

illuminate



VANDERBILT
People, Culture and Belonging

Vol 2.1

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EDITOR'S REFLECTION

Recently, while reading *Still Possible*, a collection of poems by David Whyte, I found myself reflecting on the power of silver linings—the unexpected gifts hidden within life's challenges. Life rarely unfolds as planned, and though certain moments may feel overwhelming, they often hold opportunities for growth—if we choose to see them.

At Vanderbilt, we call these [Moments That Matter](#)—the small yet meaningful experiences that remind us we're in this together. *The Vanderbilt Way* is more than a phrase; it's a mindset. It's how we support one another, find strength in our shared purpose, and transform challenges into steppingstones.

When things don't go as expected, a conversation, a kind word, or even a shared laugh can make all the difference. Our relationships sustain us, reminding us that we're never alone on this journey. Some of the greatest opportunities arise from the most unexpected places. By facing uncertainty with an open mind, we adapt, grow, and discover possibilities we never imagined. When we align ourselves with something greater than our individual paths, obstacles become catalysts for change rather than barriers. At Vanderbilt, our mission is not just about what we do—it's about *why* we do it and the lasting impact we create.

We may not have all the answers, but we have each other. Together, we grow, support, and inspire—turning challenges into defining moments that shape us for the better. At Vanderbilt, we continue to grow, support, and inspire—turning challenges into moments that shape us for the better.

As we move forward, let's seek out the silver linings, embrace the unexpected, and create more *Moments That Matter*—for ourselves, for one another, and for the future we are building together.

It's our moment!

Sydney Savion

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Celebrating the excellence of Vanderbilt staff.



Mia Abernathy, Associate Director School of Medicine: Basic Sciences

Mia began working at VU as the Associate Director in School of Medicine: Basic Sciences in March 2024. Learning the everchanging VU policies and processes can be a challenge for new employees but Mia accepted her role and has handled it with grace. She begins each day with a positive attitude, she provides guidance and appreciation for her team, and she truly cares about each individual that she meets.

Submit a nomination for a staff member or team for our Staff Spotlight



Did You Know?

kudos 

Kudos is a digital platform where staff members can recognize and celebrate each other's efforts. With just a few clicks, you can send a personalized message to a colleague, highlight their contributions and share your gratitude for their work and impact. It's quick, meaningful and all about celebrating the moment. [Check out Kudos here.](#)



It's so uplifting to login and see the positive messages shared across teams—it truly brings a sense of connection and belonging here at VU.



-Raven Osa-Oni, VUIT

PROGRAM UPDATES

Dore to Dore Navigators

Join us in congratulating the second cohort of Dore to Dore Navigators. The Navigator program was launched to provide skills and knowledge to lead engaging, effective training sessions that support the professional development of colleagues here at VU.

The Navigators recently completed the Association for Talent Development (ATD) certification program and are on their way to partnering with PCB to deliver various programs across campus.



Pictured left to right:

- *1st row: Steven Gild, Courtney Hiff-Oelberg, Amber Price, Tawana Marchbanks, Paige Ellenberg, MaryLyn Albritton*
- *2nd row: Peter Nordberg, Elizabeth Taylor, Taylor McFall, Jennifer Knapp, Karen Byrd*
- *3rd row: Meredith Painter, Candis Corley, Michael Payne, Mia Wells*
- *4th row: Brandon Floyd, Amber Payne, Cassanora Lampley, ADT Trainer Jared Douglas*

Snow Day Learning

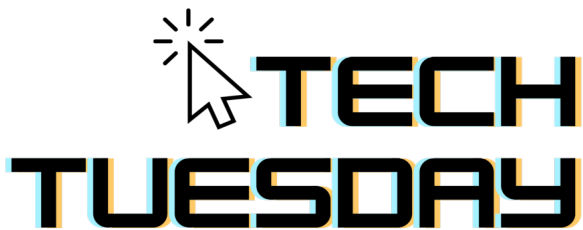
Unlike other kindergarten programs that closed for days, VCFC's Owls Kindergarten program embraced the snowy weather as an opportunity for hands-on, sensory-rich learning indoors and outside. Grateful to the teachers that encourage the development of the Whole Child with these important experiences. If you see us around campus playing you can be sure that we are learning!



FUTURES LEARNING HUB UPDATES

Empower Your Learning Continues This March!

The Futures Learning Hub is thrilled to continue *Tech Tuesday* and *Thrive Thursday* into March! Building on the momentum from February, these sessions will bring together Vanderbilt staff for practical technology insights and meaningful personal and professional development.



What to Expect: Dive into emerging tech trends, discover practical digital tools, and strengthen your technical skills through interactive Q&As.

Who Should Attend: Anyone interested in staying current with rapidly evolving technology, from beginners to more advanced learners.

Why Join

Skill Building: Gain valuable skills to help you excel in your current role or unlock new opportunities.

Community: Connect with colleagues across the university who share a passion for growth and learning.

Accessibility: Each session is designed for a wide range of experience levels and interests.

Mark Your Calendar

Don't miss the chance to spark new ideas and elevate your personal and professional journey this March. Keep an eye on the Futures Learning Hub schedule and join us for the next round of Tech Tuesday and Thrive Thursday events. If you need assistance registering, [please review our job aid](#).

Register for Tech Tuesday & Thrive Thursday Events

Complete a learning course through Futures Learning Hub

At Vanderbilt University, we value professional growth and continuous learning. We want to reward you for your hard work of expanding your skills through Digital Learning Marketplace.

You don't need to **take a specific course** to be eligible for the swag box drawing. Feel free to choose any Digital Learning Marketplace course that aligns with your professional goals! Winners will be announced at Curious Bar the last Wednesday of March, April and May.

Here's How You Can Enter:

1. **Login:** Access the Learning Hub.
2. **Learn:** Complete at least one course of your choice.
3. **Win:** You are automatically entered to our drawing to receive a Vanderbilt Swag Box valued up to \$75!

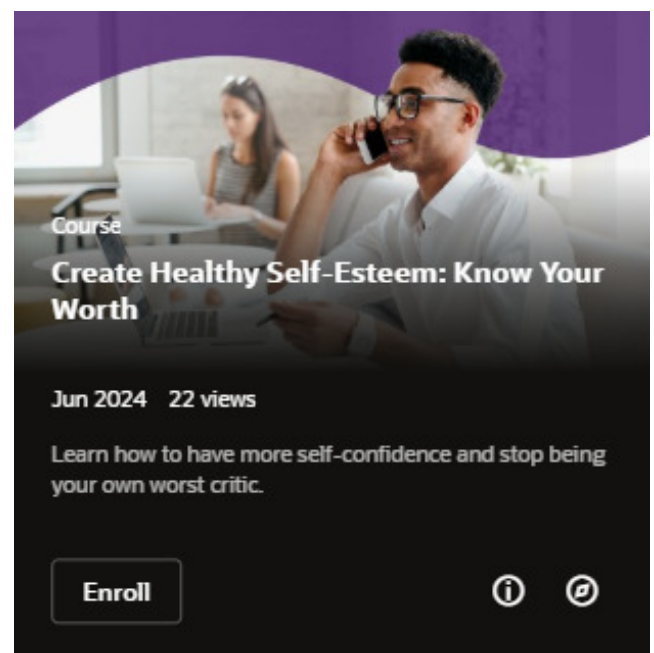
Course of the Month - March 2025

Create Healthy Self-Esteem: Know Your Worth

What you'll learn

Discover ways to appreciate yourself more, become more comfortable with who you are, and recognize the value you have in both your personal and professional life. Instructor TJ Guttormsen shows you how to take back control of your self-esteem. He discusses how to build healthy self-esteem from within yourself by exploring integrity, how to stop disappointing yourself and excusing your success, how to let go when things don't work out, how to accept what you cannot change, and more.

In addition to a general improvement in life quality, higher self-esteem can improve your professional life by helping you know your value during job searches, feel more comfortable taking up more space, going for what you want, handling criticism, and more.



Register for the Course of the Month

THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING CORNER

Celebrate National Nutrition Month with VU Campus Partners & Earn 200 Points in Personify Health

This year's theme is "Food Connects Us." Food is a connecting factor for many of us. Food connects us to our cultures, our families, and our friends. Sharing a meal is an opportunity to learn about its preparation, who made it and where the ingredients were sourced. Health, memories, traditions, seasons, and access can all impact our relationship with food. While these factors influence the foods we eat, the foods we eat also affect our health. Mini expo stations will serve healthy foods and drinks, share more information about Personify Health, offer opportunity for you to learn your recommended daily foods based on your activity level, age, etc., include transportation promotion and provide bike helmets and lights, and more. There will even be a cornhole station for those having time for a quick game.

Campus partners include:

- Vanderbilt Recreation and Wellness Center
- Health, Wellbeing & Belonging
- Campus Dining
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Planner, Transportation & Mobility Office

Personify Health Monthly Webinar Series *Earn 200 Points for Attending!*



Join Amy Silvers, Wellbeing Champion Program Manager, for an engaging Personify Health webinar series designed to help faculty, staff, and postdocs get the most out of this powerful wellbeing platform!

Whether you're new to Personify Health or a long-time user, these sessions will provide a comprehensive walkthrough of the platform's key features, tips for maximizing its benefits, and insights into recent updates and new offerings.

Learn how to personalize your experience, track progress, set goals, and leverage the tools and resources to support your overall health and wellbeing. Don't miss this opportunity to make the most of Personify Health, because health is personal.

Upcoming Sessions:

March 20, 11am-12pm [Register Here](#)

April 17, 11am-12pm [Register Here](#)

May 15, 11am-12pm [Register Here](#)

June 18, 11am-12pm [Register Here](#)

A graphic for a Nutrition Month Mini Expo. It features a dark green background with a grid of orange dots in the top-left and bottom-left corners. The text 'NUTRITION MONTH' is in large, white, bold, sans-serif font, with 'Mini Expo' in a smaller white font below it. To the right of the text is a photograph of fresh produce including peaches, tomatoes, eggplants, and leafy greens. At the bottom, the date and time 'Wednesday, March 5 11:00am - 1:00pm' and the location 'Vanderbilt Recreation & Wellness Center' are listed in white text on a dark green background.

NUTRITION MONTH
Mini Expo

Wednesday, March 5
11:00am - 1:00pm

Vanderbilt Recreation & Wellness Center

Vandy Trivia & Game Night

Mark your calendars for an evening of fun, laughter and friendly competition at Vandy Trivia & Game Night on Mar. 5, 2025, from 4:45 pm to 6:15 pm at Jaspers. This exciting event, open to all faculty and staff, promises an engaging atmosphere where knowledge meets entertainment.

Participants can look forward to challenging trivia questions, lively conversations with colleagues, and the chance to win fantastic door prizes. Whether you're a trivia master or just in it for the fun, this event is designed to bring our Vanderbilt community together and celebrate the vibrant community we share.

Why You Should Join Us:

Vandy Trivia & Game Night is more than just a competition; it's an opportunity to build connections, unwind after a busy day and experience the fellowship that makes Vanderbilt a great place to work.

Event Details:

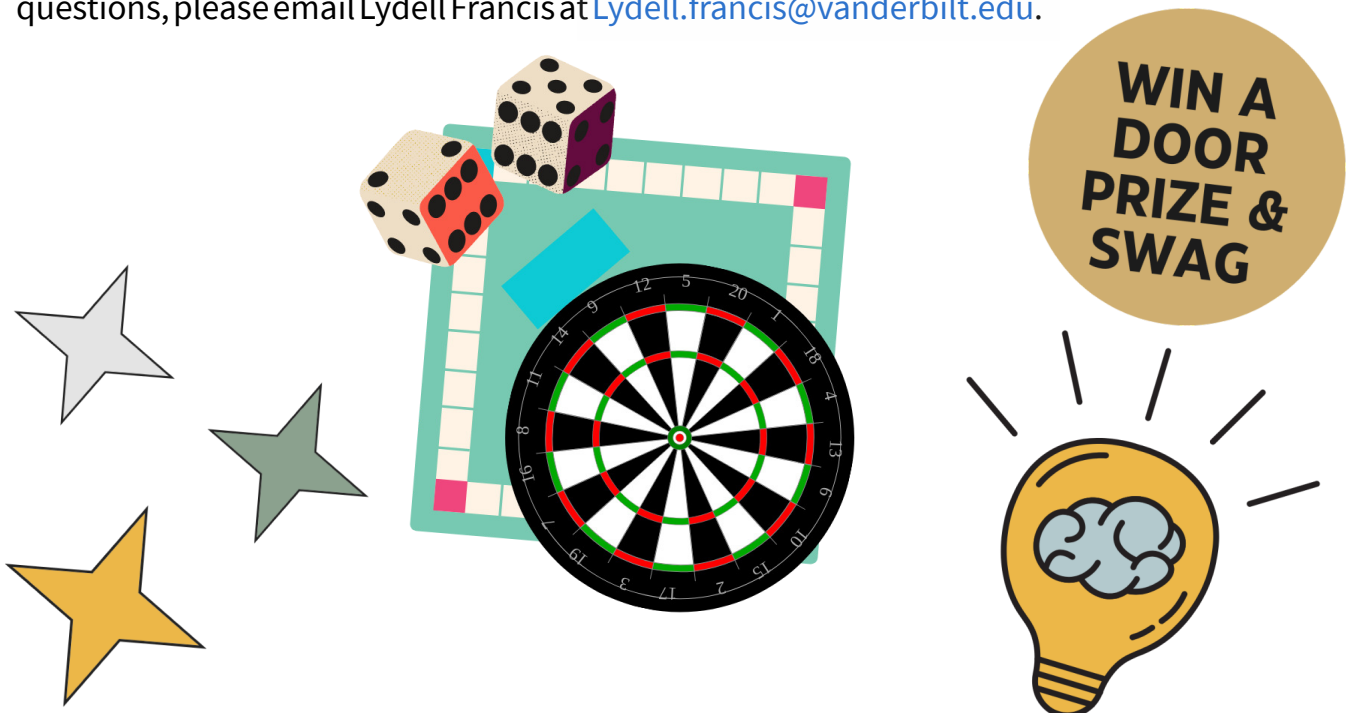
Date: March 5, 2025

Time: 4:45 pm - 6:15 pm

Location: Jaspers, 1918 West End Ave, Nashville, TN 37203

Who's Invited: Vanderbilt faculty and staff

We can't wait to see you there! Save your seat! [RSVP](#) to reserve your spot today! If you have any questions, please email Lydell Francis at Lydell.francis@vanderbilt.edu.



UPCOMING EVENTS AND LAUNCHES

Celebrate National Employee Appreciation Day with coffee and connection!

Join us in celebrating National Employee Appreciation Day on **March 7 from 8AM to 10AM at Fleming Yard by Alumni Lawn/Rand Dining Center.**

This special event is our way of saying thank you for your hard work, dedication, and contributions to Vanderbilt University. Enjoy a delicious cup of coffee from **Proverbial Cup**, a local favorite known for its exceptional brews and warm service.

As a token of our appreciation, the first 500 employees to arrive with their Vanderbilt ID will receive a Vanderbilt coffee mug to take home. This event is an opportunity to take a break, connect with colleagues and feel celebrated for all you do. Whether you're stopping by for a quick cup or staying to mingle, we can't wait to see you there and show our gratitude.



Nominations for 2025 Spring Staff Awards close FEB 28!

The awards recognize the many contributions of university staff to Vanderbilt's core goals and mission. The winners of each award will be announced at the third annual Spring Staff Assembly on May 15.

The Spring Staff Awards include longtime university awards, including the Commodore Award and the Belonging Excellence Award, along with newer awards, such as the Vanderbilt Early Impact Award and the One Vanderbilt Excellence Award.

Nominations can be submitted by staff, students, faculty or postdoctoral scholars via the online nomination form through **Friday, Feb 28**. Please see the [staff awards website](#) for nomination guidelines and award amounts.

VU SUMMER CAMPS FOR 2025

Summer is just around the corner, and Vanderbilt University is offering a wide-ranging variety of summer camps and programs for kids. From athletics to academics and arts, there is something for everyone to enjoy and learn—all within Vanderbilt’s supportive and enriching environment.

Academics, Creative Arts & Athletics

[Vanderbilt Summer Academy](#) at Peabody College of education and human development serves academically advanced students in rising grades 7–12 in one-week and two-week residential opportunities. VSA provides students an accelerated summer experience grounded in academic rigor, while also fostering a strong sense of community and friendship. The majority of VSA courses are taught by Vanderbilt faculty and graduate students.

[Summer Academy](#) at Vanderbilt for the Young at Peabody College is tailored for gifted and high-achieving students in rising grades 1–6. SAVY provides an intellectually vibrant environment where young minds can delve into numerous academic subjects and cultivate their passion for knowledge. Six options for full-day, weeklong classes are available.

[Career Connections](#) at Peabody College is a program within SAVY that offers rising seventh and eighth grade students the opportunity to explore specific fields of study through immersive classes led by college professors, graduate students, industry experts and master educators. Students experience how expert knowledge and skills are applied in

different fields, industries and/or research. Three options for full-day, weeklong classes are available.

[Vanderbilt Lacrosse](#) provides a middle school camp for rising grades 5–8 focusing on skills, position play and team concepts. Two camp options are also available for rising grades 8–12. The Elite Camp is designed for experienced players who want to take their game to the next level, while the Goalie Clinic focuses on skills and concepts specific to the goalie position.

[Vanderbilt Tennis](#) offers four weeklong camps for kids ages 7–17 at all skill levels. Campers will work on fundamentals, compete in singles and doubles matches and participate in fun games for skill development. A discount is available to Vanderbilt employees.

[Vanderbilt Golf](#) gives kids the opportunity to have fun and become better golfers. This two-day weekend camp is open to boys and girls ages 10–17 of any skill level. Campers receive instruction from the Vanderbilt men’s and women’s golf coaches on fundamentals, technique, rules and etiquette.



[Check out the full list of offerings here.](#)

CULTIVATING CONNECTION:

Breaking Silos and Fostering Collaboration at Vanderbilt

In today's academic environments, collaboration is not just a buzzword—it's a necessity. At Vanderbilt University, we recognize that the most innovative ideas and impactful solutions emerge when individuals and teams across disciplines, departments and roles come together. That's why we are committed to **cultivating connection**, ensuring that networking and cross-campus collaboration are embedded into our institutional culture.

The Challenge of Silos

Organizational silos—where teams or departments operate in isolation—can unintentionally stifle creativity, limit resource-sharing and reduce efficiency. In a university as dynamic as Vanderbilt, it is essential to break down these barriers to unlock the full potential of our talented faculty and staff. By fostering a culture that prioritizes connectivity and collaboration, we can drive innovation, enhance professional development and create a more cohesive campus experience.

The Power of Networking

Networking is often associated with career growth, but it's about much more than that. It's about building relationships that drive change, inspire learning and create opportunities for impactful partnerships. Through formal and informal networking opportunities, our faculty and staff can:

- Exchange knowledge and expertise across departments.
- Identify collaborations that lead to interdisciplinary projects.
- Strengthen professional development through mentorship and shared experiences.
- Develop innovative solutions by tapping into different perspectives.

How We're Fostering Connection at Vanderbilt

Vanderbilt is actively investing in initiatives that bring people together, ensuring collaboration is not just encouraged but structured for success:

- **Futures Learning Hub:** A digital learning marketplace designed to enhance professional development and foster a culture of shared learning.
- **Kudos Employee Appreciation Platform:** Encouraging peer recognition to strengthen workplace relationships and a culture of support.
- **Curious Bar:** Providing personalized support and assistance related to areas within PCB.
- **Virtual Curious Bar:** Open office hour opportunities for staff to connect with PCB leadership, ensuring open dialogue.

A Call to Action: Engage, Collaborate and Thrive

Collaboration is not just about productivity—it's about creating a thriving workplace where every individual feels valued and empowered. We encourage all faculty and staff to actively seek out networking opportunities, participate in cross-campus initiatives and share their insights with colleagues. By working together, we can break down silos, foster innovation and elevate Vanderbilt as a model of connected collaboration.

connect with us



vanderbilt.edu/pcb



110 21st Ave S Suite 1000
Baker Building



pcb@vanderbilt.edu



Curious Bar
Check website for location



Virutal Curious Bar
2nd and 4th Wednesdays

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