

## KC will celebrate 90th Anniversary with ceremony set for Sept. 15

KC will celebrate its 90th anniversary with a community ceremony at 9 a.m. Monday, Sept. 15, on the west side of the Pedestrian Bridge on campus.

The program will include remarks from Kilgore College leaders, city and county officials, and Rangerette officers. Attendees will also hear musical selections from KC Connection, highlighting the role of music and the arts in the college's history.

Since its founding, the institution has grown into a hub for higher education, innovation, and community engagement, while remaining dedicated to its original mission of making education accessible to students of all backgrounds.

The 90th anniversary ceremony will not only reflect on the college's beginnings during the 1930s but will also highlight its ongoing contributions to the region and its vision for the future.



KILGORE COLLEGE IS CELEBRATING  
**90 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE!**

SEPT | **15** | 2025  
**AT 9:00 AM**

## Berry named Dean of Students

Kilgore College has announced the appointment of Amanda Berry as its new dean of students.

In her role, Berry will provide leadership for student conduct, athletics, campus life and student activities.

She will work with faculty, staff and students to support a safe, inclusive and engaging campus environment.

Berry most recently served as civil rights administrator and Title IX coordinator at East Texas A&M University, a position she held since 2023.

In that role, she oversaw compliance with federal and state regulations and coordinated community outreach efforts.

Prior to that, she was associate director of student conduct at the University of Tampa, where she managed student conduct processes and compliance initiatives. Berry also worked for more than seven years at Murray State College, where she gained broad experience in student services and higher education leadership.



## RADICAL HOSPITALITY

KC employees who go "Above & Beyond"

### Callie Blakeley

"I wanted to call out Callie Blakeley who went above and beyond to help my son get through the registration process.

As we ran into a few issues with transcripts she was there anytime we needed help and was always quick to respond.

She even took the time to keep us updated during the process.

We had the chance to meet her during registration and she was able to help us again with some transcripts that did not load.

We need more people like Callie out there."



**Blakeley**

Submitted by Clay Johnson, parent of KC student



# Hey KC, what's your INNOVATIVE IDEA?



Dr. Brenda Kays

Attention all pioneers striving to advance KC through a creative idea, this newsletter article is for you!

During our Fall Convocation, I announced that our innovation grants would return for the 2025-26 school year. The KC Board of Trustees has approved a set-aside of \$60,000 to foster innovative ideas at KC. The fillable KC Innovation Grant form is now available. The only "catch" associated with the grant is that interested faculty/staff members must complete a grant application to apply!

The Innovation Grant application is relatively simple to complete and may be accessed by following the steps:

- Visit AccessKC
- Go to "employees"
- On the left-hand side of the screen, under quick links, you will find the "Innovation Grant Application"

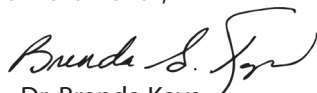
Now is your chance to receive some "seed money" to fund your great idea, benefit our students and continue to move us forward as a college! Grant awards may go to one or multiple applicants.

There is no application minimum or maximum, but KC will not award more than \$60,000. The Innovation Committee will select the grant recipients and look for applicants who propose new methods and ideas to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Applicants are encouraged to "think outside the box!" Get your creative juices flowing now, as there are some important dates to note.

The application deadline is Oct. 10. Awards will be announced no later than Nov. 7, and must be expended during the College's fiscal year ending Aug. 31, 2026. Awardees will be asked to do a short presentation during a KC Board of Trustees meeting next spring.

What project do you want to launch to benefit our students? Contact me with any questions. I hope your semester is off to a great start, and I look forward to reading about your innovative ideas. The Innovation Committee will select the recipients of these grant dollars, so don't wait—apply now! Together, let's create a culture where innovation thrives and where the success of our students remains at the heart of everything we do.

Until next month,

  
Dr. Brenda Kays  
KC president



FOLLOW DR. KAYS ON TWITTER!  
[@KCBrendaKays](https://twitter.com/KCBrendaKays)

## KC Food Pantry accepting donations through Dec. 5

The KC Food Pantry is accepting donations of nonperishable food items and hygiene products through Dec. 5.

Donations can be dropped off at the Longview campus cashier's office or on the Kilgore campus at Canterbury Room 203, Old Main Room 102, or the Devall Student Center, second floor, Room 246.

The KC Food Pantry supports currently enrolled students by providing up to two bags of free food each week.

For more information about donating or accessing the pantry, contact Tracy Fletcher at (903) 988-3766, text (903) 231-7031, or email [tfletcher@kilgore.edu](mailto:tfletcher@kilgore.edu).



## FACULTY & STAFF REPORTS

### CIT faculty host course design workshop

Computer & Information Technology (CIT) faculty members including **Dr. Ginger Dennis, Karl Riley, Danny Darden and Mark Stephens**, hosted a four-day intensive workshop May 12-15, focused on course design and development.



The workshop provided training on best practices for addressing challenges in online and HyFlex learning, including strategies for content delivery, student engagement and assessment. Faculty also collaborated on program improvements such as integrating industry certification preparation, creating an IT Professional Expectations guide and developing digital badging opportunities for students.

The event was supported by the college's National Science Foundation ATE grant, Reducing Barriers to IT Technician Education (RBITTE). The grant's acronym, pronounced "ribbit," inspired faculty to adopt a beanie-belly frog as the workshop mascot.

### Ray speaks to Lions Club about Corrosion Tech

**Kenya Ray**, Corrosion Technology instructor at KC, speaks to the Kilgore Lions Club about the critical role of KC's Corrosion Technology program in supporting local industry and national infrastructure.



With expertise in a field that helps prevent costly and dangerous material failures, Ray emphasized how the program equips students with hands-on skills that are in high demand across the energy, utility, and transportation sectors. Her presentation highlighted the program's growing impact and the value it brings to both the East Texas region and beyond. *Photo by Rachel Stallard/KC*



### KC will host 9/11 Ceremony Sept. 11

KC will hold its annual 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony on Thursday, Sept. 11, in the Devall Student Center Ballroom. Guests are asked to arrive by 9:45 a.m. The program will begin at 10 a.m.

The ceremony will highlight the role of aviation's first responders and present a program placing attendees in the symbolic seats of passengers aboard the four flights involved in the attacks.

The event will recognize those who died on Sept. 11, 2001, as well as others who lost their lives in the years that followed.

## 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.

## Birthdays

## SEPTEMBER 2025

|               |                       |               |                       |
|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| <b>2-Sep</b>  | Holden-Williams, Cori | <b>15-Sep</b> | Simpson, Matthew      |
| <b>3-Sep</b>  | Jones, Jason          | <b>15-Sep</b> | Thompson, Russell     |
| <b>4-Sep</b>  | Laszik, Stephanie     | <b>18-Sep</b> | Brandt, Christopher   |
| <b>5-Sep</b>  | Davis, Rebekah        | <b>19-Sep</b> | Longacre, Betty       |
| <b>7-Sep</b>  | Hunt, Bridget         | <b>20-Sep</b> | Cervantes, Luz        |
| <b>9-Sep</b>  | Graves, Estonia       | <b>23-Sep</b> | Copeland, Jessica     |
| <b>9-Sep</b>  | Logozzo, Derrick      | <b>23-Sep</b> | Hopkins, Rosa         |
| <b>9-Sep</b>  | Lothrop, Coy          | <b>24-Sep</b> | Halton, Falecia       |
| <b>9-Sep</b>  | Sipes, Justina        | <b>24-Sep</b> | May, Meredith         |
| <b>9-Sep</b>  | Zastoupil, Mary       | <b>25-Sep</b> | Allison-Dennis, Ebony |
| <b>10-Sep</b> | Stewart, Amber        | <b>25-Sep</b> | Cox, Hope             |
| <b>10-Sep</b> | Stine, Ashley         | <b>26-Sep</b> | Smith, Darrell        |
| <b>15-Sep</b> | Ciochon, Sonya        | <b>26-Sep</b> | Williams, Amber       |
| <b>15-Sep</b> | Harvey, Remona        | <b>27-Sep</b> | Craddock, Chris       |
| <b>15-Sep</b> | Simpson, Matthew      |               |                       |
| <b>15-Sep</b> | Thompson, Russell     |               |                       |

## OCTOBER 2025

|               |                      |               |                      |
|---------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| <b>2-Oct</b>  | Davis-Mitchell, Nora | <b>21-Oct</b> | Ignatchenko, Elena   |
| <b>3-Oct</b>  | Reavis, Deanna       | <b>21-Oct</b> | Thompson, Jeffrey    |
| <b>4-Oct</b>  | Jones, Jessica       | <b>22-Oct</b> | Gooden, Willie       |
| <b>4-Oct</b>  | Willoughby, Justin   | <b>23-Oct</b> | Collard, Janet       |
| <b>6-Oct</b>  | Jenkins, Courtney    | <b>23-Oct</b> | Foster, Holly        |
| <b>7-Oct</b>  | Fisher, Kristen      | <b>25-Oct</b> | Shaw, Mary           |
| <b>7-Oct</b>  | Harris, April        | <b>27-Oct</b> | Stephens, Mary       |
| <b>9-Oct</b>  | Cross, Jennifer      | <b>28-Oct</b> | Covarrubias, Jessica |
| <b>11-Oct</b> | Boyd, Yulonda        | <b>28-Oct</b> | Ross, Allison        |
| <b>14-Oct</b> | Hansard, Betsy       | <b>29-Oct</b> | Potter, Meghan       |
| <b>19-Oct</b> | Delgado, Jaime       | <b>28-Oct</b> | Jessica Covarrubias  |
| <b>20-Oct</b> | Morris, Karen        | <b>29-Oct</b> | Meghan Potter        |

## NOVEMBER 2025

|               |                  |               |                      |
|---------------|------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| <b>2-Nov</b>  | Sammons, Brazy   | <b>14-Nov</b> | Horton, James        |
| <b>6-Nov</b>  | Atkins, Tracy    | <b>15-Nov</b> | Degrass, Carol       |
| <b>6-Nov</b>  | Martin, Margaret | <b>17-Nov</b> | Cope, Alison         |
| <b>7-Nov</b>  | Horn, Robert     | <b>17-Nov</b> | Rangel, David        |
| <b>8-Nov</b>  | Bammel, Matthew  | <b>19-Nov</b> | Mathis, Terence      |
| <b>8-Nov</b>  | Garcia, Gabriela | <b>19-Nov</b> | Parnell, Philip      |
| <b>9-Nov</b>  | Dohanich, Alec   | <b>21-Nov</b> | Hale, Clydea         |
| <b>9-Nov</b>  | Miller, Riley    | <b>21-Nov</b> | Thompson, Traci      |
| <b>10-Nov</b> | Halton, Jennifer | <b>22-Nov</b> | Baker, Donald        |
| <b>11-Nov</b> | Santiago, Sarah  | <b>24-Nov</b> | Fullerton, Stephanie |
| <b>13-Nov</b> | Foster, Destiny  | <b>25-Nov</b> | Applegate, Susan     |
| <b>13-Nov</b> | Good, Eric       | <b>27-Nov</b> | Hitt, Lindsey        |
| <b>13-Nov</b> | Johnston, Sierra | <b>30-Nov</b> | Chaline, Freddie     |

## Sammons named new CFO

Kilgore College has announced the appointment of **Brazy Boyd Sammons** as vice president of administrative services and chief financial officer (CFO), effective Aug. 1.

She will oversee the college's financial and operational functions. College officials said she brings a strong understanding of institutional needs, financial expertise and a commitment to the mission of Kilgore College.

"Brazy brings a deep understanding of the financial and operational needs of our institution, a sharp financial insight, and an unwavering commitment to the mission of Kilgore College," said KC President Brenda Kays. "She has my full confidence, as well as the confidence of our Board of Trustees."

Her appointment follows a series of CFO Connect Forums held July 23, where faculty and staff provided input as part of the selection process.



Boyd Sammons

## Martin to continue in VP leadership role

KC announced that **Dr. Staci Martin**, who had planned to retire this year, returned to her former role as vice president of organizational effectiveness and excellence.

Martin previously guided KC through major initiatives, including its SACSCOC reaffirmation of accreditation, the implementation of TASB policy services and navigating the challenges of the pandemic.

"Dr. Martin has been instrumental in helping Kilgore College through some of its most significant moments," said KC President Brenda Kays. "Her leadership, experience and commitment to KC are invaluable, and I am thrilled she has chosen to continue serving the college."



Martin

## Belaski sworn in as new KC Police Chief

**Andre Belaski** was sworn in as the new KCPD Chief on Aug. 8.

The ceremony was attended by outgoing Chief William McPherson, who had faithfully served KC since December 2021, along with Belaski's family, friends, and colleagues.

Belaski brings nearly two decades of law enforcement experience, having served 19 years with the Lodi Police Department in California, where he rose to the rank of Sergeant and worked as both a K-9 handler and motorcycle patrol officer. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice Management and is currently pursuing a Master of Science in Criminal Justice – Public Administration.



Belaski



# HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE brings the 90s back for CONVOCATION

KC kicked off the fall semester with a high-energy Opening Convocation planned and organized by the college's Hospitality Committee. This year's event paid tribute to the 1990s, complete with colorful decorations, themed activities and music that brought employees back to the decade of grunge, mixtapes and neon.

The ballroom was transformed into a nostalgic '90s scene, with tables covered in bright colors, hanging decorations and centerpieces featuring pop culture throwbacks. Employees joined in the fun by dressing in their favorite '90s attire, from flannel shirts to classic concert tees.

Winners of the costume contest were: 1st place, **Portia Scott**, 2nd place **Ebony Allison-Dennis**, 3rd place **Lacey Carter**.

Music also played a major role in setting the tone. The event featured a playlist of memorable '90s hits and President Dr. Brenda Kays even made her entrance to AC/DC's iconic anthem "Thunderstruck."



Photos by Amber Stewart

## KC Athletics Hall of Fame is Oct. 4

KC will recognize former athletes, coaches and contributors during its annual Hall of Fame Brunch, set for Oct. 4 in the Devall Ballroom. Tickets for the brunch are \$35 per person. HOF inductees will also be recognized during halftime of the football game at 3 p.m. that day. For more info, contact Courtney Pruitt at [cpruitt@kilgore.edu](mailto:cpruitt@kilgore.edu).



### The 2025 HOF Class:

- **Men's basketball player:** Bernard Barrow (1997-1999)
- **Women's basketball player:** Jade Thurmon (2016-2018)
- **Softball player:** Heather Bunn (2013-2014)
- **Football:** 1982 Team
- **Spirit of Excellence award:** Dave Wilson
- **Contributor:** Chris Craddock

## Scholarship established in memory of longtime board member Jon Rowe

KC has established The Jon Rowe Endowed Scholarship to honor the legacy of Jon Rowe, who served on the KC Board of Trustees from June 2018 until his passing. Rowe was recognized for his commitment to education and his support of KC during his years of service. The endowed scholarship will provide financial assistance to students, continuing his dedication to expanding educational opportunities. Contributions to the scholarship fund are being accepted through the KC Foundation. For more information or to make a donation, email [Gabriela Garcia](mailto:Gabriela.Garcia) or call (903) 988-7523.



Rowe

## Foster named new student activities coordinator



Foster

KC has announced the appointment of **Destiny Foster** as its new student activities coordinator.

In her new role, Foster will oversee student activities, support student organizations and lead campus spirit initiatives.

Foster is already familiar with the KC community and brings knowledge of the campus, a dedication to student success and a commitment to building a vibrant college experience. She also serves at the KC Cheer coach. She takes over for Laney Urban who left the college for another job opportunity.

## Bindy Tice's family working to establish endowed scholarship

**Bindy Tice's** family is working with the KC Foundation to establish an endowed scholarship in her memory.

The scholarship, initiated at the request of Tice's brother, will provide financial support for KC students and serve as a lasting tribute to her life and impact on the community.

"Bindy touched so many lives with her spirit and dedication," said Merlyn Holmes, executive director of the Kilgore College Foundation and Community Relations. "This scholarship will honor her memory in a meaningful way by helping future students achieve their educational goals."

For more information or to make a donation, email [Gabriela Garcia](mailto:Gabriela.Garcia) or call (903) 988-7523.



Tice

# KC Social Services host Community Resource Fair



KC's Social Services department hosted the 2025 Community Resource Fair this semester, connecting students with campus and community partners.

The fair featured informational booths, food, and entertainment, with support from KC mascots, Christus therapy dog Lillie Grace, Charlie's Snoballs, and the KC Ranger Roadshow. Students enjoyed music and dancing throughout the event.

Tracy Fletcher, KC Social Services benefits navigator, expressed gratitude to the many individuals and groups who contributed to the event's success.

"This semester I didn't have any interns, and I can't express enough appreciation for everyone who stepped up to help," Fletcher said. "It was wonderful to see students engaging with resources and having such a good time."

Fletcher also credited community partner Toni Jones from the Credit Union of Texas, who not only attended but also suggested additional resource organizations and helped arrange for the food truck. The fair was held near the KC library, where booths and activities drew strong participation.

[VIEW PHOTOS](#) by Rachel Stallard/KC

## tccta

### TCCTA membership open to KC employees

**Stacie Smith**, KC's Texas Community College Teachers Association (TCCTA) campus representative, is encouraging KC employees to consider joining the statewide organization.

Membership is open not only to instructors but also to administrators, full-time and part-time staff, and others who want to support community colleges.

TCCTA offers professional development programs, networking opportunities, and optional liability insurance coverage for members. The association will hold its 79th Annual Convention in Frisco,

Texas, Feb. 18-20, 2026, featuring more than 150 professional development sessions.

Liability insurance remains a key benefit, offering protection against potential legal claims related to employment, contracts, and student issues. TCCTA recommends members use a personal email address when inquiring about coverage to ensure privacy and reliable communication.

Membership details, insurance information, and registration links are available at [tccta.org](https://tccta.org).

## In Memoriam

**Robert Sprouse** passed away May 3. Sprouse taught math in public schools for three years before becoming a computer programmer/analyst in the early 1960s. After five years in that field, he returned to teaching in the subject of computer science, which he taught at KC for 24 years.

[View full obituary](#)



Sprouse

**Dr. Charles Florio** passed away June 11. Florio began his career as Dean of Arts and Science at KC, then Vice President of Student Affairs at Tyler Junior College. He ended his career as CEO and President Emeritus of Northeast TX Community College, a position he held from 1995-2008.

[View full obituary](#)



Florio

**Joan Light** passed away June 29 at the age of 90. Joan worked for 27 years at KC, until her retirement in 2006, where she held the position of secretary in the Business Administration office, as well as working in the Financial Aid and Human Resources offices.

[View full obituary](#)



Light

**David McElroy** passed away July 1 at the age of 85. McElroy taught history and related subjects at KC for 29 years from 1975 until his retirement in 2004. His thousands of students, over 30 years of teaching, fondly referred to him as "Mr. Mac."

[View full obituary](#)



McElroy

**Michael Kusheba** passed away July 2 at the age of 82. He began his teaching career at KC in the Computer Science Department in 1979 and this is where he remained for 40 years until he retired from his teaching career in August of 2019.

[View full obituary](#)



Kusheba