

The VOYAGER



AUGUST 2025



WEEKS OF WOW

Exciting campus events kick off new school year.



ADULT ED GRADUATION

Adult education empowers lives, celebrates growth and perseverance.



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Forty-four Bobcats honored for academic excellence.



GET READY TO BE WELCOMED!

The month of August marks the beginning of a new academic year for schools, colleges, and universities across the region and state. At Frontier Community College, the excitement kicks off with Weeks of Welcome—a series of welcome events for students, faculty, and staff. The celebration runs from Tuesday, August 19, through Thursday, September 4.

Weeks of Welcome begins with New Student Orientation on Tuesday, August 19, from 8 to 11 a.m. More than 100 first-year students are expected to attend. Students will check in at Workforce Development Center and enjoy a free breakfast before breaking into groups for a guided campus tour and an introduction to life at Frontier.

"This year we have planned student engagement opportunities for the first ten days of the semester. New Student Orientation is a first look at the campus and a chance to meet fellow students. From that point there is an activity every day to provide the chance for students to learn more about clubs, to make new friends, and settle into the college experience," says Lori Noe, Director of Learning Commons.

WOW!

WEEKS OF WELCOME!

AUGUST 19-SEPTEMBER 4, 2025



	19 TUESDAY 8-11 a.m.	20 WEDNESDAY 6-8 P.M. Back to School Splash at Leo French Park. Enjoy food and an evening swim! Hosted by FCC Softball and Phi Theta Kappa.	21 THURSDAY First Day of Classes. 11 A.M. - 1 P.M. Cookout & Outdoor Games at Dr. Mike L. Dreith Pavilion in Rotary Plaza.	22 FRIDAY 11 A.M. - 1 P.M. Board Games in Learning Commons at Cox Hall. Snacks will be provided by One Love Christian Club.
25 MONDAY 7:30 - 10 A.M. Donut Stress w/TRiO in Learning Commons at Cox Hall. 4-6 P.M. Pickleball at Lakeside Park in Fairfield. Hosted by Bobcats Baseball.	26 TUESDAY 11 A.M. - 2 P.M. Sweet Start Sweeties Ice Cream mobile unit will be on campus providing ice cream to students to sweeten the first week of class. 11 A.M. - 2 P.M. Club Rush in Learning Commons at Cox Hall.	27 WEDNESDAY 6 P.M. School Spirit Night Support the Bobcats Volleyball team at Center Street School, and wear yellow and black. The first 100 students will receive a pom pom.	28 THURSDAY 9 A.M. - 4 P.M. Chalk Walk Contest. Sponsored by Active Minds. Sidewalks adjacent to Cox Hall. 9 A.M. - 4 P.M. Popcorn Bar in Learning Commons at Cox Hall.	29 FRIDAY 9 A.M. - 11 A.M. Board Games in Learning Commons at Cox Hall. Snacks will be provided by One Love Christian Club.
1 MONDAY No classes - college closed	2 TUESDAY 7 P.M. BINGO Night hosted by FCC Student Senate in Bob Boyles Hall.	3 WEDNESDAY 12 Noon - Pizza and Preparation at Learning Commons in Cox Hall.	4 THURSDAY 12 Noon - Duck Drop at the Dr. Mike L. Dreith Pavilion in Rotary Plaza.	

On Wednesday, August 20, a Back-to-School Splash will be held at Leo French Park from 6 to 8 p.m. Attendees can enjoy swimming and free food, courtesy of FCC Softball and Phi Theta Kappa.

Thursday, August 21 marks the first day of classes. To celebrate, a cookout and outdoor games will take place from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Dr. Mike L. Dreith Pavilion in Rotary Plaza.

On Friday, August 22, and again on Friday, August 29, card and board games will be available at the Learning Commons in Cox Hall from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Snacks will be provided both days by One Love Christian Club.

Monday, August 25 kicks off with Donut Stress with TRiO at the Learning Commons in Cox Hall from 7:30 to 10 a.m. That afternoon, students can head to Lakeside Park on the north side of Fairfield for a fun game of pickleball from 4 to 6 p.m., hosted by FCC Bobcats Baseball.

Tuesday, August 26 features Sweeties Ice Cream's mobile unit on campus from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., serving cool treats to students, faculty, and staff. At 2 p.m., Club Rush will be held in the Learning Commons—an opportunity for students to learn more about campus clubs and organizations and how to get involved.

On Wednesday, August 27, the Bobcats Volleyball team will host Wabash Valley College in their first home game of the season at Center Street School in Fairfield. First serve is at 6 p.m. It's School Spirit Night, and students are encouraged to wear yellow and black to cheer on the Bobcats. The first 100 students in attendance will receive a free pom-pom.

Thursday, August 28 will feature a Chalk Walk Contest, where students can showcase their artistic talents on the sidewalks near Cox Hall. The contest is sponsored by Active Minds. A popcorn bar will also be available in the Learning Commons from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Monday, September 1 is Labor Day, and the campus will be closed.

Tuesday, September 2 features a lively BINGO Night at Bob Boyles Hall, beginning at 7 p.m., hosted by FCC Student Senate.

Wednesday, September 3 offers Pizza and Preparation at the Learning Commons in Cox Hall, starting at noon. Jordie Higgason, College and Career Specialist, will speak to students about preparing for their future.

Weeks of Wow concludes on Thursday, September 4, with a Duck Drop at the Dr. Mike L. Dreith Pavilion in Rotary Plaza. Students will have the chance to win a TV.



Angelique Maguire addresses graduates and guests during the 2025 Adult Education Graduation Ceremony at the Terry L. Bruce West Richland Center in Noble, Illinois.

THEY DREAMED BIG, THEN ACHIEVED MORE

Cheers, applause, and proud smiles filled the Terry L. Bruce West Richland Center on Friday, July 19, as 24 of 81 graduates crossed the stage during Frontier Community College's Adult Education Graduation Ceremony. With friends and family packing the venue, the evening stood as a powerful celebration of perseverance, achievement, and personal transformation.



Chika Koker, guest speaker and Adult Education alumna, shares her story at the podium.

The ceremony opened with a heartfelt welcome from Angelique Maguire, Program Director of Adult Education for Illinois Eastern Community Colleges, who set the tone for the night by emphasizing the themes of dedication, growth, and triumph. “There is so much to say about my love for our students, the program, and celebrating their accomplishments,” Maguire shared. “Watching someone choose education—choose a different and better path—is an amazing experience. Being a part of that journey impacts you in a way that enriches your life and changes you as well.”

A lineup of guest speakers followed, offering heartfelt words of encouragement. Among them was Chika Koker, an alum of Frontier’s English as a Second Language (ESL) program. Since completing the program three years ago, Koker has earned an Associate in Science degree and a Certified Medical Assistant certificate. Her story reminded the audience of the life-changing opportunities that stem from determination and education.

Though unable to attend the ceremony, graduate Crystal Brewer was honored with the IECC Adult Education 2025 Star Student Award. Brewer completed her credential through the Alternative Methods of Credentialing (AMOC) process and was recognized for her outstanding commitment and achievement.

Jeremy Brush, Superintendent of Regional Office of Education 12, also addressed the graduates, highlighting the widespread impact of adult education across the region. Additional remarks were shared by Danyelle Ayres, Director of ICAPS & Instruction, and FCC instructor Gina Draper, who praised the graduates’ hard work, resilience, and determination to overcome personal and academic challenges.

Maguire then proudly announced the names of the graduates who participated in the ceremony, with certificates presented by Sharis Wilson, IECC Literacy & Adult Education Operations, alongside Ayres. Each name called represented not just a completed program—but a life changed.

After the formal ceremony, graduates and their loved ones gathered for a reception to celebrate the momentous occasion.

One such graduate, Tameka Balding, says the moment marked more than an academic milestone—it was a deeply personal victory.

“It means a lot,” she said. “When I was younger, my family pulled me out of school. I was told I would never be anything. But I graduated on my own while raising my daughter—and now I own and operate my own in-home daycare.”



Graduate Tameka Balding takes in the moment during the ceremony.

Tameka's journey has been anything but easy. Labeled as a special education student in childhood, she struggled for years without understanding the root of her academic challenges. "I always wanted to continue my education, but it took time," she shared. "Just over a year and a half ago, I was diagnosed with dyslexia. That helped me understand the things I'd been doing wrong—and while I can't fix it, I can acknowledge it and grow."

She credits much of her progress to instructor Angelique Maguire, who played a key role in helping her identify her learning barriers. "Angel went above and beyond. She gave me a reading test that helped uncover what was going on. She couldn't diagnose me, but she led me in the right direction."

Reflecting on her role in supporting students like Tameka, Maguire said, "Starting work in Adult Education back in 2018 was not what I thought it would be coming into the program. I have always loved teaching and seeing students reach that 'Aha' moment. But to help them on a more holistic level—a level that impacts their families, opens doors for them to provide for their homes, to reach their dreams and goals, to prepare opportunities for and to change the trajectory of even their children's lives—has provided me as an educator and a leader with fullness and gratefulness. We are truly blessed to be able to offer our communities educational services and wrap-around support through the IECC Adult Education and Literacy programs."

Now, Tameka is pursuing her next goal: earning degrees in early childhood education with hopes of becoming a teacher.

Her advice to others: "Always believe in yourself and trust your gut instincts."

For more information about Frontier's Adult Education program or to register for upcoming classes, contact Angelique Maguire at 618-847-9160 or email maguirea@iecc.edu.

44 BOBCATS NAMED ACADEMIC ALL-AMERICANS

Frontier Community College is proud to announce that 44 student-athletes have been named NJCAA Academic All-Americans for the 2024–2025 academic year. The recognition reflects both athletic dedication and academic excellence across the college's softball, baseball, and volleyball programs.

Among the honorees, 16 student-athletes earned First Team distinction with a perfect 4.00 GPA, 13 were named to the Second Team with GPAs between 3.80–3.99, and 15 were selected to the Third Team for GPAs between 3.60–3.79.

In addition to individual honors, Frontier's athletic programs achieved impressive national rankings for overall team GPA:

Softball: 3.73 GPA — ranked 9th in the nation

Baseball: 3.61 GPA — ranked 11th in the nation

Volleyball: 3.64 GPA — ranked 16th in the nation

Academic All-Americans by Sport:

Softball

First Team: Abby Cunningham, Riley Cunningham, Rylee Hendricks, Rylan Jarboe, Emmalyn Vinson, Maci Warner

Second Team: Alexis Miller, Alicia Stanley

Third Team: Ahjareece Hollowell, Kyndall Webb

Baseball

First Team: Bailey Collins, Landon Harrelson, Nick Kaelin, Cameron McDonald, Ian Olivier-Beaulieu, Chance Pair, Ethan Payne, Miles Whitesell

Second Team: Kyle Carter, Justin Early, Dawson Holtz, Braxton Mathews, Sean McConachie, Nate Stivers, Brock Taulman

Third Team: Keyonte Back, Asa Dunleavy, Kaelin Farr, Dylan Fleener, Drake Hartline, Dillon James, Trent Lowery, Troy Mann, Gael Salinas, Isaiah Thompson, Tony Woodie

Volleyball

First Team: Rebekah Busby, Laela Kohzadi

Second Team: Olivia Brummer, Arlissa Sharber, Camdyn Tappendorf, Maryn Vaughn

Third Team: Alexis Cline, Cadence Wartsbaugh

Frontier Community College competes in NJCAA Division I and is a member of Region 24. There are 525 NJCAA schools across 24 regions in the U.S.

For more information on Bobcat Athletics, visit www.fccbobcats.com.

FCC'S KADENCE SMITH SHINES BRIGHT AS FAIR QUEEN

Frontier Community College student, Kadence Smith of Cisne, was crowned Miss Wayne County Fair Queen on Tuesday, July 8, in front of an enthusiastic crowd at the 2025 Wayne County Fair in Fairfield. For Smith, it was a moment she will never forget.

"It truly feels amazing. I never really expected this to happen—but it did. It feels like a dream come true. I've wanted this since I was little and always wondered why Wayne County didn't have a pageant. So, when they announced it this year, I knew I wanted to participate, and I'm so pleased with the outcome."

According to Penny Shreve in the July edition of The Outlook, it had been nearly three decades since the last Wayne County Fair Queen Pageant—and that lasted only one year. Prior to that,

the pageant hadn't been held since the 1980s, or possibly even the 1970s, (organizers aren't sure). Fast forward to 2025, and the pageant made a strong return with 33 contestants across three divisions: Little Miss, Junior Miss, and Miss Wayne County Fair Queen.

All contestants spent the past ten weeks preparing for their big moment on stage, participating in rehearsals and bonding with fellow participants. In the Miss Wayne County Fair Queen division, judging criteria included a personal interview (40%), evening gown/stage presence/poise/posture (25%), onstage speech (20%), and an onstage question (15%), totaling 100%.

Smith noted that practices began in May, and lasting friendships were formed throughout the journey. One of her fellow contestants, RaeAnn Harris—also from Cisne and a student at Frontier—was someone she already knew.

"We've had weekly practices since May and kept in touch through group chats, sharing outfit ideas and supporting each other. I'm grateful for the friendships I've made. I got to crown RaeAnn when I was Miss Cisne Reunion in 2022, and she became Miss Cisne Reunion in 2023. It was special to be in the pageant with her."

With hundreds of spectators in attendance, Smith said the event never felt like a competition but rather a shared experience full of support and camaraderie.

"It honestly didn't feel like competition to any of us. We saw it as a fun and memorable experience. We weren't focused on who would win the crown—we were just happy for each other. Even on stage, we were proud of whoever won and of everyone's efforts. We all did amazing."

Looking ahead, Smith is pursuing a degree in nursing. She has already begun taking summer classes at Frontier and has her sights set on a career in healthcare.

"This fall, I'll be in the registered nursing program and plan to complete it in 2027. I'm still deciding whether to pursue my bachelor's and master's degrees, which I would likely do online. Ultimately, I hope to work close to home, possibly at a local doctor's office."

She also shared her appreciation for her college experience so far.

"I'm grateful to Frontier Community College. It honestly feels like high school in the best way—everyone is kind, and my instructors have all been great. It's been a wonderful experience at FCC."

As the newly crowned Miss Wayne County Fair Queen, Smith received a crown, sash, plaque, and a gift, along with a \$1,000 scholarship that will be awarded at the end of her reign. She will now prepare to represent Wayne County at the 2026 Miss Illinois County Fair Queen Pageant, to be held this January at the Crowne Plaza in Springfield. The event will feature more than 70 county fair queens from across the state.



Kadence Smith beams with joy after being crowned Miss Wayne County Fair Queen. She will represent Wayne County at the State competition in January 2026.



Sophomores Olivia Brummer, Camdyn Tappendorf, and Arlissa Sharber are set to help lead the Bobcats this season under Head Coach Chet Snyder. Pictured left to right: Olivia Brummer, Camdyn Tappendorf, Chet Snyder, and Arlissa Sharber.

SHARPENING THE CLAWS: FRESH START, FIERCE FOCUS

A new era of Frontier Community College Bobcats Volleyball is underway as Chet Snyder prepares to lead his first regular season at the helm. Hired in late 2024, Snyder succeeds former head coach Nixie Hnetkovsky and also serves as the Student Life Coordinator on campus. Since arriving at FCC, Snyder has been actively engaged in athletics and has played a key role in enhancing student life at Frontier.

"It's been great! I'm learning something new every day. I'm very grateful for this opportunity and really appreciate being able to work with college students. Coaching has been very time-consuming—building a roster and schedule—but the Student Life part is something I really want to improve on campus. Both roles are very rewarding," Snyder said.

Snyder comes to FCC from Fairfield Community High School, where he became the winningest coach in FCHS history across all sports. He amassed an overall record of 543-210, collected 13 conference titles, six regional championships, and two consecutive sectional titles, while maintaining a remarkable 73% winning percentage—without ever experiencing a losing season. When asked if his high school coaching success will translate into building a strong program at Frontier, Snyder responded:

"I remember the first event I took my FCHS squad to a summer tourney in 2004 at Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville. There were 32 teams there, and we finished 32nd. It doesn't always turn around as quickly as you hope. FCC Volleyball has been around for 10 seasons and has experienced some great moments—not always measured in wins and losses. My success in high

SEPT 2025 UPCOMING EVENTS

1	Campus Closed - Labor Day	
2	Volleyball vs Rend Lake College	6:30
4	Volleyball vs Lincoln Trail College	6:30
5	Volleyball @ ECC Tourney in Union, MO	3 & 5
5	Baseball vs SIC - Scrimmage	
5	High Five Friday at Northside School in Fairfield	
6	Volleyball @ ECC Tourney in Union, MO	11A & 1
9	Baseball @ Parkland - Scrimmage	
10	Volleyball @ Kaskaskia	6:30
12	Volleyball @ Mineral Area College	3
13	Volleyball vs Indian Hills CC @ Mattoon, IL	11:00 A
13	Baseball @ PUMA Classic in Westfield, IN - Scrimmage	
15	Volleyball @ Lake Land College	6:30
16	IECC Board of Trustees Meeting @ FCC	6:15
16	Baseball @ SIC	
17	Volleyball vs SWIC	6:30
17	Constitution Observance Day - Classes in Session	
24	Volleyball vs SIC	6:30
26	Volleyball @ John A. Logan	6:30
26	Softball @ Deaconess SportsPark - Scrimmage	
27	Softball @ Deaconess SportsPark - Scrimmage	
29	Volleyball @ Kaskaskia	6:30

OCT 2025 UPCOMING EVENTS

1	Volleyball @ Wabash Valley College	6:30
3	Volleyball vs Shawnee	4:00
3	Baseball @ USA Stadium Showcase - Scrimmage	
3	Volleyball vs East Central College	8:00
5	Softball @ University of Evansville (DH)	1/3
6	Volleyball @ Rend Lake College	6:30
8	Volleyball @ Lincoln Trail College	6:30
8	Baseball @ Danville CC - Scrimmage	
10	District Faculty & Staff PD Day - No Classes	
10	Volleyball @ SIC	6:30
11	Baseball @ EIU vs Parkland	
11	Softball @ Oakland City University (DH)	12/2
12	Softball @ Kentucky Wesleyan University (DH)	1/3
13	Campuses Closed - Columbus Day	
13	Volleyball vs St. Louis CC	2:00
13	Volleyball vs Vincennes	6:00
15	Volleyball @ Shawnee	6:30
16	Fall Midterm	
17	Baseball @ Vincennes - Scrimmage	
18	Volleyball @ Parkland	TBA
18	Baseball vs Shawnee - Scrimmage	
18	Softball vs Oakland City University (DH)	12/2
20	Volleyball vs Lake Land	6:30
21	Spring Registration Begins	
21	IECC Board of Trustees Meeting @ LTC	
22	Volleyball @ SWIC	6:30
25	Volleyball @ Danville Area CC	11:00 A.M.
25	Baseball @ Fall Fan Fest - Scrimmage	
29	Volleyball vs John A. Logan @ FCHS	6:30
29	Baseball @ John A. Logan - Scrimmage	
30	Baseball vs Vincennes - Scrimmage	

school was fun and meaningful, but this is a whole new ball game. Patience is a must."

With two returning veterans, an experienced transfer, and a talented group of freshmen, the Bobcats aim to make some noise this season and contend for the top spot in Region 24 and the Great Rivers Athletic Conference. Leading the way are returning sophomores Arlissa Sharber (5-10, S/RS) and Olivia Brummer (5-8, OH).

"Both Sharber and Brummer improved a lot in the spring and will provide much-needed leadership to a very, very young roster," Snyder noted.

Among the new faces is 5-10 sophomore transfer Camdyn Tappendorf (S), who joined the Bobcats from Rend Lake College.

"Camdyn transferred at the beginning of the spring semester and played the spring season with us. She's a talented setter who worked extremely hard in the gym and has stepped in as a great leader for our team."

The remaining roster is filled out by 13 freshmen from across the region, state, country, and even internationally.

Local players include Sarah McCorkle (5-8, S) from Mt. Carmel; Tinlea Webb (5-3, DS) from Hamilton County; Bria Beals (5-8, OH) from Effingham; Riley Roark (5-4, DS) from Carmi; and Avery Wolfe (5-5, DS) from Marion. Also from Illinois—but outside the immediate area—are Elliana Ames (5-11, MH/RS) from Columbia and Annika Van Heemst (5-9, OH/DS) from Kankakee.

From beyond state lines are Jenna Abusharbain (6-1, MH/RS) from St. Louis, Missouri; high school teammates Evan Polsgrove (5-10, OH) and Cassidy King (6-0, MH/RS) from Brookland, Arkansas; and Ylayna Olivera Rivera (5-10, MH) from Puerto Rico.

The two international players are Lily Spark (5-9, OH) from New Zealand and Mariana Garcia Gomez (5-7, DS) from Colombia, South America.

With few returning players and a roster loaded with newcomers getting their first taste of NJCAA



Several freshman Bobcats are ready to make their NJCAA volleyball debut on the road against Vincennes on Saturday, August 23. Their first home match will be School Spirit Night on Wednesday, August 27, when they host Wabash Valley. Pictured left to right: Tinlea Webb, Bria Beals, Cassidy King, Evan Polsgrove, Sarah McCorkle, and Riley Roark.

volleyball, Snyder believes the team is ready to rise to the challenge.

"I honestly feel our roster is talented enough to compete with everyone on our schedule right away. Fans can expect to see a high-energy team that serves tough, plays tenacious defense, and run a fast-paced offense."

Snyder shared that new goals and objectives have been set for this season, both on and off the court.

"Our goals are to find success in both the classroom and on the court. We've never had a winning season, and that's something we'd love to accomplish. Only the top six teams in our region make the

tournament—we want to be one of them.

Personally, I want to grow and learn as a coach. I want every player, whether they're playing a lot or not, to have the best possible experience in our program."

Establishing strong values and a positive culture is a major focus for Snyder, who believes those elements build a foundation of trust, accountability, and teamwork.

"I really want to teach our players that they can do hard things and handle tough situations. Life isn't always easy and doesn't always give us what we want. We live in a self-centered world, but our focus isn't going to be on just winning games. It's going to be about doing our best—every time. Even when we don't

Joining Snyder on the sidelines is Assistant Coach Kera Vinson. She brings years of coaching experience at the junior high, high school, and club levels. Vinson currently serves as the Head Volleyball Coach at Cisne Middle School and previously coached three years at Cisne High School. She's also active in Integrity AAU Volleyball.

"Kera was a home-run hire. I'm thrilled to coach with her. She's a workhorse who's passionate about being a great coach. She's very approachable, and I know she'll offer our players strong guidance on and off the court."



Freshman Lily Spark of Christchurch, New Zealand, proudly displays her nation's flag, the New Zealand Ensign. She is one of two international players on the team, alongside Mariana Garcia-Gomez of Colombia, South America.

Fan support plays a vital role in the success of any athletic program. It fuels team spirit, builds momentum, and creates an atmosphere that motivates student-athletes to perform at their best. A strong, supportive crowd not only energizes players on the court but also strengthens the bond between the college and the community.

During Snyder's time at Fairfield Community High School, volleyball fans regularly packed the stands—creating an electric environment that even featured performances by the high school band at select home games. Now at Frontier, Snyder hopes to see that same enthusiasm carry over to Bobcats Volleyball.

"At FCHS, we built an incredible fan base. Our home crowds were the biggest in southern Illinois, and the Lady Mules fans traveled so well," Snyder said. "That's something we hope to build here at FCC. We're going to put a fun and exciting team on the court each night. I hope people will make their way to the gym and give the girls some support."

The fall 2025 Bobcats Volleyball schedule and roster can be found online at fccbobcats.com. The season begins on Saturday, August 23 at Vincennes. The Bobcats' first home game is Wednesday, August 27 against Wabash Valley College.



FCC HONORS ANNIE ON HER FINAL DAY

On Thursday, August 7, Frontier Community College bid farewell to Annie Lankford on her final day at the college. Faculty and staff gathered in the Learning Commons at Cox Hall to celebrate her nearly 13 years of dedicated service with cake and punch. Annie has now begun a new chapter in the Edwards County School System in Albion.

A successor will be appointed to fill the TRiO Advisor position she previously held.

FCC IN PICTURES



1 A turtle takes a break in the Mason Hall parking lot on July 22.

3 Dr. Sharmila Kakac sands off one of the rails at West Hall during Campus Beautification Day on Friday, August 1.

5 Steve Hnetkovsky responds to a question from a student during his summer class.

2 Holt Gilbert and Jacob Maguire work on extracting DNA from strawberries in Steve Hnetkovsky's class.

4 The basic floor plan and west elevation of the future athletic facility are now on display at FNB and on campus.

6 Angel Maguire shares a smile ahead of the Adult Education Graduation ceremony on July 18.