



Director, Equal Opportunity and Access Office

Vanderbilt University

Nashville, Tennessee

THE SEARCH

Vanderbilt University, top-ranked in both academics and financial aid, seeks an accomplished, assured, collaborative, innovative, and communicative leader to be the next Director of the Equal Opportunity and Access (EOA) Office. Reporting directly to the Associate Vice Chancellor for Equal Access, the Director is responsible for the oversight, implementation, and management of the University's policies, procedures, response, investigation, and compliance efforts related to equal opportunity and affirmative action. Through assured, visible, and boundary-spanning leadership, the next Director will seek to enrich office services and deepen its contributions to a diverse and inclusive campus community dedicated to achieving a sense of belonging for all students, faculty, and staff. The Director will be supported by eager partners in many units, such as the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Office; Human Resources; Student Affairs; Faculty Affairs; and Public Safety – all dedicated to the best practices in the equal opportunity and access field and elevating the stature of the EOA Office on campus.

Established in 2020 and serving 22,000 Vanderbilt students, faculty, and staff, the EOA Office is undergoing a strategic revitalization to improve the services it provides and reform its identity amongst the community. Furthermore, the Office specializes in a space of ongoing change due to shifting federal and state regulations as well as evolving living, learning, and working needs in a higher education setting. The Director must be exceptionally well-practiced in civil rights and nondiscrimination compliance and lead the office with rigor, integrity, and warmth. The Director will manage, support, and develop a team of four and together the EOA Office will develop and encourage compliance processes that are accessible, high-quality, timely, and efficient.

In 2022, *U.S. News & World Report* ranked Vanderbilt University #13 in the top national universities and #8 in the list of best value schools. Vanderbilt offers an immersive residential undergraduate experience, with programs in the liberal arts and sciences, engineering, music, education, and human development. The University also is home to nationally and internationally recognized graduate schools of law, education, business, medicine, nursing, and divinity, and offers robust graduate-degree programs across a range of disciplines. Vanderbilt is committed to the strength of its interdisciplinary research enterprise and inclusive excellence, believing that profound breakthroughs happen when scholars of different perspectives, races, gender identities, ethnicities, and socioeconomic backgrounds work together.

Vanderbilt has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in conducting this important search. All inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed to Isaacson, Miller as indicated at the end of this document and will be held in the strictest confidence.

ABOUT VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

Vanderbilt University, located in Nashville, Tennessee, is a top-15 private research university offering a full-range of undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees. Created from an initial \$1 million gift from Cornelius Vanderbilt, who envisioned a place that would “contribute to strengthening the ties that should exist between all sections of our common country,” Vanderbilt is situated on a 330-acre campus near the thriving city center, serving more than 13,000 students and employing almost 7,000 faculty and staff.

Vanderbilt offers undergraduate programs in the liberal arts and sciences, engineering, music, and education and human development, as well as a full range of graduate and professional degrees. The combination of cutting-edge research, strength in the liberal arts, and nationally recognized schools of business, divinity, education, engineering, law, medicine, and nursing create an invigorating atmosphere where students tailor their educational experiences to meet their goals and researchers collaborate to solve complex questions affecting health, culture, and society.

Vanderbilt provides a gateway to greatness, drawing the best and brightest students from all backgrounds across the nation and around the world. Vanderbilt alumni can be found in Congress, on the judicial bench,

among the list of Nobel laureates, heading corporations, conducting innovative medical research, writing for, and appearing on the stage and screen, and playing in the NFL and major league baseball.

The University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award bachelor's, master's, education specialists, and doctoral degrees. Vanderbilt is a member of the Association of American Universities.

COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

Vanderbilt University is intentional about and assumes accountability for fostering advancement and respect for equity, diversity, and inclusion for all students, faculty, and staff. The University has created a community that celebrates differences and lets individuality thrive. As part of this commitment, it actively values diversity in the workplace and learning environments as the University seeks to take advantage of rich backgrounds and abilities. The diverse voices of Vanderbilt represent an invaluable resource for the University in its efforts to fulfill its mission and strive to be an example of excellence in higher education.

THE COMMUNITY

From 2020-2021, Vanderbilt had a total enrollment of 7,057 undergraduate and 6,480 graduate students for a grand total enrollment of 13,537 with 34.3 percent of students being from the Southern region of the country. Women make up 56 percent of the student body, with 65 percent of students receiving some form of aid. 39.5 percent of the student population is White, 18.8 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, 11.5 percent black, 11.1 percent Hispanic, 8 percent international, 5.7 percent identify as two or more races, and 0.4 percent American Indian. There is 4.1 percent of the population whose race is unknown. Vanderbilt also recorded total employment of 9,253, with 4,470 staff members and 4,783 faculty members in 2020. In 2021, 19 percent of the faculty were people of color and 3 percent international.

LOCATION

Vanderbilt University is located a mile and a half southwest of downtown Nashville, Tennessee. Occupying over 179 buildings across 340.7 acres, the University also hosts two National Historic Landmarks: the Peabody College section of campus and the [Vanderbilt Dyer Observatory](#), located about nine miles from campus. Known as the Music City and a creative incubator for many award-winning culinary white coats,

U.S. News and World Report ranks Nashville, TN as the #1 best place to live in Tennessee and the #25 best places to live in the country.

LEADERSHIP

[Daniel Diermeier](#), an internationally renowned scholar of political science and managerial leadership, began his tenure as the ninth chancellor of Vanderbilt University on July 1, 2020. Diermeier guided the University through the many challenges and unknowns of the COVID-19 pandemic—driven by Vanderbilt’s commitment to protecting the health, safety, and wellbeing of the community, and by the university’s mission to provide an empowering residential education to the leaders of tomorrow. During his first year in office, Diermeier launched several ambitious programs with the goal of setting new benchmarks for excellence. Key initiatives include Destination Vanderbilt, a bold commitment to recruiting and hiring renowned faculty at an increased rate, and The Vanderbilt Project on Unity and American Democracy, which seeks to elevate evidence-based reasoning in the national conversation. Diermeier also oversaw the launch of Vandy United, a \$300 million campaign dedicated to Vanderbilt student-athletes, athletics programs, and Commodore fans, which is the largest undertaking of its kind in the University’s history.

[Eric C. Kopstain](#), formerly Vanderbilt’s Associate Vice Chancellor for Finance, began his tenure as the university’s vice chancellor for administration on July 1, 2014. A 23-year veteran of higher education administration, finance, and planning, Kopstain came to Vanderbilt in May 2012 from Harvard University, where he was the Associate Dean of Finance for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. As Vice Chancellor for Administration, he is responsible for the university’s administrative infrastructure. This broad-ranging portfolio includes human resources, business services, facilities and construction, contract and grant accounting, police, environmental health and safety, traffic and parking, printing services, health and wellness for faculty and staff, and equal opportunity, affirmative action, and disability services.

[Stephanie A. Roth](#) was named Associate Vice Chancellor for Equal Access in December of 2020, where she oversees the Title IX, Equal Opportunity and Access, and Student Access offices. Additionally, Roth has overseen the university’s implementation of the U.S. Department of Education’s new Title IX regulations, which have mandated significant shifts in colleges and universities’ policies and procedures for investigating and adjudicating violations of their sexual misconduct policies. She previously served as associate general counsel for Vanderbilt, where her practice primarily focused on student concerns and

Title IX matters. She is a published author and co-author of numerous articles in the field of Title IX and labor and employment law.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND ACCESS OFFICE

The [Equal Opportunity and Access Office](#) supports Vanderbilt's inclusive learning, living, and working environment through prevention, education, and outreach efforts. These efforts are executed by providing a robust and efficient reporting process for members of the university community, along with investigative channels for incidents of discrimination, harassment, and related retaliation. The EOA Office also oversees religious accommodation processes for all populations on campus and medical accommodations for staff, faculty, and postdoctoral fellows. Under a newly developed structure, the EOA office also works collaboratively with Vanderbilt's [Title IX](#) and [Student Access](#) offices, all of which report directly to the Associate Vice Chancellor for Equal Access. This structure promotes efforts to further increase communication and services for internal stakeholders. The Director will be given the opportunity to exercise innovative leadership to re-envision the EOA Office in order to meet the ever-changing needs of the Vanderbilt community.

THE ROLE

The Director will be essential in developing and optimizing processes for reporting, investigating, and resolving various equity and access-related complaints and inquiries. As such, the Director must not only work to drive and implement initiatives that promote Vanderbilt's values, but also ensure compliance with a variety of federal and state laws, including but not limited to: Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990; the ADA Amendments Act of 2008; Executive Order 11246; the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended by the Jobs for Veterans Act; the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, as amended; and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008.

As a supervisor to four direct reports, the Director will provide critical and innovative leadership that supports fellow staff members and further promotes the success of the EOA office and those it supports. The Director of Equal Opportunity and Access must possess qualities that reflect the mission and values of Vanderbilt University, promote diversity and equity in thought and leadership, inspire and maintain a

culture of collaboration inside the office and externally, and should bring an innovative, forward-thinking mindset and approach to Equal Opportunity and Access for the University.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF THE DIRECTOR

Oversee and provide strategic leadership for the continued implementation of Vanderbilt's policies surrounding federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to civil rights and nondiscrimination.

The Director will have the primary responsibility for the implementation, administration, and monitoring of the University's response to, and investigation of, alleged violations of a variety of federal and state laws and implementation of equitable formal and informal resolution procedures under regulatory requirements and University policy. In this role, the Director will use their expertise to develop and execute a vision for a safer, more inclusive campus and establish communication strategies that clearly articulate the available resources on campus, while providing relevant information regarding processes and protocols in a visible and accessible format. This includes the preparation and dissemination of relevant institutional reports. The Director will lead the development and application of university policies and procedures that reflect input from the broader campus community and consider the impending changes to federal regulations on civil rights and nondiscrimination.

Develop and promote the identity of the EOA Office across campus.

It is imperative to the success of this position that key stakeholders across the University view the Director and the EOA Office as trusted and knowledgeable partners, legal experts, strong communicators, and supportive colleagues. This will be especially true regarding processes that involve numerous offices on campus and the desire to streamline and clarify workflows. To that end, the Director will aim to strengthen the identity, processes, mission, and strategic goals of the EOA Office both internally and externally. To further achieve this goal, the Director should be a visible presence on campus and will increase the visibility of the Office to develop a trusting and supportive relationship between the EOA Office and the campus community.

Increase responsiveness, quality of services, and communication to the campus community.

In an effort to deepen trust in the office and the services it provides to the University, the Director will have a proven track record of timely response to incidents and steady progress through office procedures

while executing all work with excellent quality and thoroughness. The Director will partner with key stakeholders to transparently explain civil rights and nondiscrimination compliance policies, procedures, resources, and relevant legal requirements to the campus community.

Collaborate and coordinate with key campus partners.

The Director, in conjunction with their staff, will constructively collaborate on a regular basis with other offices and constituencies on campus to develop and deliver a holistic, aligned array of resources to the broader campus community. This individual will work with other offices reporting to the AVC for Equal Access; key partners within the offices of Human Resources, Faculty Affairs, and Student Affairs; the Office of the General Counsel; the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; and the Department of Public Safety, to develop and implement training and preventative education tailored to the needs of specific groups on campus within the student, faculty, and staff communities. The Director will be a trusted partner, an effective communicator, and a knowledgeable colleague who can effectively engage with a variety of stakeholders and advise on civil rights and nondiscrimination matters. The individual should also possess an equity mindset and have a high level of competence around topics including but not limited to sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, and religious identity.

Connect the work of the Office with Vanderbilt's equity, diversity, and inclusion principles, and initiatives.

The Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) staff are eager partners to the Director, who will be committed to promoting an affirming, welcoming, equitable, inclusive, and diverse living, learning, and working environment at Vanderbilt. The Director will be supported by a community willing to develop innovative and sustainable practices aimed toward a shared vision of institutional excellence.

Lead, develop, and support office staff.

The Director will directly supervise four individuals within the EOA Office. The Director will work with their team to carry out EOA's objectives, including handling investigations, coordinating assessment efforts, overseeing formal and informal resolution processes, and providing training and preventative education, often in conjunction with departmental partners across campus. The individual will lead their team to ensure complaints are handled in a prompt, thorough, compassionate, and equitable manner. The

Director will use their management skillset to further develop and support their team, characterized by the highest ethical and moral standards in conjunction with deep care for the campus community. Throughout their tenure, the Director will encourage innovation both in engagement with the community and in development of best practices in the field. The Director will also identify efficiencies and advocate for resources for the EOA Office to maximize effectiveness for the greater benefit of the campus community.

KEY FUNCTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

The successful candidate is required to have a Master's, Ph.D., or Juris Doctorate degree from an accredited college or university and a minimum of seven years of employee relations, legal, or human resources compliance experience. They are required to have a minimum of five years of experience performing professional work in EEO and ADA compliance. A minimum of two years of supervisory experience is required. The core responsibilities of the Director are as follows:

- Ensure compliance with a variety of Federal and State laws, including but not limited to Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, Executive Order 11246, the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 as amended by the Jobs for Veterans Act, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, as amended, and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008;
- Fulfill duties as outlined in university policies (e.g., Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy, Anti-Harassment Policy, and Student Discrimination Policy), including coordinating the effective implementation of supportive measures, evaluating requests for confidentiality, and overseeing investigation processes and effective implementation of remedies;
- Proactively support the Associate Vice Chancellor for Equal Access and all department initiatives, continuously seeking opportunities to assist and elevate the department's work product, organization, and outputs;
- Select, train, and oversee Equal Opportunity and Access team members;
- Address inquiries from students, faculty, staff, post-docs, and trainees regarding rights and responsibilities concerning discriminatory conduct in violation of University Policy;

- Collaborate with academic administrators and faculty to provide support and advocacy for students, staff, and faculty with accommodations;
- Develop and communicate efficient and transparent equity processes that address departmental and institutional needs through workshops, training, and written communications (policies, procedures, etc.);
- Collaborate with Equal Access leadership and University partners to develop a plan to conduct outreach and present training and educational programs about discrimination, harassment, accommodations, and related topics to key internal audiences;
- Collaborate with Equal Access leadership and University partners to provide skill-specific training for those involved in discrimination and harassment response protocols and resolution processes;
- Implement and administer requirements for reporting, record-keeping, and retention of documentation and information regarding training, investigations, supportive measures, resolutions, dispositions, monitoring, and compliance for Equal Opportunity matters in partnership with Equal Access team members and University partners;
- Collaborate with key stakeholders in the development and implementation of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts;
- Collaborate with Division of Communications team members to develop, create, and disseminate education and communication materials to support the initiatives of the University, particularly focused on equity and inclusion;
- Serve on various University committees, as requested, particularly those related to the work of the EOA Office;
- Some evening and weekend hours will be required.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SUCCESSFUL TEAM MEMBER

The successful candidate will bring many of the following skills and qualities:

- Demonstrated compassion for all parties involved and understanding of the impacts of trauma in civil rights and nondiscrimination matters;
- Proven ability to provide thought leadership to transform and enhance institutional approaches to compliance with federal and state regulations;

- Demonstrated knowledge of and ability to understand nondiscrimination laws and regulations and other applicable laws and regulations and experience in complaint resolution, investigations, and grievance processes;
- Demonstrated experience developing and implementing preventative education and training
- Exceptional critical thinking skills;
- A strong communicator, including written, oral, and interpersonal communication, who can transparently convey compliance policy to internal and external groups;
- A demonstrated professional history in successful and progressively responsible administrative roles; experience in strategic planning, program assessment, and policy development;
- Embraces change and provides consistent leadership to all team members;
- Proactively searches for solutions to challenges within the department; strives to offer creative solutions; and implements, or partners with other team members to implement those solutions;
- Professional demeanor that engenders confidence and demonstrates credibility.

TO APPLY

Vanderbilt University has engaged Isaacson, Miller to assist with identifying and reviewing candidates for this position. Inquiries, applications, and nominations may be sent in confidence to the following as indicated below:

Rebecca Kennedy, Partner (she/her)

Tiffany Weber, Senior Associate (she/her)

Alexis G. Ditaway, Associate (she/her)

Cortnee Bollard, Senior Search Coordinator (they/them)

Apply online: <https://www.imsearch.com/8673>

Vanderbilt University has a strong institutional commitment to recruiting and retaining an academically and culturally diverse community of faculty. Minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, and members of other underrepresented groups, in particular, are encouraged to apply. Vanderbilt is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer.