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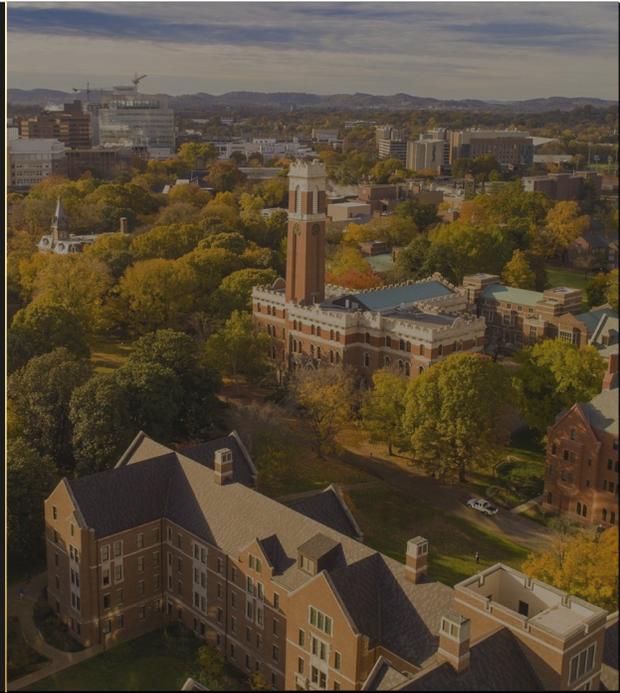
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April 25, 2024

# Vanderbilt Board of Trust University Staff Advisory Council



Good morning, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you all today on behalf of the University Staff Advisory Council.

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**Amanda Harding**  
President

Assistant Director,  
Office of Digital  
Education



**Adam McKeever-Burgett**  
Vice President,  
President Elect

Assistant Dean for  
Academic Services,  
School of Engineering



**Lynn Maddox**  
Secretary

Special Project  
Director, Government  
& Community  
Relations



**LaDonna Smith**  
Treasurer

Administrative Officer,  
Department of  
Biological Sciences

- My name is Amanda Harding, current president of USAC.
- I've been at Vanderbilt for seven and a half years and am the Assistant Director of Strategy & Operations in the Office of Digital Education.
- I also just completed the final requirements for my Doctorate of Education in Peabody's Leadership & Learning in Organizations program.

Included on the slide here with me is the USAC executive committee, whom this work would not be possible without their support

- Vice President/President Elect – Adam McKeever-Burgett
- Secretary – Lynn Maddox
- Treasurer – LaDonna Smith

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## USAC

The University Staff Advisory Council (USAC) represents all staff members in Vanderbilt University (non-union) positions. USAC is an advisory group to the university's administration, including Chancellor Daniel Diermeier, on issues that are important to staff, such as policies, benefits and practices.

April 25, 2024

## Our Vision



Through **communication**, **consultation**, and **service**, the Council will promote a strong **partnership** among the staff, faculty, students, and administration of Vanderbilt University.

- Since last hearing from USAC, we have continued to raise important topics of issues to administration and create opportunities to build community and a sense of belonging amongst our staff.
- During our time today, I will recap the 2023 fiscal year and answer any questions you might have.
- Before sharing our work and accomplishments I wanted to remind you of who we are and what we do.
  - USAC is an advisory group to the university, focused on issues that affect Vanderbilt and those served by the council.
  - We work in tandem with the university's administration and staff community to resolve problems, develop policies and advance best practices for staff.

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## Who We Are & What We Do

- 90+ elected individuals from 19 groups
- Advisory group to administration and staff on issues, policies, and practices that affect the University and those served by the Council
- Research, develop, and submit proposals
- Ongoing campus representation (benefits, traffic & parking, Employee Critical Support, EAG creation, HR Recruitment & Retention, Future of Work, Sesquicentennial)
- Invite speakers to share updates and stories from across campus to connect our work to the broader impact of Vanderbilt's mission.

- We are comprised of 96 staff members, segmented into 19 groups, who represent both exempt and non-exempt, non-union roles across the campus.
- Our council meets once each month, where we invite speakers from across campus to share more about the work they do, accomplishments, and exciting initiatives that connects what they do with the broader university mission and USAC's mission.
- USAC members are also often looked to as leaders and thought-partners on a variety of campus-wide efforts such as the Future of Work initiative, the sesquicentennial advisory committee, Employee Critical Support Fund committee and others.

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## USAC Standing Committees

•**Communication** - responsible for communications among USAC's membership and with the wider VU Staff community

•**Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion** - aims to promote and develop a culture of collaboration and inclusion that supports the success and affirmation of all VU staff

•**Events** - coordinates council-sponsored activities, meetings, and special events

•**Membership** - maintains the council's membership roster and facilitates elections

•**Rules and Administration** - reviews and maintains USAC bylaws and procedures

•**Staff Life** – investigates and prioritizes issues of staff concern and recommends specific courses of action when appropriate

In addition to our monthly meetings, USAC has six standing committees who help with the operations of our council. Those committees are

- Communication
- Equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Events
- Membership
- Rules and administration
- And staff life

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Office of Faculty Affairs and Professional Education Area  
USAC Representatives  
**2023-2024**



- **Nonie Behhan**, Divinity
- **Faith Bishop**, the Graduate School
- **Sean Butner**, Center for Technology Transfer & Commercialization
- **Brenda Kole**, Undergraduate Affairs and Residential Faculty
- **Sharon Manlove**, Experiential Learning
- **La Tisha Moore**, Career Advancement and Engagement
  
- **\*Amanda Harding (past president)**, Office of Faculty Affairs & Professional Education

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## Your Representatives' Roles

- Attend monthly USAC meetings and disseminate information to constituents
- Vote on USAC resolutions and recommendations based on the desires of constituents
- Be available to receive feedback from constituents (you all!) on matters of staff concern and report that to USAC leadership
- Serve on a USAC standing committee of interest

Questions

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# USAC Accomplishments

I'd like to now highlight some of the more recent work and accomplishments of our council and committees.

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The graphic features a large title "Employee Critical Support Fund" in black with a gold "V" logo to the right. Below it, "Payroll Deduction" is written in large black font. A central illustration shows a family (man, woman, child) holding a green sign that says "KROGER COMMUNITY REWARDS". To the left, a photo of people at a "VANDERBILT GIVING DAY" event is shown, with text "4.27.23" and "STAND WITH US AS WE DARE TO GROW". At the bottom left, "DARE TO GROW" and the Vanderbilt University logo are visible. On the right, a "Donation Summary" box displays the following information:

Star icon	Donation Summary
Status:	enrolled
Organization Name:	Vanderbilt Employee Critical Support Fund
Enrollment Date:	01/06/2023
Organization Number:	KR662
<a href="#">Change Organization</a> <a href="#">Cancel Enrollment</a>	

USAC has been a long-time supporter and promoter of the Employee Critical Support Fund, formerly know as the Employee Hardship Fund.

- As you may recall, the Employee Hardship Fund was previously managed within VUMC’s Employee Assistance Program.
- In January of this year, Vanderbilt established their own fund – the Employee Critical Support Fund, which provides both faculty and staff with assistance during times of temporary hardships.
- When housed in VUMC, the fund struggled financially with the demand for employee needs.
- The committee was often faced with difficult decisions on whether to award funds or not.
- USAC consistently requested additional methods for contribution to the funds, but due to the VU/VUMC separation, these options were not viable.

Over the past year, as administration worked to establish the new VU fund, the Hardship Fund working group, lead by USAC representation, set out to provide recommendations to enhance the fund. Those recommendations led to:

1. A seed funding of \$10,000 from Vanderbilt

2. Additional ways to donate to the fund, including payroll deduction and the inclusion during Giving Day.
3. A more inclusive review committee – which now includes a faculty representative
4. And an increased level of maximum support from \$600 to \$2,000 every 5 years

While USAC has always been an advocate of this fund, this is just one example of how we are able to work closely with the Vice Chancellor of Administration team, and we are so thankful to the University's continued investment in this vital resource for faculty and staff alike.

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# Membership Committee



- Collected data on staff representation
- Education & Outreach
- Revamped election communications



USAC represents over 3,500 non-union staff members at Vanderbilt.

- However, what we have consistently noticed is the type of member who participates on the council – advanced professionals, mid-career managers, and leaders.
- A goal we have been working towards this year was to increase the diversity of our representation. To accomplish this, our executive committee under the leadership of our Membership co-chairs focused on three areas.

1. The first: Data collection.

1. To confirm our assumptions about member diversification, we worked with HR to understand the categorization of staff by job category title, exempt/non-exempt status, and demographic data.
2. As a result, our assumptions were confirmed, and our representation gaps include non-exempt members, non-white members, and advanced level position members.

2. Education and outreach.

1. Given the data and representation gaps, we have strategized to form solutions on how to encourage participation from more diverse staff across campus. This includes communications to managers, informational road-shows, and working with the Employee Affinity Groups.

2. Through communications campaigns and in-person events, which I will share more about shortly, we aim to educate the staff community on who we are to encourage participation in the future.
1. Last, we revamped election communications.
  1. Noting a struggle to receive nominations for elections in prior years, the membership team revamped their election communications by using the USAC newsletter and a more visual approach to capture readers attention. The use of the newsletter, rather than email, allows us to monitor the open and click rates, and think through additional strategies to reach staff.
    1. For example, one group who received election emails had less than a 3% open rate. It occurred to us that this particular group, Public Safety, is less likely to be engaged with email as they are out monitoring the campus. Thus, in the future we will include more communications that are physical in nature – such as a flyer to post in office or attending an all-staff meeting with their team.

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# Communications Committee



## VANDERBILT USAC... DID YOU KNOW?

University Staff Advisory Council

### USAC PROPOSAL SUCCESSSES

- Vanderbilt University marked **MLK Day** as a staff holiday beginning in 2021 in direct response to recommendations spearheaded by the USAC EDI Committee.
- Parental Leave Enhancement** – In response to USAC's proposal, and previous work conducted within HR, Vanderbilt increased paid parental leave for staff which resulted in an extended eight-week parental leave policy.
- In 2020, the Staff Life Committee provided ELE a professional development and staff engagement proposal. The recently launched **Staff Mentor Program** is a direct response to that work.

Learn more about these proposals:  
[vu.edu/usacproposals](http://vu.edu/usacproposals)

## VANDERBILT USAC INFORMATION

University Staff Advisory Council

### JOIN US AT OUR NEXT MEETING!

To request an invitation, please email [usac@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:usac@vanderbilt.edu)

### USAC LEADERSHIP 2022-23

- Amanda Harding, President
- Adam McKeever-Bargett, Vice President/President Elect
- Lynn Maddox, Secretary
- Ladonna Smith, Treasurer

The University Staff Advisory Council represents all staff members in Vanderbilt University (nonunion) positions. USAC is an advisory group to the university's administration, including Chancellor Daniel Diermeier, on issues that are important to staff, such as policies, benefits and practices. USAC is made up of more than 90 elected individuals from nearly two dozen campus groups who represent more than 4,000 full-time and part-time exempt and nonexempt university staff members.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!  
website: [vu.edu/usac](http://vu.edu/usac) | email: [usac@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:usac@vanderbilt.edu)  
Vanderbilt University Staff Advisory Council  
[@VanderbiltUSAC](https://www.facebook.com/VanderbiltUSAC) [@vanderbiltusac](https://www.instagram.com/vanderbiltusac)

Use the QR code to access our [USAC Anonymous Comment Form](#).



As part of the Education and Outreach efforts for our elections, the communications committee has continued to think of innovative ways to spread the word about USAC.

1. They have created strategic communication campaigns where designated communications champions email their group with specific information and updates. This provides a more personal touch and increased engagement with USAC.
2. USAC also participated in Turkey Toss, where we handed out an informational notecard for visitors. This was created by our communications health and safety team and provides staff with a quick reference to who we are, what we have recently accomplished, and how they can have their voice heard.

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# Events Committee



Raised:  
**\$850.00**



52



Our events committee, or the fun committee as they like to say, has continued to foster a sense of belonging through several events.

1. In concert with Government & Community Relations, our events team gathered volunteers to participate in the One Generation Food Drive
2. They have held several in-person coffee breaks, with their most recent including a turnout of 52 staff members at the 2525 Starbucks location.
3. Following tradition of previous years, they coordinated a virtual food drive to support the Second Harvest Food Bank of Middle Tennessee, raising \$850 to provide meals for families in need.
4. Additionally, they have focused on promoting, supporting, and participating in campus community events such as the Graduate Career Closet, and the Period Product Packing Party hosted by the Women's Center.

Th Event co-chairs and members continue to exude what it means to be a Vanderbilt Staff member and will close out the year with

1. A campus tour & dining hall lunch in thanks to the Vice Chancellor for Administration
2. Another on-campus coffee break, in thanks to catering & dining services
3. A members only happy hour at Kung Fu Saloon

4. And an ice cream social – utilizing the Wond'ry's Icicle tricycle

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## Staff Life Committee



- Parental Leave proposal submitted October 2021
  - Positive response & implementation from Administration
- Summary of Issues on Compensation submitted February 2023
- Developing proposal on Tuition Benefit Expansion
- Reinstated bi-monthly meetings with ELE team



And last, but not least our Staff Life committee continues to be active in surfacing issues of concern and innovative ideas from staff through research and proposals.

1. In October of 2021, the committee submitted a formal proposal to administration to increase the paid parental leave. We were thrilled to learn of the significant enhancements Vanderbilt undertook as related to not just parental leave, but to women's health in general.
2. This February, the committee compiled a list of "issues" related to compensation and shared with administration. Topics of concern that surfaced were focused around
  1. Annual increases
  2. Salary ranges & reviews
  3. Job titles
  4. And Career progressionWe recognize these topics are difficult to navigate but look forward to further discussions surrounding potential improvements.
3. Their next proposal will be focused on a request to expand the tuition benefit. This will seek to allow staff to utilize benefits for programs other than a degree, for opportunities that may be more skill based or professional development based.

4. The committee has also re-instituted their bi-monthly meetings with the Employee Learning and Engagement team, which provides a wonderful opportunity to share staff ideas directly with the HR team to consider and implement.

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As Chancellor Diermier likes to say, proud...but never satisfied.

I am honored and humbled to serve as the University Staff Advisory Council leader and showcase the incredible work my colleagues do each and every day. As I move towards the end of my tenure, this opportunity to share with you today gave me the chance to reflect on the last ten months. While it has been a challenge to hold a full-time role, complete my doctorate degree, and serve as the USAC leader, I could not be more thankful for the experience. I am confident that USAC will continue their work to forge collaborations, spark innovative new ideas, and enhance the One Vanderbilt mentality.

In closing, I'd be remiss without taking a moment to recognize Chancellor Diermier, Vice Chancellor Kopstain, Vice Chancellor Churchwell, Associate Vice Chancellor Retton, and Associate Vice Chancellor Rucker.

As I shared, I've been at Vanderbilt for over seven years, and have had a front row seat in observing and experiencing the culture shift. Their guidance, support, and empowerment make all our work possible.

On behalf of USAC, and all staff at Vanderbilt, thank you.

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Questions?