



THE CURRENT

KACRAO'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2026

WHAT'S INSIDE:

Earth Day Info

Graduation Time

KACRAO Kernel: Be Present

KACRAO Award Nominations

Small things you can do to celebrate Earth Day?

1. Use a recyclable water bottle or coffee mug
2. Build a birdhouse
3. Take a bike ride
4. Hike or walk
5. Use recyclable grocery bags, not plastic ones
6. Recycle your paper and cardboard
7. Remember to turn off lights that you're not using
8. Switch to LED lightbulbs
9. Repair your leaky faucet
10. Pick up trash at a local park, neighborhood, or beach
11. Plant a tree or buy a tree certificate
12. Carpool to work or other activities
13. Switch to paperless bills and invoices
14. Compost
15. Start a bee farm
16. Plant a garden
17. "Adopt" an animal at a wildlife preserve



The possibilities are endless! How are you going to celebrate this year?

Graduation: How you can help your friendly registrar!

BY CHARLES PEITSCH
Registrar, Benedictine College

Graduation season: a time when students celebrate years of work, and registrars wonder how we survived another semester. While students see caps, gowns, and smiles, we registrars see more spreadsheets, send more emails, and sigh heavier over the last-minute application.

So why is this such a taxing time for registrars? We'll tell you. If you have medicine for what ails some of us, feel free to share. Admissions staff, you also can help us help the students you recruited.

Common Headaches

- Missing or late graduation applications, outdated plans, and students who haven't read emails...ever. Seriously!
- Coordinating staff, volunteers, stage flow, and special recognitions, enforcing rules – it all takes serious planning.
- Last-minute changes from departments or administration can derail even the most carefully laid plans. We can all relate

Things you may not know that make the headaches worse

- Degree audits multiple times. Is there a registrar not paranoid about having someone commence who shouldn't?
- Some of us are decent event planners. Some of us are not. But that's irrelevant when you find yourself responsible for your school's biggest event.
- So much to check and re-check and check again.

Relief is available

Tips from your fellow registrars

- Keep extra caps, gowns, and tassels. Late additions are inevitable, and a little cushion goes a long way.
- Think of strategies to get students to complete their graduation applications – establish fees, institute registration holds, pester them into compliance.
- One clear, student-friendly place where students find what they need without dozens of follow-ups. Granted, they have to look.
- Some things will always go sideways. Breathe, adjust, and keep moving forward.

“I'm in Admissions. What can I do?”

- Every registrar with commencement responsibilities said they can use more help. Anything you can give, we will take.
- Many computer-based graduation applications pull info from existing student data. The more accurate that information is when the student gets to graduation, the fewer changes.
- Many students plan to finish in two or three years. Sometimes, registrars don't know that until the final semester. If we can know that when we start, less headaches.

We Are All In This Together

We are all willing to help. Give your advice. We all want to see our students walk across the stage. And to those registrars that don't handle commencement, and are enjoying graduation season from a safe distance, we know you have tips, too.

KACRAO Kernel: Be Present

BY TERRI VAN SLYKE

KACRAO Vice President for Professional Development



KACRAO Kernel is a monthly professional development column designed to provide members with important leadership tips to plant, grow, cultivate, and use in your professional and personal life.

We live in a world full of distractions. Now, more than ever, it is easy to find ourselves drifting mentally while in the presence of others. We may be distracted by our phones, our hustle, the news, or our thoughts. With the continual advancements of technology, increased virtual options, and the number of tasks we commit ourselves to, it is easy to become too busy to take time to also be physically present.

As a former athlete, I equate the idea of being present to being locked-in, where you can focus solely on the person, the activity, or the challenge in front of you. It's letting go of the past and the future and living in the right now. Being present is practicing humility by putting your own personal agenda aside to be there for your teammates. When I competed in sports, I had this uncanny ability to forget about and block out everything that was not related to that contest, my teammates, and my coach. It was easy for me. But for some reason, I struggle sometimes in my life after sports to stay locked-in. I must make a very conscientious effort to be present.

Below is a checklist of tips on how I remind myself to be present for others:

- Eliminate distractions – put away your phone, silence your smart watch, or hide other distractors while engaged in conversation with others.
- Sit down, be humble – actively listen to understand, not just respond. If your mind begins to wander thinking about the wise advice or personal experiences that you want to share, take a mental note but humble your mind to listen.
- Be intentional, authentic, and genuine – ask questions to get to know the person better. Summarize or make mental notes of what those individuals' interests are.
- Practice self-awareness – become self-aware of how you handle situations and what can make your mind wander.
- Take your own thoughts captive – train your brain to “lock-in.” Practice mental exercises to maintain your focus, such as self-talk and mental checklists.
- Physically show up – if you are expected to be present for people physically, show up. Don't make excuses about why you can't give them your time.

Challenge: Focus on one of these tips to be present this next week.

If you have a suggestion for a KACRAO Kernel, please contact Terri Van Slyke at professionaldevelopment@kacrao.org.

S A V E

T H E

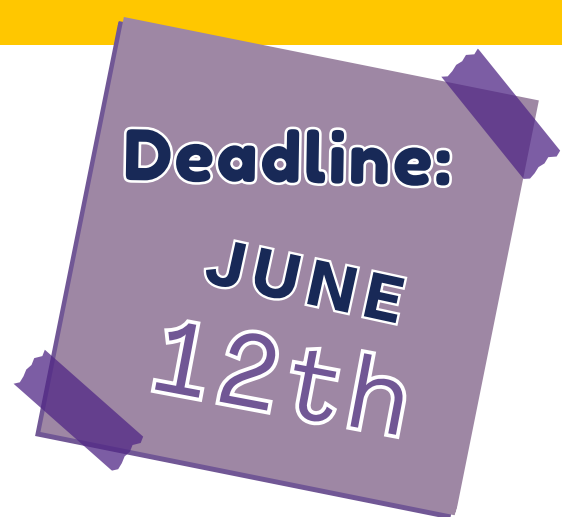
D A T E

KACRAO Summer Drive-In Workshop

Join us at the 2026 KACRAO Summer
Drive-In Workshop
"Riding the Wave: Elevating the Student
Experience"
July 14, 2026 at Hutchinson Community
College

Registration info coming soon!

KACRAO Awards Nominations



Nominations are now open for KACRAO's Annual Awards and Accolades
Let's celebrate the incredible people who make our community shine!

Do you know someone who consistently goes above and beyond - for KACRAO, their students or their institution? Someone whose dedication, passion, and hard work truly inspire those around them - whether it's a mentor who's guided you, a colleague who motivates you, or a member who always goes the extra mile. Now is your chance to highlight their impact and show your appreciation.

Submitting a nomination is quick and easy - visit our website and share why your nominee deserves to be honored. Deadline for submissions is Friday, June 12th.

For more information about our awards or see past recipients, explore our Awards and Accolades page.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to bbrenner2@kumc.edu.

Let's recognize and celebrate those who help build KACRAO and its members!

Brandi Brenner
2026 KACRAO Past President
Awards and Accolades Chair



2026 KACRAO ANNUAL CONFERENCE
SEPT 23-25 | HILTON GARDEN INN | MANHATTAN

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2026 KACRAO CONFERENCE INFO

SAVE THE DATE for KACRAO 2026:
September 23-25, 2026, in
Manhattan, KS

Watch the KACRAO Annual
Conference page for registration and
hotel information.

All sessions will be held at the Hilton
Garden Inn Conference Center.



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#KACRAO Voices

Got something to celebrate at your institution?
A win, a resource, or a wellness tip worth
sharing?

Send it our way at kyuen@butlercc.edu and you
might see it featured in next month's newsletter!



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