August Washington named Vanderbilt's new chief of police

By Princine Lewis

August Washington admits that his path from the oftentimes rough Lower Ninth Ward in New Orleans to chief of police may not be an obvious one. As a child, he never imagined making law enforcement his career. Now he now can’t imagine doing anything else.

“I can’t think of one day that I wished I had chosen a different career,” he says.

The kid who grew up in a section of town wary of police became a man whose face lights up with excitement about continuing his career as Vanderbilt’s new chief of police and assistant vice chancellor.

“I really love being on a college campus,” Washington says. “I think that being a university police chief is one of the best kept secrets in law enforcement. Colleges and universities are just so lively. There’s an energy that I really and truly enjoy.”

Washington joined Vanderbilt after serving most recently as chief of police at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Washington hopes to develop goals and objectives by consensus as he gets to know his department and the Vanderbilt community.

“I really want to try and be an assistant vice chancellor and chief of police where people can say, ‘I can call August and find out about this,’ ” he says. “I want people to be able to think, ‘I’m going to call August to see if we can’t work this out.’ ”

Washington’s experience includes being deputy director of safety and security at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, and director of safety and security at Florida Atlantic University, which has seven campuses throughout south Florida. He also served as director of public safety at Indiana State University, director of community safety at Reed College in Portland, Ore., and as a public safety lieutenant at Portland Community College.

Washington began his career on a college campus. He worked his way through college as part of a unique student officer program at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, now known as the University of Louisiana, Lafayette.

Washington and his wife, Annette, a nurse at Vanderbilt, have two children. Their son, Trey, attends the University of Tennessee. Their daughter, Aerin, recently accepted a job as a police officer for the University of Louisiana, Lafayette, where her father began his law enforcement career. Her goal is to be a university police chief.

Key dates

April 27
Classes end

April 28–May 6
Reading days and examinations

May 8
First-year residence halls close at 9 a.m.

May 12–14
Commencement activities

May 15
All residence halls close at 1 p.m.

Save the Date
October 8-10
Family Weekend

Spring 2010
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

Inside OverVU
Living Learning Communities—not your mother’s dorm. . . . page 2
Career Center offers networking opportunities . . . . . . . . . page 3
Student and faculty leaders . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . page 4
Parents make music happen at Blair Concert Series . . . . . . . . . page 6
Parents support Commodore Cruises

When their daughter, Jayma, was accepted into Vanderbilt in 2007, Tracey and Tommy Wright were excited to play an active role in her college experience. Both know firsthand about the challenges and rewards of higher education. Tracey is the assistant vice chancellor for student development at Appalachian State University in Boone, N.C., and Tommy is vice president for finance and administration at Cleveland State Community College.

“We understand that tuition alone is not enough to cover the wonderful experiences that our students are having, even at a place like Vanderbilt,” Tracey says. “For that reason we wanted to find a way to give back as parents.”

For many Vanderbilt students, those wonderful experiences include Commodore Cruises—alcohol-free, off-campus events. Each cruise begins with dinner, followed by a night on the town that might include a hockey game, play or musical performance.

When the Wrights, co-chairs of the Parents and Family Association advisory board, learned that the Commodore Cruise Series was in need of funding, they reached out to their fellow board members and raised enough money to pay for one of the events. Each family was asked to contribute $50—a relatively small sum, Tracey argues, for such a meaningful gift.

What’s most satisfying for the Wrights is not just the amount raised but rather the group effort behind it. “If we come together and give,” Tommy says, “even small amounts of our money or time, it’s amazing what we can accomplish.”

Living Learning Communities—a unique housing option

Vanderbilt’s Living Learning Communities give students the opportunity to live and learn with others who share similar interests. The communities are housed in the residence halls and provide a focused learning environment. They also offer faculty interaction outside the classroom and the chance to work on projects and initiatives closely associated with their majors.

Vanderbilt’s seven Living Learning Communities give students the choice of focusing on leadership, arts, foreign language, community service and independent or self-directed study. The offices of Housing and Residential Education, Leadership Development and Intercultural Affairs, and Arts and Creative Engagement as well as the College of Arts and Science sponsor and support these programs.

Rising sophomores, juniors and seniors may apply. Each community has at least one staff and/or graduate student contact person who coordinates the programs. To learn more about each community and the application process, please visit the Living Learning Communities Web site at www.vanderbilt.edu/ResEd/main/LLC.php. You may also check the upperclass housing assignment calendar at www.vanderbilt.edu/ResEd (click on “housing assignments”) for housing registration and application deadlines.

Jewish leadership at Vanderbilt

By Ari Dubin, executive director of the Ben Schuman Center for Jewish Life

Vanderbilt’s Jewish community has changed dramatically over the last decade, growing from 3 percent of the total student body to 14 percent. While this change has impacted every area of campus, perhaps the greatest change has occurred in the area of student leadership and group participation.

The changes started in 2005 with a reorganization of Hillel, the world’s premier Jewish campus organization. The Hillel board was split into an executive board and a program board. At the same time an advocacy organization, ‘Dores for Israel, was created. These changes provided multiple ways for students to become involved, and each offered unique leadership opportunities.

Today Hillel has 16 different student groups. Some focus on community service. Others, like Jewgrass—a group of bluegrass musicians—are just for fun. Students take part in activities that inspire them and appeal to some aspect of their personal identity.

Learn more about Jewish life at Vanderbilt at www.vanderbilt.edu/hillel.

Updates from the Vanderbilt Career Center

Networking offers a great way for students to find jobs and internships. The Vanderbilt Career Center provides these connections through a variety of events and partnerships during the year. A few 2009 highlights:

• Soiree at Sarratt featured live jazz, hors d’oeuvres and career advice from parents to students during Family Weekend last October.

Co-sponsored by the Parents & Families Programs Office, this event gave students the opportunity to network with professionals in many fields including finance, engineering, information technology, health care, arts, communications, government, law, education and nonprofit. More than 40 parents, many in leadership positions, participated. They represented a variety of organizations including The Washington Post, Microsoft Corp., Deutsche Bank, Cargill and CSX Corp.

• Vandy on the Hill brought 20 students to Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., in September to network with Vanderbilt alumni at the Central Intelligence Agency, the Vanderbilt Office of Federal Regulations and the U.S. Department of State. This event was a collaborative effort between Vanderbilt’s Office of Development and Alumni Relations, Vanderbilt’s Division of Public Affairs and the Washington, D.C., alumni chapter.

• Vandy on Music Row offered students access to music industry movers and shakers when they visited Cherry Heart Music and the HoriPro Entertainment Group Inc.

For more information on upcoming Career Center events, please visit www.vanderbilt.edu/career.
Student spotlight: TaCara Harris

Chancellor's Scholar TaCara Harris was recently selected one of the top 10 finalists in Vanderbilt's Outstanding Senior competition.

"This is a great honor," TaCara says. "It really makes me stop and think about my experience here. Vanderbilt has given me a great education, and I know I'm prepared for what comes next."

TaCara is set to graduate with a double major in sociology and women's and gender studies and plans to enter law school in 2013. She is at Vanderbilt's School of Engineering. George and Debbie are first-year parent liaisons to The Commons. George and Debbie, members of the Parents and Family Association Advisory Board, have been selected as outstanding senior liaisons to The Commons.

The Commons is one of the most innovative concepts around; TaCara says. "As head RA, I've been able to impact the lives of first-year students by helping them make the transition from high school to college."

TaCara Harris graduated as valedictorian from Glenn Hills High School in Augusta, Ga.

Faculty spotlight: Guelcher helps rebuild lives

Scott Guelcher, assistant professor of chemical and biomolecular engineering, has won a prestigious National Science Foundation Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) Program award. Guelcher's research focuses on bone regeneration, and he is particularly interested in helping victims of combat trauma.

"Many combat wounds are to the lower leg. In some cases bones are set but just don't grow back together," Guelcher says. "When this happens, the soldier is basically disabled, often in their early 20s."

Another goal of Guelcher's research is to help those with traumatic facial injuries—especially for those who are missing part of their jaw and as a result cannot chew.

"The Army wants to help these soldiers live happy, productive lives," Guelcher says. "We believe that the materials we're working on could help make a difference."

There is also an outreach component to Guelcher's work. He has developed curriculum materials for the Vanderbilt School for Science and Math, a part-time public high school at Vanderbilt that is a joint venture with Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools.

Guelcher turned to teaching and research after spending time in the industrial arena.

"Universities are exciting because you're around all these enthusiastic young people who want to get ahead and do well," he says. "It's really rewarding on a personal level."

10 tips for Commencement May 12–14

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. No heels for the ladies! You'll sink into Alumni Lawn.

2. Special needs: If your family requires mobility or other assistance, call the Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Disability Services department at (615) 322-4705 to discuss parking options, wheelchairs and additional assistance. Reservations for services are limited and must be made at least 24 hours in advance.

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

4. Announcements: Order through the Commencement Web site, www.vanderbilt.edu/commencement. Orders placed before April 16 will arrive in time for mailing prior to Commencement. Remember, you can send announcements before or after the event.

5. Housing: Have a last-minute guest and all the hotels are full? Stay at The Commons on campus. Call (615) 322-2870 or toll free at (866) SVUGRAD (388-4725) for more information.

6. Dining: Avoid the crowds and dine on campus—we have many options during Commencement week. Check the Web site for more information, including how to order our popular box lunches for just $10.

7. The Party: This can't-miss outdoor event is set for 9 p.m. May 12. Graduates receive one free ticket. Purchase additional tickets at our Web site for $20.

8. Faculty seminars: 1:30 p.m. and 2:45 p.m. Thursday, May 13. Talented faculty discuss research projects and current events to give you a taste of the academics your student has had at Vanderbilt.

9. Commencement day: The ceremony begins at 9 a.m. Friday, May 14. No tickets are necessary. Seating is first-come, first-served. Arrive no later than one hour before to get a program and find a seat. Also, make sure your group arrives together as saving seats is not allowed due to space constraints.

10. Alerts: Sign up for Commencement text alerts to have the latest information sent directly to your cell phone in the event of severe weather.

Questions: We're here to help. If you need assistance or have any questions about the tips listed above, please call us at (615) 322-2870 or toll free at (866) SVUGRAD (388-4725), e-mail at commencement@vanderbilt.edu or visit www.vanderbilt.edu/commencement for complete details and ordering information.
Parents and family members can be engaged in various capacities, including serving on the Parents Steering Committee, participating in teleconferences and steering committee meetings, and hosting a small event for prospective new PLC members. Their work is invaluable and supports the university's goals.

The new committee consists of twenty-one parents who are current or past parents of students at Vanderbilt University. The committee includes representatives from the Parents Campaign, created the Parents Leadership Committee, and is co-chaired by the 2009-2010 Parents and Grandparents Campaign Office at (615) 343-3120, and it will be processed accordingly.

Class of 2010 pays it forward

The Class of 2010 plans to leave a lasting mark on Vanderbilt through the Senior Class Fund—individual gifts made by graduating seniors and presented to the school at the end of the school year. Students designate their gift to the Vanderbilt school, department or organization that has meant the most to them. Parents may also contribute to the fund in honor of their child's graduation.

Alex Barker, a medicine, health and society major from Maryland, is the 2010 Senior Class Fund chair. She began working in the Commodore Calling Center as a sophomore, contacting parents about supporting Vanderbilt. Over the years she's learned a lot about fundraising and looks forward to reaching new levels of participation for the Senior Class Fund.

"Our 2010 goal is 30 percent participation from the senior class," Alex says. "We are encouraging every senior to give $20.10 in honor of our class. This is our chance to leave our mark on Vanderbilt and support the areas of the university that have meant the most to each of us.

Alumni support is one of the keys to Vanderbilt's continued success. Regular, consistent donations fund scholarships for deserving students, help recruit and retain top faculty, support research, and keep the lights on each day. The Senior Class Fund provides an opportunity for students to join the ranks of alumni and help maintain Vanderbilt's tradition of excellence.

Vanderbilt Student Government President Wyatt Smith, a human and organizational development major from Alabama, is also dedicated to the success of the senior campaign.

"I don't think many students realize that the cost of a Vanderbilt education is much more than tuition," Wyatt says. "The generosity of alumni helps make our college experience possible. We need to do the same for those who follow us.

The Vanderbilt Fund, part of the Office of Development and Alumni Relations, oversees the Senior Class Fund. "It has been a pleasure to work on this campaign and see the students' genuine enthusiasm for giving back to Vanderbilt," says James Stofan, associate vice chancellor of Development and Alumni Relations. "All seniors have the unique opportunity to show their gratitude and their loyalty to Vanderbilt by participating in the Senior Class Fund."
Vanderbilt University
Parents & Family Programs
PMB 401627
2301 Vanderbilt Place
Nashville, TN 37240-1627

Key links
Parents & Family Programs
www.vanderbilt.edu/families
Parents and Grandparents Campaign
www.vanderbilt.edu/pagcampaign
Dean of Students
www.vanderbilt.edu/deanofstudents
Commencement
www.vanderbilt.edu/commencement
Housing and Residential Life
www.vanderbilt.edu/ResEd
Student Health Center
www.vanderbilt.edu/student_health
Athletics
www.vucommodores.com
First-year orientation
http://commonplace.vanderbilt.edu
Greek life
www.vanderbilt.edu/greek_life
Bookstore
www.vanderbiltbookstore.com
VSG shuttle service
http://studentorgs.vanderbilt.edu/vsg
University calendar
http://calendar.vanderbilt.edu

For more information, please contact:
Parent Helpline
(877) 887-2736
E-mail
parents@vanderbilt.edu
Parent Web site
www.vanderbilt.edu/families

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