

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WITH VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

Dr. Lauren Bethune, Assistant Director of Next Steps at Vanderbilt University, answered common questions about the program.

Q: How do you ensure your students are actively involved with the greater college community?

A: While academics remain at the forefront of the Next Steps at Vanderbilt program, being engaged in the greater campus community provides an exciting time of being exposed to new people, ideas, cultures; essentially, it's a chance to develop both personally and professionally. Next Steps students are encouraged to explore campus life opportunities with the 600 plus student organizations they may become interested in. Our students have access to the same student organizations, campus offices, and services that all Vanderbilt students use.

Q: What types of academic and social supports does your program offer?

A: Ambassadors, peer mentors, are undergraduate and graduate students who establish one-on-one relationships with the Next Steps students. Each student has 8-12 Ambassadors who make up their circle of support, and has at least ten Ambassadors sessions each week. The circle members work together to promote all around student growth throughout the semester. There are four Ambassador roles that define their interactions with our students: lunch partners, workout partners, academic tutors, and daily planners. In addition, each student receives class notes from a note-sharer appointed by the Vanderbilt's Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Disability Services office.

Q: What does the application process look like?

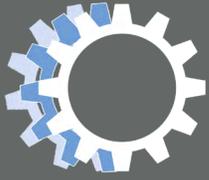
A: All applicants must:

- Complete the online student application located on our website.
- Mail or upload the required documents to the Next Steps at Vanderbilt office by the deadlines outlined on the website. For required documents, visit our website at <http://vu.edu/nextsteps>
- Must participate in a personal interview, if notified by the admission committee.
- Selected candidates are also invited back for a "preview day" on campus.

Q: What skills should prospective students have prior to applying to your program?

A: Prospective students should have the following skills prior to applying to Next Steps:

- Time management skills
- Organization and planning skills



Transition

T E N N E S S E E

- Self-advocacy skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Safety skills
- Conflict-resolution and social skills
- Use of technology
- Stress management skills
- Communication skills
- Be able to understand the differences between high school and college

Q: What sorts of outcomes have alumni of your program achieved?

A: Outcomes of Next Steps alumni include:

- Paid, meaningful employment
- Increased independence and self-advocacy
- Enhanced social skills
- Connection to a social network as a Vanderbilt alumnus
- Independent living situations for some students