



*Downtown Roxboro,  
Dwayne Reaves Photography*

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

### Upcoming Events

- Medicare Open Enrollment Period Ends: **Thursday, December 7**
- **Christmas Holiday, Kerr-Tar COG Office Closed: Monday, December 25 through Wednesday, December 27**
- **New Year's Holiday, Kerr-Tar COG Office Closed: Monday, January 1**

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*Merry Christmas*





# Kerr-Tar COG at 2023 NADO Conference



Members of Kerr-Tar COG Staff and the COG Board of Directors had the opportunity to attend the 2023 National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Annual Conference in Cleveland, Ohio on November 7-10. During the week long conference, attendees participated in workshops, seminars, and networking opportunities focused on a variety of topics including building local recreation economies, housing, downtown development, federal grant funding, collaborating with local university centers, board leadership, investing in brownfields and more. Our staff and Board members had a wonderful time at the NADO conference this year and they certainly brought back valuable insight for our communities!

## Kerr-Tar COG Welcomes New Finance & Administrative Assistant

The Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments (COG) is pleased to welcome Cynthia Pernell as our new Finance and Administrative Assistant! Cynthia, a Vance County native, is a graduate of Vance-Granville Community College with a double associates degree in Business Administration and Accounting. Cynthia comes to us with over 40 years of experience in the finance field, having started off her career at Camper Products where she served in their finance department for 8 years. She most recently served as Fiscal Coordinator at Franklin Granville Vance Smart Start for over 11 years.



*Cynthia Pernell*

A few fun facts about Cynthia: she loves a good challenge and enjoys reading Karen Kingsbury books in her spare time. She also enjoys making crafts and spending quality time with family. Welcome aboard Cynthia, we are so happy to have you!

# Need Medicare? Count on the KTAAA!

The Kerr-Tar Area Agency on Aging (KTAAA) has been very busy with Medicare Open Enrollment! What is Open Enrollment? Medicare Open Enrollment happens every fall from **October 15 through December 7**. Our agency staff, Barbara Stewart, Kim Hawkins and Michael Patterson have been assisting seniors across our five county region to ensure that everyone has all their Medicare needs addressed.



Wondering what you can do during the Medicare Open Enrollment period? Here are some of the many options you have:

- Switch from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage plan, or vice versa.
- Change from one Medicare Advantage plan to a different Medicare Advantage plan.
- Change from a Medicare Advantage plan without drug coverage to a Medicare Advantage plan with drug coverage, or vice versa.
- Enroll in a Medicare prescription drug plan.
- Jump from one Medicare drug plan to a different Medicare drug plan.
- Quit your Medicare prescription drug coverage.
- **Call our KTAAA team today for assistance with your Medicare needs! (252) 436-2040**

## Scam Jam Events Coming Soon



What are Scam Jams? Scam Jams are educational events that offer education regarding: insurance and investment fraud, online and door-to-door scams, identity theft and other scams targeting older consumers. Americans lose billions of dollars to frauds and scams each year. Studies have shown that the hardest hit are often individuals age 60 and over. To help prevent these losses, the KTAAA will be hosting several Scam Jams next year. Make sure to be on the lookout for further details in upcoming newsletters!

## Aging Specialist to Serve as State Senior Games Mentor



Our very own KTAAA Aging Specialist, Barbara Stewart, has been invited by the North Carolina Senior Games Local Coordinators' Association to serve as a Mentor to New Local Coordinators this upcoming year. She will be tasked with providing support and encouragement to new coordinators from the unique perspective of a veteran Local Coordinator.

Congratulations on this accomplishment, Barbara!



# IEDC Volunteers Visit the Kerr-Tar Region

The Kerr-Tar COG had the honor of hosting two International Economic Development Council (IEDC) volunteers during the months of October and November to conduct a series of strategic visits across our region.

Kicking off our **Small Business & Entrepreneurship week (Oct. 30-Nov. 3)** was Carolyn Rowley, CECD, Director of Retention & Innovation at Lubbock Economic Development Alliance. Ms. Rowley met with 1-3 small businesses in each of the region's five counties, as well as individual meetings with the economic development staff of each county. Meetings were conducted to gauge available services throughout the region related to small business development and to identify gaps or opportunities for further resources to be provided. The conclusion of the project will result in a report highlighting findings for use in strategic planning moving forward.



Next up was **Business Retention & Expansion week (Nov. 6-Nov. 10)**! Joining us was IEDC volunteer Lynne Stein Benzion, CECD, Director of Economic Development at Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation in Maryland. The visit began with a brief training on business retention and expansion (BRE) best practices, followed by meetings with industry partners throughout the region. Real time feedback was provided to county economic development staff during the week, and additional resources expanding on the results of conversations and the BRE training will be made available for regional leadership as the region expands BRE efforts.





# AmeriCorps Member Serving at the Kerr-Tar COG

The Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments (COG) is pleased to welcome Charlie Robinette as our AmeriCorps member who will be serving as our Food Systems Specialist. A UNC alum, Charlie has worked in both rural and urban communities across North Carolina, dealing with food systems topics such as public policy, accessibility, health equity, supply chain, agriculture, local economies, and GIS. A few organizations he has worked for and collaborated with include NC State, Center for Environmental Farming Systems, NC Cooperative Extension, and NASA. Over the next year, he'll be looking to produce agricultural asset mapping, conduct community outreach and education, create a regional food system assessment, and assemble a Regional Food Council in an effort to implement the Kerr-Tar Regional Food Policy.



*Charlie Robinette*



A few fun facts about Charlie: he enjoys any outdoor activities from hiking with his puppy dog, Ranger, to shooting basketball with his wife, Allison. He also enjoys chatting about National Parks, films (big movie buff), or college sports! Welcome to the team Charlie!

## Funding Forecast

Check out these awesome funding opportunities, they might just make you **jolly!**

- **Walmart Local Community Grants**

- The Walmart Local Community Grants Program provides grants to support the unique needs of local communities in the service areas of Walmart and Sam's Club stores. Funding areas include: Community & Economic Development, Diversity & Inclusion, Education, Environmental Sustainability, Health & Human services, Hunger Relief & Healthy Eating, Public Safety and Quality of Life. The next round of applications are due Dec. 31 and awards range from \$250-\$5000. More information [HERE](#).

- **Grants for Art Projects**

- Funded by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), this program provides project based funding ranging from \$10,000 - \$100,000 with a non-federal one-to-one match with programming focused on creating a healthy and thriving arts and culture ecosystem, elevating artists, facilitating collaborations, investing in capacity building and more. The next round of applications are due Feb. 15, 2024. More information [HERE](#).



# SRTS Visits Students at VCS Center for Innovation



The Kerr-Tar COG's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program partnered with Huff Consulting, LLC. to visit a group of Vance County High School students at the VCS Center for Innovation in Downtown Henderson! Michele Walker, Sales Account Manager with Huff Consulting kicked off our time with the students by leading them through a Teamship problem-solving learning experience. The goal of this activity was to present a real business problem to the students that would allow them to work collectively as a team to come up with real solutions. Overall, this experience provided them with impactful, work-based learning skills that will come in handy as they begin their professional lives.

Our SRTS program strongly believes that creating a path towards success for students should include a health and safety component. That's why we were so excited to partner with Huff Consulting on this wonderful activity, and the students surely enjoyed receiving SRTS goodie bags which included a great selection of bike/pedestrian safety material!

If your organization would like to partner with our SRTS program, please contact Kenia Gomez-Jimenez at [kgomezjimenez@kerrtarco.org](mailto:kgomezjimenez@kerrtarco.org) or (252) 436-2040, ext. 2009.

## Subscribe to our Grant Opportunities Newsletter

Want to stay in the know about great funding opportunities that could greatly benefit your community or organization? Subscribe to our bi-weekly grant opportunities newsletter today! To subscribe, contact Amanda Lewis, Regional Project Manager, at [alewis@kerrtarco.org](mailto:alewis@kerrtarco.org) or (252) 436-2040, ext. 2005.





# Veteran Appreciation & Community Hiring Event

On November 8, the Kerr-Tar NCWorks Career Center and Kerr-Tar Workforce Development Board hosted the 3rd Annual Veteran Appreciation and Community Hiring Event. This gathering left an indelible mark on the attendees and the community. With a turnout of 30 veterans and engaged community members, the event was a resounding success, proving the impact of fostering connections between veterans and local employers!



The event was not merely a job fair but a comprehensive resource hub, providing attendees with vital assistance across various domains. Veterans and community members had the opportunity to explore housing assistance, financial guidance, and re-entry assistance, underscoring a commitment to holistic well-being. The presence of the Veterans Service Officers (VSOs) further added value by offering crucial benefit assistance in education, compensation, and medical support.

One of the event's highlights was the participation and commitment of five local employers actively seeking to hire veterans, recognizing their unique skills and experiences. The term "veteran-friendly employers" took on a tangible meaning as these companies eagerly shared job openings and career opportunities. The symbiotic relationship between employers and veterans was palpable, creating an atmosphere of collaboration and mutual benefit. Congrats on a wonderful event Kerr-Tar NCWorks!



[CLICK HERE FOR KERR-TAR LABOR MARKET UPDATE](#)



**Bunn**  
Christmas Parade:  
December 10,  
12:00pm

**Franklinton**  
Christmas Parade:  
December 7,  
7:00pm

**Oxford**  
Lighting of the  
Greens & Parade:  
December 8,  
4:00pm

**Roxboro**  
Christmas Parade:  
December 9,  
2:00pm

**Warrenton**  
Tree Lighting  
& Parade:  
December 9,  
7:00pm

# Upcoming Holiday Celebrations

**IN THE KERR-TAR REGION**





# KERR-TAR

*Council of Governments*

## COMMUNITIES SERVED

- [Franklin County](#)
- [Granville County](#)
- [Person County](#)
- [Vance County](#)
- [Warren County](#)
- [Town of Bunn](#)
- [Town of Butner](#)
- [City of Creedmoor](#)
- [Town of Franklinton](#)
- [City of Henderson](#)
- [Town of Kittrell](#)
- [Town of Louisburg](#)
- [Town of Macon](#)
- [Town of Middleburg](#)
- [Town of Norlina](#)
- [City of Oxford](#)
- [City of Roxboro](#)
- [Town of Stem](#)
- [Town of Stovall](#)
- [Town of Warrenton](#)
- [Town of Youngsville](#)

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## MISSION STATEMENT

Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments aims to promote regionalism that provides opportunities for local governments to enhance and improve the quality of life for our citizens through effective delivery of services and programs.

### Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments

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