



NEXT STEPS AT VANDERBILT

ANNUAL REPORT: 2022 - 2023

*On the city's western border
Reared against the sky
Proudly stands our Alma Mater
As the years roll by.*

*Forward ever be thy watchword,
Conquer and Prevail.
Hail to thee our Alma Mater,
Vanderbilt, All Hail!*

*Cherished by thy sons and daughters,
Thy mem'ries sweet shall throng
Round our hearts, O Alma Mater,
As we sing our song.*



VANDERBILT
Peabody College
Next Steps

TABLE OF CONTENTS



2 / DIRECTOR'S CORNER

3 / ABOUT US

4 / TAMMY DAY & ELISE MCMILLAN

5 / HIGHLIGHTS

6 / INCLUSIVE ACADEMICS

8 / SENIOR CELEBRATION

9 / COMMENCEMENT

10 / SAIL / DISABILITY DAY ON THE HILL

13 / CAMPUS LIFE

14 / CAREER DEVELOPMENT

18 / STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

19 / RESIDENTIAL LIFE

20 / YOUR GIFT MATTERS

22 / SUMMER INSTITUTE / CLASS OF 2027

24 / ALUMNI UPDATES

26 / GALLERY

28 / PARTNERSHIPS

29 / STAFF



Pictured:
Bailey Duncan, Class of 2026 (Above)
Connor Bosse, Class of 2023 (Below)

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

A message from Dr. Ariana Amaya, OTD, OTR/L

I am absolutely thrilled to join Next Steps at Vanderbilt as the Director and lead a dynamic and innovative staff in facilitating authentic, inclusive, and excellent experiences in academics, social belonging and career development for students. I am excited to be back in Nashville to continue the great work that Next Steps has done in the field of inclusive higher education and to expand inclusive offerings for neurodiverse students. I am an advocate for inclusion and for supporting students in pursuing and actualizing their passions and dreams. I look forward to continuing to customize the student experience, expand inclusive experiences, innovate national best practices, and maintain Next Steps' position as a leader in the field.

Students' lives are transformed through going to college, and the impact can be seen in the stories and experiences highlighted in this report. It is amazing to see the ways that current students, alumni, and Ambassa'Dores are creating ripple effects of inclusion in their communities and leading meaningful lives and roles both on and off campus.

I am looking forward to growing and connecting with the Next Steps and Vanderbilt community!

Ariana Amaya

Dr. Ariana Amaya, OTD, OTR/L



About Us

Next Steps at Vanderbilt is a nationally-recognized inclusive higher education program at Vanderbilt University. The four-year program supports neurodiverse college students to participate in the breadth of learning and living activities that comprise a typical undergraduate experience—coursework, extracurricular activities, service projects, recreational endeavors, internships, employment, and residential experiences. Since 2010, we have evolved into one of the leading programs in the country and the very first at a top-15 university. Our students are thriving on campus and graduating to a future of flourishing in the workplace and in their communities.



Kristal Orta Martinez (M.A. Ed.) and Annabel Hines (Class of 2024) enjoying pumpkin carving.

ACADEMICS

Students audit Vanderbilt courses. Each student takes 1-2 courses per semester and has a learning agreement that addresses how their involvement is supported. Over 200 faculty have had students from Next Steps at Vanderbilt participate in their classes.

Malik Shelton and Ray Malcolm, Class of 2026, working on a group assignment



CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Our career-related programming is driven by each student's interests, future career plans, strengths, and identified needs. Every semester of their program, students participate in job shadowing experiences, internships, or on and off-campus jobs designed to prepare them for a meaningful, paid career after graduation.

Erik Cohen, Class of 2025, smiling for his internship at Peabody Library



CAMPUS LIFE

Students participate in the wide range of student organizations, service groups, and campus activities available to Vanderbilt students. In addition, they are involved in orientation activities and Vanderbilt Visions during their first year.

Ali Augustyn (front center), Class of 2023, enjoying a moment with her sorority sisters



THANK YOU AND HAPPY RETIREMENT

TAMMY DAY, M.Ed

We celebrated our fearless leader of nearly 14 years, Tammy Day, this December as she entered retirement.

Tammy has had a remarkable and influential career. Tammy Day joined the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center in April 2009, as the founding director of Next Steps at Vanderbilt. Tammy began her career over 37 years ago as a special education teacher who was always interested in the question, "What happens after high school?" This interest inspired her to pursue certification as a Work-Based Learning facilitator master's degree from Peabody College at Vanderbilt with a focus on transition services. Prior to joining Vanderbilt, she worked for Rutherford County Schools as a special education teacher and then as the high school liaison and transition specialist, where she developed many new initiatives.

Tammy worked tirelessly with creative professionals and students both on and off the Vanderbilt campus in the development of our successful inclusive higher education program. She has expanded these college opportunities across our state and country and established Next Steps as an innovative leader within the field for emerging programs to model after.

While we are saddened to see Tammy go, her influence and impact have created a strong foundation for Next Steps and the field of inclusive higher education. Her vision has given life to our students' dreams and opportunities, and her abundance of humility, kindness, and gentle leadership have opened doors for this program to continue to expand and create lasting impacts for years to come.



ELISE MCMILLAN, JD

We also celebrated the retirement of Elise McMillan on June 30, 2023. With over 20 years of experience, Elise McMillan led programs and projects that provide essential support to individuals with intellectual and developmental disability, as well as their families and communities. Her leadership extends to numerous national, state, and community disability organizations, including The Arc of Tennessee, the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities, Disability Law and Advocacy Center Of Tennessee, and the Tennessee Disability Coalition.

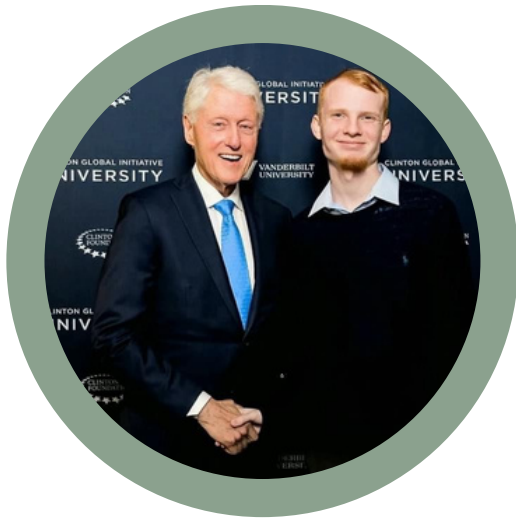
As Co-Director of the Kennedy Center's UCEDD, she has diligently overseen daily operations and lent her expertise to assist area coordinators and directors of core functions in planning and implementation. Elise has actively engaged in leadership roles with Tennessee Works, Tennessee Disability Pathfinder, and Next Steps at Vanderbilt, showcasing her dedication to promoting inclusive and accessible opportunities.

Elise was a foundational person in the movement of inclusive higher education and the development of the program of Next Steps at Vanderbilt, expanding the legislature and funding opportunities, and in establishing the TN Inclusive Higher Education Alliance.

The community is immensely grateful for Elise's valuable contributions. She remains actively involved in Next Steps at Vanderbilt, serving on the Advisory Board, attending graduations, and actively participating in panel discussions. Her dedication to the cause is personal as well, as her son Will attended Next Steps and successfully graduated in 2013, further solidifying her commitment to the program.



HIGHLIGHTS



CLINTON GLOBAL INITIATIVE UNIVERSITY

Raymond Malcolm, a SAIL scholar, participated with his Ambassa'Dore in the Clinton Global Initiative held at Vanderbilt University. Ray worked alongside a community of young leaders dedicated to discovering innovative solutions to the world's most critical challenges and issues.



COMMODORE CITIZENSHIP AWARD

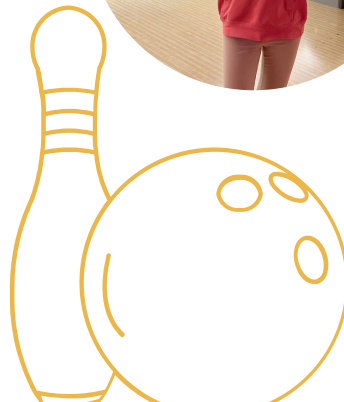
Lydia Young and Ben Ellis received the inaugural Commodore Citizenship Award for their dedication to their work, making them both exemplary Vanderbilt students. Lydia and Ben both have demonstrated excellence in citizenship, leadership, and character.

Congratulations!

STUDENT MIXER WITH TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY AND LIPSCOMB UNIVERSITY



Students enjoying bowling on "Fun Day!" to celebrate the end of the semester!



INCLUSIVE ACADEMICS

And the Curtain Rises... A Theatrical Vanderbilt Course Experience

“Working with Matthew Gang was an absolute delight. He came in to class every day eager to learn and eager to share. My specialization is the Suzuki Method of Actor Training, a psychophysical approach created by renowned theatre director Tadashi Suzuki, which is designed to align an actor’s mind and body. It is also a method that builds stamina, focus and the allowance of deeper impulse and inspiration through rigorous physical exercises reminiscent of the Noh Theatre and Kabuki.

This stuff isn’t easy, and Matthew entered into the work with enthusiasm. He was game and always volunteered to present his monologues and scenes to the class. He took direction like a champ and incorporated notes. He was an all around fun student to have in class that his classmates loved!”

-Professor Rene Millan (Lecturer in Theatre; Vanderbilt University)



Matthew Gang and fellow VU student's performance at the Neely Auditorium

New Inclusive Vanderbilt Courses

Laughable - The Science of Humor

Small Group Behavior

Acting 1

A History of Nashville During the Civil War

The Science of Flavor

Gender and Leadership

21

New Faculty

80

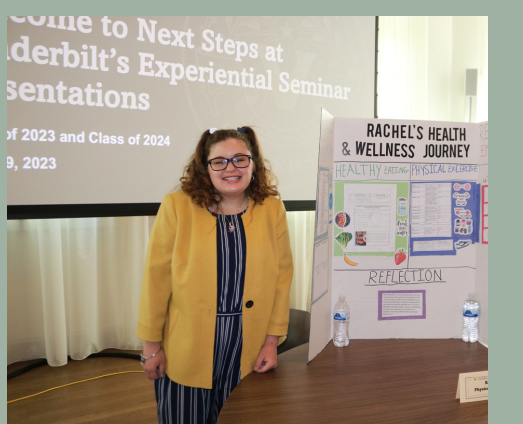
Vanderbilt
Courses

12

New Courses



INCLUSIVE ACADEMICS



Rachel Williams - Health and Wellness

A Look into Experiential Seminars...

Each semester, juniors and seniors complete an independent study on topics of interest and/or skills to learn. With support from an Experiential Seminar tutor, students become experts in their topics and gain valuable employability skills and greater independence.

At the end of the semester, students present their project to fellow classmates, students, family and friends. At this presentation, students answer questions about their experience, skills learned, and how this knowledge can help them become successful in the future.

Way to go, Class of 2023 and Class of 2024 for a job well done!



Matthew Martin-Bradley - Cooking and Meal Preparation



Rachel Sarubbi - Opening up a Bakery



Andres Angarita - Money Management



SENIOR CELEBRATION

Pictured Left to Right: Rachel Williams, Tanav Kaza, Ben Ellis, Sophie Kaiser, and Sam Van Ert

It's always bittersweet to send off our graduating seniors into life beyond Vanderbilt University! We are thankful that we can reflect on the last four years with our Class of 2023 during the Next Steps Senior Celebration. During this event, we had the honor of having the Associate Professor and Chair from the Department of Special Education, Joe Wehby, and Senior Associate Dean from the Office of the Dean, Sharon Shields, open up the event with words of sincere gratitude and congratulations. In addition, we heard from Ambassa'Dore Co-Presidents, Sophie Kaiser and Sam Van Ert, who shared their reflections and encouragement for the Class of 2023. The star speaker was our own Class of 2023 graduate, Rachel Williams, who gave a passionate Senior speech that moved the entire audience. Then, Elise McMillan took the time to close out our celebration by speaking of the seniors' resiliency and excellence in all their endeavors in the past four years. Erik Cohen, Class of 2025, sang and led our Alma Mater. It was a beautiful, intentional, and all-encompassing celebration for all those who have poured into the lives of our eight graduating seniors. We wish them a meaningful and exciting new chapter of life after college.



Pictured Left to Right: Mac Al Awadi, Ali Augustyn, Connor Bosse, Ben Ellis, Tanav Kaza, Nathan O'Neal, Rachel Williams, and Lydia Young

COMMENCEMENT



Pictured Left to Right: Dr. Lauren Bethune-Dix, Ali Augustyn, Lydia Young, Mac Al Awadi, Connor Bosse, Tanav Kaza, Rachel Williams, Ben Ellis, and Nathan O'Neal

On May 12th, the Bridgestone Arena in Nashville was filled with anticipation and excitement as Vanderbilt University celebrated its graduation ceremony. Graduates, families, and faculty members gathered to honor the accomplishments of the Class of 2023 and prepare for the next steps in their journeys. Among them were our very own 2023 Next Steps at Vanderbilt Graduates!

Vanderbilt University Chancellor Daniel Diermeier and esteemed faculty delivered inspiring speeches, reflected on the graduates' achievements, and offered words of wisdom for their future endeavors. The ceremony was a testament to the hard work, dedication, and resilience of the students, as well as the support provided by the university throughout their academic journeys.

As our very own graduates walked across the stage, the crowd cheered so loudly that their cheers could be heard from outside the arena. We know these cheers are a culmination of support from VU students, families, and Next Steps advocates who have supported our students and this program from the beginning.

Class of 2023 - Your resilience and passion will not be forgotten! Congratulations!

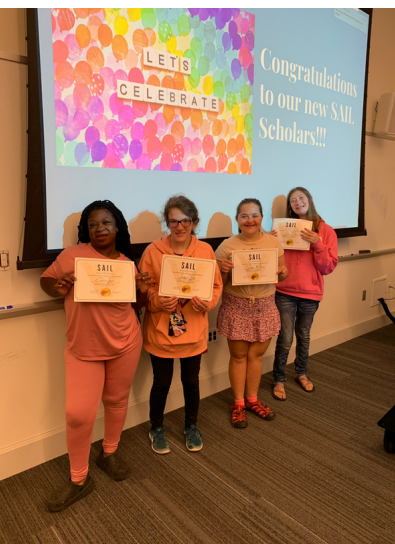


SAIL

SELF-ADVOCATES IN LEADERSHIP



Next Steps at Vanderbilt was awarded Tennessee Believes funding to expand the quality, impact, and reach of the Next Steps at Vanderbilt’s program of study for college students with neurodiversity. This funding has allowed for us to develop a Self-Advocates in Leadership concentration where students receive a SAIL credential at completion of the program. This new SAIL concentration began in the Fall 2022 semester with seven students. During this inaugural year, we developed a SAIL logic model that helped us to identify the activities needed to make the greatest impact and produce rich outcomes for our SAIL scholars. We held informational interviews with current students enrolled through Next Steps and program alumni to capture their reflections on what leadership means to them and the importance of both advocacy and self-advocacy in daily life. From this, we crafted our SAIL mission statement along with our program objectives and competencies. The SAIL concentration has greatly impacted aspects of the Next Steps program and community in many positive ways.



This year, SAIL scholars have strengthened their leadership skills by learning to be effective communicators, gaining skills in problem-solving and professional reliability, and having a better understanding of their own preferences, strengths, interests, and needs. The impact is not only present on a student-level but can be seen community-wide. SAIL has partnered with 17 Vanderbilt campus partners (e.g., the Department of Human and Organizational Development, Peabody College Library Sciences, the Peabody Office for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Peabody Office of Student Engagement and Wellbeing, Vanderbilt’s State Government Relations), and 14 community partners (e.g., Metro Nashville Schools, Director of Programs for TN Titans, State Capitol). These partners have shared that SAIL is empowering and meaningful and that they are excited to be involved in this endeavor. We cannot wait to see what our second year of SAIL brings!

“ I advocated for myself to stand up for others; self-advocates stand up for others with disabilities. ”
- **Courtnie Taylor (SAIL Scholar)**



20

Partnerships Formed

15

Speeches delivered by SAIL scholars

8

Vanderbilt University Course Involvement

DISABILITY DAY ON THE HILL



CAMPUS LIFE



141

Ambassa'Dores from 31 Majors



ZETA TAU ALPHA

“

I loved going through recruitment and getting to join a sorority. All the girls made me feel so special. I joined Zeta because they really wanted me and made me feel included. Here is a picture at Bid Day with my good friend, Sadie Sherman. Thanks to Zeta I have been involved in pledge class activities, Big Man on campus, and Big / Little sister events. I cannot wait to see my sisters in August and build some new memories. Go ZTA!

- Grace Dodd (Class of 2024)

”

DISABILITY AWARENESS

EVENTS



Kai Jamison, Class of 2025, and Kristen Romines, Class of 2026, speaking at a Disability Awareness Event.

“Throughout the month of March, Next Steps Ambassa'Dores worked with multiple other campus organizations to host and sponsor events that focused on educating the Vanderbilt community about disability rights and celebrating the accomplishments of those with disabilities. We provided an opportunity for many students in Next Steps to get involved and discuss what disability awareness means to them. Our first event was a screening of Crip Camp, which Ambassa'Dores hosted with SAIL (Self-Advocates in Leadership). At this event, we had a panel discussion following the screening where students in SAIL had the opportunity to share their thoughts on the movie and create connections to Disability Awareness month. We were also able to table at the Spread the Word event, hosted by Best Buddies. At this event, two students, Jeremiah Whitehead and Kai Jamison, spoke about what disability awareness means to them and how they have found a community on campus. At the end of the month, we had our biggest event which was a Next Steps Disability Awareness Month Celebration. Many SAIL Scholars led games and gave speeches which both educated people about disability rights/organizations while also giving students a chance to share why disability awareness is important to them and how Next Steps has impacted them. Through these events, we hope that we were able to make an impact by creating a more inclusive environment on campus and beyond.”

-Abby Hopper (Class of 2025), Long Term Partnership and Training Chair, Ambassa'Dores

CAMPUS LIFE



CAREER DEVELOPMENT



Class of 2026 and the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD)

The career development program of study assists students in developing the skills and experiences necessary for a successful transition into competitive, paid employment upon graduation. The career development four-year scope of study provides students with coursework, hands-on internships, and work experiences to develop the following competencies*: professionalism, critical thinking, communication, teamwork, technology, leadership, career and self-development, and equity and inclusion. Upon completion of the program, students will have identified a career interest related to their skills, developed a resume of varied work experience, and cultivated and refined their workplace skills.

*Based on the National Association of Colleges and Employers' Career Readiness Competencies

“

My internship supervisor helped me learn that I am a hard worker, I am really nice, and I am mature.

- Erik Cohen, Class of 2025

”

“

At my internship at Rand Post Office, I was in an environment of diverse people from different cultures. I learned so much from my team members and as a person as well over lunch, getting to know them and why they enjoy what they are doing. I felt like I really understood what was going on, we all worked together as a team. Even though it was a new environment, they were patient with my learning differences so I could ease into the position. I felt more independent with this job than before!

-Phillip Porter, Class of 2024

”

“

Being a job coach for Next Steps helped me to feel really connected to Vanderbilt my first year. I loved learning from all of the students, job coaches, and other Next Steps staff. It also gave me the opportunity to work in settings and with populations I wouldn't have worked with otherwise.

-Erin Cantor, Vanderbilt Graduate Student in Special Education with the Applied Behavior Analysis add-on

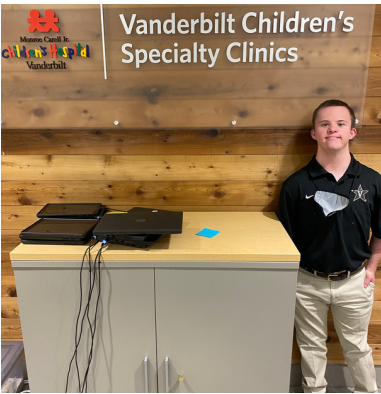
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Bailey ('26) preparing for a baseball game at her internship with Vanderbilt Athletics Marketing



Malik ('26) cleaning art supplies at his internship at Sarratt Art Studios



Michael ('26) at his internship at the Down Syndrome Clinic



Rachel ('24) at her job at Biscuit Love.

46 Internship Sites

11 New Sites

14 Students Paid by Internship Sites

10 Students Paid through MAC WIOA* Funding

6 Industry Tours

9 Career Exploration Sites

5 Graduate Job Coaches

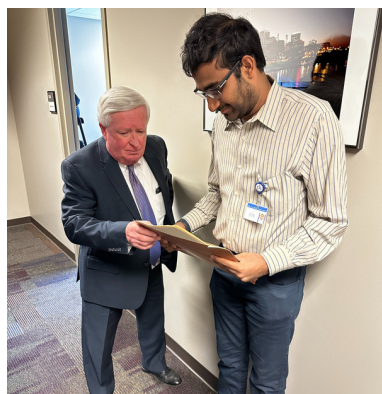
6 Undergraduate Job Coaches

*Federal Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act funding

“ In the field of childcare, we need teachers that are eager and passionate about their work. And I must say, Ms. Courtnie is what we need in this field. ”
- Whitney Nash, Lead Teacher at The Acorn School (Mentor teacher for Courtnie Taylor, Class of 2025)



Andres ('24) running the front desk check-in at the YMCA



Tanav ('23) talking with colleagues at the District Attorney's Office

JOURNEY TO EMPLOYMENT

During their four years in Next Steps, the students in the class of 2023 explored their career paths and passions. Though their interests vary, all the students have worked hard to gain the skills needed to step into employment after graduation. Here are a few stories about the Class of 2023's employment paths.



Lydia Young explored internships in the business and government sectors, working in places like the Davidson County Clerk's Office and the Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Lydia was a member of the Vanderbilt Dance Team and was an integral member of Vanderbilt Athletics by dancing at various Vanderbilt athletic games and events. When planning for after graduation, Lydia expressed interest in working in government or a sports/athletic setting since she greatly enjoyed her internships and campus life experiences. Using a connection from a previous internship, Lydia applied to and accepted a role working over 32 hours per week with Centennial Sportsplex as a Central Aide and Social Media Coordinator. Centennial Sportsplex is a part of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville & Davidson County. Additionally, Lydia began working part-time with Nashville Soccer Club Street Team. In her role, she engages with NSC fans at home games and community events. Lydia has greatly enjoyed this role as it offers her the opportunity to engage fans and be part of a team environment, similar to her involvement with the Vanderbilt Dance Team. Both of Lydia's internships and campus life experiences shaped her vision for her future. Her favorite part of her job is getting to meet new people.

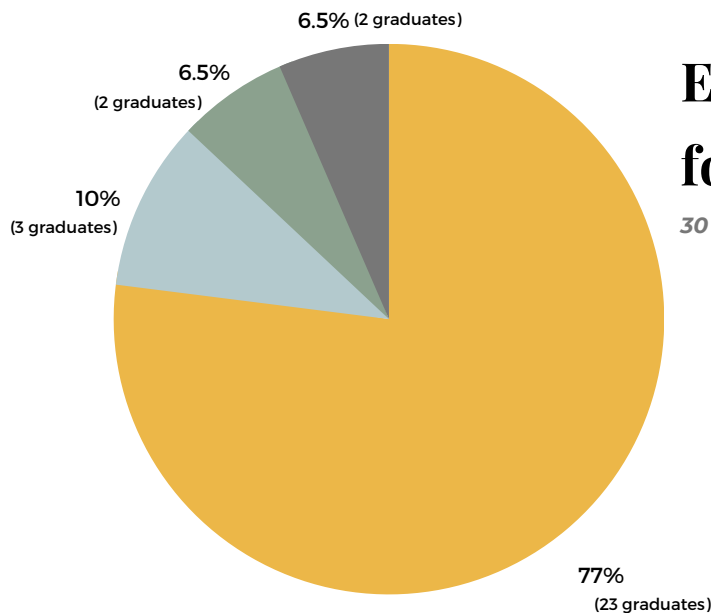
Ben Ellis made the most of his internship experiences during his time at Vanderbilt. Throughout his four years in the program, he interned with The Wond'ry, Transition Tennessee, the Frist Center for Autism, Long Hunter State Park, Rand Post Office, and UPS. He started college thinking that he wanted to work in video production and realized throughout his internships that he liked having hands-on roles where he can move around and be creative. He also learned that he values being a part of a supportive team. For the entirety of Ben's junior year, he interned at Long Hunter State Park. He completed tasks like folding maps, filling map kiosks, posting event materials, taking inventory in the gift shop, completing light park maintenance, creating social media posts for the park, and greeting customers in the gift shop. For Ben's senior year, he wanted to try some work in the customer service field. Toward the end of his final semester, his supervisor from Long Hunter State Park reached out and shared they would love to have Ben come back and work part-time with their team. They missed the work ethic and creativity he brought to the team. They carved out a role for him, and he is now working at the park 2-3 days per week. Ben's favorite part of his new job is the people. He loves his coworkers and getting to meet new people when they come into the park.





Rachel Williams has always wanted to work with children. After completing an internship at Station Camp Elementary School, she applied to and began the Early Childhood Education Apprenticeship through Next Steps at Vanderbilt at The Acorn School. During the apprenticeship, Rachel learned skills like classroom ecology, classroom management, planning and leading reading, writing, and math activities in the Pre-K and Kindergarten classrooms, and modeling compassionate behavior for children. Rachel completed the apprenticeship program in May 2023, earning her Early Childhood Educator credential from the U.S. Department of Labor. After graduation, Rachel was offered a full-time Assistant Teacher position at The Acorn School and recently began her new role. Rachel's favorite part about working at The Acorn School has been working with the kids and seeing them develop and become independent.

Other graduates from the Class of 2023 are also excited for life and work after graduation with jobs at the Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Home Depot, and Cheekwood Golf Club lined up. Others are continuing their learning through trainings like the ISACA Computing Fundamentals program or are exploring job opportunities in human resources, IT, and office services. We are excited to see how all of the graduates continue to grow and use the skills they have learned at Vanderbilt in their careers!



Employment Outcome Data for 4-Year Graduates

30 Total Graduates

- Paid, competitive employment
- Completing training or volunteer experiences
- Seeking new paid employment opportunity
- Not currently seeking paid employment

CLASS OF 2023

6 of 8 graduates working in paid positions within a month of graduation

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Meet Matthew Martin-Bradley,
Class of 2024

"I HAVE MADE SO MANY GOOD FRIENDS DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS AND LOOK FORWARD TO STAYING IN TOUCH WITH THEM AFTER GRADUATION"

My name is Matthew Martin-Bradley, and I am in the Next Steps program at Vanderbilt University, Class of 2024. I am originally from San Diego and moved with my family to Franklin, Tennessee in 2005. My favorite activities are swimming, running, playing basketball, watching sporting events, and getting together with friends. I have also enjoyed working at Brixz Pizza and Taziki's Cafe in Franklin since I was a senior in high school. These jobs have been a good experience for me, and I have especially enjoyed meeting and getting to know my co-workers and customers. The internships I have had over the past few years through Next Steps have allowed me to learn about jobs I might be interested in. I worked with the Vanderbilt Sports Marketing Department during my sophomore year at football, soccer, and basketball games. I also worked in the dining hall at McGugin Center bussing tables and washing dishes. This past year I have had an internship at the Country Music Hall of Fame in Downtown Nashville. This has been my favorite internship since I love country music and the enjoy all new exhibits they have on display. My jobs so far have been scanning tickets, collecting audio guides, and checking the galleries. The people I have worked with at the Hall of Fame have been nice and helpful. I hope to work at the Hall of Fame again. Being in the Next Steps program has also taught me about independent living skills. Learning to manage time and get around the campus helped me initially. In my sophomore year, I took a class called "Living on Your Own," where I learned about managing money, grocery shopping, cooking, and cleaning. This past year, I had an opportunity to share an apartment near campus with a former Next Steps student. This coming year, I will have my own apartment, and I am really looking forward to becoming more comfortable living independently. Probably the best part of my time at Next Steps is the friends I have made with my fellow students and Ambassa'Dores. It has been so much fun to go to sporting events, work out at the rec center, go to pizza/karaoke parties, and meet for lunch, dinner, and dessert at the Commons or nearby spots! I hope to continue these friendships in the future.

RESIDENTIAL LIFE



As the inclusive higher education sectors grows, so does the need for inclusive residential opportunities. We are so grateful to the Scarritt Bennett Center for their partnership at the Ogburn House. For the 2022-2023 academic year, we had 3 female students experience our pilot residential program. These students lived with our graduate assistants that worked alongside them as they mastered independent living skills near our Peabody campus.

There were many successes with our pilot program, and we have collaboratively identified opportunities for growth to cultivate an inclusive residential space for our students to thrive in. While we implement the changes, we will pause our residential offerings.

We are excited to continue to explore partnerships to create meaningful experiences for students on and off campus.



YOUR GIFT MATTERS



Next Steps at Vanderbilt partners with our extended community to achieve the program's most immediate goals and needs—programming, student scholarships for program participants and graduate students, internship supports, and technology supports. Our success derives not only from the hard work of faculty, staff, and students but also from the supports offered by the wider community.

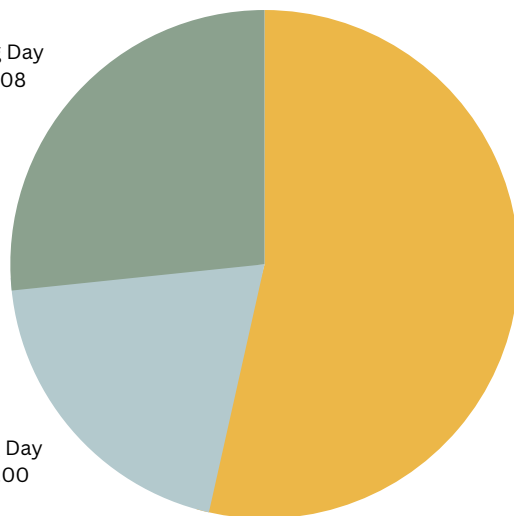
Your contributions directly support students and graduate assistants. Each semester, students enroll in one or two Vanderbilt courses that fit their academic interests, needs, and future goals.

Your contributions help prepare our graduates for meaningful employment. More than 89% of program graduates find paid employment within three months of graduation. This far exceeds national employment rate of 18%. Next Steps graduates have worked at places such as Metro-Davidson District Attorney's Office, Vanderbilt University Bookstore, Home Depot, and more.

Int'l Giving Day
\$30,576.08

VU Giving Day
\$22,760.00

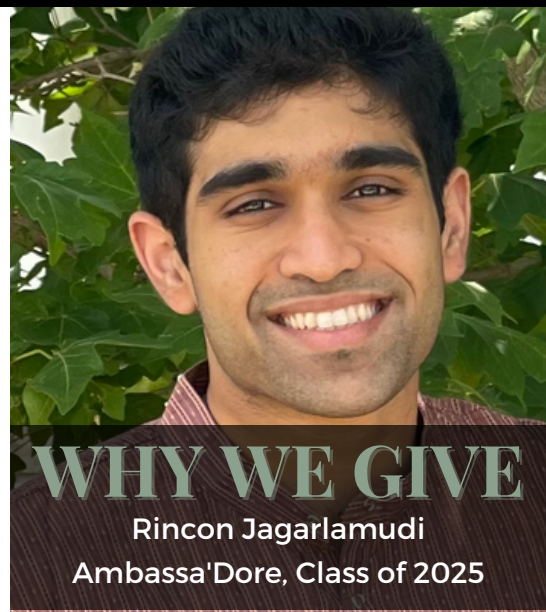
Donations (other)
\$61,401.50



To give, please visit: <https://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/departments/nextsteps/>

TOTAL GIFTS (22-23): \$114,737.58

"I feel fortunate to have been part of the Next Steps community from the very first day I stepped foot on Vanderbilt's campus. I was fortunate to have Jeremiah Whitehead and Erik Cohen (two students from the Next Steps Class of 2025) in my Visions group and Lily Hauptmann (Next Steps Ambassa'Dore) as my VUceptor (orientation leader). Having these wonderful people in my orientation group allowed me to build friendships with Erik and Jeremiah and also learn about the Ambassa'Dores program through Lily. I went on the join Ambassa'Dores at the start of my freshman year and I can say without a doubt that it has been the most fulfilling experience I have had here at Vanderbilt. Next Steps does an incredible job of creating an inclusive and safe learning environment for both Next Steps students and Ambassa'Dores to grow and succeed at Vanderbilt. As Jeremiah's lead Ambassa'Dore for the past two years, I have been amazed by how Jeremiah has used the foundation provided by Next Steps to take steps toward his goal of becoming a pastor. I love seeing all the incredible projects and skills the students of Next Steps cultivate each year. The progress each student makes shows just how impactful the mission work of Next Steps can be for students and their families."



WHY WE GIVE

Rincon Jagarlamudi
Ambassa'Dore, Class of 2025



THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS

PLATINUM DONORS (Gift of \$1,000 or more)

American Online Giving Foundation, Dr. Mary Morel Enoch Harvey, Honorable Anne Clayton Martin, Marlene and, Spencer Hays Foundation, Mr. John L. Van Cleave and Mrs. Mary Layne Van Cleave, Mr. John T. Lewis, Mrs. Elizabeth O'Connell MacLean, Mrs. Janet V. Lloyd and Mr. Robert W. Lloyd, Mrs. Jilah Tova Kalil and Mr. Mark G. Kalil, Mrs. Sarah Hunt, Ms. Clisby L. Hall and Mr. Robert H. Zarabi, Ms. Dawn T. Turton and Mr. Mason Risko, Ms. Jan Ellis, Ms. Jennifer Holt, Ms. Vanda Cohen, Nelson Fdn, Hermoine & Glen, Wallace Fdn, Louise Bullard

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NEXT STEPS SUMMER INSTITUTE

Next Steps Summer Institute (NSSI) is our annual week-long summer program traditionally provided to both our incoming first-years and prospective students in the community. This year, we had the pleasure of hosting our five incoming students. Throughout the week, students met with several of our campus partners, including Sarratt Art Studio, Student Access Services, VU Theater, Title IX, and so many more. Our partners informed the students of their purpose and utilization, as well as how students might access these services once they begin in the fall.

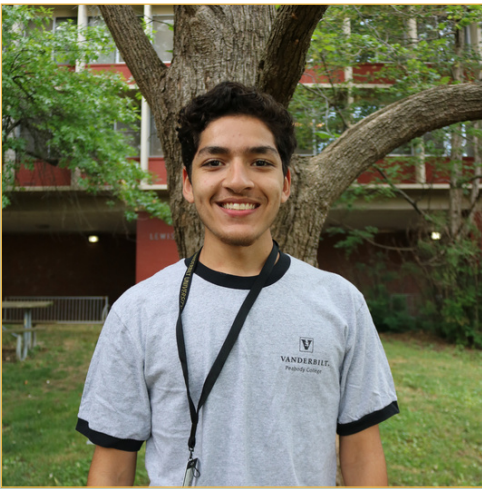
Aside from meeting with campus partners, students had the opportunity to bond with one another through interactive activities. As students learned about Vanderbilt, they were also creating a final presentation reflecting on all that they learned in the week. By the time students finished the week, they left feeling more confident about and more excited for their time here at Vanderbilt!

We'd like to share our gratitude for all who contributed their time and services to making this week possible. Also, we'd like to thank Caroline Bell and Sarah Rhyne who stayed with and supported the students throughout the entire week!



WELCOME, CLASS OF

2027!



AHMAD AMEDI
Antioch, TN



ELLA RISKO
Franklin, TN



SADLER BRASFIELD
Bristol, TN



NICHOLAS FRAZIER
Hermitage, TN



JASMYN CHEATHAM
Nashville, TN



HARDIN MANHEIN, CLASS OF 2015

Hardin Manhein graduated from Next Steps in April 2015. Since graduating from Next Steps, he has been working at the Country Music Hall Of Fame and Museum. He has been working there for eight years and is still going strong. Some of the tasks that he does at his job are selling people tickets to go into the museum, training new employees, and giving private tours of the museum to guests and new employees. He also points people in the right direction to start the museum and answers any questions people might have. He loves his job because he enjoys the people he works with and considers them family. He enjoys the history and music of the building too. He is currently living in a tiny house in his mom's backyard by himself. He is living by himself, but he still comes over to his mom's house because she cooks a lot and he takes the food back to his house. Hardin takes Lyft to and from work. He does his laundry, washes dishes, makes his bed, and gets around for work each day on his own. Some of the things he misses about Next Steps are being on campus, going to classes, making friends, and eating at the cafeteria. Some of his hobbies are taking walks through Hillsboro Village while listening to music, going to movies and sporting events, watching t.v, and going out to dinner with friends and family. Some advice that he would give to the current students is to keep working hard, and always have a positive attitude and a smile every day.





ANDRE CARTER, CLASS OF 2022



Andre Carter, a determined individual from the Class of 2022, embarked on a transformative journey after graduating from Next Steps. He decided to pursue his GED, motivated by his desire to defy the world's perceptions of what a person with disability could accomplish. Andre's unwavering goal is to reach his full potential and excel in all his endeavors.

Upon earning his GED, Andre was relieved! The journey to success was not without challenges, with memorizing vast amounts of material proving to be the most demanding aspect of the process. Nevertheless, Andre persevered, driven by his ambition to achieve more in life.

Next Steps played a crucial role in shaping his character. It instilled in him a newfound sense of self-discipline, empowering him to stay focused and dedicated to his studies. Through this experience, he has grown as an individual, becoming more determined than ever to forge a path of achievement for himself.

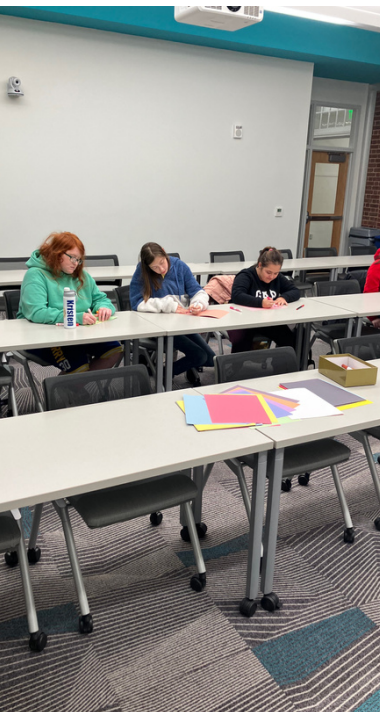
Andre's story is one of resilience and determination. He has set a powerful example for others to follow, inspiring them to strive for their dreams with unwavering commitment and dedication. Congrats, Andre!

64 Next Steps at Vanderbilt Graduates

16 Next Steps Alumni living independently

55 Next Steps Alumni with competitive, integrated paid employment





PARTNERSHIPS

Think College
Southeast Postsecondary Education Alliance
Center for Teaching and Learning
Disability Services/ Student Access Services
Peabody College Development and Alumni Relations
Peabody College
Vanderbilt Sarratt Art Studios
Vanderbilt Writing Studio and Tutoring Services
VUMC Dietetic Internship Program
Vanderbilt Career Center
VU and VUMC Human Resources Departments
VU Development and Alumni Relations
VU Project Safe
ADPi Sorority
Alternative Spring Break
Best Buddies
Club Baseball
Delta Sigma Theta Sorority
Melodores
MoneyThink
Multicultural Leadership Council (MLC)
OC (The Original Cast)
Sigma Nu fraternity
Special Olympics
Vanderbilt Alliance on Disability & Condition (VADC)
Vanderbilt Community Garden
Vanderbilt Student Government (VSG)
Vanderbilt Student Volunteers for Science (VSVS)
Vitality Dance Company
VOB (Vandy Off Broadway)
VUcept
Women in BusinessLEA's/Agencies
Benton Hall Academy
Currey Ingram Academy
Franklin Road Academy-Heart to Heart
Lead Academy
Pope John Paul II- Hand in Hand Program
Rutherford Co. Schools
Williamson Co. Schools
Sumner Co. Schools
Metro Nashville Public Schools
Down Syndrome Association of Middle TN
The Arc TN
The Arc of Williamson Co
TN Council on Developmental Disabilities
Disability Rights Coalition
TN Inclusive Higher Education Alliance
Lipscomb University- IDEAL program
East TN State Univeristy - ACCESS Program
University of TN, Knoxville - Future Program
Union University- EDGE Program
University of Memphis - TigerLIFE program
Tennessee Student Assistance Corps
Old School Farms
Tennessee State Capitol
Vanderbilt University Medical Center
Holiday Inn- Nashville-Vanderbilt
Pearl Drums

Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
Plant Operations
Vanderbilt University Theatre
Owen School of Business
Mama Lere Hearing School
Data Science Institute
Vanderbilt University Police Department/Parking Office
Commons Munchie Mart
Science Labs
Vanderbilt Recreation and Wellness Center
Deloitte
Tennessee Governor's Office
Vanderbilt Football- Equipment Management
Vanderbilt Rand Post Office
Davidson County District Attorney's Office
Home Depot
Vanderbilt Child and Family Centers- The Acorn School
Davidson County Clerk's Office
The Parthenon
Vanderbilt Student Access Services
Monroe Carell Junior Children's Hospital - Family Resource Center &
Child Life Specialist Team
Vanderbilt Women's Basketball Team
The Tennessee Titans
Country Music Hall of Fame
The Green Hills YMCA
Biscuit Love
Vanderbilt Commons Dining
The Dog Spot
Regal Green Hills Movie Theater
The Down Syndrome Clinic
Vanderbilt Peabody Library
Preschool for Children with Autism
Vanderbilt Fiber Arts Build Lab
Mama Lere Hearing School
Vanderbilt Office of Undergraduate Admissions
Baptist Collegiate Ministry @ Vanderbilt Place
Vanderbilt Athletics Marketing
UPS
Vanderbilt University IT
TennCare
Vanderbilt Bookstore
Monroe Carell Junior Children's Hospital - Pediatric Rehabilitation
TN Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
Metro Nashville Police Department
Vanderbilt Reformed University Fellowship
Commons Munchie Mart
Vanderbilt University Theatre Costume Shop
Monroe Carell Junior Children's Hospital - Nutrition Services
Vanderbilt Divinity Library
Susan Gray School
Vanderbilt Recycling
Vanderbilt Currey Tennis Center
Vanderbilt Occupational Health Clinic
Vanderbilt Recreation and Wellness Center
Sarratt Art Studios
Kissam Kitchen/Munchie Mart

MEET THE TEAM



Next Steps at Vanderbilt is a 4-year inclusive higher education program committed to providing neurodiverse students an inclusive, transformational postsecondary education in academics, social and career development, and independent living, while honoring equality, compassion, and excellence in all endeavors.

We thank the graduate students who played an integral part in the design and implementation of Next Steps at Vanderbilt in the year 2022-2023.

- Caroline Parker** (Low Incidence Severe Disabilities Track, Department of Special Education)
- Olivia Niestrom** (Low Incidence Severe Disabilities Track, Auxiliary Training in Applied Behavior Analysis, Department of Special Education)
- Kelley Fowler** (Low Incidence Severe Disabilities Track, Auxiliary Training in Applied Behavior Analysis, Department of Special Education)
- Kelly Hunter** (Low Incidence Severe Disabilities Track, Auxiliary Training in Applied Behavior Analysis, Department of Special Education)
- Sarah Rhyne** (Low Incidence- Severe Disabilities Track, Department of Special Education)
- April Kosakoff** (Community Development and Action, M. Ed)
- Caroline Bell** (Low Incidence Severe Disabilities and ABA, Department of Special Education)
- Kristal Orta Martinez** (M. Ed Special Education, Severe Disabilities)
- Fatmanur Onder** (High Incidence Disabilities, Department of Special Education)
- Catherine Dias** (High Incidence Disabilities Track, Department of Special Education)
- Samuel Keillor** (International Education Policy and Management, Department of Leadership, Policy, and Organizations)
- Hannah Crider** (Human Development Studies, Department of Human and Organizational Development)
- Teresa Zhang** (Human Development Studies, Department of Human and Organizational Development)
- Mattie Scoggins** (Low Incidence Severe Disabilities Track, Special Education)
- Erin Cantor**, AmeriCorps Member (High Incidence Disabilities Track, Auxiliary Training in Applied Behavior Analysis, Department of Special Education)



ARIANA AMAYA, OTD, OTR/L
Program Director



LAUREN BETHUNE-DIX, PHD
Assistant Director & Director of Academics



LINDSAY KRECH, M. ED
Director of Campus Life and Student Supports



MEGAN MACON
Director of Career Development



ELIZABETH SANDERS, MAT
Program Coordinator of Career Development



EMILY BARKER
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JESSICA CLIFTON
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STEVEN GREINER
Alumni Coordinator & Recruitment Assistant
Next Steps Alum '12



CAITLIN BERNSTEIN
Office Assistant
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