**Best Buddies' Prom**

On February 10th, several Next Steps students, alumni, Ambassadores, and staff dressed up to attend the Best Buddies Prom at Bridgestone Arena in downtown Nashville. Attendees walked the red carpet, danced to music, and sang karaoke. Two Next Steps alumni, Cat Bernstein ('15) and Jamie Galvin ('16), danced with the Best Buddies' special guest, country singer, Brett Eldridge! The event was lots of fun for everyone who attended!

**Important Dates:**

- **March 4-12:** Spring Break - No Classes
- **March 17:** Deadline to Register for NSSI
- **March 22:** Spread the Word to End the Word
- **April 10:** College Night, 5:30-7:00 PM
- **April 24:** Classes End
- **April 26:** Graduation Ceremony, 5-7PM, Wyatt Center Rotunda
- **June 5:** Open House, 2:00-3:30PM
- **June 11-16:** Next Steps Summer Institute
- **July 13:** Open House, 5:30-7:00PM

Register for Open House and College Night here: https://goo.gl/forms/tfTCfZ1cQVj57jt2

**Highlighted Alumna**

Elizabeth Story, a member of the first Next Steps at Vanderbilt class, graduated in 2011. When she was in the program, she interned as a childcare assistant at the Susan Gray School. Since graduation, she has continued working at the Susan Gray School as a childcare assistant. As a childcare assistant, she answers the phones, takes the attendance, plays with the kids, makes copies, and helps illuminate lessons for teachers. Elizabeth likes working at her job because she likes the staff that she works with. When she is not working, she enjoys cooking recipes with her roommate at her apartment.
Next Steps Summer Institute

Next Steps at Vanderbilt Summer Institute is a week-long introduction to our college transition program for rising high school juniors, seniors, and young adults with intellectual disabilities up to the age of 24. This week-long residential program will allow participating students to find out what college is like at Vanderbilt while introducing the broad topics of independent living, social skills, campus life, and self-advocacy. At the same time, students build new friendships and experience some of Nashville, such as going to the Wild Horse Saloon! We are currently accepting applications until March 17th for this summer! To apply, please go to:

https://redcap.vanderbilt.edu/surveys/?s=WPDN9FJWP3

Disability Day on the Hill

On Wednesday, February 8th, Next Steps students and staff attended Disability Day on the Hill at Legislative Plaza. The students made appointments to meet with their legislators and spoke about disability-related issues that are important to them. The students engaged in conversation with legislators to enact positive change in our state and community. Our students learn about self-advocacy in their Career and Community Studies classes, so they were excited to practice it for themselves! It was a very productive and exciting day!
New Semester Internships

This semester, our students are working at internships to refine their career goals, develop job skills, and obtain work experience for a resume. The first-year students are completing their first internship experience at Vanderbilt-affiliated on-campus worksites. The second-year students, however, are working at off-campus businesses for paid employment! The Next Steps' career development staff find internship sites that meet the students' unique career and personal interests. Nila, for example, who is interning at Moe's Southwest Grill, says that she loves her internship because she gets to work at her favorite restaurant!

Internship Sites:

Hill Center IT Department
Occupational Health
Student Media
VU Women's Basketball
McGugin Sports Medicine
Owen School of Business
Branscomb Munchie Mart
VU Theatre Department

Vanderbilt University Police Department
Preschool for Children with Autism
Moe's Southwest Grill
Davidson County Clerk
McDonald's West End
Vanderbilt Recreation Center
Belmont Weekday School

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