Houston Parents Enjoy Vanderbilt Camaraderie

By Laura and Tom Bellows
Parents of
Jack Bellows, Engineering, Class of 2007
Steven Bellows, Engineering, Class of 2009

We think this type of event is very important to build a community of Vanderbilt support in Houston,” say Collier and Richard Blades, parents of Becky Blades, ’09. “The parents enjoy being able to share and learn from the other parents, and it helps us to see our students from other perspectives and see more of the whole picture of campus life.”

Kay and Dan English, parents of Ellen English, ’07, and Tom and I agree. We three families were delighted to co-host and be among the 72 Houston area parents who gathered at the Bayou Club on a balmy February evening for refreshments, conversation and to hear from our guest speaker, Dr. Mark Bandas, Associate Provost and Dean of Students. Also welcoming parents on behalf of Vanderbilt were Board Trustee Gene Vaughan and wife, Susan, and Suzanne Thigpen, Director of the Parents and Family Programs Office. Suzanne coordinated the planning of the reception and made hosting easy for us by taking care of the major tasks such as sending out invitations, receiving responses and arranging for our speaker.

“Everyone seemed very pleased with the experience their child was having at Vanderbilt,” say Kay and Dan English. “It was a great opportunity for parents to meet or become reacquainted with other area Vanderbilt parents. Those parents often pass along tips about aspects of Vanderbilt (study abroad, Maymester, graduation activities) that another parent might not be aware of.”

In addition to comparing notes with fellow parents, we were privileged to hear Dr. Bandas speak about the school’s goal to “meet our children’s high expectations of themselves and of Vanderbilt.” Citing impressive recent statistics, he confirmed that Vanderbilt is “admitting and retaining the best students in the country, and recruiting and retaining outstanding faculty.” Vanderbilt is also dedicated to fostering faculty-student relationships, the third piece to a successful undergraduate experience, through many innovative programs such as the Commons dorm program planned for 2008 freshmen. Dr. Bandas updated us on the residential housing program in general and, in closing, shared
Parents Gather in Houston

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his experience of participating in January’s Freedom Rides where “150 students, faculty and staff from Vanderbilt, TSU, Fisk and American Baptist College filled four buses and retraced segments of the 1961 Freedom Rides.” Dr. Bandas graciously talked with parents before and after his comments.

Beyond the reception, Collier is further connecting Vanderbilt parents in the Houston area by starting a “lunch bunch” in March for those interested in meeting occasionally for lunch and conversation about Vanderbilt and our children. She will also keep participants apprised of important upcoming school dates. Over 30 parents signed up for the lunch bunch at the reception, and Houston area parents who were unable to attend the event and wish to be included in the group may e-mail Collier at Crbwm@aol.com. Also welcome are parents whose children have just been accepted to Vanderbilt.

Collier sums it up for all of us who think it’s important to be active members of the VU Parent and Family Association: “As parents, we still want to be connected to our children even while they are away at college. The Vanderbilt parent group is a support group, information group and a fun social group to enhance the complete family approach to raising children.”

If you are a Vanderbilt parent and you would like to host a Vanderbilt parents event in your area, please contact Suzane Thigpen, Director for Parents and Family Programs, for more information at 615-343-7370 or e-mail at suzanne.thigpen@vanderbilt.edu.

Working Towards Professional Success

By Robin Lebovitz
Career Center

This academic year, the Vanderbilt Career Center (VCC) staff succeeded in forming stronger partnerships on and off campus, expanding recruitment, bridging career education and job placement, and developing new career program initiatives.

“We are trying hard to prepare our students even better for the world of work,” Associate Provost Sandler asserted. “This preparation means more mock interviews, more targeted ‘boot camps’, and more information sessions about a given industry. In all of these cases, the help of parents and alumni is needed and welcome.”

Attributed to Vanderbilt’s success in getting its students hired, employers such as Goldman Sachs have designated Vanderbilt as a “core school.” Companies that chose Vanderbilt as a “core school” may have a greater presence on-campus, offer top priority hiring, and even boost opportunities available to students.

Career Center professionals advocate the importance of internships in preparation for professional success. In some industries, the pre-graduation internship is an important part of the hiring process. In fact, the National Association of Colleges and Employer’s “2006 Experiential Education Survey” states, “Employers reported 62.5 percent of their college hires came to them with internship experience and over one-quarter (26 percent) had co-op experience.” The College of Arts and Sciences responded to a greater need for experiential education and created ASI: Vanderbilt as a clearinghouse for students to achieve their internship goals and earn credits. The ASI: Vanderbilt web site offers information at http://www.vanderbilt.edu/cas/asi/.

Parents interested in helping their students can view tips at our web site and sign up to receive the Weekly e-mail to learn about...
In February, Vanderbilt had seven teams ranked in the Top 25 --- Baseball, Women’s Basketball, Men’s Basketball, Women’s Bowling, Women’s Tennis, Women’s Golf and Women’s Lacrosse. In March, Women’s Basketball won the SEC Tournament Championship, and both Men’s and Women’s teams advanced to the NCAA Tournament, #6 and #2 seeds, respectively. To add, Baseball has been ranked #1 for over a month. In the media, Vandy was featured in a full-page article in the USA Today by Tom Weir entitled, Vanderbilt is a big winner after reforms. Plus, Chancellor Gee and Vanderbilt were featured in the Costas Now program debut discussing the state of today’s student athlete and our emphasis on the student.

Who would have thought that after all of the criticism and speculation stemming from the announcement on September 9, 2003 by Chancellor Gee, stating that all activities and facilities within Vanderbilt Athletics would be integrated into the University administrative structure, no longer functioning as a separate entity within the institution, would have arisen quite this way? “Nothing short of a revolution will stop what has become a crisis of conscience and integrity for colleges and universities in this country.” --- Chancellor Gee.

To the onlooker, the administrative changes of the new structure had no visible outcomes and were mostly operational ones --- autonomy and empowerment of coaches, formal alignment with the overall university structure, and a rejuvenated fundraising endeavor. But, these types of strategic initiatives don’t make headlines. However, our programs certainly do with leading coaches and amazing student athletes. Being #1 in the nation means having a #1 baseball coach. Women’s bowling, ranked #2 in the nation, just secured Vanderbilt’s first national championship in April. To add, women’s soccer just finished two back-to-back NCAA appearances. Plus, we have added a new women’s swimming team and coach to the family in a very competitive conference. It is too early to tally all of the individual student achievements, but senior Garnetta Holloway is defending SEC Heptathlon Champion, junior Taka Bertrand was the 2006 SEC Tennis Player of the Year, sophomore Earl Bennett and junior Jonathan Goff are All-America candidates in football, and senior golfer Luke List is a three-time All American and made the Masters cut in 2005, just to name a few. There is still so much competition left!

More importantly, all of the above accomplishments were done in concert with stellar academic achievements. 164 student athletes were named to the SEC Academic Honor Roll in 2005-06, and we continue to boast a 92% graduation success rate among our student athletes. “We will not engage in the arms race. We will strive to give our student athletes a complete college experience, and we will win.” --- Vice Chancellor David Williams.

What do you get when you combine one of the world’s great universities and one of the country’s most successful sports programs? Vanderbilt University: Academics & Athletics --- The Total Package.

SAVE THE DATE!
FAMILY WEEKEND 2007
September 28-30
Questions about Family Weekend?
Call the Parents & Family Programs Office at 1-877-887-2736
Family Weekend from a Freshman Parent’s Point of View

By Mary Ann Teruya
Parent of Richard Teruya, Class of 2010

As soon as our son mailed his decision for Vandy, an old friend called and told me to make air and hotel reservations for Move-In and Family Weekend. She even knew the dates. You see, my friend Dorothy Snowden comes from a whole family of Vandy alums. Her nephew plays center for the football team and her daughter, Emily, was an incoming freshman. Although we had not seen each other in more than six years, she was determined to make our son’s entry successful and bring our family into the Vandy fold. Her enthusiasm and excitement over the opportunities afforded Vandy students and families were inspiring, comforting, and practical.

For Family Weekend, we took a 4:00 AM shuttle to the airport and arrived in Nashville by 8:30 AM. Thank goodness for Southwest Airlines and direct flights. This was our first chance to hear and see how things were going with our first born and we were anxious to get there.

While Richard was in class, we registered, attended some of the meetings and got a snack at Rand. The meetings were great but we enjoyed Rand more. It was impossible to go through the lines without noticing how nice the food service workers were to the students. The students obviously liked the food and virtually no student was alone. This was a very happy and well fed group of people.

When you have a son, you don’t get a lot of information on the telephone. If it wasn’t for the telephone bill we would think he was allergic to his phone. Thus, we came to see him, listen to him, and stock him up on essentials. As a parent you learn to size up your son’s condition from thirty paces and before they even speak. What a relief to see that he was not only in good shape physically, but he was also peaceful and happy. Then he began to speak. The words poured out. He told us of new and fascinating friends from other parts of the country and the world. There were camping and rafting stories and all the groups he had joined. We took him out to lunch and he told us more. He told us he had his own lunch lady who takes very good care of him. It sounded like they take care of him like a mother or grandmother would. He talked about his Japanese big brother and his new church. We learned that he and another engineering student found Emily’s room a great place to study because Mama Snowden sends great snacks.

Vitamin Water, Cliff Bars, and other essentials were purchased. A coat would be needed soon but shopping was brief (as is typical of male shopping) and unsuccessful. He did, however, let us know that he needed a bow tie (thanks Chancellor Gee). His phone rang frequently and he always smiled when he heard the callers.

Dinner Friday evening was a reunion with Dorothy’s family. Emily and Richard had been in 4th grade together in Kentucky. Although they moved to Atlanta and we to Delaware, we had stayed in touch. It was great to see Richard and Emily treating each other almost as siblings and obviously, both enjoying the Vanderbilt freshman experience.

Dropping him at the dorm Friday night was interesting. It was his home and his new family was waiting for him. Somehow leaving him at the dorm was much easier than when we left him at orientation.

Saturday included breakfast, the bookstore and more meetings. Richard took off to study while we went to the Parents and Family Association Advisory Board luncheon. We had no idea what to expect. How could we have anything to share? We were new to having a child in college and we were new to Vanderbilt. Our role soon became clear. This was a college that wanted to hear from parents and was willing to tackle the tough questions head-on. Chancellor Gee hit on all the key concerns of parents and shared his vision for Vanderbilt.

Continued on Page 6
Vanderbilt University will award its second Nichols-Chancellor’s Medal and a $100,000 prize on May 10 to Muhammad Yunus, a Vanderbilt alumnus and winner of the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize. “It is with great joy that we anticipate the return of Muhammad Yunus to Vanderbilt for his first visit since he won the Nobel Peace Prize,” said Vanderbilt Chancellor Gordon Gee. “The Nichols-Chancellor’s Medal is meant to exemplify the best qualities of the human spirit, and the accomplishments of Muhammad Yunus are a tremendous example for all of us. His story is a dramatic example of how one person with a great idea can impact the world.”

Yunus developed the concept of micro-credit and founded the Grameen Bank, which has improved the lives of millions in his native Bangladesh through small loans to fund enterprises and buy livestock. Yunus will accept the award when he visits Vanderbilt on May 10 to serve as the keynote speaker for Senior Class Day. He will speak at 10 a.m. on Alumni Lawn.

Yunus earned a Ph.D. in economics at Vanderbilt in 1971 through the Graduate Program in Economic Development. The Grameen (which means “rural” in Bengali) Bank began in the village of Jobra in 1976, when Yunus lent $27 to 42 self-employed crafts workers. He reasoned that if money were made available to poor people on appropriate and reasonable terms, “these millions of small people with their millions of small pursuits can add up to create the biggest development wonder.” The Grameen Bank has since loaned nearly $6 billion to 6.61 million borrowers, and 99 percent of the loans have been repaid. The bank provides services in more than 71,000 villages in Bangladesh through 2,226 branches.

In October 2006, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded jointly to Yunus and the Grameen Bank. “Muhammad Yunus has shown himself to be a leader who has managed to turn visions into practical actions for the benefit of millions of people, not only in Bangladesh but also in many other countries,” said Ole Danbolt Mjos, chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, during the Nobel ceremony in December. “There are now micro-credit programs in nearly 100 countries all over the world.”

The Nichols-Chancellor’s Medal was created and endowed by Vanderbilt Law School graduate Ed Nichols and his wife, Janice Nichols-Carmack and Lucile Hamby Nichols. Last year, first lady Laura Bush accepted the first Nichols-Chancellor’s Medal on behalf of rescue workers who responded to natural disasters around the world. Senior Class Day is held the day before Vanderbilt’s annual Commencement ceremony. It begins with the traditional Senior Walk through the main gates of the university, followed by a program on Alumni Lawn. Students, faculty and staff can reserve free tickets for the Yunus speech at the Commencement site, www.vanderbilt.edu/commencement/.

Law School graduate Ed Nichols and his wife, Janice, in honor of Edward Carmack and Lucile Hamby Nichols. Last year, first lady Laura Bush accepted the first Nichols-Chancellor’s Medal on behalf of rescue workers who responded to natural disasters around the world.

Villages People to Headline Commencement Kickoff

The Village People, the 1970s music group that became a worldwide sensation during disco’s heyday with such hits as “Y.M.C.A.,” “Macho Man” and “In the Navy,” will headline the annual Commencement kickoff celebration “The Party”. The outdoor event is scheduled from 9 p.m. to midnight Wednesday, May 9. Previous headliners have included Little Richard and Kool & The Gang. The Party will be held rain or shine on Peabody Mall. One complimentary ticket will be sent to each graduating student at his or her local address. Additional guests tickets are $20 each. Tickets are not required for children 12 and under. To purchase tickets, visit www.vanderbilt.edu/the-party.

Commencement 2007 May 9-11

For a detailed listing of Commencement activities please visit the Commencement Office web page at http://www.vanderbilt.edu/commencement or call 866-388-4723 for more information
No smoke and mirrors, no double talk----just the facts. We were impressed with the goals of the group and humbled to take part.

Meanwhile, Richard received a call from Elise, another friend from San Antonio. She told him to come to her room and her Dad would fix his back. Sure enough, her Dad had him stretch first and then he twisted him until his back popped back into alignment. Now he has a Mom and Dad from San Antonio.

We dropped by Dorothy’s family tailgate to meet her parents and the rest of the family and then off to the game. Richard went to the student section and we to our seats. By the end of the first quarter, old friends from Baton Rouge were on the phone trying to find us in the stadium. We had lived in Atlanta and Santa Monica, CA, at the same times. We have great pictures of their daughter Elise (now a Vandy sophomore) and Richard playing together between the ages of 1 and 4. Richard left the student section and started over to meet the Attingers. I will never forget watching him climb the stadium steps. He had only been at Vandy for about six weeks and he looked like a politician greeting his public. His smile was wide and he kept stopping to chat or meet a parent. We will always believe God stacked the deck on Richard’s walk up so that we could see clearly his personal growth and that this indeed was where he was supposed to be.

After dinner with the Attingers, Richard decided to stay with us for the night. We would be leaving at 5 a.m. and the thought of a queen size bed and a private bathroom till noon sold him on the idea. For us, it was almost easy to leave him the next morning. He was home and needed to get back to his new life. So we left him sleeping and slipped out the door.

As we look back at the first two months of life at Vandy, we are ecstatic. We, like most parents, were concerned about the social and academic challenges that our son would experience on his next stage in his life. Thanks to the Vandy community, many social and academic opportunities were provided. As a wise friend told Richard, you can choose to live your college experience in your dorm room playing video games or you can choose to become involved in as many academic and social activities to make your college life a wonderful experience. Thanks Vandy.

Chancellor Gee signs an autograph for a parent during Family Weekend

Professional Success, Continued from page 2

Career Center programs at http://www.vanderbilt.edu/career/parents/. Weekly e-mails keep the Vanderbilt community informed of hiring application deadlines, company information announcements, and updates on current and upcoming events such as on-campus interviews and career fairs. Parents can also help by encouraging their employers to open up internship and hiring opportunities to Vanderbilt students.

Internships are only part of the career planning process. The Career Center encourages students and parents to familiarize themselves with the career planning process by reading The Career Planning Guide (CPG) online at http://www.vanderbilt.edu/career/planning_guide/. Online career guidance can help the student begin the process. Additionally, professional career advisers supplement online activities with one-on-one advising and offer additional assistance that is not available online or in print.

The VCC also provides students with databases of companies, job listings, and alumni which are accessible from any computer. The VCC urges students to become familiar with the following searchable sites early in their academic careers: • CareerLink: a web-based college recruiting platform that interfaces students with recruiters and Career Center programs. • CareerSearch: a powerful networking database of over 4 million companies nationwide, compiled from the most respected, industry-specific sources. • Dore2Dore: a database of alumni who serve as career resources to their VU fellows. Alumni contact information is searchable by career field and city. Students may contact Dore2Dore volunteers to conduct informational interviews and locate opportunities to network.

Finally, with all the use of high tech tools, career advisers offer the most valuable guidance. Each adviser focuses his or her skills on counseling particular groups of majors in order to provide the greatest service possible to all Vanderbilt students. For more information, please contact the Career Center Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm.

Contact the VCC
310 25th Avenue South, Suite 220
Nashville, TN 37240

Telephone: 615-322-2750
Fax: 615-343-4448
E-mail: careercenter@vanderbilt.edu
Website: www.vanderbilt.edu/career
2006-2007 Parents and Family Association Advisory Board

The Office of Parents and Family Programs would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the following members of the 2006-2007 Parents and Family Association Advisory Board. We appreciate all that you do for Vanderbilt on behalf of the parents of our undergraduate students.

Arnold and Arlene Cooper, Outgoing Co-Chairs (06-07) 
Covington, LA

Jay and Pam Sottolano, Incoming Co-Chairs (07-08) 
Tariffville, CT

- Tom and Laura Bellows  
  Houston, TX  
  Barrett, A&S 2007

- Michael and Laura Donnelly  
  University Park, MD

- Gary and Willia Doss  
  Nashville, TN

- Sandra Fetuga  
  Nashville, TN

- Tom and Dr. Mary Kay Finan Cameron, MD

- Jay and Terri Goldsmith  
  New Orleans, LA

- Steve and Arleen Grushkin  
  New Canaan, CT

- Elizabeth Hahnfeldt  
  Nashville, TN

- Pat Karlsson  
  Alexandria, VA

- Dr. John Kleeman and Gayle Christmas  
  Klamath Falls, OR

- Spencer Kravitz and Ronnie Greenstein  
  Manhasset Hills, NY

- Dr. R. Craig and Sara Kuykendall  
  Ocala, FL

- Lawrence Muenz and Judith Meritz  
  Washington D.C.

- Scott Nathan  
  Franklin, MA

- Paul and Frances Rubacha  
  New York, NY

- Jim and Brenda Shirley  
  Atlanta, GA

- Olin and Nancy Shivers  
  Tampa, FL

- Dale and Mary Ann Teruya  
  Hockessin, DE

- Tom and Kathy Thompson  
  Cookeville, TN

- William and Betty Thompson  
  Orinda, CA

- Lee VanKirk  
  Wellesley, MA

New Leadership in the Parents & Family Programs Office

Suzanne Thigpen was promoted to Director of Parents and Family Programs in January. Before relocating to Nashville and being hired by Vanderbilt in September, 2005, she worked for five years at the University of Mississippi in admissions and pre-college programs. In March, Susan Starcher accepted the position of Assistant Director and for the last four and half years, Susan served Vanderbilt as Activities Coordinator for International Advancement. They bring enthusiasm and organization to every task, an openness to new ideas, a great team ethic, and are willing to go the extra mile for our students, their parents and families.
Calendar Highlights

Summer 2007

May 5, Saturday
Residence halls open for May Session at 2 p.m.

May 6, Sunday
Residence halls close at 1 p.m. except for Seniors

May 7, Monday
May Session classes begin

May 9-11, Wed.-Fri.
Commencement Celebration

May 12, Saturday
Residence halls close at 1 p.m. for seniors

June 1, Friday
May Session examinations; May Session ends

June 2, Saturday
Residence halls close for May Session at 9 a.m.

June 3, Sunday
Residence halls open at Noon for first-half Summer Session

June 5, Tuesday
First-half and full Summer Sessions begin

July 6, Friday
First-half Summer Session ends

July 7, Saturday
Residence halls close at 9 a.m. for first-half Summer Session

July 8, Sunday
Residence halls open at Noon for second-half Summer Session

July 10, Tuesday
Second-half Summer Session begins

August 10, Friday
Second-half and full-term Summer Session ends

August 11, Saturday
Residence halls close at 9 a.m. for second-half Summer Session

August 25, Saturday
Residence halls open at 8 a.m. for new students; orientation begins

August 29, Wednesday
Classes begin

Find out what's happening at Vanderbilt with the University Calendar
One click....endless possibilities
http://calendar.vanderbilt.edu

Vanderbilt University
Parents & Family Programs
Physical Location: 1010 Lupton
Basement of Branscomb Quadrangle
VU Station B #351627
2301 Vanderbilt Place
Nashville, TN 37235-1627

Suzanne Thigpen, Director
Susan Starcher, Asst. Director

Parents & Family Programs
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parents@vanderbilt.edu
www.vanderbilt.edu/families

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