

Vanderbilt Child & Family Center

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VCFC Values Teachers

At Saturday professional development mornings, I make a clear declaration of my regard for teachers and the teaching profession. I consider myself a teacher; it is where I got my start and where I left my heart. Children so willingly engage us to be co-researchers with them. Fearless in their explorations, they fuse curiosity with spirit in the great leap to grasp knowing. I find their infinite capacity to wonder and discover the most joyful aspect of my work.

Consequently, I adore teachers. Being in partnership with the VCFC team, marveling at their willingness to dig deeper, is simply a thrill. The VCFC parents are commendable in their outreach to staff through their consistent expressions of appreciation and support; the

parent CONNECT group specifically exists to support planning activities across sites and accomplishes this beautifully. Vanderbilt as an organization provides concrete actions of its high regard for Early Childhood Education by being one of the few universities in the nation to resource onsite child care for its employees, and by compensating ECE teachers above industry levels. This helps our VCFC community to understand that teachers, children, parents, and ECE are valued. It is a privilege to work for an organization that so intentionally represents ECE as a priority.

Respectfully,

Kathleen Seabolt

VCFC Town Hall Meeting

The quarterly Town Hall Meetings are designed to engage parents directly with VCFC leadership and staff, to support a dissemination of information on a range of topics meant to better communicate the inspiration, design and operations of the VCFC early childhood program. VCFC's first Town Hall Meeting took place on July 19th and included Vice Chancellor Eric Kopstain to speak about FutureVCFC planning, and featured a panel of four of our preschool teachers (Jahsheba, MaryBeth, Samantha, and Stephanie) to address the Windows Into Learning documentation initiative in place to support parent understanding by making children's learning visible in the classroom.

The next Town Hall Meeting will be Thursday, October 25th from 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM in the Wyatt Rotunda. Feel free to bring your lunch!



Vanderbilt Child and Family Center celebrates 35 years this month! Founded through the advocacy of employee parents,

Vanderbilt University invests in early childhood care and education:

- ❖ As a reflection of our academic mission & values
- ❖ In support of our Academic Strategic Plan
- ❖ As a laboratory school in partnership with the Peabody College of Education to contribute to, and benefit from the practical application of research in the field of Early Childhood Education
- ❖ To provide child care to faculty, staff, students and post-docs; as an employer of choice, to attract and retain top talent while enabling their best work, knowing that their children are safe and cared for in an environment that is conducive to their natural curiosity

We are so grateful to have early childhood education championed by Chancellor Zeppos, who honored VCFC by speaking recently at the Fall Faculty Assembly of the support he received through our child care as a faculty member and parent at the beginning of his Vanderbilt career.

VCFC staff and leadership are committed to our stance that play is the hard work of childhood. By establishing teacher research cohorts that meet monthly (Infant, Toddler, Twos, Preschool), we seek to understand the opportunities that exist to champion this belief, and to better articulate what it means to offer a hands-on, sensory-based learning environment informed by social-constructivism to engage and support 21st century learners. What does it mean to “be in relationship”? What are our rights and responsibilities as we establish these, both to children, parents, colleagues, and to ourselves? How will VCFC connect our pedagogy to the greater community of the university? We have dedicated this year to deep diving into our systems, including communication and documentation, to enable the good work to move forward and to make the learning visible.



VCFC Advisory Task Force

In the spring of 2018, it was proposed that a VCFC Advisory Task Force be created to make recommendations on the future of child care at Vanderbilt University. To advance the vision for VCFC to become a center of excellence in early childhood care and education, the Advisory Task Force will build on the strengths of the current child care and support the pathway necessary to create a nationally recognized ECE program that is centered on joyful and creative play-based open inquiry learning, and that ensures that children in our care are advantaged by the latest findings in cognitive, physical and social/emotional development research, while addressing:

- The scope of services provided to the Vanderbilt Community
- Accessibility, via an Opportunity Vanderbilt inspired tuition structure
- The development of a professional development and compensation philosophy for teaching staff
- The physical manifestation of the child care vision in a new facility or neighborhood of facilities

Advisory Task Force

Kathleen Seabolt, VCFC Director (chair)

Laura Nairon, AVC Business Services

Eric Bymaster, AVC Finance

Samantha Barclay, 19th Avenue Preschool Teacher

Camilla Benbow, Dean of Peabody College of Education and Human Development

Shenika Cawthon, VCFC 18th Avenue 0-2s Teacher

Vivian Gama, Assistant Professor of Cell and Developmental Biology

Tassany Henderson, Program Coordinator Transitions Programs

Amanda Rose, Professor of Management, Owen Graduate School of Business

Tanga Russell, VCFC Edgehill 0-2s Teacher

Jason Valentine, Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering

Christina Weathers, VCFC 18th Avenue Preschool Teacher

Amber Williams, VCFC 19th Avenue Site Director

Brette Farrelly, Business Services (Project Mgr.)

VCFC has received tremendous support from Vice Chancellor Eric Kopstain to think critically and creatively to turn our challenges into opportunities. In addition to the work of the Advisory Task Force, Vanderbilt has composed the Steering Committee to inform researching a new child care center building in direct response to VCFC's Wait List and the Nashville area's current child care desert. The Steering Committee is comprised of:

Mike Perez, Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities (Chair)

Keith Loiseau, Director of Campus Planning & Construction

Eric Kopstain, Vice Chancellor for Administration

Camilla Benbow, Dean of the Peabody College of Education

Sally Parker, Assistant Provost

Eric Bymaster, AVC for Finance

Laura Nairon, AVC for Business Services

Kathleen Seabolt, VCFC Director

Child Care Learning Environment

Autumn 2018

Creating a beautiful learning environment is a source of pride for early childhood educators. It is also a process. As teachers design, and re-design, the classroom, decisions are based on functionality, aesthetic, and supporting child engagement. While VCFC is focused on building our future, we are equally sensible to the opportunity of investing in our current learning environments for the children we serve today, and VCFC continues to update classroom furniture with wood products made with FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified wood from responsibly managed forests, and that is BPA and PVC free with pinch free hinges and rounded edges. The goal for 2018-2019 is to refresh every classroom with some new furniture pieces. Our play-based approach to early learning demands “loose parts”, defined as open-ended components with multiple uses. These include blocks and manipulatives, but could also include recycled tubes and cartons and boxes. High quality and upcycled materials support teachers to engage children through a hands-on, inquiry based, multidisciplinary approach to learning through play. We believe the “smarter” the toy the less advantage to the student, and VCFC is phasing out electronic gadget-y type toys, while further investing in loose parts.



Beyond Buggy Rides

We recognize the rich resource outside our doors that is the Vanderbilt campus. Teachers have been collaborating to understand how to support children’s engagement with the buildings and grounds of the university, to provide them with a larger landscape on which to test their theories and to reinforce children’s rights as citizens of the world to be seen as part of their community.



Please welcome Alice Shi, our new Family Services Coordinator, to VCFC. We are delighted to have her join our team. Alice will support our analysis of the services (additional to child care) that VCFC currently offers. A big project will be taking a fall inventory of lactation rooms. Alice earned her MS in Family and Child Studies from Texas State, and graduated Vanderbilt cum laude with her BS in Child Development: Medicine, Health & Society.

She starts the end of September!