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Season's Greetings from OACS



The Office of Active Citizenship and Service wishes all Vanderbilt students the best on final exams. This will be the last OACS newsletter of 2016 as we look forward to winter break and spring semester.

OACS News

Register a Project for the MLK Weekend of Service



OACS invites all students, staff, and faculty to register a project for the 2017 MLK Weekend of Service: January 13th – 16th. Projects can be with any community partner in the Nashville area. If you would like to register a project but are unsure of where to start, please email [OACS](#). To register a project, visit [Anchor Link](#) and complete the form.

Redefine Applications Due Next Week

REDEFINE
 SERVING LOCALLY, CONNECTING GLOBALLY
Spring Semester 2017
 OACS, ISSS & the Nashville Food Project
 invite you to explore the meaning of service
 Applications due December 16th
 Seminars and service begin January
www.vanderbilt.edu/oacs

DEAN OF Students Active Citizenship & Service
 THE NASHVILLE FOOD PROJECT
 DEAN OF Students International Student & Scholar Services

Redefine, a collaboration between OACS, ISSS, and [the Nashville Food Project](#) is now entering its third year. In Redefine, students will immerse themselves in the conceptualization of community service as it relates to U.S. communities and how or if the same ideas translate across cultures. Redefine exposes students to local community needs by partnering with the Nashville Food Project. Students will serve with a non-profit organization that is delivering real impact in Nashville through its mission of cultivating community and alleviating hunger. A central goal of Redefine is the development of friendships amongst people from different countries. Undergraduate and graduate students from all disciplines are encouraged to apply. Please visit the [website](#) to learn more and to apply.

Cultivating Roots



Horace Mann deemed education “The Great Equalizer, the balance-wheel of the social machinery”.

However, education still remains one of the most pressing concerns of local communities. OACS is looking for passionate and engaged students to be the first ever pilot cohort of our new local immersion program: Cultivating Roots. This semester-long program combines local community engagement with seminar topics that focus on access to equitable education in the Nashville community.

Sound interesting to you? [Apply on Anchor Link](#).

OACS Student Advisory Board

The OACS Student Advisory Board is a passionate and engaging group of student leaders who are proactively trying to increase community engagement on Vanderbilt’s campus, in Nashville, and globally. This year the board is heightening its commitment to the local community and placing a strong emphasis on relevancy to daily student life. The Student Advisory Board is eagerly planning for next semester and is excited to begin their work strengthening the culture of service at Vanderbilt. To learn more, visit the Board’s [website](#).

OACS and Student Service

Have questions about service, where to serve, what to do, or how to do it? OACS advisers are always on hand to give advice and support relating to service in Nashville, globally, or by mean of membership in service-related student organizations. Check in with an OACS adviser if you have any questions by emailing oacs@vanderbilt.edu.

Need transportation to a local service site? Book an OACS Service Vehicle. For \$10/year you can use our vehicles to get to community service sites. For more information visit the [website](#).

Additionally, OACS develops and offers programming year-round, including summer service-learning experiences in Ecuador, the UK, South Africa and Morocco. We also offer VIEW: a public service internship program in Washington, D.C. Visit www.vanderbilt.edu/oacs for more information!

Student Spotlight: Melissa Looby



Melissa Looby has been the Graduate Assistant in OACS for about a year and a half, and she has really contributed to the group dynamic of the office. Melissa is

a team player with a big heart and she is very passionate about being an active citizen.

Melissa and I sat down at Starbucks and chatted about her goals and aspirations. I hope you enjoy learning about our sweet Graduate Assistant.

Holly: So, tell me a little about yourself. Where did you grow up? Do you have any brothers or sisters?

Melissa: I grew up in Wheaton, Illinois: a suburb of Chicago. I got that suburban childhood. Our house was at the end of the cul-de-sac and that's what got me started on this love of community. I knew all my neighbors and everything seems to culminate in that area. I think that really gave me the essence and love of community.

When I was seven we moved out to Marengo, Illinois, which is this tiny little farm town of 7,000 people and 12,000 cows. It was very different from what I was used to, but I was young enough to be very open to change. I have a brother who is 6 years older than me. He was in high school when that happened, so it was more of an adjustment for him. We were separated from so much because this town literally had a Dollar General and that was it! We would have to drive at least 20 minutes to get to anything, so you really had to develop and form deep friendships because that was your entertainment. In the summer it was wonderful because we did a lot in the community and we were very close. I feel like that really helped form who I am today because I really value relationships.

I was in an anthropology class in college studying ancient societies and how barter systems were a form of community. I remembered growing up. We didn't have farm equipment but we had a 5-acre hay field. Our neighbor, who was a farmer, would bail our hay and we would come grab vegetables from his farm stand for free whenever we needed them. That was the environment that I grew up in, of decency and valuing your neighbor. I like to see what I can do for my neighbor and what I can add to my community because my community gave so much to me when I was growing up.

Holly: That's wonderful! You are in your Masters program and you have one more semester left. Where do you see yourself down the road?

Melissa: I will want a job (laughs). I went straight from undergrad to graduate school so I am really excited to go into the workforce. My dream job would be working in a community development program in a higher education institution, so working in OACS would be my dream job. I want to work with students who have a passion or curiosity for community development. Students self-select to be in those spaces, and they want to interact with the community. There are so

many people who want to do that but don't know how to do that correctly. I want to take all the theoretical knowledge that I have learned through my program and through OACS and put it to practical application with students through the lens of community development. When your end goal is community development then you lead from a community standpoint and won't have an intrusive presence. I would really love to do work involving that. Right now I'm really inspired by higher education so I would like to stay there, possibly looking into Christian institutions because I think my faith is very intrinsic to who I am. It has driven me to this work, and is why I love this work. I acknowledge that acts of cruelty and also acts coming from good intentions have produced bad results in the name of God. There is a right way to do it, and I want to help transition some of those works that are well-intentioned to have positive results. I'm not 100% sure where I will end up, but those are the end goals.

Holly: Are you wanting to stay in Nashville?

Melissa: Oh my, I love Nashville. I would love to stay in Nashville, but I am an adventurous soul so I'm looking at other places. I have always wanted to live in the Pacific Northwest. I love hiking, and I think the music scene and the coffee shops are just wonderful. The Pacific Northwest has my three favorite things in the world: nature, coffee, and music. I think it has a great sense of community, and I love the social entrepreneurship ventures that are there. I am hoping to find a place that is conducive to living a socially responsible life. It isn't easy to blend and adjust a socially responsible life with contemporary society, and I want to find a place where this happens. Nashville is one of those places and so are Chicago and Colorado. I am looking all over. I don't want to just take any job. I want to find a job that I feel called to and know that I will be good at, but also one that helps me lead the life I want to lead.

Holly: What is the one thing that you would like to change in the world?

Melissa: There is not just one answer to that question. I think everything is connected. I liken it to a marionette: if you pull on a string to relieve pressure, then another part will feel the pressure. I guess if I could create one thing in the world it would be to improve interpersonal relationships. I think modeling contemplate love. Contemplate love is limitless and it's hard because we are finite beings. Being able to love one another unconditionally, kind of like the love that your dog has for you (laughs). When you act in love, really when you are practicing contemplate love, you are listening. You're putting others before yourself and you are humbling yourself. I would like people to value each other more than valuing themselves. I saw a painting in Franklin and it really spoke to me and

captured my heart. “When you have more than you need, build a longer table, not a higher fence.”

Holly: I really like that quote too! That is something to think about. Okay, last question: if you had a superpower, what would it be and why?

Melissa: I think I would be...I don't think this is a superpower, but I wish I had better intuition. Intuition comes in handy when you are trying to comfort someone. I always try to think of words to say, but sometimes I wish I knew what that person needed from me so I could be there for them. I want to know how I can best help them, by “helping” not “fixing”. How can I be useful in this situation? I think that would be my superpower.

Holly: Melissa, I want to say thank you for meeting with me. I've really enjoyed having you in OACS. You are such a great joy to be around, and we will miss you so much when you graduate. I know that you will do amazing things in the world, and OACS will always be cheering you on!

Student Service



Vanderbilt Moneythink is part of a national organization to help build the financial health of Americans by equipping youth and young adults with the knowledge and confidence to make sound financial decisions. We partner with MLK Magnet High School and Pearl High School to mentor juniors and seniors every week during the spring and fall. Through this partnership, Moneythink has helped educate hundreds of Nashville high school students about making smart financial choices since our inception in 2012.

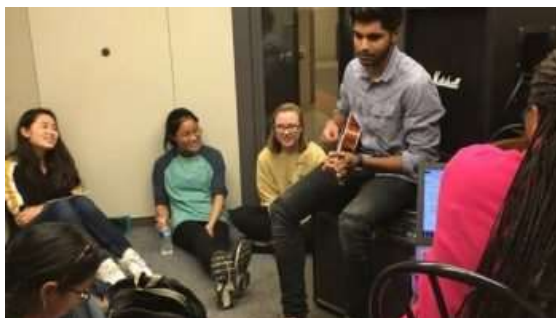


Volunteers Around the World has open spots for our Medical Outreach Trip May 17th-31st, 2017. We will be serving in one of these four countries: the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Panama, or Peru. We will set up mobile clinics and participate in other service projects. You do not have to speak Spanish to go on the trip, but it is a great way to practice your Spanish-speaking skills. The application will close on December 18th at 11:59 pm. You can find the application using [this link](#).



She's the First Vanderbilt is part of a national organization that sponsors girls' education in the developing world. For underprivileged girls, the impact of a sponsorship is life-changing: most will be the first in their families to graduate. Our chapter is hosting a fundraiser night at Jason's Deli on December 8th from 5:00-9:00. The restaurant will donate 15% of all proceeds towards funding a student in Shanti Bhavan, India.

Lyrical Movements



Lyrical Movements has been working with Sing Me A Story during the last year by finding stories on SingMeAStory.org. These stories are illustrated by children from disadvantaged backgrounds and are brought to life through songwriting. We are excited to offer an additional opportunity which involves more direct interaction with children. We are working closely with Sing Me A Story Nashville to set up a program in which Vanderbilt volunteers visit hospitals, hospices, and community centers to help children write the original stories. This initial story writing stage is important because it allows the children to recognize that their diseases and/or socioeconomic situations don't define them – rather, their creative/emotional expression is what helps shape who they are. If you are interested, please contact us by [email](#) so we can provide more information. No music experience is necessary.



Glamour Gals seeks to inspire and organize Vanderbilt students to provide ongoing companionship and complimentary beauty makeovers to women living in senior homes. Vanderbilt's chapter was voted the best college chapter by the national organization last year. Every week, a group of approximately ten students visits one of Glamour Gals' four retirement homes. We would love additional volunteers to join our [Anchor Link page](#) and attend one or more of our makeovers!



Project Nicaragua is an organization committed to improving the access to healthcare and education for the people of Nicaragua. On our summer service trip we will volunteer at hospitals and clinics, shadow physicians, visit the students we Skype tutor during the school year, distribute educational and medical supplies, and participate in outreach activities with the community in Chacraseca, Nicaragua. The dates for the trip are May 7th-17th. If you are interested in joining us, please [contact us](#).

Community News

Homework Hotline

Homework Hotline's Learnathon has begun. Homework Hotline provides free one-on-one tutoring and reading remediation for thousands of struggling Tennessee students (more than 505,000 since 1990). Our goal for the 2016/17 school year is to raise \$100,000. This will help provide 15,000 free tutoring sessions to Tennessee students. How many sessions will you sponsor? Visit the [website](#) to learn more.

Humanity in Action

Help us find the next generation of Humanity in Action Fellows. Applications for our programs in Europe and the United States are now open.

- [Humanity in Action Fellowship programs in Europe](#) (Amsterdam, Berlin, Copenhagen, Sarajevo and Warsaw): May 26th – June 25th
- [John Lewis Fellowship](#) program in Atlanta, Georgia: July 5th – 30th

We invite applications from students and recent graduates of U.S. colleges and universities who are passionate about active and responsible citizenship, pluralism, and human rights. Current sophomores, juniors and seniors, as well as graduates from the classes of 2015 and 2016 are eligible. The deadline to apply to these programs is January 4th at 11:59 pm PST.

Southern Word



Help Southern Word welcome Nashville college and high school poets and writers to Vanderbilt for a day of spoken word workshops, brunch, and poetry. Southern Word is a youth development organization that teaches students how to tell their stories and speak their truth through spoken word. On December 10th at 7:00 pm we will be hosting a showcase of the top high school and college poets from across the region at the Blair School of Music. Celebrate community and join us for our morning brunch and open mic, culminating in our showcase at 7:00 pm. You won't want to miss this night of inspirational spoken word. Email Camille for details.

Service Year Alliance

Service Year Alliance is working to make a service year (a paid, full-time position with programs like AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, or YouthBuild) a common

expectation and opportunity for all young Americans. A service year before, during, or after college gives young people the chance to transform their lives, make an impact in their community, and become the active citizens and leaders our nation needs. Expanding service years has the power to revitalize cities, uplift and educate children at risk, and empower communities struggling with poverty. If you'd like to learn more about Service Year and their campus program please reach out to [Stephanie](#) or visit the [website](#) to learn more about Service Year Positions near you.

Global Shapers

[Global Shapers Nashville](#) will host our first “Meet and Three” at Refinery Nashville. Based on the current political rhetoric, our group has chosen to dedicate our inaugural Meet and Three to the topic of Nashville’s immigrant and refugee community. A Meet and Three is a dialogue that creates a space where all participants have an equal chance to hear and be heard. The formula is simple.

Meet: We will break up into groups of roughly 10 people. Each group will have 1 facilitator and at least 1 individual representing Nashville’s refugee and immigrant communities, either through personal or professional experience. The facilitator will lead the group through a series of questions with an equal amount of response time allotted for each participant.

Three: Every group will end with 3 actionable takeaways.

Join us if you’re interested in meeting new people, gaining a deeper understanding of Nashville’s New American community, and having a meaningful dialogue that leads to action.

Dean of Students | (p) 615.32(2.6400) | (f) 615.34(3.3702) | [Email](#)

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