SPRING 2026

RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE SOCIETY

'Dwelling together, let us learn'

PROPOSALS OPEN FOR THE 2026 RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE SYMPOSIUM

OCTOBER 21-23 | NASHVILLE, TN

RADICAL COLLABORATION: THE ROLE OF RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES IN 21ST CENTURY HIGHER EDUCATION

Join us for the 13th Annual Residential College Symposium, hosted by **Vanderbilt University**. This premier gathering brings together faculty, academic and student affairs professionals, and student leaders to expand their learning, advance their practice and build meaningful connections within the residential college community.

As institutions face evolving student needs, shifting demographics and emerging challenges, residential colleges serve as powerful catalysts for transformative learning, belonging and academic engagement. Through collaborative partnerships among faculty, staff and students, residential colleges can lead the way in reimagining higher education for the next generation. The 2026 Symposium will focus on the following areas:

- Academic Integration and Residential Pedagogy
- Assessment and Innovation
- Faculty-Staff Partnerships
- Student Leadership and Belonging

Participants are also invited to a **brand new Pre-Symposium Institute** offering deep learning opportunities tailored by role (see page 3).

REGISTRATION RATES (Opens May 1)

RATE TYPE	EARLY BIRD (BEFORE 7/15)	REGULAR (BEGINNING 7/16)	LATE (BEGINNING 9/1)
GENERAL	$300	$350	$400
GRAD STUDENT	$50	$75	$100
UNDERGRAD	$25	$35	$40
PRE-SYMPOSIUM INSTITUTE	$50	$50	$50

For more, visit **https://www.vanderbilt.edu/residentialcolleges/rcs2026/**.

RCS Executive Team

Karen K. Inkelas
University of Virginia
Executive Team Co-Chair

Jamie Penven
Virginia Tech
Executive Team Co-Chair

Laura Ammon
Appalachian State University

Natalee Erb
Vanderbilt University

Paige Hicks
University of Chicago

Deborah Keene
University of Alabama

Matt McCabe
University of Miami

Jennifer Stephens
Elon University

Nick Tippenhauer
Princeton University

Symposium Schedule At-a-Glance

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21

12:30 - 1:00 p.m.	Pre-Institute Check-In
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.	Pre-Institute*
5:30 - 6:00 p.m.	Symposium Check-In
6:00 - 8:00 p.m.	Opening Keynote & Reception

**Pre-Institute requires additional registration. See details on next page.*

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22

9:00 - 10:00 a.m.	Plenary Session I
10:10 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Concurrent Sessions
12:00 - 1:15 p.m.	Cohort Group Lunch
1:15 - 1:45 p.m.	RCS Awards Presentation
2:00 - 2:50 p.m.	Concurrent Sessions
3:00 - 3:50 p.m.	Plenary Session II
4:00 - 4:30 p.m.	Institutional Exhibition Hall
4:30 - 6:00 p.m.	Tour of Residential Colleges at Vanderbilt University
6:00 - 6:30 p.m.	Cohort Socials
6:30 p.m.	No Host Dinners in Nashville

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23

8:00 - 8:50 a.m.	Constructing Residential Colleges
9:00 - 10:50 a.m.	Concurrent Sessions
11:00 - 11:50 a.m.	Plenary Session III
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.	Closing Lunch

Note: Updated information on travel recommendations and accommodations will be posted on the symposium website during the week of May 4.



Institution Spotlight

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

- Founded in 1873
- 7,300+ undergraduates
- 6,200+ graduate students
- 11 schools and colleges
- 8:1 student to faculty ratio
- Founding member of the Southeastern Conference

RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES

- System opened in 2008
- 16 residential colleges (10 first-year specific, 6 upper-division)

With questions about the 2026 Residential College Symposium, call 615-322-4948 or email **residentialcolleges@vanderbilt.edu**.

INTRODUCING THE PRE-SYMPOSIUM INSTITUTE

The Pre-Symposium Institute offers faculty, staff and students the opportunity to spend concentrated time learning from their peers. Tailored sessions explore those aspects of the residential college experience which are unique to each role: faculty and administrator, staff or student. A tentative outline of session topics is listed below. The Pre-Institute will conclude with a networking opportunity and a closing address on "Fostering Conditions to Accelerate Learning Beyond the Classroom."

FACULTY & ADMINISTRATORS

- Cultivating Strong Partnerships with Staff
- Am I Doing This Right?
- Leading Across Difference
- From Operations to Educational Impact

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

- Cultivating Strong Partnerships with Faculty
- Advising and Supervising Student Leaders
- Designing Residential Learning that Scales
- Your Leadership in the Residential College Ecosystem

STUDENT LEADERS

- Leading Where You Live
- Dialogue that Matters
- Facilitating Ideation in Group Settings
- From Experience to Expertise

THINGS TO DO IN MUSIC CITY, USA

- Explore the world of country music at the Grand Ole Opry, the Ryman Auditorium, or the Country Music Hall of Fame
- Take in live music down Nashville's Honky Tonk Highway
- Test your limits with Nashville Hot Chicken at Prince's or Hattie B's
- Be transported back in time with a visit to the full-scale replica of the Parthenon
- Choose your own adventure with an Old Town Trolley Tour
- Get your game on and support the Nashville Predators or Nashville SC



CALL FOR PROPOSALS
OPEN NOW | SUBMIT BY MAY 15

RCS seeks timely, thought-provoking proposals for sessions aligned with the theme of **Radical Collaboration** and the **four focus areas** of the 2026 Symposium. Proposals should follow one of three formats: a case study of a specific program, initiative or process; a panel presentation offering multiple perspectives on the same topic; or a roundtable discussion inviting participants to co-construct the outcome of the discussion. Most available sessions will be 50 minutes in length.

Submissions require: Profile information for up to three presenters, session type, focus area, intended audience(s), title (no more than 15 words), tags, an abstract of no more than 250 words that will be shared with attendees, a list of intended outcomes, and a detailed outline.

To submit a proposal or learn more, visit **https://www.vanderbilt.edu/residentialcolleges/rcsproposals/**.

Academic Integration & Residential Pedagogy	Showcasing how curricular and co-curricular elements intersect in residential colleges, including faculty-in-residence teaching and learning practices
Assessment & Innovation	Advancing evidence-informed improvements and creative programming, including responsible uses of technology and AI
Faculty-Staff Partnerships	Elevating collaborative models and operations that are fundamental to how residential colleges work, including roles, decision-making, communication and culture-building
Student Leadership & Belonging	Centering student voice and leadership pathways to cultivate inclusive, vibrant residential college communities

RCS AWARDS NOMINATIONS
OPEN NOW | DUE BY MAY 15

Sponsored by VMDO Architects, the Residential College Society offers annual awards based on submissions. We offer a diverse range of awards geared toward students, faculty, staff and wider college systems. Awards will be presented at the annual symposium. RCS welcomes nominations of any person, entity or program associated with residential colleges. The leadership team will make determinations about which awards to grant based on the nominations submitted in a given year.

ELIGIBILITY FOR AWARDS

The awards are intentionally broad to capture the diversity of the individuals, programs and entities represented across institutions and residential college systems. Consider nominating:

- A faculty member whose research explores the role of residential colleges on student outcomes
- An exceptional staff member who contributed uniquely to a residential college system
- A residential college system that exemplifies the mission of integrating academics into students' lives
- A specific program or initiative, housed within a residential college, that had a major impact at your institution
- An exceptional campus or external partner who facilitated your institution's commitment to fostering residential education

NOMINATIONS

In the nomination, provide a detailed rationale for why the nominee (e.g., individual, program, partnership or residential college) is deserving of an award. Describe the scope, significance and impact of their contributions or achievements. Consider highlighting innovation, collaboration, sustainability, leadership, research and/or outcomes as appropriate. Be specific and provide examples or evidence to support the nomination.
Suggested length: 250-400 words.

AWARDS SPONSOR

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SUBMIT A NOMINATION
CLICK FOR LINK