Dear Vanderbilt Community,

On June 10, I had the honor of joining hundreds of Vanderbilt students, faculty, staff and alumni to participate in the Nashville Juneteenth Walk. The walk was organized to commemorate the end of slavery in the United States, specifically in the Confederate states. Juneteenth, June 19, commemorates the announcement of the End of Slavery in Texas, which was the last state to formally abolish slavery.

At the walk, we celebrated the end of slavery and remembered the contributions of enslaved people to the United States. The walk also served as an opportunity to reflect on the ongoing struggle for racial justice and to support the movement for racial equity.

Vanderbilt University has become the newest member of the Universities Studying Slavery consortium as part of its reinvigorated commitment to confront racial injustice while working toward a more inclusive and welcoming campus community. Vanderbilt joins peer group studying legacies of slavery and racial injustice and will soon be able to benefit from the consortium's resources.

Vanderbilt launched a new Interest session for new Jewish Employee Affinity Group, the Jewish EAG. The Jewish EAG is a professional group that supports and connects Jewish employees across different departments and centers at Vanderbilt. By providing a space for Jewish employees to come together, the Jewish EAG aims to foster a sense of community and belonging.

Contact Jinexa Rivera at jinexa.rivera@vanderbilt.edu for more information or to join the Interest session.

Best regards,
Jacek Kedzierski, MD
Vanderbilt's new provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs

Belinda 'Otukolo Saltiban, a seasoned higher education professional with extensive experience leading diversity and inclusion efforts in support of professional development and student success, has been named associate vice chancellor for equity, diversity and inclusion. In her role, Saltiban will be responsible for developing and implementing strategies to improve diversity and inclusion efforts across the university.

The new Multicultural Community Space to open on campus this fall. The Office of the Dean of Students and the Student Center for Social Justice and Identity have announced. The new community space will provide a dedicated area for multicultural student organizations and their leaders to gather and connect. It will open in Vanderbilt's West End Neighborhood this fall.

Clayton County Conversation on Health Disparities in Nashville: A Virtual Event. Join us on June 29 for a virtual conversation on health disparities in Nashville. Clayton County is a rural county in Georgia, and it has some of the highest rates of chronic diseases and health disparities in the United States. The conversation will feature experts in public health and medicine who will discuss the challenges and strategies for addressing health disparities in Clayton County and beyond.

Watch: "Fostering Racially Inclusive Book Groups: 'Black Bottom Saints' Group." Join us for a virtual book group discussion on "Black Bottom Saints," a novel by Walter Dean Myers. The book tells the story of a young African American man who is sent to a reformatory for boys after his older brother is killed in the Civil War. The book group will be facilitated by Dr. Hadiya Murdock, a professor of English at Vanderbilt.

When: June 29, 2021
Where: Online

Watch: "When Breath Becomes Air." Join us for a virtual screening of "When Breath Becomes Air," a documentary film about the life and legacy of the late novelist James Baldwin. The film explores Baldwin's life and work, and his influence on the civil rights movement.

When: June 29, 2021
Where: Online

Sign up to receive this newsletter monthly by registering here.