



## November 2020 Newsletter

### Now Accepting Applications for the Class of 2025!

*\*This year, we will be hosting virtual interviews and Preview Days.*

[Click here to Apply](#)

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## Next Steps at Vanderbilt Events

*\*All events will be virtual until further notice.*

### Online Information Sessions

Please join us for an Online Information Session! During this virtual event, prospective students, parents, and guests will learn about classes, internships, social opportunities, and more. Once you register for a Online Information Session, you will be sent a link to join. Please come with questions as you will be able to type your questions into the chat box.

### 2020 Online Information Session Dates:

Thursday, November 12, 2020 (2:30 - 4:00 p.m.)

**Virtual College Nights**

During our Virtual College Night, prospective students and parents will learn about the different aspects of our program from staff, alumni, a parent and current students. First we will have a panel of speakers answering questions about their experience with Next Steps. Then guests will have the opportunity to ask questions to representatives from all aspects of the program (social, academic, career, residential, financial aid, etc.) through the use of breakout rooms. Once registered for a Virtual College Night, you will be sent a link to join.

**2020 Virtual College Night Dates:**

Thursday, November 5, 2020 (5:00 - 6:30)

[Click here to register for an event](#)



## Student Spotlight

*Cat Bernstein, Office Assistant*

This month's student internship spotlight is Kristi Vanwulven. Her internship this year is at the Circuit Court Clerk's Office. She works on a variety of tasks at her internship. She works on a lot of different types of court cases to check to make

sure the plaintiffs and defendant's names are spelled correctly, to make sure the attorney's names and the attorneys codes are correct, and to make sure social security numbers, bank account numbers, driver's license numbers, and any other personal identification numbers are blacked out for privacy. When she is not working, she enjoys hanging out with her friends and being involved in dance groups.



*Hannah Humes, class of 2024, recently wrote the poem below that was accepted by the University of Syracuse to be included in a chapter book they are*

## **Goal in Common**

Hannah Humes

I was born in 2001 and that same year the first girl with Down syndrome graduated from a local high school with an academic diploma.

What did this mean? Could I, someday, also graduate from high school?

### **Goal in common.**

I went to a typical preschool so I could model my friends and practice language. We played together, sat in circle time together, ate snacks together.

### **Goals in common.**

I had access to the general education curriculum all through elementary school.

I modeled my peers; I learned to follow the routine; I learned to keep my hands to myself; I learned to follow directions; I was accountable for my behavior; I made friends; I learned to read and write (at my level).

### **Goals in common.**

I transitioned to middle and high school. I had access to the general education curriculum. I modeled my peers; I worked within groups; I learned about responsibility; I participated in clubs; I went to Homecoming; I went to sports events; I made friends; I volunteered in our community center for work experience; I toured college campuses.

### **Goals in common.**

Senior year I filled out college applications; I was interviewed by college programs; I celebrated college acceptance with friends.

### **Goals in common.**

Then....COVID-19 happened in the spring of 2020.

I finished my senior year in remote learning.

I graduated high school just like the girl did in 2001, but my graduation was virtual.

I started my college career as a Freshman participating in remote classes.

NOT A GOAL IN COMMON but a **reality in common.**

I haven't been able to meet anyone in person yet, only via zoom, but I can't wait.

I haven't been able to take a class on campus yet, only via zoom, but I can't wait.

I haven't been able to participate in clubs or sports yet on campus, only via zoom, but I can't wait.

Being tutored via zoom has been hard for me.

Learning cooking skills via a computer has been hard for me.

Sometimes I get headaches.

Alongside my Next Steps classes and electives, I'm learning about time management, computer skills, how to be a better communicator and how to cope with so many zoom meetings. I exercise and keep an exercise log. I'm doing my best at journaling and completing homework. It's good to keep busy! I love my Vanderbilt class called American Popular Music! I am motivated to learn by my love of music. I have a Learning Agreement with my Professor. Instead of tests I do projects like making a music history timeline and creating a digital poster of Taylor Swift.

I think my instructors and ambassadors are so smart and friendly; they are the best.  
Anchor Down!

I am happy that I don't have to wear a mask all day!

I want COVID-19 to go away!

**Goal(s) in common.**

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## Alumni Update

*Steven Greiner, Alumni Coordinator and Recruitment Assistant*

Andrew Van Cleave graduated from Next Steps at Vanderbilt in 2010. He is now a Replenishment Associate for Michael's Craft Store. Some of his tasks include removing packaging from the floor of the store and breaking down the boxes. When Andrew is not at work, he likes to volunteer at the Adventure Science Center. When he volunteers, he works in the gift shop and cleans different areas of the building. He also enjoys watching TV, shooting basketball, and playing play station.



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