

# KC CONNECTION

Official Employee Newsletter of Kilgore College



Photo by O. Rufus Lovell

## KC MOURNS PASSING OF DR. MIKE JENKINS

*Beloved leader leaves a legacy of 35 years marked by deep empathy, unwavering support and a genuine love for every member of the KC family*

Kilgore College is mourning the loss of Dr. Mike Jenkins, Executive Vice President of Internal Collaboration & Strategic Initiatives, who passed away Sunday after a courageous battle with lymphoma. Dr. Jenkins faithfully served KC for 35 years, impacting countless lives with his positive, encouraging spirit.

"Mike truly had a servant's heart and will be greatly missed," said Interim President Dr. Staci Martin. "Please keep Mike's family, and those of us who worked closely with him, in your thoughts and prayers during these difficult days."

### WAKE OF REMEMBRANCE

Trinity Baptist Church  
Friday | 6:00-8:00 PM

(Refreshments, music, laughter and stories – just the way Mike would want us to remember him)

### A CELEBRATION OF LIFE SERVICE

Trinity Baptist Church  
Saturday | 10:00 AM

Trinity Baptist Church is located in Lakeport at 5041 Estes Pkwy.

[VIEW OBITUARY](#)

## Martin named interim president

The Kilgore College Board of Trustees voted Oct. 20 to appoint **Dr. Staci Pollan Martin** as interim president of the college, effective Nov. 1.

Martin, who currently serves as KC's vice president of organizational effectiveness and excellence, steps into the interim role following the transition of Dr. Brenda Kays, who has been named president emeritus in recognition of her service to the college. Kays will continue to work for the college to assist with the transition until her retirement on Feb. 28, 2026. "Being selected as interim president of Kilgore College is the highest honor of my career," Martin said. "I am grateful to the Board of Trustees for placing their faith in me to serve KC in this role and will do my best to be a good steward of this great institution while it is in my care." [READ MORE](#)



Dr. Staci Martin

## RADICAL HOSPITALITY

### KC employees who go "Above & Beyond"

While sitting at a KC football game with my wife recently, I noticed something that intrigued me. I saw one of my employees make a connection with a young girl who was sitting with her mom.

**Caitlyn Jimerson** was the employee, and what I saw her do was walk down the stands and place a KC bracelet on a young girl's wrist.

Her conversation with the young girl only lasted a few seconds, but the look on the young girl's face was so appreciative and happy, I couldn't help but notice the impact.

During the third quarter of the game, I had a chance to walk over to Caitlyn and ask about the interaction.

She told me that she and another employee, **Jordan Collard**, had started looking for ways to enhance the student experience at games.

As part of that process, the two had obtained KC items and started distributing them at games.

Sometimes, they used their own money to purchase items that could make students' and others' experiences better. Giving the young girl the bracelet was just one example of that.

Caitlyn and Jordan went out of their way to grow student satisfaction and engagement and brought renewed spirit to the games.

They went above and beyond their day-to-day work and brought positive recognition to Kilgore College.



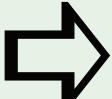
Caitlyn Jimerson

Jordan Collard

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

An exciting spring convocation is set for Jan. 5 in the Devall Ballroom. For more info on Opening Week:

[www.kilgore.edu/opening-week](http://www.kilgore.edu/opening-week)



*Submitted by Dr. Philip Parnell*

# Seals named VP of Student Learning, Success

KC has promoted **Donny Seals** to Vice President of Student Learning & Success.

In his role, Seals oversees student support services, enrollment management strategy, library operations and academic program development, working closely with instructional deans and student success leadership. He also provides oversight for accreditation processes and leads efforts to improve retention and graduation outcomes.

Seals previously served as dean of Liberal and Fine Arts from 2024 to 2025, supervising 125 full- and part-time faculty and supporting curriculum, budgeting and dual credit partnerships.

Prior to that, he spent 17 years as a faculty member and chair of Humanities and Social/Behavioral Sciences, managing a department of more than 30 faculty across multiple campuses.

Before joining KC, Seals taught history at Panola College.



Donny Seals

## Ursula Dyer returns as interim executive director of institutional effectiveness, research

**Ursula Dyer** has returned to Kilgore College on a part-time basis as interim executive director of institutional effectiveness and research to assist with Dr. Staci Martin's current responsibilities while Martin serves as interim president.

Many at KC will remember Dyer, who spent 25 years at the college from 1998 until her retirement in 2023. She served as an instructor, clinical coordinator and program director in the Radiologic Science Program, and later worked as assessment coordinator. At the time of her retirement, she was dean of institutional effectiveness and research and the college's SACSCOC accreditation liaison.

Dyer's extensive experience gives her a deep understanding of KC's institutional effectiveness and research processes, which are essential to the college's ongoing improvement efforts.



Ursula Dyer

## Abouras hired as director of Institutional Effectiveness

KC also welcomes **Dr. Rachel Abouras** as the new director of Institutional Effectiveness, joining the Organizational Effectiveness & Excellence team Aug. 25.

Abouras comes to KC from the City of Longview, where she served as a data analyst for the past three years. She brings extensive experience in data assessment and analysis, SACSCOC accreditation processes, and faculty training and development. While completing her Ph.D. in higher education studies and leadership at Baylor University, Abouras also taught graduate-level research courses.

In her new role, Abouras will lead KC's assessment activities, monitor progress on strategic plan objectives, and support the college's accreditation efforts.

"We are excited to have Rachel join our team," said Dr. Staci Martin, KC interim president. "Her strong background in data analysis, assessment and accreditation will be a tremendous asset."



Dr. Rachel Abouras

## Rangel named dean of BSTEM division

Kilgore College has appointed **David Rangel** as the permanent dean of the Business, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (BSTEM) division, transitioning him from the interim role he has held since earlier this year.

Rangel brings nearly a decade of leadership experience at KC. Before being named interim dean, he served four years as assistant chair for Mathematics, Engineering and Physics and the past five years as department chair. Prior to joining KC, he taught mathematics at Northeast Texas Community College for 13 years.

"David has shown consistent, steady leadership during his time at KC," said Donny Seals, vice president of Student Learning & Success. "We look forward to his continued leadership in the years ahead."

Rangel began his career at KC as a mathematics instructor and has since helped guide several academic initiatives across the BSTEM disciplines. The college community is invited to join in congratulating him on his appointment.



David Rangel

## KC boasts record enrollment, STAR Days scheduled



This semester, KC celebrated another record-breaking enrollment -- a testament to the college's strategic planning and its ability to attract and retain students through exceptional academic and workforce offerings, state-of-the-art facilities and a supportive campus culture.

**KC has several STAR Days scheduled to enroll students for the spring semester:**

### THURSDAY, DEC. 4, 2025

TIME: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

LOCATION: KC-Longview's Hendrix Building, 305

### WEDNESDAY, DEC. 10, 2025

9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

LOCATION: Via Zoom

### THURSDAY, Dec. 11, 2025

TIME: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

LOCATION: KC Watson Library (Kilgore campus)

## PREVIEW DAY DEC. 5

KC will host its annual Ranger Preview Day on Friday, Dec. 5, to give potential students an opportunity to learn more about the educational opportunities KC offers. Attendees will have the chance to visit with instructors and current students, check out campus life and have a free lunch in the Ranger Café. [MORE INFO](#)



## Enroll in TCCTA today!

**tccta** | Texas Community College Teachers Association

It's not too late to enroll in TCCTA, the largest organization of post-secondary educators in Texas. Membership extends to counselors, librarians, administrators and part-time faculty. TCCTA is dedicated to "the pursuit of excellence in teaching and the advancement of education in the community, junior and technical colleges of Texas."

KC also reimburses a portion of the membership dues for full-time faculty (\$15 of the annual \$55 plus fees). For more information, contact the KC representative for TCCTA, [Stacie Smith](#). To register for TCCTA, please [visit this website](#).

## KC welcomes Littlefield as new controller

KC is pleased to announce that **April Littlefield** has joined the college as its new controller, effective Oct. 13.

Littlefield brings more than 15 years of experience in accounting and financial management, with a strong background in finance, auditing and budgeting. In this role, she will oversee the financial operations of the institution, ensure compliance with applicable regulations and support strategic initiatives that strengthen fiscal management and accountability.

She is located in the Deall Student Center, office 147, and can be reached at [alittlefield@kilgore.edu](mailto:alittlefield@kilgore.edu) or (903) 988-7495.



April Littlefield

### ON-CAMPUS EVENTS

#### VIEW ON-CAMPUS CALENDAR ONLINE

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 DeRouen](mailto:email Judy DeRouen) so she can add it to the online calendar.

## Birthdays

### DECEMBER 2025

1-Dec	Wheat, Tiarah
2-Dec	MacDonald, Savannah
4-Dec	McKinney, Sidney
4-Dec	Simpson, Nicholas
10-Dec	Jordan, Sydney
12-Dec	Deupree, Jennifer
13-Dec	Raulston, John
13-Dec	Snow, Amanda
14-Dec	Redfearn, Julian
14-Dec	Stallard, Rachel
15-Dec	Dodson, Benjamin
16-Dec	Huston, Michael
16-Dec	Jackson, Lillian
17-Dec	O'Connor, Shelby
18-Dec	Foot, Madison
18-Dec	Wiley, Janet
20-Dec	Wallace, Stephanie
20-Dec	Childers, Kimberly
21-Dec	Estrada, Joel
21-Dec	Jones, April
22-Dec	Jackson, Amanda
22-Dec	Schwindt, Bianca
24-Dec	Winter, Brice
24-Dec	Oden, Jayden
26-Dec	Germany, Gin
29-Dec	DeHoyos, Megan
30-Dec	Bessey, Kevin
31-Dec	Dorsey, Larry
31-Dec	Metcalf, Rebekah
31-Dec	Thompson, Katelyn

### JANUARY 2026

3-Jan	Stowe, William
5-Jan	Snyder, Carrie
5-Jan	Moseley, Matthew
7-Jan	Kasper, Brian
7-Jan	Brooks, Briana
7-Jan	Dimitriadis, Carlie
8-Jan	Davis, Trevor
9-Jan	Waggoner, Russell
9-Jan	Harris, Collin
11-Jan	Hudson, Tanya
11-Jan	Petty, Kendra
11-Jan	Buchanan, Paul
12-Jan	Jacks, Jonathan
13-Jan	Gillis, Sheri
14-Jan	Carter, Lacey
14-Jan	Hatfield, Kathy
15-Jan	Simmons, Shanetra
16-Jan	McKnight, Holly
16-Jan	Byrd, Kenny
17-Jan	Sweeney, Elizabeth
17-Jan	Gayetsky, Matthew
18-Jan	Watson, Alyssa
18-Jan	Wayne, Shelley
18-Jan	Burlingame, Sheri
19-Jan	Belaski, Andre
19-Jan	Durham, Konner
21-Jan	Everett, Heidi
21-Jan	Temple, Matthew
21-Jan	Williams, Candice
21-Jan	Challis, Cary
23-Jan	Gless, Luke
24-Jan	Ducote, Magen
25-Jan	Kay, John
26-Jan	Fletcher, Tracy
27-Jan	Gramling, Vickie
30-Jan	Webb, Julie

### FEBRUARY 2026

1-Feb	Campbell, Madison
2-Feb	Knighton, Kathy
2-Feb	Thurman, Cindy
5-Feb	Belken, Brandon
5-Feb	Heinsohn, Rhonda
8-Feb	Almanza, Manny
5-Feb	Heinsohn, Rhonda
6-Feb	Kenney, Dorothy
8-Feb	Martin, Staci
9-Feb	Bates, Anita
10-Feb	Berry, Amanda
10-Feb	Moore, Sonja
11-Feb	Walker, Alex
16-Feb	Williams, Stephanie
19-Feb	Cook, Kayla
23-Feb	Rutherford, Jason
23-Feb	Prestidge, Amber
23-Feb	Hughes, Susan
24-Feb	Key, Mandy
25-Feb	Tutt, Karen
26-Feb	Brisendine, Amber
28-Feb	Stephens, Mark

## KC appoints deans of public services, industrial technology

KC has restructured its Division of Public Services and Industrial Technology to improve efficiency, establishing two separate academic divisions and appointing new leadership for each.

**Johnny Zackary** has been named dean of public services. **Brandon Belken** has been appointed dean of industrial technology.

Zackary brings extensive public safety and instructional experience to his new role. He served with the Longview Fire Department from 1993 to 2017 before joining the Kilgore College faculty to teach fire science courses from 2017 to 2022. He was promoted to director of the KC Fire Academy in 2022 and later to associate dean of public services.

Belken offers more than 18 years of combined industry and instructional experience. He worked for five years as an ASE-certified automotive and heavy truck technician at area dealerships and Halliburton Energy. He served at Kilgore College from 2012 to 2020 as an automotive instructor, lead instructor and department chair for automotive technology. From 2020 to 2023, he owned and operated an independent automotive repair shop and mobile service before returning to KC in August 2024. Since his return, he has served as associate dean for industrial technology and advanced manufacturing.

"We are excited to have two experienced leaders with deep local connections step into these roles," said Donny Seals, vice president of student learning and success. "Their expertise and commitment to student success will help guide the future of both divisions."



Johnny Zackary



Brandon Belken

## Graves named dean of Liberal & Fine Arts

**Jase Graves** has been appointed permanent dean of Liberal and Fine Arts at Kilgore College, transitioning from the interim role he held for the past six months.

Graves taught English for two years at TSTC-Marshall and three years at Panola College before joining KC as a faculty member in the Department of Language Development.

Over the past 22 years, he has demonstrated strong leadership and commitment to KC, serving as assistant chair for two years, department chair for 11 years, and chair of the Student Success Council for a decade.

"Please join me in congratulating Dean Graves on his promotion," said Donny Seals, vice president of Student Learning & Success. "We look forward to his continued leadership in the years ahead."



Jase Graves

## KC receives TPS safety grant to expand campus AED program



PHOTO ABOVE: (left to right): Gary Fian (TPS senior loss control representative); Allen Hall (TPS loss prevention director); Dr. Staci Martin (KC interim president); and Andre Belaski (KCPD chief). Photo by Rachel Stallard/KC

KC has been selected to receive a \$18,660 grant from the Texas Political Subdivisions Joint Self-Insurance Fund (TPS) through its 2025 Safety Grant Program.

The grant funds the purchase of 15 automated external defibrillators (AEDs) installed across campus along with Stop the Bleed supplies and first aid kits. KC's application was one of 27 chosen out of 43 submissions statewide.

## Morales named director of TRIO programs

**Dr. Carolyn Morales** has joined Kilgore College as the new director of TRIO Programs.

With more than 17 years of experience in progressive leadership, Dr. Morales has administered programs focused on college access, P-20 pipeline development, and student success strategies. At Kilgore College, she will lead the TRIO teams in efforts to expand student access, retention, graduation, and transfer outcomes.

In her role, Dr. Morales will oversee TRIO Student Support Services, Educational Opportunity Centers, and Upward Bound grant activities. She will focus on strengthening tutoring and mentoring, enhancing college and career readiness, and deepening campus and community partnerships.

"Please join me in welcoming Dr. Carolyn Morales to Kilgore College," said Ebony Dennis, dean of Support Services and Retention.



Dr. Carolyn Morales

## Daniels thanks caring KC co-workers

The following reflection, written by speech teacher **Michele Daniels**, stands as a heartfelt testament to the generosity, kindness, and caring spirit of the people at Kilgore College—colleagues who go above and beyond to support one another in ways both big and small.

### Powerful Village at KC, by Michele Daniels

The adage goes that it takes a village to raise a child—but sometimes, it takes one just to get to work!

This past year, after a torn retina surgery in what had been the better of my two eyes, I found myself unable to drive. Not an easy task under any circumstances, but it was complicated further by having two dual credit locations. At the same time, my husband took on a new project that limited his ability to be by my side. How was I going to manage my job?

I thought I knew a few people... and then they knew a few people... and then... a solution appeared.

Rides to campus were arranged in several ways. A ride to one location led to another, and someone referred me to two others who could get me to my other location. Soon, rides appeared that could get me home at least two days a week. Others pitched in just to get me across campus!

But it wasn't just the rides—at least three other people on campus found ways to make it easier for me to do my job.

These individuals have proven to be more than just rides; many have turned into cherished friendships.

What a blessing this campus has been! How do you even begin to say thank you for this? Without them, I could not have gotten to work, let alone continued doing my job.

I've been grateful for my almost 20 years at Kilgore College, and this past year has given me one more reason to be proud to be part of this community.



Michele Daniels

## Christman named new CIO

**Pamela Christman** has joined Kilgore College as the college's full-time chief information officer, succeeding Dan Duffy. She officially begins her tenure this month and will serve as CIO through the end of the College's contract with CampusWorks.

Many on campus have already met Christman in recent weeks as she led the Data Governance project. She looks forward to engaging with the Kilgore College community in her new role. During the transition, Duffy will continue to advise and collaborate with Christman on remaining projects to ensure continuity.

Christman is a proactive IT leader with more than 20 years of experience in higher education, including serving as CIO at the Community College of Rhode Island and Rhode Island College.



Pamela Christman

## Snow joins procurement services

Amanda Snow has joined KC as the new Procurement & Contract Administrative Assistant. Snow will support the college's purchasing process and focus on strengthening contract management. Her work includes organizing and standardizing contracts, building an intranet site for easy access to agreements and key dates, and collaborating with departments to ensure contracts are accurately documented.



Amanda Snow

### In Memoriam

**Dr. Barbara Pankhurst**, 85, of Longview, died Tuesday, Nov. 4, long battle with cancer. She retired in 1997 from Kilgore College after teaching office administration classes for 31 years. [View full obituary](#)



## Kilgore College honors veterans with annual ceremony

KC hosted a Veterans Day Appreciation Ceremony Nov. 10 to honor the service and sacrifice of veterans and active-duty military members.

The event, held on the Kilgore campus, featured remarks, music and special recognitions celebrating those who have served. Opening remarks were delivered by **James Horton**, KC's financial aid veterans specialist.

**Dr. Philip Parnell**, a U.S. Air Force veteran who served from 1985 to 1993 and now serves as KC's associate vice president of student engagement, presented the Veterans Hero Award to KC

student veteran **Daniel L. Matthews**.

Matthews, who began his studies at KC in 2024, served more than 17 years in the U.S. Marine Corps and attained the rank of Gunnery Sergeant. His service included multiple overseas deployments in Kosovo, Iraq, the Persian Gulf and Afghanistan. He is pursuing an Associate of Applied Science degree in Business Management at KC.

The program also included recognition of the oldest and youngest veterans in attendance. A \$500 scholarship recipient was announced during the event, and door prizes were awarded to attendees.



PHOTO ABOVE: Bailey Harris, Baptist Student Ministry director, opens the Veterans Day ceremony with an invocation. Photo by Rachel Stallard/KC