



by Kenton Beal  
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## SWCBA Store Adapting

Let's all go back in time to the start of Spring 2020 Rush! We all had just returned to our campuses from the holiday break refreshed, rested, and ready to greet students back on campus for start of another semester. Soon we were all back into our normal routines and assisting students on our campuses find all they would need in our bookstores for a successful start to the spring semester. Most of us were aware of the news reports about a new virus by early February. And like myself, many of us listened to the reports and felt confident that it would never affect our areas or our campuses.

Then Spring Break 2020, along with Covid-19, hit with a vengeance, and the news was bleak. Suddenly, normal was not the same anymore. As bookstore managers we all strived to do what we always do to be successful, and provide the best service possible to our students and campuses. "Adapt and Change" became our motto at Kilgore College. It has now been almost a year since the first report of COVID-19, the old normal never returned, and our new normal is completely different.

"Adapt and Change", how does this look for our store now and how has it impacted the Kilgore College Bookstore? When I arrived at Kilgore College in July 2019, I immediately had ideas of how I wanted to change our bookstore.

Most of us realize change is sometimes slow in institutionally-owned and operated stores. I encountered numerous roadblocks, was continuously questioned as to why would we change things that are working fine, and/or told the modifications were not at the top of our priorities currently. However, all resistance to change was thrown aside and out the window when Spring Break 2020 happened, especially when our campus announced that students would be fully remote the remainder of the Spring 2020 semester.

While our students were enjoying the spring break at home in lockdown, I was working long hours at the store with our campus administrative teams to formulate a plan on the best strategy to get course materials to our students for our Spring 2 semester scheduled to start on Monday following Spring Break. We considered a multitude of scenarios.

Even though we were unclear on the path of what to do, everyone understood the important role of the bookstore in creating success for our students.

After all the administrative meetings plus additional phone calls and emails to other campus stores, our team developed a plan for our students. We worked with Nebraska Book Company and Prism Services on our website, installing more options that were available to us than what we were currently using to enhance our online store and the shopping experience.



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## SWCBA Store Adapting-continued

Our online sales were going through the roof with students away from campus and taking courses remotely. Our bookstore had previously always shipped books via US Mail. We quickly realized that we needed to make changes to our shipping method, so I reached out to contacts at FedEx. Fortunately, we were able to negotiate the same FedEx rates that the college is currently receiving from FedEx. FedEx also helped us install the FedEx Ship Manager software and acquire the equipment we needed to get our shipments out to shoppers.

These changes allowed us the ability to ship books and course materials much faster plus provide tracking numbers to our students. We also partnered with RedShelf to take advantage of their Covid-19 response initiative, RedShelf Responds, in providing free e-books to students. Following up with Mike Repovz, we received confirmation that Kilgore College students definitely took advantage of this offer. A big shout out goes to RedShelf and their teams for helping Kilgore College students along with students nationwide gain immediate access to digital course materials.

Kilgore College made the decision to remain fully online with remote teaching for the remainder of the Spring Semester and through our Summer 1 Semester. Our store offered curbside pickup for students and shoppers who are in our local area as an option to avoid shipping fees.



The final big change was the implementation of Inclusive Access during the Summer Semester. After a successful pilot program with one university department, we are receiving tremendous response from other departments wanting to move to Inclusive Access, especially since everyone is fearful we might have to experience another shutdown at some point.

Inclusive Access has been a smooth transition, and with the help and support of our partners at RedShelf, we look forward to moving more sections and courses to this model.

There is never rest for successful bookstore managers. Each day brings us new challenges. We all do what we always do in making things happen not only for our campuses, but certainly for our most important stakeholders, the students that we serve.

I look forward to the future when we can all meet again face-to-face at conferences and share our 2020 individual experiences, challenges, and successes. While we have overcome challenges and have experienced many successes, I also think we are all in agreement that 2020 is the year that we look forward to moving beyond!



# Vendors Spotlight

## 2021 Jardine updates!

Hello to All –

Welcome to 2021!

We at Jardine are here to assist you with your Campus, Store, and Virtual needs as the dynamics of College Life have changed this past year and will continue to change moving forward.



by Kris Salazar  
Jardine Associates

We are working on having all of our 2021 catalogs and programs in your hands by the end of the month. Most of them were sent to you in December. New Programs are being introduced and many of our programs have been adjusted to Drop Ship programs for your stores to implement digitally. We had tremendous success in the Fall with the Jardine Campus Crystal, Jardine Fossil Watch, Jardine Timeless Etchings, and Jardine CSI Drop ship programs. The Church Hill Diploma Frame in store and drop ship programs have been stronger than in previous years. We can now do Drop ship Programs from Uscape, University Blanket and Flag as well as KH Sports. These additions to your On-line assortments will bring value to your webstore and the breadth of your assortments without adding excess inventory to your floors.

**Jardine Associates**

800-543-7655

[jardineassociates.com](http://jardineassociates.com)

I look forward to showing you all the new programs as well as the best selling lines that we are continuing with over the next months. We will be marketing our Spring Tailgate Show and Camex specials to you, though the events will most likely not happen in the spring.

Thank you for your support thru this past year and we all look forward to doing healthy business in the future!



### 3 Major Takeaways from the 2021 FedEx and UPS Rate Increases

FedEx and UPS rates are going up in 2021, and it's more important than ever that college stores know how to mitigate the effect on their business. Here are a few things you should know about the changes to come:

FedEx and UPS small package rates are increasing an average of 4.9% - effective January 4, 2021 and December 27, 2020 respectively.

Your actual costs will vary. Depending on the service you use and your package characteristics, you could see increases above or below the average.

Many common surcharges are also increasing. On top of the base rates, you need to be aware of the charges that apply to your shipments and how they'll affect your total costs.

PartnerShip<sup>®</sup>, the benefit provider that manages the NACS Shipping Program, has analyzed the FedEx and UPS increases so you can accurately prepare for the new year. Get a simplified explanation of the complicated changes you need to be aware of when you download the free white paper: [The Essential Guide to the 2021 FedEx and UPS Rate Increases](#).

The good news is that NACS members now save up to 50% with FedEx. [Enroll in the NACS Shipping Program today](#) to help offset the rate increases.

## Vendors Spotlight-Continued



by Arlinda Bush  
AB Student Services

As 2020 is ending, this year has definitely been a challenge for both individuals and businesses.

In early 2020, we all got word about a virus that spreads quickly and we didn't know much about it. Some businesses were shut down completely and others started to work from home. Only essential workers could be working outside the home.

College and Universities had to make changes to go virtual and start zoom meetings to keep in touch. Here we are 8 months later and things have changed depending where you live and the business you run. A lot of businesses are trying to self-sustain, hoping soon that things will get back to normal. We have all taken this in stride and accomplished so much to overcome the stressful challenges we are dealing with on a daily basis.

### AB Student Services

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My name is Arlinda Bush and I am the business owner of AB Student Services. I supply graduation items to colleges and universities. Being that the pandemic started in March, most schools had been able to have a grad fair for their students. The down fall that we were dealing with next was May graduation ceremonies.

Many universities and colleges were having to cancel/delay or do a virtual ceremony. Graduation day is every graduate's dream, along with their families to see them walk across the stage and get that diploma. The graduation ceremonies for fall 2020 are still happening but virtual. The virtual ceremony is definitely exciting in its own way but nothing compares to the real ceremony in person. We are all hoping that spring 2021 brings us all better news.



During this pandemic, Oak Hall Cap and Gown continues to make masks for John Hopkins Hospital.

[Oak Hall Cap and Gown](#) sends over **70,000 masks to John Hopkins.**



This year has been filled with uncertainty and continuous change due to the onset of the pandemic.

However, one thing has been certain: campus stores have continued to be resilient, adaptable, and creative in their approach to navigating the new normal.

In July, we surveyed our campus stores to find out what pivots stores were making to adapt. Over 75 stores responded and shared that growing inclusive access programs and increasing digital course material offerings through e-Commerce were the top two ways business operations were changing. Listen to our recent webinar with our friends at ICBA to find out the impact those strategies had as Jared and Ryan present [“Forging Ahead with Data-Driven Strategies in Course Materials.”](#)

We have a great way for you to keep up with all the latest piping-hot course material trends! We recently launched our [Verba Coffee Chat Podcast!](#) Listen to the latest episodes as we chat with industry and campus store leaders. Subscribe to your favorite podcast platform to know when a new episode drops!



At [Verba | VitalSource](#), we have been proud to support campus stores and their efforts to ensure students have the course materials they need to be successful while driving revenue back to the campus store. [Let us know](#) how we can help you!

# SWCBA Happy Hour Bingo

Mike Repoz with RedShelf hosted our first virtual Happy Hour Bingo. Sixteen bookstores and vendors gathered for one hour and played four rounds of bingo.

- ⇒ 1st round winner: Kenton Beal with Kilgore College
- ⇒ 2nd round winner: Starla Marshall with Oklahoma State University
- ⇒ 3rd round winner: Beverly Constable with Signature Announcements
- ⇒ 4th round winner: Teri Mitchell with Navarro College.

It was a great way to socialize and see everyone.



Virtual Bingo Card



Screen shot of 9 participants.

## Anthony Martin Scholarship

SWCBA executive board approved a \$1,000 donation to the Houston Baptist University student scholarship fund in the memory of Anthony Martin. Anthony passed in November 2019 of a heart attack. He was a member of SWCBA for many years and served our SWCBA board as well.



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## Got News?

How is your bookstore handling COVID-19? Buyback? Closures? Online sales? How are you keeping connected with students? Graduation postponed or cancelled? How are you managing your team from home? How are vendors staying connected with bookstores? Any vendors out there having product delivery issues? Also, bookstores and vendors can pass on any job openings that they are needing to appear in the next newsletter. Share article links you wish to see in the next newsletter as well.



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## Industry News

[Vindy's assessment](#) on How COVID-19 is affecting online textbook prices.

[MBS Foreword Online](#) shares 25 Customer Service Trends That Strengthen College Stores.

[CAMEX21](#) Reimagined.

College Board's [Trends in College Pricing and Student Aid 2020](#).

[ICBA 2021](#) Virtual Conference.

[Verba|VitalSource Coffee Chat](#) on What's Next for the Independent Campus Store.

[Coronavirus Resources](#) for College Stores.

'[They're not ready](#)': Students are about to flood college campuses. The virus could, too.

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*The Southwest College Bookstore Association's mission is to promote a high standard of business methods and ethics among its members, unite those persons and firms engaged in the sale, manufacturing and/or distribution of products and services to the campus communities of its member states, promote the common interest of individuals and companies who provide those products and services, assist members in their efforts to serve their respective campuses and disseminate industry ideas and information among its members. The SWCBA is a 5 state regional association who unites people/services to serve the college community.*

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