



# KERR-TAR

Council of Governments

JANUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER



Henry A. Dennis Building,  
Downtown Henderson

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

### Upcoming Events

- **Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Holiday , Kerr-Tar COG Office Closed: Monday, January 15**
- Kerr- Tar RPO TAC/TCC Meeting: **Thursday, January 25, Kerr-Tar COG Office @ 3:00pm**
- Region K CAC Board Meeting: **Thursday, January 25, Kerr-Tar COG Office @ 6:00pm**
- Kerr-Tar COG Board Meeting: **Thursday, January 25, Kerr-Tar COG Office @ 7:00pm**
- **SAVE THE DATE: Cultivate 2024, Thursday, March 21 @ Jones Performing Arts Center, Louisburg NC**
- 2024 Senior Games Opening Ceremonies: **Friday, March 22 @ Aycock Recreation Center, Henderson NC**

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# Kerr-Tar COG Supports Christmas Family with Gifts & More



Since 1992, the Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments (COG) has taken the “giving back” aspect of the holiday season quite seriously. 1992 marked the start of a very important Christmas tradition at the COG, which was to sponsor a family in need and provide them with gifts and holiday cheer. Each year a family is chosen based on the location our past Board chairman represented. This year we sponsored a family from Granville County. Our past chairman, Zelodis Jay, connected us with Granville County DSS. Through this connection, we were able to help out a single mother and her 4-year old daughter.

From a variety of Minnie Mouse themed items, to clothes, toys, food boxes and even gifts for the mom, our family was well loved! We are positive that these presents brought great cheer to this family. This of course, could’ve not been possible without our wonderful COG staff who are always willing to be a part of this yearly effort! Thanks to all involved!

# Kerr-Tar COG Awarded Member Spotlight Award by HV Chamber

On Friday, December 8, the Kerr-Tar COG was awarded a Member Spotlight award by the Henderson-Vance County Chamber of Commerce! Chamber President Sandra Wilkerson, along with Chamber Board Member Scott Burwell, presented our Executive Director Diane Cox with this exciting recognition. We are so thankful towards the Henderson-Vance County Chamber of Commerce for their partnership, and for supporting many of our Workforce and Economic Development endeavors over the years.



# FEMA Offering BRIC Direct Technical Assistance for Communities

FEMA offers direct technical assistance for the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant program. The Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Direct Technical Assistance (BRIC DTA) initiative provides tailored support to **communities and tribal nations** that may not have the resources to begin climate resilience planning and project solution design on their own. Through process-oriented, hand-in-hand assistance, BRIC DTA will partner with communities interested in enhancing their capability and capacity to design holistic, equitable hazard mitigation solutions that advance community-driven objectives. Click [HERE](#) for more information.



## Digital Equity Plan



The N.C. Department of Information Technology's Division of Broadband and Digital Equity has released its draft North Carolina Digital Equity Plan. The plan addresses high-speed internet affordability, device access, and digital literacy for all North Carolinians over the next five years. You can review the draft plan [HERE](#) and email comments to [digitalequity@nc.gov](mailto:digitalequity@nc.gov) until **noon, January 2**.

## Purchasing & Contracting 101 Course

The Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments (COG) is happy to be partnering with the UNC School of Government and statewide COG Association to offer a low-cost course on Purchasing and Contracting. Start off the New Year with new knowledge (or a refresher)! The course will be online; however, we are offering conference space for anyone who would like to participate in-person and participate in facilitated group discussion afterwards. **Registration will close on January 5, at 5:00pm. See details to register!**



### Course Info

**When:** January 9-10, 2024

**Time:** 9:00am - 11:00am

**Cost:** \$55

**Format:** Virtual

**Registration:** Click [HERE](#) to register

# KTAAA Spreads Holiday Cheer with Popcorn & Movies

Our KTAAA Regional Ombudsman, Kim Hawkins, brought holiday cheer to long term care facilities through “Popcorn and a Movie” afternoons in Granville County. Eight nursing homes, adult care homes and family care homes enjoyed Christmas movies including Charlie Brown’s Christmas, Christmas with the Kranks and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer!



# Evidence Based Health Programs



Evidence Based Health Programs continue across the Kerr-Tar Region! Classes in Granville and Franklin counties **trained 24 people** in our **A Matter of Balance** program. As one person said, “I feel so much more confident and less afraid. This class is so practical and taught me things I can actually do and apply to my life.”

If you or your organization would like to learn more about our Evidence Based Health Programs, please contact Susan Tucker at (252) 436-2040, ext. 2041.

# Successful 2023 Medicare Open Enrollment Period for KTAAA

Part of our KTAAA team (Kim Hawkins, Michael Patterson and Barbara Stewart) assisted Medicare enrollees with their plan decisions during annual Open Enrollment this year, which ran from mid-October to early December. Our team met with **over 120 older adults** at senior centers, pharmacies and by phone to help them make decisions about their Medicare plans for the coming year. Congratulations to our team for a job well done! Their expertise and assistance are surely appreciated.



# Coming Soon: 2024 Senior Games



Get ready Kerr-Tar Region, the 2024 Senior Games are coming! Are you 50 years or better? Do you enjoy participating in athletics and the arts, all while making valuable friendships along the way? If so, Senior Games may just be for you! Opening Ceremonies will be held on **Friday, March 22 at Aycock Recreation Center in Vance County.** Registrations Packets will be distributed soon, so make sure to join in on the fun and games!

## NC Lakes District Project Set to Relaunch in 2024

Initiated in 2014 as a collaborative effort between member governments and the Kerr-Tar Rural Planning Organization (KTRPO), “NC Lakes District” serves as both a transportation planning tool, and regional tourism initiative. Consistently identified in feedback collected for the most recent Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, updated in 2022, was the region’s strength of recreational opportunity. Two of the ways this opportunity was incorporated into the 2023-2027 CEDS include enhancement of recreational assets and convening regional tourism directors. Although the reach of recreational opportunity exceeds those two objectives, the NC Lakes District project will allow for Community and Economic Development staff to continue the conversation around recreational opportunity in the Kerr-Tar Region.



*Kerr Lake, Henderson NC*

## NCDOT Bicycle Helmet Initiative

Since being introduced, the North Carolina Department of Transportation's Bicycle Helmet Initiative (BHI) has equipped thousands of children with a helmet. Unfortunately, children are a key demographic involved in bicycle-related incidents. To promote helmet usage and support local bicycle activities, the Division of Bicycle & Pedestrian Transportation will be accepting applications from organizations and non-profits willing to distribute helmets to children. The application for 2024 is set to be released **early January**. Please visit the NCDOT BHI webpage [HERE](#) to keep up with the application release date and deadline!



Save  
THE  
Date

CULTIVATE  
2024

Regional Economic Development Summit

Thursday, March 21, 2024  
Jones Performing Arts Center  
Louisburg, NC

# SRTS Participates in Youngsville Tree Lighting Ceremony



The Kerr-Tar COG's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program served as a vendor for the 2023 Town of Youngsville Tree Lighting Ceremony! The event was held on Friday, December 1 on Oak Street. With **over 300 people in attendance**, the event was incredibly fun and the crowd was vibrant, filled with children ready to take photos with Santa! Our SRTS Coordinator, Kenia Gomez-Jimenez, educated parents on the program and offered children great bike and pedestrian safety goodies! From bike lights, educational flyers, to interactive coloring books and crayons, children enjoyed from a great variety of SRTS centered resources.

A huge congrats to the Youngsville Parks & Recreation Department on hosting a great community event! We greatly enjoyed being a part of this holiday celebration, and look forward to working with more departments across our region to spread the message of SRTS!

## SRTS Extends a Helping Hand

Each year during the holidays, Franklin Granville Vance (FGV) Smart Start staff work as a team to make sure a family needing support is able to have gifts for their entire family at Christmas. This year, FGV Smart Start brought holiday cheer to the Davis family (Megan, Caleb, Christian, Chloe, Caysiah, and Jaharee) at Lifeline Ministries.

FGV staff gifted the family with a ton of wonderful gifts, including some pretty awesome bikes! To keep the children safe while biking, FGV reached out to our Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program to see if we could donate bike helmets for this family. With a bit of help from our friends at the Henderson Family YMCA, we were able to obtain these much needed helmets for this wonderful cause! Community partnerships (and Christmas magic) are the backbone of our SRTS program and it was an honor to be a part of this FVG holiday tradition.



# State of NC Digital Equity Survey

The North Carolina Broadband Survey is designed to gather information on locations in the state without adequate internet access and speeds. The information gathered from the survey will:

- Provide clear data to guide investment of funds through the state's Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology grant program
- Inform research and policy recommendations
- Support strategic targeting of additional funding streams

The survey is a collaboration between the N.C. Department of Information Technology's Broadband Infrastructure Office and the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation at NC State University.

Take the survey by clicking [HERE](#) or scanning the QR Code. 



## ALA to Launch New Digital Inclusion Working Group for Library Workers

On December 15, the American Library Association (ALA) Public Policy and Advocacy Office and the **National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA)** announced a new Digital Inclusion Working Group for library workers to exchange knowledge around digital equity work taking place in all library contexts. The working group will meet monthly, facilitated by PPA staff members Megan Janicki and Emily Durkin. Meeting topics will be driven by the digital inclusion discussion generated in the group and will include regular digital equity and inclusion policy updates. The first meeting will be held on **Tuesday, January 30, at 4 p.m. EST**. To join the working group, click [HERE](#). Library workers are not required to be ALA members to participate in the working group but must create an ALA Connect account.



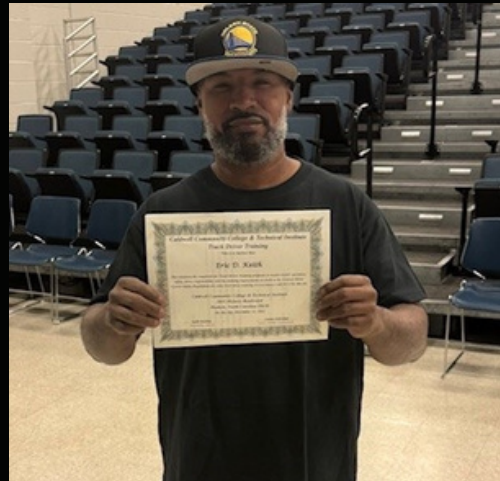
## Farm to School Grant Program

The **Patrick Leahy Farm to School Grant Program** is designed to increase the availability of local foods in schools and help connect students to the sources of their food through education, taste tests, school gardens, field trips, and local food sourcing for school meals. Grants can launch new farm to school programs or expand existing efforts. The fiscal year (FY) 2024 Farm to School Grant awards projects of 24 months in length for funding **up to \$500,000**. Applicants are required to provide matching support of at least 25 percent of the total project budget in the form of cash or in-kind contributions. For eligibility requirement and additional information, click [HERE](#).



# Success Story: *Eric Keith*

Congratulations to Eric Keith on graduating from the Vance-Granville Community College CDL program on December 12! Eric was referred to the Kerr-Tar NCWorks Career Center by Vocational Rehabilitation. He was homeless, living in a very unstable situation and was facing many challenges in life. His goal was to get his CDL so that he could gain employment and make a suitable wage to improve his living environment. Through the support of Vocational Rehabilitation and NCWorks, he is on a path to succeed in life!



Upon obtaining his CDL license, Eric started his job search and has been in contact with some prospective employers hoping to make a decision soon. We are extremely proud of Eric's accomplishment! Congratulations!

## Stay Connected with Your Local NCWorks Career Center!



[@NCWorksCareerCenter-KerrTar](https://www.facebook.com/NCWorksCareerCenter-KerrTar)



[www.kerrtarworks.com](http://www.kerrtarworks.com)



[@ncworks\\_kerrtar](https://www.instagram.com/ncworks_kerrtar)

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



## Share Your Good News!

If you have news, events, announcements, or other items you would like included in an upcoming newsletter, please email Kenia Gomez-Jimenez, Kerr-Tar COG Regional Program Coordinator.

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Your friends at the  
Kerr-Tar COG wish you joy,  
success, and new opportunities  
in 2024. Cheers to a fantastic  
year ahead!



# 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](#)

### Executive Director

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### Community & Economic Development

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### Workforce Development

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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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