Living and learning in Kissam

The Kissam Quadrangle is a close-knit community of six residence halls for upperclass students that offers the unique Kissam Experience.

The Kissam Experience (KXP) is a collaborative initiative designed to encourage and empower residents to direct their own living experiences through community-focused programming, student-led community leadership, interaction with faculty and involvement in student-directed inquiry learning projects (Kissam Learning Initiatives in Collaborative Knowledge or KLICKs).

The Kissam Programming Council (KPC), made up from students from all six halls, offers a wide range of events. Recent examples include a screening of *The Princess and the Frog* followed by a faculty-led talk to panel discussions on the process of applying to and succeeding in law school and medical school. The KPC has also created successful annual traditions like the Kissam Karnival. Attendance at major Kissam events usually exceeds 200 people.

KLICKS offer students the opportunity to explore a question of their choosing that produces knowledge and action. KLICKS projects include “Fighting Poverty with Social Capital” to “Opportunities Beyond Engineering” to “Diversity on Campus.” Students apply for KLICKS through the programming council and if selected are placed with a mentor (faculty, staff or alumni) by the Kissam graduate program coordinator.

Kissam also provides students access to faculty. Professor Maria Paz Pintané serves as the faculty in residence in Kissam, planning programs and interacting with students. In addition, faculty members often assist in the programs planned by the resident advisers or the KPC.

For more information about the KXP or to serve as a KLICKS mentor, contact Senior Director Randy Tarkington at r.tarkington@vanderbilt.edu.

Key dates

- **April 26**
  Spring classes end

- **April 27–May 5**
  Reading days and examinations

- **May 7**
  Residence halls close at 9 a.m.
  for students not staying for Commencement

- **May 11–13**
  Commencement activities

- **May 14**
  Residence halls close at 1 p.m.

- **May 9–June 3**
  Maymester summer session

- **June 7–July 8**
  Summer Session I

- **July 12–August 12**
  Summer Session II
Dining by the numbers at Vanderbilt

Vanderbilt Dining offers a broad array of options for students, faculty and staff:

- Chef James Bistro at the Rand Dining Centers every day offers six entrees, five vegetables, three starches, seven salads and two soups.
- There are 20 on-campus locations that accept the Vanderbilt Meal Plan. Three are 24/7 markets. Also 26 partner restaurants within walking distance of campus accept students’ Meal Money.
- Vanderbilt Dining utilizes more than 50 local businesses. It buys eggs and chickens from Will McDonald in Hohenwald, Tenn., chickens from Emerald Glen Farms in Munfordville, Ky., beef from Gourmet Pastures in Springfield, Tenn., and milk from Hatcher Family Dairy in College Grove, Tenn., to name a few.
- Vanderbilt Dining has won more than 30 awards for excellence in food preparation and management. Food Management magazine awards included Best Concept, Best Special Event, Best Residential Dining and Food Service Operation of the Year.
- Making things special for the students is a goal for the dining staff. They average 108 special events every school year.
- Rand Dining Center and Chef James Bistro serve an average of 3,500 students every day. The Commons serves an average of 1,500 students per day.
- The markets on campus serve 725 parfaits and 850 cereal cups daily. The top-selling cereal is Honey Nut Cheerios.

Students must enroll for electronic billing

Beginning July 2011, Vanderbilt student bills will only be available electronically—paper bills will no longer be sent. All students should enroll for electronic billing by visiting www.vanderbilt.edu/stuaccts and clicking the “Important information concerning electronic bills” link.

Once enrolled, students can grant online account access to parents, guardians or other payers.

After enrolling, online account access offers a secure way to view bills, make payments and review up to 12 months of payment information. On the first of each month (except September and January, when no bills are sent), students and their authorized users will receive an email with the subject line “Your new Vanderbilt e-bill is now available.” The email will contain a link to the secure e-bill website where an online payment can be made or the bill can be printed for payment by mail. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that bills are paid on or before the due date.

For questions, please contact the Office of Student Accounts at (615) 322-6095, toll-free at (800) 288-1144 or via email at student.accounts@vanderbilt.edu. For additional information, please visit the Student Accounts website at www.vanderbilt.edu/stuaccts.

Vanderbilt Catholic offers more than church

By the Rev. John Sims Baker

One Friday last fall Professor Robert Scherrera, chair of the physics department, gave a talk entitled “The Religious Implications of Cosmology and the Far-future of the Universe.”

The talk’s sponsor? Vanderbilt Catholic.

I serve as chaplain to Vanderbilt Catholic, a student organization. We also rely on a student board for guidance. Administratively, we fall under the Office of Religious Life at Vanderbilt, and I serve the Catholic Diocese of Nashville within the church. The vision for our program is to offer formation to students in four essential areas: spiritual, intellectual, human and apostolic.

Spiritual formation includes offering Mass and confession on campus, other sacramental preparation, retreats and various opportunities for prayer. On the intellectual side, we seek to connect the intellectual tradition of Catholicism to the life of Vanderbilt students through “College Catholicism” seminars and faculty talks. We also encourage human virtue in the students for them to enjoy the fullness of life in everything they do: in class or the residence halls, playing intramurals or at a party. We try to offer apostolic experiences to put faith into service, whether in Honduras over spring break or right around the corner at the Hope Clinic.

Learn more about us at www.vanderbilt.edu/catholic.

Get involved with your local Vanderbilt chapter

Local chapter social and educational events are open to all parents as well as Vanderbilt alumni and friends. Chapters are located in the following cities:

- Atlanta
- Austin, Texas
- Birmingham, Ala.
- Boston
- Charlotte, N.C.
- Chattanooga, Tenn.
- Chicago
- Cincinnati
- Cleveland, Ohio
- Dallas
- Denver
- Detroit
- Houston
- Huntsville, Ala.
- Jackson, Miss.
- Jacksonville, Fla.
- Kansas City, Mo.
- Los Angeles
- Louisville, Ky.
- Memphis, Tenn.
- Miami
- Nashville, Tenn.
- New Orleans
- New York City
- Orlando, Fla.
- Palm Beach/
- Broward County, Fla.
- Philadelphia
- Phoenix
- Richmond, Va.
- San Antonio
- San Diego
- San Francisco
- Seattle
- St. Louis
- Tampa, Fla.
- Minneapolis/St. Paul
- Washington, D.C.
- International chapters are located in Paris and
- London.

To find out more about events at a chapter near you, visit www.vanderbilt.edu/alumni and click on “Chapters and Events” under the heading “Get Involved.” You can also call (615) 322-2929 for more information.

Parents and Family Association Advisory Board Members 2010-2011

Lee Von and Paulette Allen
Antioch, Tenn.

Philip and Irl Altman
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Aurora, Ohio

Walt and Lynn Kunsau
Louisville, Ky.

R. Craig and Sara Kuykendall
Ocala, Fla.

Continued on page 3
Parent Spotlight: David and Shawn Brevard

Just six weeks into her first year at Vanderbilt, Stewart Brevard’s grandfather passed away. As she dealt with the loss, the compassionate response she received from everyone at Vanderbilt impressed her—and her parents.

“This isn’t something you read about in some brochure,” says Shawn Brevard, Stewart’s mother. “Obviously, Vanderbilt has outstanding faculty and facilities, but it also has a great heart when it comes to caring.”

Since then, David and Shawn Brevard have served on the Parents and Family Association Advisory Board and Parents Leadership Committee, as Move-in Day and Family Weekend volunteers, and at Vanderbilt events in their hometown. Their spirit of service has had a ripple effect. Stewart has accepted a job with Teach for America.

“Volunteering at Vanderbilt has strengthened our relationship with our child and introduced them to wonderful fellow parents, classmates and Vanderbilt staff,” Shawn says. “Supporting Vanderbilt by reaching out to fellow parents, offering financial support for scholarships and adding to the ‘brain trust’ of the institution are opportunities that are beneficial to all.

“We are indebted to Vanderbilt for the positive impact on our child, and for the relationships that have enriched our lives.”

Faculty spotlight: Mimi Engel

To teach or not to teach. And if to teach, whither and wherefore? The answers to that quandary lie in the realm of Mimi Engel, assistant professor of public policy and education at Peabody College of education and human development. One area of her research involves teacher labor markets, including supply (how teachers decide whether and where to teach) and demand (principal hiring practices and policies). “The work I’m doing in this area examines principals’ hiring practices in Chicago and teacher preferences when applying for jobs at schools in Chicago,” she explains.

Since arriving at Vanderbilt in 2009, she has taught undergraduates as well as master and doctoral candidates. “I want to help my students become more sophisticated, savvy consumers and producers of research,” Engel says. “I want to help them discern high quality research and help them understand what conclusions they can and can’t draw from empirical work. For undergraduates, I’m interested in helping them develop their critical thinking and writing skills.” Also of interest to Engel is the importance of children’s early mathematics skills and knowledge for later school outcomes. “We’re looking at which math skills are most important, and whether kindergarten teachers teach the math skills that children need to know,” she says.

Next, she would like to research truancy intervention in public schools. “Truancy is one of the largest problems facing large urban districts and is a major precursor for dropping out,” she says, “so I’d love it if we got funding to do the study.”

One more thing you should know about Mimi Engel: She really likes her students. “I’ve thoroughly enjoyed teaching them so far,” she says. “There are so many bright and enthusiastic students here.”

Top tips for Commencement, May 11–13

By Matthew Redd, director of Commencement

1. Attire: Layer in light colors. It could be 50 degrees at 7 a.m. and 90 degrees by noon. An advisory about 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) 322-8705 to discuss parking options, wheelchairs and additional assistance. Services are limited and must be requested in advance.

3. Photography: We’ll take close-ups of each graduate 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 undergraduate diploma ceremony, will also be available.

4. Announcements: Order through the Commencement website at www.vanderbilt.edu/commencement. Orders placed before April 15 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 Commodore from only $89 a night.

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

7. THE PARTY: This outdoor event—set for 9 p.m. May 11 and featuring the 2011 Grammy-winning Latin music Grupo Fantasma—is great for the whole family. Graduates receive one free ticket. Purchase additional tickets at our website for $20.

8. Senior Day speaker: Nobel Peace Prize recipient and Green Belt movement founder Wangari Maathai is our 2011 Nichols-Chancellor’s Medal recipient and speaker. The event is set for 10 a.m. on Thursday, May 12, at Memorial Gym. Doors open at 8:30 a.m. 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 website for locations.

11. Alerts: Sign up for Commencement text alerts at www.vanderbilt.edu/commencement/text-message to have the latest information sent directly to your cell phone in the event of severe weather.

Questions? If you need assistance, call (615) 322-2870 or toll free at (866) VWUGRAD, email commencement@vanderbilt.edu or visit www.vanderbilt.edu/commencement for complete details on everything you just read and more.

Faculty spotlight: Mimi Engel

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Student spotlight: Hana Nasr

Hana Nasr, Class of 2011, was recently selected as one of the top 10 finalists in this year’s Outstanding Senior competition.

Nase, a premed student and a neuroscience major with an Islamic studies minor, is committed to breaking down stereotypes and uniting the Vanderbilt campus. She is the president of the Muslim Students Association and is also a part of the Interfaith Council and the Multicultural Leadership Council.

“It’s important for everyone to understand that it’s not about how you dress or what you believe in,” she says. “It’s what you can do for the betterment of your community that really matters.”

Nase lives up to her beliefs through her dedication to serving others. Since her first semester at Vanderbilt, she has volunteered with Vanderbilt Student Volunteers for Science and for the past two years she has been a part of the Special Activities Committee of the Vanderbilt Programming Board. She also volunteers with the American Red Cross.

“This is such an honor for me,” says Nasr. “I have a true appreciation for the many opportunities here at Vanderbilt.”

Owen business degrees and programs

Is your student interested in a business career? Vanderbilt’s Owen Graduate School of Management business programs provide the skills and credentials needed to open doors to world’s leading companies. Programs include:

• MBA—two-year MBA features general management skills, career-focused specializations, immersion learning and best-in-class leadership development

• Master of Science in Finance—nine-month advanced graduate degree designed for college graduates seeking careers in asset management, investment research, sales and trading, insurance, corporate finance and risk management

• Master of Accountancy—one-year program that gives high-performing students from non-accounting majors the skills and knowledge sought by leading professional services firms. This year, 100 percent of the MAcc class received internship offers from our partner firms, four of which are on Bloomberg BusinessWeek’s “Best Places to Launch a Career” list.

• Accelerator Summer Business Institute—a four-week immersion exclusively for undergraduates. Students apply now! Knowledge immediately as consultants for real-world clients.

All of these programs are accepting rolling applications. To learn more, visit www.owen.vanderbilt.edu.
Unrestricted gifts meet critical needs

Unrestricted gifts help Vanderbilt students have a fuller academic experience. These gifts—which are not earmarked for a specific purpose—can be used immediately by the undergraduate school deans for any purpose. In the past, deans have tapped these funds to pay for laboratory and classroom equipment, guest lectureships, special programs and seminars, and much more. These gifts from parents, grandparents and alumni allow students to explore their potential and become our next generation of leaders.

For example, the School of Engineering uses unrestricted funds in its Senior Design Seminar to explore the different areas of engineering to collaborate on problem solving.

The College of Arts and Science used unrestricted dollars to recruit and retain faculty.

Annual unrestricted support is a high priority for the Blair School of Music because of the flexibility these funds afford.

Unrestricted gifts to Peabody—ranked the No. 1 graduate school for education for the past three years—help fill immediate needs such as student scholarships, internships and technology support.

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 (615) 343-3120 or pag.campaign@vanderbilt.edu.

2009 graduate’s life honored with scholarship fund

If a man’s worth is reflected in the eyes and actions of his friends and colleagues, then Kyser Miree’s too short lifetime was beyond measure. Beginning this fall, an incoming Vanderbilt engineering student will be the first recipient of the Christopher Kyser Miree Scholarship, established in 2010 to honor his memory and his legacy as a student leader and friend.

Kyser, a 2009 mechanical engineering graduate, started in his first job with Chevron Corp. He moved to Mobile, Ala., to begin his career. In April 2010, he was killed during a home robbery attempt. Four men have been indicted on capital murder charges. Miree’s friends, friends’ parents, fraternity brothers and many others sprang into action to create and fund this new scholarship.

“The support Kyser’s gotten from his friends and friends’ families has been really magnificent,” says his father, Ben. “From overflowing the church at the memorial service, to the letters and things on a number of levels that they’ve done—just because they adored Kyser.”

Members of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity, where Kyser was president his senior year, were the first to rally the troops. Working with Vanderbilt, they were able to raise enough money in short order to reach the $100,000 threshold necessary to fund a scholarship. Funding continues with bequests and pledges.

Kyser’s mother, Kathryn, attended Homecoming this year and was overwhelmed by the wealth of support she experienced. “It really surprised me, the sort of breadth of this participation, especially from the kids that are so young. I work in the area of development. I’m a consultant to charities of all kinds all over the country,” she says. “What is unusual here is that some of these kids contributing are still in school and many just got out of school. I’ve rarely seen such broad-based participation... The sense of community we saw there really filled our hearts.”

“Kyser thrived at Vanderbilt,” she adds. “I think it would give him a lot of pleasure—and it certainly gives us a lot of pleasure—that this scholarship is going to help many other engineering students chase their dreams like he did.”

John and Anne Stokes chair Grandparents Campaign

When Cabell Brown moves into The Commons in August, he will be carrying out a family tradition that reaches back five generations. His great-grandfather, William Hall Stokes, graduated from Vanderbilt’s dental school in 1897. It only seems natural that his grandparents, John and Anne Stokes, both BA’59, agreed to chair the 2011 Grandparents Campaign.

“I grew up thinking Vanderbilt was the only university in the country,” John says. “I never even thought about going anywhere else. Chairing this campaign is a way to give back to Vanderbilt and we are privileged to help out in this way.”

Cabell will join his cousins, John Stokes, Class of 2011, and Will Stokes, Class of 2013.

“When we were asked to do this, we gave it some serious thought,” Anne says. “Today, Vanderbilt is turning out students who feel that it’s more important to give back to humanity. I don’t see a lot of selfish materialism.”

The Stokes would like to encourage all Vanderbilt grandparents to support the campaign.

“When I was younger, my goal was to work hard and make a lot of money,” John says. “Today, Vanderbilt is turning out students who feel that it’s more important to give back to humanity. I don’t see a lot of selfish materialism.”

The Stokes would like to encourage all Vanderbilt grandparents to support the campaign.

“We all need to give back and education is a good place to do it.”

John and Anne Stokes, both BA’59