



Vice Chancellor for Finance and Chief Financial Officer
Vanderbilt University
Nashville, TN

THE SEARCH

Vanderbilt University seeks a highly accomplished strategic financial leader who embraces collaboration and pairs a bold, entrepreneurial mindset with rigorous financial discipline to serve as its Vice Chancellor for Finance and Chief Financial Officer (VCF&CFO). The VCF&CFO will play a central leadership role at one of the nation's preeminent private research universities during a period of significant momentum, investment, and growth. Under the visionary leadership of Chancellor [Daniel Diermeier](#), Vanderbilt is defining and modeling the great research university of the 21st century. The level of ambition and transformation necessary to achieve this vision requires a sophisticated financial architect to ensure they become a durable reality.

Reporting directly to the Chancellor and serving as a trusted partner to university leadership, including the Provost, Board of Trustees, and other campus leaders, the VCF&CFO provides strategic counsel across the university's financial and enterprise priorities. They lead a large and experienced team of more than 100 staff and oversee capital and operating budgets, financial affairs and reporting, procurement, debt and treasury management, and commercial transactions for a more than \$2.0 billion operating enterprise. Although Vanderbilt University Medical Center is a separate legal and financial entity, the VCF&CFO partners closely with the CFO there to align research strategy and shared institutional goals. With an endowment of approximately \$12 billion, total net assets of roughly \$11.2 billion, and a Moody's Aa1 rating, the VCF&CFO plays a central role in shaping Vanderbilt's long-term financial strength across academics, research, athletics, and other campus initiatives.

The successful candidate will be a creative, flexible thinker who can deliver sound advice on financial and administrative matters, demonstrating creative thinking and strong judgment across complex issues. The VCF&CFO must lead their team with clarity, cohesion, and high standards, fostering a culture that embraces complex adaptive budgeting—financial frameworks that are flexible, iterative, evidence-based, and aligned with institutional priorities rather than static cost containment—translating ambitious institutional goals into actionable financial and operational models while reducing administrative burdens that slow decision-making or create unnecessary complexity. The VCF&CFO must embody the university's

commitment to radical collaboration by engaging diverse stakeholders, convening the right voices quickly, and communicating transparently about critical financial issues. The role demands an enterprise-level perspective, comfort managing complex priorities, and the ability to operate as a true institutional financial partner and colleague to leaders across campus.

Vanderbilt University has retained the national executive search firm, Isaacson, Miller, to assist in this important recruitment. Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

Vanderbilt University is in Nashville, Tennessee, with more than 13,000 students and more than 7,000 faculty and staff. Vanderbilt University offers undergraduate programs in the liberal arts and sciences, engineering, music, education, and human development, as well as a full range of graduate and professional degrees in its 11 schools and colleges. The combination of cutting-edge research, strength in the liberal arts, and internationally recognized schools of education, law, engineering, business, divinity, nursing, and medicine creates an invigorating atmosphere where students tailor their education to meet their goals, and where researchers collaborate to solve complex problems of importance to health, culture and society.

As a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities since 1950, Vanderbilt University is among the most preeminent universities in the nation; it has achieved external research funding exceeding \$1 billion and enjoys a growing global reputation.

Vanderbilt University spurs—and is optimized for—cross-disciplinary research to foster discoveries that impact society for the better. "Radical collaboration," in a culture where Vanderbilt community members can simultaneously challenge and support one another, is one of Vanderbilt's most closely held values. The One Vanderbilt spirit can also be seen in the enthusiastic support from Vanderbilt's global alumni community, which recently helped the University vastly exceed a \$3.2 billion fundraising goal -- the most ambitious in Vanderbilt's history—20 months ahead of schedule.

From Vanderbilt's beginnings in 1873, the university has believed in the power of bringing together people of differing viewpoints for a common purpose. Free expression is fundamental to Vanderbilt's culture. Vanderbilt's approach to free expression rests on the pillars of open forums, institutional neutrality, and civil discourse. Through Vanderbilt's Dialogue Vanderbilt initiative, the university continues to live its long-held value of free expression and strives to be a model of civil discourse. More about free expression at Vanderbilt may be found on [Vanderbilt's website](#).

Vanderbilt University is proud of what has been achieved in its first 153 years and is continuing to drive forward into bold new areas of growth. The College of Connected Computing, the university's first new college in 40 years, recently became Vanderbilt's eleventh college. Vanderbilt is expanding its business and education programs to West Palm Beach, Florida; is establishing a full-time academic campus in San

Francisco focused on innovative education and interdisciplinary collaboration that integrates technology, design, and the arts in a global center for innovation, entrepreneurship, and creativity, and has established a campus in New York City that serves as a hub for immersive learning, academic programming, and engagement with alumni and industry partners. More about these growth initiatives and others may be found on [Vanderbilt's website](#).

Vanderbilt is grounded in its shared values and common purpose, with one overarching, ambitious aim: to make Vanderbilt the great university of the 21st century.

UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP

Daniel Diermeier is an internationally renowned political scientist, management scholar and visionary leader, Diermeier is Vanderbilt's ninth chancellor.

Vanderbilt named Diermeier chancellor in late 2019 after an extensive search by the Board of Trust. In May 2024, the Board of Trust extended Diermeier's contract until 2035 "as a demonstration of our confidence in Chancellor Diermeier's leadership and to support the realization of his long-term vision for the university."

Stepping into his role in July 2020, Diermeier immediately committed to safely and successfully bringing students back to campus during the COVID-19 pandemic, making Vanderbilt one of a very small number of the nation's best universities to do so. Today, in the spirit of Vanderbilt's motto, *Crescere aude*, or "dare to grow," Diermeier leads an ambitious program of expansion and improvement, driving efforts to create a culture of radical collaboration and personal growth and to increase Vanderbilt's presence and reputation both nationally and globally.

During a time of unprecedented criticism of higher education, Chancellor Diermeier has been nationally recognized as a leader of reform in the sector, advocating for universities to avoid politicization, return to their core purpose and embrace time-tested principles such as excellence, institutional neutrality and civil discourse. In an era when society faces urgent and complex challenges, Diermeier has made the case for universities as essential engines of innovation that strengthen American security, competitiveness and economic prosperity.

With Diermeier as chancellor, Vanderbilt has strengthened its standing as a destination for the most promising faculty and students, attracting a record number of admissions applications, posting its highest percentage of admitted students attending, and expanding financial aid through Opportunity Vanderbilt. In combination with Vanderbilt University Medical Center, the university has topped the \$1 billion mark in external research funding and set a university record for licensing revenue—at one point surpassing traditional innovation leaders Stanford and MIT. Vanderbilt's endowment has grown from \$6.9 billion to \$12 billion since Diermeier's arrival and, in 2023, Vanderbilt launched Dare to Grow, a record fundraising campaign that has raised \$3.8 billion to date. It includes Vandy United, a landmark \$300 million effort to reimagine Vanderbilt athletics. The university's athletics program has opened a new era of success under

Diermeier, with a record-breaking 2025 football season, record seasons for men's and women's basketball, an SEC championship and NCAA Elite Eight appearance for women's soccer, and the return of volleyball in 2025 after a 45-year hiatus.

In 2022, the university launched Discovery Vanderbilt, a multimillion-dollar investment to ignite and expand the university's capacity for innovation and discovery across disciplines. Clinton Global Initiative University selected Vanderbilt as its host in 2023, the same year the university launched a landmark celebration of its Sesquicentennial. In 2024, Vanderbilt announced it was establishing the College of Connected Computing, its first new college since 1981.

Under Diermeier's leadership, the university has sought to realize a bold vision of establishing a network of additional campuses located in the nation's innovation centers. It opened Vanderbilt University–New York City in 2025 and laid out plans for a quantum campus in Chattanooga the same year. In early 2026, the university officially launched development of a graduate campus for business and engineering in West Palm Beach and outlined plans to open an undergraduate campus focused on innovation and the arts on the site of California College of the Arts in San Francisco in 2027.

Chancellor Diermeier has also spearheaded efforts to increase cross-sector collaboration and employ Vanderbilt's capacity for innovation to expand Middle Tennessee's innovation economy. In the summer of 2024, Vanderbilt and the office of Nashville Mayor Freddie O'Connell established the Nashville Innovation Alliance, which aims to bring together public, private, civic and education institutions to collaborate in improving the region's ecosystem for innovation and research. Diermeier has also grown partnerships and collaboration with the U.S. military and national security agencies. He has driven development of the annual Asness Summit on Modern Conflict and Emerging Threats and established the Vanderbilt Institute of National Security. He led development of the Vanderbilt Project on Unity and American Democracy and, in the fall of 2023, oversaw the launch of Dialogue Vanderbilt, a multifaceted initiative to promote civil discourse on campus and affirm Vanderbilt's long-standing commitment to free expression.

Vanderbilt has taken steps to attract students from a broader variety of backgrounds during Chancellor Diermeier's tenure. The university now covers tuition for admitted students whose families earn \$150,000 or less, and Vanderbilt was a founding member of The Stars College Network, which seeks to ensure that students from rural and small-town America can enroll and graduate from the college or university of their choice. In 2024, Vanderbilt introduced Nashville Vanderbilt Scholars, a partnership with Metro Nashville Public Schools that covers the direct costs of attending Vanderbilt for any MNPS student admitted to Vanderbilt through the early decision process who also qualifies for a Federal Pell Grant or whose parent income is \$100,000 or less.

In 2025, Chancellor Diermeier was honored with Vanderbilt Chabad House's Lamplighter Award and was inducted into the White Rose Society, reflecting Vanderbilt's commitment to maintaining a campus environment where all students can live, learn and grow without fear.

In addition to his role as chancellor, Diermeier is University Distinguished Professor in the Owen Graduate School of Management and Distinguished University Professor of Political Science in the College of Arts and Science. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Guggenheim Foundation. He has published six books and more than 100 research articles in academic journals—primarily in the fields of political science, economics and management, but also in linguistics, sociology, psychology, computer science, operations research and applied mathematics.

Throughout his career, Diermeier has proven to be a bold innovator, combining excellence as a leader, researcher and teacher with an entrepreneurial mindset. Before arriving at Vanderbilt, Chancellor Diermeier served in leadership roles at the Stanford Graduate School of Business, the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University and at the University of Chicago, where he served as dean of the Harris School of Public Policy. Chancellor Diermeier also served as director of the Ford Motor Co. Center for Global Citizenship and, in 2007, received the Aspen Institute’s Faculty Pioneer Award, called “the Oscars of the business school world” by the *Financial Times*.

A first-generation college graduate, Chancellor Diermeier earned a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Rochester. He also holds master’s degrees in political science from the University of Rochester and the University of Munich, and he earned a master’s degree in philosophy from the University of Southern California.

CURRENT FINANCIAL POSITION

Vanderbilt University generated net operating income of \$217 million in fiscal year 2025, an increase from \$154 million in fiscal 2024, reflecting continued strength across core revenue streams and disciplined expense management. Operating revenues without donor restrictions increased \$177 million, or 10%, to \$2.02 billion, with key contributions from tuition and educational fees (\$420 million), grants and contracts (\$350 million), endowment distributions (\$330 million), affiliated entity revenue (\$213 million), and trademark and royalty revenue (\$163 million), demonstrating a well-diversified and resilient revenue base supported by enrollment growth, research activity, and institutional partnerships. Vanderbilt maintains a unique and longstanding relationship with Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC), a legally separate entity, through multiple agreements—including an Academic Affiliation Agreement, Trademark License Agreement, and Master Services Agreement—through which the university receives recurring financial support. These arrangements generate meaningful revenue streams through affiliated entity payments and trademark royalties tied to academic collaboration, shared services, and brand usage, further enhancing revenue stability and diversification.

Operating expenses increased \$114 million, or 7%, to \$1.8 billion, primarily driven by higher compensation and benefits as well as increased operating costs associated with expanded research activity, professional services, and student support. Despite these increases, Vanderbilt maintained strong operating performance while continuing to invest in academic programs, financial aid, research initiatives, and campus infrastructure.

The university's endowment had a market value of approximately \$12 billion as of April/May 2026, increasing from \$10.9 billion at the end of FY 2025 and \$10.3 billion at the end of FY 2024. The endowment distributed \$516 million in FY 2025 and \$463 million in FY 2024 to support current operations, including academic programs, faculty support, and student financial aid. The endowment returned 9.9% in FY 2025 and generated a five-year annualized return of 12.1% through the end of FY 2025. The Office of Investments, led by Anders Hall, manages Vanderbilt's endowment.

Vanderbilt maintains strong credit quality, with Moody's reaffirming its Aa1 rating and Fitch affirming its AAA rating, reflecting the university's solid operating performance, robust liquidity, and strong balance sheet.

Vanderbilt ended FY 2025 with total assets of \$14.9 billion, total net assets of \$11.2 billion, and long-term debt and commercial paper of approximately \$982 million, reflecting continued investment in strategic capital projects and campus development.

More information about Vanderbilt's financial position can be found in the university's [Fiscal Year 2025 Financial Report](#).

ROLE OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR FINANCE AND CFO *(KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES)*

The VCF&CFO is Vanderbilt's most senior financial officer, reporting directly to the Chancellor and serving on the executive leadership team. They lead a complex organization with 5 direct reports, including the Chief of Staff, the Associate Vice Chancellor for Finance & Treasurer, the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Finance & Controller, and two Chief Business Officers. The organization also includes 13 unit-based Chief Business Officers who are embedded within academic and administrative units, providing day-to-day financial leadership to those areas while reporting centrally through Finance. The VCF&CFO will partner closely with Vanderbilt University Medical Center's CFO to ensure alignment on research and shared strategic priorities. They also serve as a key advisor to the Chancellor, Provost, senior leadership, and the Board of Trustees, regularly reporting to the Audit Committee, Investment Committee, athletics subcommittee, and other strategy focused committees.

The VCF&CFO oversees capital and operating budgets, financial affairs and reporting, procurement, debt and treasury management, commercial transactions, and select auxiliary and real-asset holdings, including university-owned hospitality and recreation assets such as the hotel and golf course. The role includes outward-facing responsibilities as well. The VCF&CFO is expected to represent Vanderbilt externally, including service on at least one nonprofit board aligned with the university's civic commitments.

The VCF&CFO will:

Provide Strategic Partnership

In addition to delivering sound, financial stewardship, the VCF&CFO will serve as a strategic advisor to Vanderbilt's senior leadership, extending well beyond traditional financial oversight. The VCF&CFO must bring disciplined risk assessment, analytical clarity, and sound judgment to high-stakes decisions while collaborating effectively across the enterprise. The VCF&CFO will establish confidence and credibility through transparent communication and data-driven recommendations. The role requires the development of sophisticated business models that integrate market demand, enrollment dynamics, faculty impact, capital requirements, and clear contingency or exit strategies.

The VCF&CFO will be expected to synthesize competing priorities quickly and provide clear strategic assessments and viable pathways forward for initiatives spanning academics, research, athletics, and campus development. The successful VCF&CFO will be defined by the ability to protect and strengthen Vanderbilt's core financial foundation while strategically partnering to enable bold growth.

Enable Enterprise-Wide Transformation through Sound Financial Management

As Vanderbilt builds on its momentum into its next phase of growth and evolution, a central priority is the ability to operate with greater agility while preserving financial strength and institutional coherence. This opportunity calls for a VCF&CFO who will design and steward complex, adaptive budgeting frameworks. The VCF&CFO will play a critical role in translating the institutional priorities into executable financial and operating models, ensuring that strategic ambition is grounded in sustainable economics, clear tradeoffs, and disciplined risk management.

Working in close partnership with academic and administrative leaders, the VCF&CFO will contribute to a culture that enables "startups within a legacy institution," supporting research growth, athletics expansion, and the continued development of Vanderbilt's network campuses in New York City, San Francisco, Chattanooga, and West Palm Beach. This leader will help determine where initiatives warrant continued investment, require recalibration, or when to fail fast advancing a selective portfolio of opportunities with clear financial logic, articulated risk thresholds, and defined exit or contingency strategies. Throughout, the VCF&CFO will ensure that enterprise-wide expansion initiatives augment, rather than distract from, the strength of Vanderbilt's Nashville core.

In support of this work, the VCF&CFO will integrate advanced data, analytics, and emerging AI capabilities into financial planning, forecasting, and decision-making, enhancing the institution's ability to evaluate opportunities and respond dynamically to change.

Collaborate, Engage, and Communicate within the Vanderbilt Community and with External Constituents

Vanderbilt is a community in which relationships, trust, and collaboration are foundational to institutional success. The VCF&CFO will be a visible and deeply engaged leader who understands the diverse needs and perspectives of stakeholders across the academic and research enterprises as well as the importance

of strong partnerships beyond the university. Working in close partnership with the Provost and deans, the VCF&CFO will embed finance within the academic mission—supporting innovation and excellence while reinforcing shared accountability and disciplined stewardship.

Operating within a complex academic–medical ecosystem, the VCF&CFO must sustain productive relationships both internally and externally. As a representative of Vanderbilt to peer institutions, community partners, and public-sector stakeholders, the VCF&CFO will communicate complex financial issues with clarity and credibility, reinforcing confidence in the university’s direction and decision-making. A successful VCF&CFO will listen first—prioritizing early engagement, valuing team stability, and managing transitions thoughtfully—ensuring continuity, trust, and alignment across the enterprise and with key external constituencies.

Lead, Manage, and Support a Strong Team

Vanderbilt’s finance organization is composed of highly capable, committed leaders and staff who support a complex, decentralized institution with rigor and professionalism. The VCF&CFO will provide visible, engaged leadership, inheriting a strong team that thrives with clear direction, empowerment, and meaningful investment in professional growth. Leading a high-performance senior team operating in tight formation, the VCF&CFO will set clear expectations, foster accountability, and enable leaders across finance to perform at their best in service of the university’s mission.

The VCF&CFO will cultivate a culture characterized by open communication, radical collaboration, creative and proactive problem-solving, and transparency, reinforcing a shared sense of purpose around delivering best-in-class service to the Vanderbilt community. With a commitment to continuous improvement, this leader will encourage innovation in both mindset and practice while ensuring operational discipline and consistency. To enhance overall effectiveness, the VCF&CFO will assess organizational structure, roles, and staffing across the finance function to ensure teams are appropriately aligned, resourced, and positioned to support Vanderbilt’s current needs and future ambitions.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The search committee encourages applications from candidates from a wide range of industry backgrounds, both within and outside of higher education. Regardless of their industry affiliation, all candidates must demonstrate a passion for Vanderbilt’s mission and trajectory as a leading global university.

While no one candidate will embody all attributes, the successful candidate will bring many of the following:

- Senior enterprise-level financial leadership experience within a large, complex, and well-run organization recognized for strong financial discipline, systems, and governance. Both traditional academic candidates and non-traditional candidates are encouraged to apply.

- Advanced degree or credentials in business, finance, or a related field (e.g., MBA, CPA, CFA) preferred.
- Mission-driven steward who delivers sound, integrity-based financial leadership with substance over theatrics—bringing credibility, humility, and a genuine commitment to Vanderbilt’s mission and long-term success.
- Demonstrated commitment to institutional values, including operating fully within Vanderbilt’s long-standing and non-negotiable policy of institutional neutrality.
- Deep financial and technical expertise, including fluency across balance sheet management, income statements, liquidity, and off-balance-sheet structures; demonstrated experience implementing sophisticated, best-in-class financial, accounting, and business systems.
- High emotional intelligence and interpersonal effectiveness, with the ability to build trust, influence without authority, and foster strong, collaborative relationships across diverse stakeholder groups; a clear communicator and thoughtful listener who aligns perspectives in service of institutional priorities.
- Personal qualities grounded in integrity, humility, and sound judgment, with demonstrated resilience and the ability to inspire confidence; approaches work with an entrepreneurial mindset, navigates change with agility, and leads with steadiness, clarity, and purpose in complex and evolving environments.
- Proven record of financing long-term institutional or organizational growth without destabilizing the core enterprise, grounded in analytically rigorous, evidence-based decision-making and disciplined risk management.
- Experience operating in complex, decentralized environments, with demonstrated success leading, structuring, and executing complex initiatives such as acquisitions, asset dispositions, contract negotiations, leasing strategies, and other enterprise-level business projects.
- Broad strategic and analytical thinker with excellent judgment—capable of balancing technically sound solutions with broader institutional, cultural, and mission-driven considerations.
- Exceptional cognitive agility: able to hold ambition and restraint simultaneously; decisive under uncertainty; calm amid complexity.
- Highly collaborative, relationship-driven leader with experience partnering closely with visionary CEOs, presidents, or chancellors and sophisticated boards; credible with trustees while constructively engaging academic, clinical, and administrative leaders.
- Demonstrated ability to lead transformation while retaining and strengthening high-performing teams, with a strong track record of developing talent, empowering leaders, and fostering accountability across diverse professional groups.

- Strong negotiation, problem-solving, and execution skills, paired with a practical orientation toward continuous improvement and a low tolerance for process that does not add clear value.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/vanderbilt-university/vice-chancellor-financechief-financial-officer>.

Dan Rodas, Partner

Katie Rockman, Partner

Steph Simon, Senior Associate

Seema Khan, Senior Search Coordinator

Isaacson, Miller

Vanderbilt University is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or status as a protected veteran, or any other characteristic protected by law.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by Vanderbilt University. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by Vanderbilt University would supersede any conflicting information in this document.

Appendix

More about Vanderbilt University

A leader in higher education access, Vanderbilt University is one of a small number of schools offering no-loan financial aid. Through the Opportunity Vanderbilt program, Vanderbilt provides full-tuition scholarships for all households with an income of \$150,000 or less. About 65% of the undergraduate student body receives some form of financial aid. To recruit the highest-potential students wherever they might be, Vanderbilt is a member of the STARS Network, a partnership that ensures that students from rural and small-town America have the information and support they need to enroll and graduate from the college or university of their choice.

Vanderbilt provides a gateway to greatness, drawing the best and brightest students and faculty from across the nation and around the world. Vanderbilt alumni are 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's stellar faculty are recognized for their teaching and research, and they receive record numbers of awards, grants, and contracts each year.

Vanderbilt University, an independent, privately supported university, and the separate, nonprofit Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) share a respected name and enjoy close collaboration through education and research. Together, the organizations employ approximately 50,000 people, significantly exceeding the largest private employer in the Middle Tennessee region. The university has total net assets of \$11.2 billion and an endowment with market value of approximately \$12 billion.

Vanderbilt as a Choice Employer

Vanderbilt is proud to have been named as one of “America’s Best Large Employers” as well as a top employer in Tennessee and the Nashville metropolitan area by *Forbes* for several years running. We welcome those who are interested in learning and growing professionally with an employer that strives to create, foster, and sustain opportunities as an employer of choice.

In addition to offering an energetic community that encourages learning and connection, Vanderbilt University provides its employees with a benefits package that is comprehensive and flexible. In addition to offering health, vision, dental, and many other benefits, the university offers tuition assistance for employees, their spouses, and eligible dependent children.

The City of Nashville

Nashville, Tennessee has been named one of the nation's hottest cities by *Forbes* and *The New York Times*. Health care, technology, entertainment, automotive, sports, and education are only a few of the industries booming in Nashville. The city is home to more than 400 healthcare businesses, including Vanderbilt University Medical Center, the region's key trauma center.

From serving as home to the nation's largest Kurdish population to being named America's friendliest city for three years in a row, Nashville is a metropolitan place that proudly exudes all the charm and hospitality one expects from a Southern capital.

Known as "Music City," Nashville has a music and entertainment scene like no other, and it is the home of country music. Nashville cultivates a spirit of creativity that manifests in its well-established music industry, chef-driven restaurants, and up-and-coming fashion. Nashville has several charming neighborhoods that serve as great places to live and explore cultural attractions. Nashville's Metropolitan Statistical Area encompasses eight counties — Cheatham, Davidson, Dickson, Robertson, Rutherford, Sumner, Williamson, and Wilson—and has a population of 2.1 million.