Dear Vanderbilt community,

We are all connected.

As Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer, I want to take this opportunity to highlight the myriad cultures, identities and voices that comprise the Vanderbilt community. The Office for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and the University Heritage Month Project celebrate diversity at Vanderbilt University.

Neurodiverse communities on campus.

LGBTQI+, Asian/Asian American/Pacific Islander, 50+ age and other Employee Affinity Groups (EAGs) are employee-led and -facilitated by representatives from marginalized communities on campus.

Vanderbilt launches Employee Affinity Groups for Neurodiverse communities on campus.

The new position of chief human resources officer, developed to organize goals at Vanderbilt University, has been promoted to the new position of chief human resources officer. Cleo D. Rucker, who has worked over the past decade to build a strong workplace culture, support employee growth and meet organizational goals at Vanderbilt University, has been promoted to the new position of chief human resources officer.

The Rev. James Lawson, a civil rights icon and Distinguished Professor of Social Justice at Vanderbilt University School of Divinity, has been named to the Nashville Area NAACP's Board of Directors and will receive the NAACP Chairman's Award for integral contributions to racial justice.

Vanderbilt issued messages recognizing how many factors have led to the creation of this newsletter, but important societal changes have deeply affected members of our community.

Dixie Place renamed in honor of Vanderbilt surgical community in trying times.

A Vanderbilt University School of Medicine student-led effort has led to Dixie Place being renamed in honor of Vanderbilt surgical community who were honored by the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center.

Provost Susan R. Wente is among five members of the Vanderbilt University Board of Trust recognized for the Mary Jane Werthan Award.

In the news: Cleo Rucker, Chief Human Resources Officer, receives Mary Jane Werthan Award.

We know that we are connected as a Vanderbilt family. Our ultimate goals are to recognize the value of our diversity, include it in everything we do and unceasingly challenge ourselves to do more to strengthen our connection.

We recognize that as we strive for progress and purpose in our commitment to EDI, we at times will fall short, but note it is our charge to press on in these aspirations to reflect the best in the human experience. We cannot tolerate or let such acts go without acknowledging and affirming that they have no place at our institution.

These heinous crimes are counter to the values of a civil and educated society and do not represent what our society is or should be. Vanderbilt University and the broader Nashville community must stand together and denounce racism, hate, intolerance, sexism, gender violence, and the indifference and blindness that can contribute to such acts and their ultimate consequence. Vanderbilt University and the broader Nashville community undertake to do our part in working to avert these crimes and to affirm the values of a community that celebrates all people and is bound together by our living and working in one place to achieve our goals as a community.

We hope that creating such a newsletter will keep you informed of Vanderbilt’s continued efforts to create a more welcoming and inclusive campus.

We are all connected. Please share this newsletter with others who are part of the Vanderbilt community.

Sincerely,

Andre L. Churchwell, M.D.