Italy with KC Visual Arts Study Abroad Tour in 2026

The KC Visual Arts program is offering a unique Study Abroad Tour to Venice, Florence & Rome in May 2026, led by KC Art Instructor **Lori Solley**. This non-credit educational adventure will immerse participants in the rich art, history & culture of Italy's most iconic cities.

Open to students, family & friends (ages 13 and up), the trip is designed to inspire a deeper appreciation of fine art and global culture—no prior art experience required. In addition to cultural exploration, the tour supports the development of soft skills valuable in any career path. Only 15 seats are available, so early registration is encouraged. [DETAILS & REGISTRATION HERE](#)



Annual spring Preview Day draws 379 prospective students to campus

Kilgore College hosted a highly successful Spring Preview Day, welcoming approximately 450 guests to campus, including a record-breaking 379 prospective students. The event offered future Rangers the chance to explore academic programs, meet faculty and staff, and experience life at KC firsthand.

Director of Admissions **Callie Blakeley** expressed heartfelt appreciation to the entire campus community for their support: "I know I say this every time, but I mean it every time – THANK YOU! We really could not host an event of this magnitude without the support of the campus community, and the admissions team is extremely grateful."

A special thank-you also goes to the Financial Aid Office, which provided a \$500 scholarship for a lucky attendee—a senior from Kilgore High School.

The admissions team extends its sincere gratitude to all who helped make Spring Preview Day a success and looks forward to welcoming many of these prospective students as part of the KC family.



PHOTOS ABOVE: KC had a record number of students in attendance at Preview Day. Photos by Jayci Pyle/KC Communications Intern