Family Weekend
September 27–29

Family Weekend is the perfect time for students, parents, grandparents and siblings to reconnect. We have many fun and exciting events planned, including a football matchup between the ‘Dores and University of Alabama at Birmingham. You’ll also have the opportunity to meet with various deans, administrators and faculty with time left over to stroll across our beautiful campus and soak up the Vanderbilt atmosphere.

Please find a tentative schedule on the Parents and Family Programs website at vanderbilt.edu/familyweekend and check often for the most up-to-date schedule. A comprehensive schedule will be available when you arrive. See you in September!

The Psychological and Counseling Center provides a range of resources

As director of Vanderbilt’s Psychological and Counseling Center (PCC), Dr. Cathy Fuchs seeks opportunities to talk with parents about mental health and success in college, not only as a practitioner but as a partner.

“We reach out to parents and encourage students and parents to contact the PCC as they prepare for the transition to Vanderbilt, particularly if the student has existing mental health needs,” said Fuchs, a board certified child and adolescent psychiatrist.

The PCC’s psychologists, licensed counselors and psychiatric medical providers are available to any Vanderbilt student and address a range of student needs including stress management, crisis intervention, substance abuse counseling, management of medications, individual counseling, emergency assessments, and psychiatric assessment and treatment.

“We want students to feel comfortable coming to us and are adding new ways for them to do so,” said Fuchs, citing new support groups as a way for students to drop in during a particularly stressful time, talk through their anxieties and work on their coping skills.

Fuchs points to evidence that high levels of stress have a negative impact on one’s ability to think and learn. “The best outcomes happen when we are able to facilitate appropriate coping skills and help students identify ways they can communicate or demonstrate the process of healthy growth to others.”

“It is helpful for parents and their students to agree on boundaries of privacy prior to coming to school and discuss how parents can best communicate their observations or concerns,” said Fuchs, noting that student attendance at the PCC is protected by FERPA laws. “Ideally, parents and their students will proactively discuss how to provide support and encouragement and how to express concerns effectively.” The PCC can help parents think through how to support their son or daughter while protecting the confidential nature of the relationship with the student.

As students prepare for the end of the semester or graduation, Fuchs advises parents to begin or continue conversations about stress, anxiety, and substance use. For those with students currently receiving support from the PCC, she encourages them to identify a local provider to continue care during the summer months.

“Conversations between parents and students about mental health issues can be difficult, but the more comfortable we are talking, the better equipped we all are to help students cope and ultimately succeed.”

On the web at www.vanderbilt.edu/pcc
How can I volunteer?

Volunteer opportunities abound for Vanderbilt parents, and we invite you to take part. Consider these ways to get involved:

• Write to first-year parents—Send welcome letters to parents of first-year and transfer students from your region.
• Host a regional Vanderbilt parent reception—Done in collaboration with the Parents and Family Programs office.
• Host a regional care package party—Organize an event for parents to assemble care packages to send their students around holidays or exam time.
• Host a Summer Send-Off Party—Work with Vanderbilt’s Office of Alumni Relations.
• Volunteer on campus—Parent volunteers are essential to the success of events like Move-In Day and Family Weekend.
• Assist the Office of Admissions at recruitment events—Volunteer at college fairs and programs in your area, pass out brochures and materials, and answer questions about Vanderbilt from prospective students and their families.
• Host a Vanderbilt international student over the holidays—Many of our international students remain on campus during the holidays, and they would welcome the opportunity to experience American holiday traditions in the home of a Vanderbilt family.
• Participate in career networking events for Vanderbilt students—Volunteer to participate in the Soirée at Sarratt networking event during Family Weekend in September. There are also various opportunities for your company to participate in recruiting events on campus.
• Serve as a Study Abroad parent mentor—If you have studied abroad through a Vanderbilt program, share your knowledge and experience with other parents.

Get involved today. To sign up, simply go to the Parents and Family Programs website at vanderbilt.edu/families, and click on “Volunteer” near the top of the page. Then complete the online participation form. Thank you!

Care package parties— the latest trend

Did you know that creating a care package for your student can be almost as fun as receiving one? The Parents and Family Programs office recently started a program that supports parents who would like to host care package packing parties in their region.

At these informal gatherings, parents come together to assemble care packages to send their students at holidays or during exam time. Each parent brings multiples of a particular item, and packages are then assembled using all the various items. It’s a fun, creative event and helps parents get to know each other better.

If you would like to host a care package party, please contact our office at (877) 887-2746 or email parents@vanderbilt.edu.

Celeste Beck Sagi

Sagi leads Office of Arts and Creative Engagement

Celeste Beck Sagi has been named director of Vanderbilt’s Office of Arts and Creative Engagement. In this capacity, she oversees eight organizations including the International Lens film series, the Rhythm and Roots performance company and the Creative Campus Residential Fellows program.

“What’s wonderful about this position is that it has such a wide reach,” she says. “I get to hear about creative opportunities all over campus and help promote those people so there is an opportunity to join in.”

Sagi believes that an office like hers plays an important role in the lives of students.

“A culturally rich, intellectually rich education involves exposure to the arts,” she says. “Students who engage in artistic activities learn to think creatively, and that can lead to entrepreneurship and innovation.”

Sagi’s own creativity is expressed through painting, singing and in her day-to-day work on campus.

“I get the chance to express myself when meeting with artists and singers and performers,” she says. “It feels like I’m growing just by being exposed to the people who do this here. I’m surrounded by inspiring people.”

Students who would like to be creatively engaged can join the Vanderbilt Performing Arts Council or take classes from the Vanderbilt Dance Program or at the Sarratt Art Studios.

Peer Coaches: students help students

The Peer Center for Student Professional Development implemented a Peer Coaching program last fall to serve Vanderbilt students. Peer Coaches are selected through an intensive application process, and it is preferred that they have coaching, advising or mentoring experience.

Ten students were chosen for the 2012–13 school year. They participated in rigorous training, including information on working with students in distress, emerging coaching theories, resume and cover letter review, customer service, working with employers, FEPSA, performance expectations, center resources and conducting job and internship searches.

“There are many benefits to being a Peer Coach, and the selection process is very competitive,” says Cindy Funk, center director. According to Funk, all Peer Coaches have a professional development plan, learn how to conduct a successful job and internship search and are exposed to a variety of employers who are recruiting on campus.

Peer Coaches work with students during walk-in hours, give presentations to student organizations, provide office support, and represent the center at employer information sessions. They work primarily with students who are coming to the center for the first time, which allows the professional coaching staff to focus on students with greater needs and challenges.

Peer Coaches also help plan large events such as Soirée at Sarratt, a networking event held during Family Weekend in the fall. Peer Coaches, with direction from center leadership, handled all aspects of the 2012 Soirée, from budgets to catering to working with invited guests.
Faculty spotlight: Philip Dikeman

It’s only natural that Philip Dikeman, associate professor of flute at the Blair School of Music, is a music teacher today—he gave his first lessons when he was in junior high school.

“My piano teacher back then told us that if we had the chance to teach, we should,” Dikeman says. “She mentored me along the way and made me realize the value of passing along what I was learning from her to my own students.”

After completing graduate school at Yale, Dikeman fulfilled a lifelong ambition and joined an orchestra, albeit one on the other side of the world in Hong Kong. After five years, he went to the Detroit Symphony where he spent 20 years.

“I basically had 25 years of playing an average of three to four concerts a week,” he says. “I reached a point where I was ready for a career shift. I heard about the opening at Blair, and everything just fell into place.”

Dikeman sees his work today as a continuation of the work of his teachers.

“When I came to Vanderbilt, I felt a responsibility to my own flute teachers,” he says. “I learned so much from them. I wanted to honor them and help their legacies endure.”

Student spotlight: Megan Piphus

Megan Piphus was recently seen on The Tonight Show with Jay Lenos performing her world-renowned musical ventriloquist act. Since age 10, Megan has performed nationally, appearing on Oprah and America’s Got Talent. In December 2012, Megan was crowned Miss Black Tennessee USA for her scholastic achievement and performance talents.

Using her skills in music and ventriloquism, Megan began an educational program for youth called “Color My Dream.” Megan visits schools and youth centers and encourages her audiences to dream big and set goals. Megan helps youth see the beauty in their dreams and recognize their special talents.

No stranger to the entertainment industry, Megan has interned for entertainment companies NBC/Universal and Warner Music. She has also worked as a field and red carpet reporter for ESPNU and BlackTree TV.

A Cornelius Vanderbilt Scholar, Megan is in her junior year and majoring in economics and minorng in general music with aspirations to study entertainment law in graduate school. Outside of the classroom, Megan serves as a residential adviser on The Martha Rivers Ingram Commons at Vanderbilt and on the executive boards of the Black Student Alliance, National Black MBA Association and National Pan-Hellenic Council.

Tips for Commencement, May 8–10

By Matthew Redd, director of Commencement

1. Attire: Layer in light colors. It could be 90 degrees at 7 a.m. and 90 degrees by noon. No heels for the ladies. You’ll sink into Alumni Lawn.

2. Special needs: If your family requires mobility or other assistance, call Disability Services at (615) 322-4705 to discuss parking options, wheelchairs and additional assistance. Services are limited and requests must be made in advance.

3. Photography: We’ll take individual close-ups of graduates holding their diploma and shaking hands with the chancellor. Proofs and order information will be sent to your graduate’s permanent address. DVDs of the main ceremony, including the undergraduate diploma ceremony, will also be available.

4. Announcements: Order through the Commencement website at vanderbilt.edu/commencement. Orders placed before April 12 will arrive in time for mailing prior to Commencement. Remember, announcements can be sent before or after the event.

5. Housing: Have a last-minute guest and all the hotels are full? Stay on campus at The Martha Rivers Ingram Commons at Vanderbilt for only $99 a night.

6. Dining: Avoid the crowds and dine on campus. Check the website for choices, including how to order our popular premium box lunches for just $10.

7. THE PARTY: This outdoor event—set for 9 p.m. May 8 and featuring the dynamic, high-energy Band X—is great for the whole family. Graduates receive one free ticket. Purchase additional tickets at our website for $20.

8. Senior Day speaker: Pulitzer- and Nobel Prize-winning author Toni Morrison is our 2013 Nichols-Chancellor’s Medal recipient and speaker. The event is set for 11 a.m. on Thursday, May 9, at Memorial Gym. There is no guest limit and tickets are not necessary.

9. Commencement Day seating: No tickets are necessary! Seating is first-come, first-served. Arrive no later than 8 a.m. Friday to be safe. Saving seats is not allowed due to space constraints.

10. Indoor viewing areas: There are many indoor areas set aside for guests to view Commencement. Stay out of the heat or foul weather but remain close to all the action. Check the maps on the Commencement website for locations.

11. Alerts: Sign up for Commencement text alerts at vanderbilt.edu/commencement/text-message to have the latest information sent directly to your cell phone in the event of severe weather. Follow us on Twitter (VUgraduation) and Facebook (facebook.com/VanderbiltCommencement) for weekly updates and reminders.

If you need assistance, call (615) 322-2870 or toll-free at (866) JVUGRAD, email commencement@vanderbilt.edu or visit vanderbilt.edu/commencement for complete details on everything you just read and more.
Unrestricted giving to Vanderbilt

Unrestricted gifts help provide the margin of excellence for the student experience. These unrestricted funds are important because they can be used immediately by a school dean for needed purposes, including laboratory and classroom equipment, library acquisitions, guest lecturerships, special programs and seminars, and much more.

- Labs in the School of Engineering are equipped with the latest tools and technology which allow our students to explore solutions for real-world problems such as cyber security and heart disease.
- Students in the College of Arts and Science are taught by faculty who are Guggenheim Fellows as well as those who have been selected for membership in elite organizations such as the National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Science.
- Unrestricted gifts enable the Blair School of Music to buy instruments and recording equipment for students and to invite guest artists to teach master classes.
- At Peabody, students are encouraged to participate in programs designed to develop and hone their leadership skills—skills our students use to become service leaders in communities around the globe.

Parents play a critical role in supporting unrestricted giving, and a gift at any level is important because it builds on participation. We hope all parents will consider supporting their child’s undergraduate school this year.

For more information on unrestricted giving and supporting your Vanderbilt student’s school, please contact Amy Jarvis or Rebekah Rohrbach in the Parents & Grandparents Campaign office at (615) 343-5120 or pag.campaign@vanderbilt.edu.

A Family Affair

The Moores are a Vanderbilt family. Jack Moore graduated from Vanderbilt University Law School in 1973 and has been an active member of the Vanderbilt community ever since, including serving as a member of the Vanderbilt Board of Trust for more than a decade. Together with his wife Betty, they have raised two black and gold alumni out of their three children. Their son Jackson Moore graduated with an MBA in 2003, and their daughter, Shellye Geske, graduated with a bachelor of science degree in special education in 2002. Shellye even met her husband, Kevin Geske, BA’02, at Vanderbilt.

Throw some extended family members—Betty’s brother and sister-in-law, plus some cousins and several nieces—into the count, and you can begin to see why Vanderbilt is part of the family’s DNA.

Because this school has played such a pivotal role in their lives, the Moore family wanted to give that same gift of a Vanderbilt education to others.

“We have been fortunate. We’ve been successful,” says Jack. “We have a strong feeling that we should share some of those successes to help prospective students who could not attend Vanderbilt without the scholarship funds provided by families.”

In 2008, the family established a scholarship for undergraduate students enrolled in either Peabody College or the College of Arts and Science. Since that time, getting to know the scholarship recipients has become a family affair.

“We have ongoing emails with them. When we are in town from Memphis, once or twice a year, we get all of them together and take them out to dinner, and we have our kids and their spouses there to share in the family support of the students,” says Jack.

Although the family has a humble and behind-the-scenes approach to giving, they felt it was important to share with others the joy this gift has brought them.

“It’s one of the greatest things you’ll ever do,” says Jack. “If you have any doubts, do it, and afterward you’ll realize what a great difference you’re going to make in some exceptional children’s lives, a difference that they will carry with them forever.”

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Key dates

April 19–20
Rites of Spring

April 22
Last day of classes

April 23–May 2
Reading days and examinations

May 4
First year residence halls close at 9 a.m.

May 8–10
Commencement Activities

May 11
Residence halls close at 1 p.m.

May 6–31
May Classes

June 4–July 4
Summer Session I

July 9–August 8
Summer Session II

Contact information

Parent Helpline
(877) 887-2736

Email
parents@vanderbilt.edu

Parents & Family Programs
vanderbilt.edu/families

Parents and Grandparents Campaign
vanderbilt.edu/pagcampaign

Key links

Academic calendar
registrar.vanderbilt.edu/calendar

Athletics
vucommodores.com

Bookstore
vanderbiltbookstore.com

Commencement
vanderbilt.edu/commencement

Dean of Students
vanderbilt.edu/deanofstudents

First-year orientation
commonplace.vanderbilt.edu

Greek life
vanderbilt.edu/greek_life

Housing and Residential Life
vanderbilt.edu/ResEd

Student Health Center
vanderbilt.edu/student_health

University calendar
calendar.vanderbilt.edu

VSG shuttle service
studentorgs.vanderbilt.edu/vsg