The past academic year has included tremendous growth in the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA). After the uncertainty associated with the pandemic and leadership changes, we were able to evaluate and determine what resources and programming were missing from the postdoc experience and how to fill in the gaps.

The year brought a return to in person events after a year of virtual offerings. We held the postdoc family picnic at Dragon Park as part of National Postdoc Appreciation Week. The 15th annual postdoc symposium was organized by the Vanderbilt Postdoctoral Association and took place at the Student Life Center on November 1. Another event was a holiday luncheon in early December as a time to gather, relax, and enjoy a good meal leading into the winter break.

In the Spring semester, OPA and the English Language Center worked to bring a series of English language modules to the entire Vanderbilt community – something that was unavailable to postdocs at Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) previously. In May, a policy was put in place, in partnership with the Biomedical Research Education and Training (BRET) office and the VUMC Office of Research, for VUMC postdocs to acquire dual identity. This allows VUMC postdocs to access Vanderbilt University resources more easily. Finally, we had the first in-person standalone postdoc awards ceremony and reception recognizing outstanding postdoctoral research, mentorship, and service as well as faculty mentorship.

We welcomed to campus more than 170 new postdocs in the 2021-2022 academic year and held twelve new postdoc orientations. We had more than 25 administrative training meetings to support the administrative staff that works with postdocs and 20 support meetings with faculty or postdocs to support our postdoc community.

We are your OPA, and we are working on your behalf.
The 2022 Spring Postdoc Awards Reception took place in Alumni Hall.

Postdoc Appreciation Family Picnic at Dragon Park.

LOOKING FORWARD

We will continue to bridge the gap between Vanderbilt University and Vanderbilt University Medical Center to provide resources for the entire postdoctoral community. Further, our efforts will continue to build programming for international postdocs including working with the Immigration offices in VU and VUMC and the English Language Center. We will continue to fill gaps that are missing from the postdoc experience across the University and Medical Center.

The 15th Annual Postdoc Symposium had 26 poster presentations over two poster sessions.

Dr. Adia Harvey Wingfield was the keynote speaker for the 15th Annual Postdoc Symposium.

Neelima Wagley, Ph.D., Vice Provost Christie-Mizell, and Harry Barbee, Ph.D.
OPA
LEADERSHIP
2021-2022

C. André Christie-Mizell
Director

Faith Bishop
Associate Director

Annie Evans
Program and Communications Manager

Caitlin Haskell
Program and Communications Manager

Carl Fritscher
Program Coordinator
VPA BOARD MEMBERS
2021-2022

Brianna Yamasaki
Senior Co-Chair

Daniel Fehrenbach
Junior Co-Chair

Rei Ukita
Senior Advisor

Markie Sneed
Treasurer

Anirban Sengupta
Scholarly Learning Chair

Kakali Ghoshal
Social Activities and Community Building Chair

Maxime Chevee
Postdoc Advocacy Chair

Zhiyu Wan
Communications Chair

Shramana Ghosh
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Chair

Reanna Roby
Community Outreach Chair
BY THE NUMBERS

POSTDOC POPULATION
AY 2021-2022

SCHOOL NUMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Postdocs</th>
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<tr>
<td>Blair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arts and Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Divinity School</td>
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<td>Law School</td>
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<td>Owen</td>
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<td>Peabody College</td>
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<td>School of Engineering</td>
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<td>School of Medicine</td>
<td>398</td>
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<tr>
<td>School of Nursing</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>638</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

International 309 | US Citizens 329

9 SCHOOLS
65 DEPARTMENTS

114 POSTDOCS ON TRAINING GRANTS OR INDIVIDUAL FELLOWSHIPS
WHAT IS A POSTDOC?

Vanderbilt postdoctoral fellows, commonly known as postdocs, are professionals who have earned doctoral degrees and are, in most cases, temporarily pursuing additional scholarly training, experience and research progress necessary for a wide range of career paths. Postdocs play an important role in Vanderbilt’s research enterprise and are integral to the discovery and learning mission of Vanderbilt University and Medical Center. At any given time, **Vanderbilt has around 450 postdocs across both VU and VUMC.**

MISSION

The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs is responsible for planning and managing programs and services for Vanderbilt’s postdoctoral community. OPA supports Vanderbilt-affiliated postdocs as well as faculty and staff administrators who work with the postdoctoral population. OPA is the central resource for postdoctoral services and serves as a liaison among postdocs and central university administrative offices. OPA also works closely with the Vanderbilt Postdoctoral Association, formally known as the Postdoctoral Association, to address the interests and concerns of postdocs.
# EVENTS

## 2021-2022

### 2021

**Jul 12**

Postdoc Wellness Workshop: Building Resilience for Postdocs  
OPA/Work/Life Connections-EAP Collaboration  
Presenter: Jim Kendall from Work/Life Connections-EAP

**Sept 7**

Peak Performance: Perfectionism and Imposter Syndrome  
Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program

**Sept 20-24**

National Postdoc Appreciation Week

- Sept 20 | Wellness Workshop: Dealing with Change OPA/Work/Life Connections-EAP Collaboration  
  Presenter: Jim Kendall from Work/Life Connections-EAP
- Sept 21 | Professional Headshots & Postdoc Appreciation Picnic
- Sept 22 | Professional Headshots
- Sept 23 | Coffee with OPA Leadership

**Sept 22**

J1 Visa Insurance Information Session  
Collaboration with ISSS and Aetna

### 2022

**Sept 29**

OPA New Postdoc Orientation Refresher for Department Admins and SPOCs

**Oct 1**

Peak Performance: Managing Conflict and Relationships in Academic  
Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program

**Oct 6**

Assertiveness & Boundary Setting Workshop for Postdocs Collaboration with Project Safe  
Presenter: Cara Tuttle, Director of Project Safe

**Oct 7**

VUEDGE Social Justice Panel: Using your Scholarship as a Voice to Promote Social Justice  
Co-sponsored by The Vanderbilt Graduate School’s Enhancing Diversity in Graduate Education Program, The Graduate School, Office of Postdoctoral Affairs, Office for the Vice-Chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Peabody College Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Fisk-Vanderbilt Master-to-PhD Bridge Program, Organization of Black Graduate and Professional Students

**Oct 12**

Critical Conversations: Managing Up  
Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program
Oct 14
What to Expect When Applying for Non-Academic Jobs
Career Center

Oct 15
Peak Performance: Motivation, Mindset & Effective Goal Setting
Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program

Oct 22
English Language Center - Postdoc Workshop
English Language Center

Oct 29
Peak Performance: Performing Under Pressure, Fighting Procrastination & Increasing Efficiency
Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program

Nov 1
Annual VPA Symposium

Nov 5
Career Connections: Alumni Perspective on Navigating the Job Search (Humanities and Social Sciences)
Career Center

Nov 8
Postdoc Wellness Workshop: Holiday Stress
OPA & Work/Life Connections-EAP Collaboration
Presenter: Stephanie Dean from Work/Life Connections-EAP

Nov 12
Peak Performance: Finding Work/Life Balance
Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program

Nov 12
Career Connections: Alumni Perspective on Navigating the Job Search (STEM)
Career Center

Dec 6
Postdoc Holiday Luncheon

Dec 10
ELC Postdoc Workshop
Strategies for effectively communicating with your advisor and mentor; resources for balancing productivity and mental health while managing postdoc responsibilities; general tips for making the most of your postdoc years
English Language Center
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 24</td>
<td>Postdoc Wellness Workshop: Chasing the Elusive Work/Life Balances</td>
<td>OPA &amp; Work/Life Connections-EAP Collaboration Presenter: Jim Kendall from Work/Life Connections-EAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 11</td>
<td>English Language Center International Workshop Series (Session 1)</td>
<td>English Language Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 15</td>
<td>CliftonStrengths for Postdocs (Part 1)</td>
<td>Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program</td>
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<td>Feb 28</td>
<td>Demystifying Taxes for Graduate Students and Postdocs Live Q&amp;A Session</td>
<td>Emily Roberts, Finance for PhDs</td>
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<td>Mar 1</td>
<td>CliftonStrengths for Postdocs (Part 2)</td>
<td>Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program</td>
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<td>Mar 4</td>
<td>English Language Center International Workshop Series (Session 2)</td>
<td>English Language Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 15</td>
<td>CliftonStrengths for Postdocs (Part 3)</td>
<td>Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 22</td>
<td>Introduction to Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>The Wond’ry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 28</td>
<td>The Women's Center Salary Negotiation Workshop</td>
<td>Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 1</td>
<td>English Language Center International Workshop Series (Session 3)</td>
<td>English Language Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 8</td>
<td>Motivation, Mindset &amp; Effective Goal Setting</td>
<td>Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>Nashville Sounds game for Postdoctoral Fellows</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 16</td>
<td>WriteNow Summer Writing Bootcamps</td>
<td>Sponsored by the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs and Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 24</td>
<td>Spring Postdoc Awards Ceremony</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jun 23</td>
<td>Speak Easy Talk Series Event</td>
<td>Sponsored by the Vanderbilt Postdoctoral Association and the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs</td>
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</table>
THE SPEAK EASY TALK SERIES,
hosted by the Vanderbilt Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA) and the Vanderbilt Postdoctoral Association (VPA), seeks to offer a causal venue for “scientific presentations” that are accessible and digestible to the public through an evening happy hour event. Speak Easy presenters will discuss a variety of topics from biology, neuroscience, mathematics, data science, health-related science, and more.

The first Speak Easy event was held June 23, 2022.
National Postdoc Appreciation Week recognizes the significant contributions that postdoctoral fellows make to U.S. research and discovery. The 12th Annual National Postdoc Appreciation Week was held September 20–24, 2021.
EVENTS INCLUDED:

Wellness Workshop: Dealing with Change
*Sponsored by Work/Life Connections – EAP Postdoc Wellness Program*

Coffee with Office of Postdoctoral Affairs
Leadership and Career Center Coaches
*Sponsored by the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs and the Career Center*

Free Cupcakes at the Women's Center
*Sponsored by the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center*

Postdoc Appreciation Annual Family Picnic

Complimentary Postdoc Headshots

The Postdoc Family Picnic returned to Fannie Mae Dees Park.
The Vanderbilt Postdoctoral Association hosted the 15th annual Postdoc Symposium on November 1. The symposium was organized in person at the Student Life Center, much to the joy and cheer of the attendees, after having it virtually in 2020 due to the coronavirus outbreak.

The preparation for the symposium started in August after the new VPA committee was formed for the 2020-21 session. The symposium committee was headed by the VPA’s Scholarly Learning Chair Anirban Sengupta and Senior Co-Chair Brianna Yamasaki. The planning committee included 10 people from the VPA board and 2 volunteers from the postdoc community along with support from the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs. The 15th Annual Postdoc Symposium had a participation of more than 120 people which included attendees, presenters, faculty judges, Office of Postdoctoral Affairs representatives including Vice Provost C. André Christie-Mizell, Provost C. Cybele Raver, and other invited speakers. Dr. Adia Harvey Wingfield, Professor of Sociology from Washington University in St. Louis presided over the event as the Keynote speaker. Her talk focused on “Professional Work in a Post Racial Era”, a topic which is of high relevance in present socio-political situation in the United States. We also had a talk on career development by Dr. Ashley Brady from the Biomedical Research Education and Training Office, which was well received by the attendees.

Postdocs presented their research during two poster sessions.
This year we had seven lightning talks and 26 poster presenters from various disciplines across the university and the medical center. Several award winners were recognized:

**SYMPOSIUM AWARD WINNERS**

**BEST LIGHTNING TALK**

**Harry Barbee** (VU)
Sex in a pandemic: how gender affects our adaptations to moments of crisis

**Michael Kammer** (VUMC)
The tumor immune microenvironment protects against recurrence in early-stage lung adenocarcinoma

**BEST POSTER PRESENTATION**

**Chitra Basu** (VUMC)
Gene expression analysis of isolated cardiac endothelial cells at different stages of tissue repair after myocardial infarction

**Hubaida Fuseini** (VUMC)
High and low leptin doses differentially effect Ki67 and IL-17A expression in CD4+ T cells from obese and lean PWH on long-term antiretroviral therapy

**Clément Garin** (VU)
An evolutionary gap in primate default mode network organization
The Vanderbilt Postdoctoral Association and Office of Postdoctoral Affairs announced its 2022 award winners at the Spring Postdoc Awards Ceremony on May 24.
POSTDOCTORAL MENTOR OF THE YEAR

Recipients of the Postdoctoral Mentor of the Year Award must demonstrate a willingness to share expertise and advice; service to the community at large, including other mentoring activities; and scholarship within the mentor’s own career, including publications, awards, presentations and honors. The Vanderbilt Postdoctoral Association solicits nominations from all Vanderbilt postdocs, and the VPA Executive Board reviews and votes.

This year’s recipient is Neelima Wagley, Ph.D. mentored by James Booth, Ph.D.

An honorable mention was awarded to Nina Hernitschek, Ph.D. mentored by Keivan Stassun, Ph.D.

Dr. Wagley is described saying, “She really values mentorship and wants to help people from all backgrounds to succeed in academics and promote science”.

POSTDOCTORAL OF THE YEAR

The Postdoc of the Year award recognizes a postdoctoral scholar who demonstrates excellence in research and scholarship. The nominee must demonstrate excellence in several criteria, including publications, presentations, awards/ honors, service, and mentoring. The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs solicited nominations from faculty in each school, and the Postdoctoral Fellow Advisory Committee reviewed and voted on all nominations.

This year’s recipient is Harry Barbee, Ph.D., supervised by Tara McKay, Ph.D. (Medicine, Health, & Society) and colleagues Kitt Carpenter, Ph.D. (Economics) and Gilbert Gonzalez, Ph.D., MHS (Medicine, Health, & Society, Health Policy) in the LGBT Policy Lab.

“Few among us can say that we have changed the culture of a government institution through our work, and Harry has been exceptional here,” states Dr. Tara McKay.

An honorable mention was awarded to Abigail LaBella, Ph.D. mentored by Antonis Rokas, Ph.D.
**POSTDOC SERVICE AWARD**

The Postdoc Service Award goes to a postdoctoral scholar who has demonstrated sustained service to Vanderbilt through service to the community at large—through professional societies, scholarly work outside regular lab responsibilities, or by leading within and promoting the postdoc experience at Vanderbilt. The Vanderbilt Postdoc Association solicits nominations from all postdocs, and the VPA Executive Board reviews and votes.

This year’s recipient is **Brianna Yamasaki, Ph.D.** mentored by James Booth, Ph.D.

Dr. Yamasaki is the Senior Co-Chair for the VPA for the 2021-2022 academic year. Outside of the university, Brianna has engaged in community outreach events to bridge the gap between the scientific and public communities.

An honorable mention was awarded to **Anirban Sengupta, Ph.D.** mentored by John Gore, Ph.D.

**FACULTY MENTOR OF THE YEAR**

Recipients of the Faculty Mentor of the Year Award must demonstrate a willingness to share expertise and advice; service to the community at large, including other mentoring activities; and scholarship within the mentor’s own career, including publications, awards, presentations and honors. The Vanderbilt Postdoctoral Association solicits nominations from all Vanderbilt postdocs, and the VPA Executive Board reviews and votes.

This year’s recipient is **Erin Calipari, Ph.D.,** Assistant Professor of Pharmacology.

Dr. Calipari is described by a mentee as “without a doubt, one of the best mentors I have had the pleasure to work with on my academic journey, spanning my undergraduate, graduate (Masters and PhD), and postdoctoral years.”

An honorable mention was awarded to **Adam Wright, Ph.D.,** Professor of Biomedical Informatics.
Faith Bishop
James R. Booth
Elizabeth Boyd
Tanya Brown
David Calkins
Maxime Chevee
C. André Christie-Mizell
Ellen Goldring
Kathleen Gould
Katherine E. Hartmann
Caitlin Haskell
E. Duco Jansen
Amy Martinez
Rick Ohmer
Mariann R. Piano
Jennifer A. Pietenpol
Chris Vanags
Julie Wilbers
Richard H. Willis
David W. Wright