



VANDERBILT
College of Connected
Computing

Chief Marketing Officer

Leadership Profile

Fall 2026



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Executive Summary

Vanderbilt University's College of Connected Computing is seeking a builder, strategist, and innovator to serve as its inaugural Chief Marketing Officer.

The College of Connected Computing (CCC) is Vanderbilt's first new college on the Nashville campus in 40 years and is in the early stages of building its administrative and academic structure. Capitalizing on the university's historic strengths, the CCC advances computing education and research across all disciplines, preparing students to lead in a world increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence, data science, and computational thinking. The College embodies Vanderbilt's enduring commitment to solving society's most complex challenges through interdisciplinary collaboration—connecting computing with fields as diverse as medicine, engineering, the arts, and the humanities to create opportunities for innovation that transcend traditional boundaries. This interdisciplinary college is designed to advance breakthrough discoveries and expand computing education through a “computing for all” approach. The College is expected to grow rapidly over the next three years, requiring agile, strategic, and collaborative leadership.

At the heart of the CCC's mission is the conviction that computational fluency has become essential across all fields, and that technical excellence must be paired with the ethical judgment and contextual understanding needed to deploy technology in service of humanity. Curiosity; impact; agency – computing doesn't replace those; it fuels it. The College's research spans artificial intelligence, machine learning, data science, cybersecurity, and human-computer interaction. At the same time, deep partnerships with industry, government, and nonprofit organizations translate academic discovery into real-world impact. Preparing students to apply computing where human insights matter most – across science, policy, medicine, design, and beyond – is a recipe for breakthrough thinking.

The Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) at Vanderbilt University's College of Connected Computing is responsible for developing and executing a cohesive and innovative marketing, communications, and brand strategy that advances the College's mission, enhances its visibility and reputation, and drives engagement with internal and external stakeholders. Reporting to the College's chief of staff and serving on the senior leadership team, the CMO provides strategic counsel to leadership and collaborates across departments to ensure alignment and consistency in messaging, voice, and brand identity. Central to this work is the responsible integration of AI and emerging technologies to elevate storytelling, sharpen audience insight, and scale engagement, ensuring innovation advances the brand with integrity and sound human judgment.

The ideal candidate will be a bold, collaborative, and creative leader with a sense of urgency and a proven track record of developing and executing successful branding, marketing, and communications strategies that measurably enhance visibility, reputation, and engagement. Genuine excitement for AI, automation, innovation, and their impact on society; the ability to navigate matrixed environments and multiple decision-makers; and a willingness to work in an environment where individuals often operate beyond traditional job boundaries will be assets for the role. Demonstrated fluency in AI-powered marketing tools and emerging technologies, with the judgment to deploy them responsibly to sharpen audience insight, scale content, and strengthen campaign performance, and the ability to use analytics to drive strategy and measure impact, and employ data to inform resource allocation and audience engagement strategies will be essential for success. The CMO will be adaptable, flexible, and resilient; comfortable making decisions with incomplete information; and able to prioritize effectively in a fast-moving environment.

To submit a nomination or express personal interest in this position, please see Procedure for Candidacy at the end of this document.

Role of the Chief Marketing Officer

The Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) at Vanderbilt University's College of Connected Computing (CCC) is responsible for developing and executing a cohesive and innovative marketing, communications, and brand strategy that advances the college's mission, enhances its visibility and reputation, and drives engagement with internal and external stakeholders. A member of the senior leadership team, the CMO provides strategic counsel to leadership and collaborates across departments to ensure alignment and consistency in messaging, voice, and brand identity.

The role provides direct supervisory leadership for the College of Connected Computing's marketing and communications team and reports both administratively and functionally to the College's Chief of Staff.

The CMO's key functions include, but are not limited to, the following:

Strategic Leadership

- Lead the development and execution of a comprehensive, integrated marketing and communications strategy aligned with organizational goals.
- Serve as a key advisor to the dean and executive leadership on brand positioning, public relations, and reputation management.
- Establish clear standards and ethical guardrails for the use of AI across marketing and communications, ensuring technology advances the college's brand with integrity, transparency, and human oversight.
- Shape and protect the organization's brand identity, voice, and values across all channels and touchpoints.



Marketing Strategy

- Oversee brand marketing, digital marketing, content strategy, and market research efforts to drive growth, awareness, and engagement.
- Harness AI-powered analytics, automation, and personalization to scale content production, sharpen audience targeting, and strengthen campaign performance and return on investment.
- Manage advertising and promotional campaigns across digital, print, social, and traditional media.
- Analyze marketing data and objectives and key results to inform decision-making and optimize performance.

Communications and Public Relations

- Direct internal and external communications, ensuring clarity, consistency, and cultural resonance.
- Serve as the primary media spokesperson and crisis communications lead, developing proactive and reactive messaging strategies.

- Cultivate strong relationships with media, community leaders, partners, and influencers.

Digital and Content Innovation

- Lead the organization's digital presence, including website, social media, email marketing, and emerging platforms.
- Champion the responsible adoption of generative AI and emerging technologies to enhance storytelling, accelerate creative workflows, and deepen audience engagement across platforms.
- Drive innovation in storytelling, content creation, and audience engagement strategies.

Team Leadership and Development

- Build, lead, and mentor a high-performing team of marketing and communications professionals.
- Foster a culture of creativity, inclusivity, accountability, and continuous improvement.
- Manage departmental budget, vendor relationships, and agency partnerships.



Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

The Answer is Human... Vanderbilt University and the College of Connected Computing are experiencing rapid growth, launching new programs, hiring faculty, expanding partnerships, and pursuing aggressive fundraising goals. The Chief Marketing Officer will be a critical leader in amplifying those efforts for the CCC. As the College seeks to increase visibility for faculty achievements, research, grants, and new programs; strengthen donor and advancement communications; support enrollment efforts; and position the college as a leader in bridging the gap between disciplines to solve problems that don't exist yet, the CMO will be expected to provide leadership in the following areas, among others:

- **Define the brand and elevate the CCC's thought leadership.**

The CMO will have a rare opportunity to shape the identity of Vanderbilt's first new college on the Nashville campus in more than four decades. As the College of Connected Computing continues to define its internal and external perception, the CMO will play a central role in articulating its narrative, brand positioning, and reputation as a college operating at the intersection of computing, AI, and society. This leader will spearhead a comprehensive marketing and communications campaign with clear short- and long-term goals and assessment metrics, and build a master brand that resonates with multiple audiences. The CMO will be responsible for significantly increasing awareness of the CCC by strengthening the College's national presence, amplifying faculty and research achievements, supporting fundraising efforts, and positioning the CCC as a leading voice in conversations on blending human instinct with new technologies. Creative, ambitious, and bold, the CMO will craft a story that connects Vanderbilt's legacy with the CCC's vision for the future of AI, computing, and interdisciplinary innovation, resonating with families, students, faculty, industry partners, and donors. Because AI is both transformative and polarizing, the CMO must help CCC articulate a credible, human-centered vision that addresses public concerns while highlighting the College's impact and opportunities.

The CMO must help the College of Connected Computing stand out in a crowded and competitive field. Conveying that value is not a one-size-fits-all exercise; the CMO must understand the nuances of the CCC's programs and the distinct populations the College seeks to engage. The mandate spans enrollment marketing across undergraduate and graduate programs, donor communications, and internal communications, each requiring tailored messaging that speaks clearly to its intended audience.

- **Build and scale a high-performance marketing enterprise.**

This is a new role and a rare, once-in-a-decade opportunity to build and scale a high-performing marketing and communications enterprise. Operating with the energy, immediacy, and ambiguity of a start-up, the College of Connected Computing seeks a leader who can build organizational capacity while balancing immediate needs with long-term strategy. The new leader will have broad authority to create structure, processes, staffing models, and systems to support a growing college. The CMO will bring an appetite to reimagine systems that enable nimble, strategic planning and to establish workflows that keep pace with rapid organizational growth, while empowering staff to own the brand and advance the CCC's human-centered mission.

- **Drive innovation through AI and data-enabled marketing.**

As a college built around the future of computing, the CCC expects its marketing leader to embrace emerging technologies, leverage data-driven decision making, and model innovative approaches to communication and audience engagement. The CMO should help the College rethink how marketing is executed in an AI-enabled environment. Central to that change is the recognition that AI can generate content, analyze data, and automate decisions at extraordinary speed. The CMO will embed that ethos across every component of the work, integrating campaigns, assets, and analytics into a platform that redefines what is possible in this space and accelerates content development. The expectation is that the CMO will model an entrepreneurial mindset,

develop data-informed marketing strategies and measurement frameworks, and reduce reliance on agencies by building internal capacities.

- **Serve as a strategic partner and influencer.**

Beyond marketing expertise, the College of Connected Computing seeks a trusted advisor who can help shape institutional strategy, influence key decisions, and guide leaders through complex communications challenges and opportunities. Given the College's developmental stage and limited infrastructure, the CMO must be comfortable operating both as an executive strategist and as a builder who rolls up their sleeves to solve problems, establish processes, and execute initiatives. This is a fast-moving, organic environment where the CCC asks its leaders to serve as position players who move fluidly beyond their formal roles and create the path as they walk it. By leveraging expertise in marketing, communications, and brand management, the CMO will collaborate closely with the dean and other senior leaders to articulate and amplify the CCC's vision, mission, and strategic priorities for both internal and external audiences. The CMO must also be effective at prioritizing ideas, operationalizing concepts, and allocating resources to maximize return. With a significant fundraising operation underway, the CMO will ensure the dean has the resources and tools necessary to make the case for support, crafting messages that resonate with donors and tell the story of how the College's work is shaping the future.

- **Foster collaboration and synergy across the University.**

The College of Connected Computing sits within a larger ecosystem that includes central marketing, marketing functions within peer schools and colleges, the Provost's office, development and alumni relations, enrollment management, and academic units, all of which have distinct perspectives on branding, messaging ownership, and organizational structures. The CMO will navigate these relationships, balancing advocacy for CCC with effective collaboration across Vanderbilt's broader ecosystem. The CMO will nurture a culture steeped in creative, agile, and flexible thinking, ensuring that programs have the content, collateral, and communication flows that highlight the student and research experience for maximum impact, and aligning the College's brand with the broader Vanderbilt identity.



Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

Vanderbilt University's College of Connected Computing is seeking a builder, strategist, and innovator to serve as its inaugural Chief Marketing Officer. It can establish a recognizable and influential brand while creating the infrastructure necessary to support a rapidly growing college. The CMO will demonstrate most, if not all, of the professional qualifications and personal qualities:

- **Strategic Leadership and Vision:** Strategic thinker with strong leadership and organizational skills, capable of translating complex ideas into clear, compelling narratives. Comfort navigating complex organizations with multiple stakeholders and competing priorities. Ability to operate as a senior leader rather than simply a marketing tactician. Experience building teams, processes, workflows, and infrastructure from the ground up.
- **Marketing and Communications Experience and Expertise:** Eight to ten years of progressive experience in marketing, communications, or public relations, with at least five years in a senior leadership role. Proven track record of developing and executing successful branding, marketing, and communications strategies that measurably enhance visibility, reputation, and engagement. Deep knowledge of digital marketing trends, analytics, and content strategy. Experience managing brand reputation, crisis communications, and media relations.
- **Mission and Vision Alignment:** Genuine excitement for AI, computing, innovation, and their impact on society. Comfortable with a highly engaged, in-person, fast-paced culture. Energized by innovation, growth, and continuous change rather than seeking stability and routine. Ability to navigate matrixed environments and multiple decision-makers. Willingness to work in a highly collaborative environment where individuals often operate beyond traditional job boundaries. Appreciation of academic culture and shared governance.
- **AI, Technology, and Data Fluency:** Demonstrated fluency in AI-powered marketing tools and emerging technologies, with the judgment to deploy them responsibly to sharpen audience insight, scale content, and strengthen campaign performance. Ability to leverage technology to improve effectiveness and efficiency. Ability to use analytics to drive strategy and measure impact, and employ data to inform resource allocation and audience engagement strategies.
- **Communication Skills:** Exceptional written, verbal, and interpersonal communication skills. Ability to communicate effectively with varied audiences, including prospective students, faculty, researchers, donors, industry partners, alumni, and the public. Ability to effectively address concerns/controversies about AI while highlighting its positive impact and opportunities.
- **Collaborative Leadership:** Ability to work effectively across divisions and institutional boundaries. Skilled at building consensus while diplomatically pushing back when necessary. Maintains productive relationships while advocating for organizational priorities. Ability to influence at all levels and foster cross-functional collaboration.
- **Personal Qualities:** Comfortable making decisions with incomplete information. Adaptable, flexible, and resilient. Able to prioritize effectively in a fast-moving environment. A builder mentality. Proactive and solutions-oriented. Comfortable taking initiative and creating pathways where none exist. Willing to challenge conventional approaches and think creatively. Possesses a "can-do" attitude. Possesses a customer service-oriented mindset and approach.
- **Credentials:** Bachelor's degree in Marketing, Communications, Public Relations, or related field from an accredited institution of higher education required; Master's degree preferred. Experience in higher education preferred.

About Vanderbilt University's College of Connected Computing

Overview

Founded in 1873, Vanderbilt University is a tier-1 research university with a student body of some 13,500 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, and approximately 1,460 full-time faculty (excluding faculty employed by the Medical Center). The university is situated on a 330-acre campus located a mile and a half south of downtown Nashville.

The College of Connected Computing (CCC) opened its doors in March 2024. The College represents a bold initiative to advance computing education and research across disciplines. As the first new college at Vanderbilt since 1981, the CCC builds upon the university's historic strengths while preparing students to excel in a world increasingly shaped by computational thinking, artificial intelligence, and data science.

The CCC embodies Vanderbilt's commitment to addressing society's most complex challenges through interdisciplinary collaboration. By connecting computing with diverse fields—from medicine and engineering to the arts and humanities—the college creates unique opportunities for innovation that cross traditional boundaries.

Inaugural Dean Matthew Johnson-Roberson joined the CCC in May 2025 and welcomed the first student cohort in 2026 to 2027, leading seven associate deans, 27 staff, and over 60 faculty.

While still in its formative stages, the CCC has shown significant growth through:

- **Proven demand:** The Data Science minor has grown to nearly 700 students, roughly one in ten undergraduates.
- **Growing programs:** B.S. and B.A. in Computer Science and minors in Data Science, Scientific Computing, and Generative AI, with a B.S. in Data Science and B.A. in AI Design and Practice launching in 2027.
- **Research strengths:** cyber-physical systems, AI and machine learning, cybersecurity, robotics, digital humanities, and computational social sciences.

Mission

Central to the CCC's mission is the recognition that computational thinking has become essential across all disciplines. The college will prepare students not only with technical skills but also with the ethical framework and contextual understanding needed to deploy technology responsibly in the service of humanity.

Research at the CCC tackles pressing challenges in areas such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, data science, cybersecurity, human-computer interaction, and computational methods across fields.

The college also serves as a hub for partnerships with industry, government, and nonprofit organizations, translating academic insights into real-world solutions. These collaborations create pathways for students to engage with practical applications of their education while contributing to technological advancement.

Through its educational programs and research initiatives, the CCC aims to expand access to computing education and careers. As computing continues to transform every aspect of our world, the College of Connected Computing stands at the forefront of preparing students and advancing knowledge for a future where computational thinking drives innovation and positive change across society.

Academic Programs

Graduate Programs

The College of Connected Computing's graduate programs offer a distinctive environment where discovery, innovation, and leadership converge. Exceptional scholars work alongside a distinguished faculty to advance work of lasting consequence, from deriving insight from complex data to engineering the systems that will define the future. Students contribute to research of genuine significance and shape a course of study aligned with their individual aspirations, preparing to lead the next generation of technological advancement.

- [MS in Computer Science](#)
- [MS in Data Science](#)
- [Online MS in Artificial Intelligence](#)
- [PhD in Computer Science](#)



Undergraduate Programs

From foundational principles to research that expands the boundaries of the discipline, the College of Connected Computing enables computing to grow in concert with each individual's curiosity. Students may pursue a focused specialization or bring a technological perspective to virtually any field of study.

- [BS in Computer Science](#)
- [BA in Computer Science](#)
- [BS in Data Science](#)
- [BA in AI Design and Practice](#)
- [Minor in Computer Science](#)
- [Minor in Scientific Computing](#)
- [Minor in Data Science](#)
- [Minor in Generative AI](#)



Leadership

College of Connected Computing

Matthew Johnson-Roberson, Ph.D, Dean of Vanderbilt's College of Connected Computing and Professor of Computer Science and Electrical and Computer Engineering



Matthew Johnson-Roberson, professor of computer science and electrical and computer engineering, serves as the inaugural Dean of Vanderbilt's College of Connected Computing. Dean Johnson-Roberson brings to Vanderbilt a remarkable track record as a pioneering researcher, entrepreneur, and academic leader in robotics and computing.

Before joining Vanderbilt, Dean Johnson-Roberson directed Carnegie Mellon University's Robotics Institute—one of the world's premier robotics research centers. His leadership has been characterized by a commitment to interdisciplinary collaboration and technological innovation that addresses real-world challenges.

A distinguished scholar with over 100 peer-reviewed publications, Johnson-Roberson's research spans underwater robotics, computer vision, and autonomous vehicles. His groundbreaking work has not only advanced academic knowledge but has also been translated into practical applications that impact society. As co-founder of Refraction AI, he developed autonomous delivery robots designed specifically for sustainable last-mile delivery in urban environments.

Dean Johnson-Roberson's vision for connected computing represents the future of how computation will transform society. Under his guidance, the college focuses on empowering students to harness computational thinking across disciplines and preparing them to address our most pressing challenges.

He earned his Ph.D. in robotics from the University of Sydney and held faculty positions at the University of Michigan, where he co-directed the UM Ford Center for Autonomous Vehicles.

The College of Connected Computing, under Dean Johnson-Roberson, emphasizes the transformative potential of computation when applied across fields, from healthcare and education to sustainability and the arts. This approach views computation not just as coding, but as creative problem-solving and responsible innovation that improves human lives.

Corey Turner, Chief of Staff

Corey Turner is Chief of Staff at Vanderbilt University's College of Connected Computing, where she works closely with the Dean on the strategy, organizational design, and operations involved in standing up Vanderbilt's first new college on the Nashville campus in over four decades. She joined the college in May 2025, shortly after its launch.

Corey brings nearly twenty years of experience spanning research universities and technology startups. Before Vanderbilt, she served as Executive Director of the Robotics Institute Pathways Fellowship at Carnegie Mellon University, a program that builds the foundation for marginalized entrepreneurs to launch robotics companies. Her startup experience includes serving as Chief of Staff at MemryX, an AI semiconductor company, and as Director of Administration at Refraction AI, an autonomous delivery startup, where she built and ran HR, finance, communications, and facilities functions during a period of rapid growth.

Corey began her career at the University of Michigan, where she spent thirteen years in research administration across the School of Public Health, the School of Information, and industry-sponsored research labs — managing multi-million-dollar sponsored research portfolios, grant proposals, and lab operations.



Nashville, Tennessee

As the hub for several booming industries, the home to a global community—including the nation’s largest Kurdish population—and “America’s friendliest city” according to *Travel + Leisure* magazine, Nashville blends history and hospitality with a rich mix of traditions and ongoing growth. Tennessee’s capital is also an international destination for the arts, entrepreneurship, and scientific research, thereby attracting world-renowned scholars to Vanderbilt and the broader community. In turn, it’s no surprise that many students choose to call Music City home, even after their time as Vanderbilt students comes to an end.

Nashville’s dining scene has grown dramatically in the past decade and is now regularly included on “best-of” lists by publications such as *Bon Appétit*, *Travel + Leisure*, and *Southern Living*. Home to several award-winning restaurants and chefs, the city’s ever-expanding food options include cuisines from around the world, as well as signature dishes like Nashville hot chicken and other Southern classics.

Nashville offers many opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors, with more than 100 stand-alone parks and a quick drive to the Great Smoky Mountains. Across the street from Vanderbilt’s campus, Centennial Park comprises 132 acres of green space and paved trails, as well as a bandshell, dog park, and other attractions. Centennial Park also has a rich history as the host site for the Tennessee Centennial Exposition and for Nashville’s Parthenon, a full-scale replica of the classical Greek temple. The structure was built in 1897 to celebrate the city’s reputation as the “Athens of the South”—a nickname earned through Nashville’s progressive dedication to higher education and the exchange of intellectual ideas.

Industry

Major industries include tourism, printing and publishing, technology manufacturing, music production, higher education, finance, insurance, automobile production, and health care management. Nashville has been named one of the 15 best U.S. cities for work and family by *Fortune* magazine, was ranked as the No. 1 most popular

U.S. city for corporate relocations by *Expansion Management* magazine, and was named by *Forbes* magazine as one of the 25 cities most likely to have the country's highest job growth over the coming five years.

History

Settled in 1779 along the banks of the Cumberland River, Nashville became Tennessee's state capital in 1843. Just 30 years later, Vanderbilt University was founded—marking the start of an enduring relationship between a dynamic Southern city and a world-class research institution.

Climate

Nashville's climate is often characterized as mild, with colder winters and high summer temperatures. Most of the city's rain occurs during the spring, and if snowfall does occur, it's seldom heavy. Campus life at Vanderbilt benefits tremendously from the city's temperate weather, as outdoor activities can typically occur throughout the academic year.

Transportation

While several restaurants and cultural attractions are within easy walking distance of Vanderbilt's campus, ride-hailing services such as Uber, Lyft, and Waymo are also widely available throughout Nashville.

For getting in and out of the city, the award-winning Nashville International Airport offers nonstop flights to 75 destinations, including Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, London, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C.

Neighborhoods

Each of the city's neighborhoods carries its own identity and benefits. The Vanderbilt campus is located approximately 1.5 miles southwest of downtown in the West End neighborhood of midtown Nashville. Among the closest neighboring areas are Music Row—often considered the heart and historic center of Nashville's recording industry—and Hillsboro Village, a pedestrian-friendly area filled with shopping, restaurants, and bars.





Procedure for Candidacy

All application materials, nominations, and inquiries are invited. Application materials should include, as separate documents, a CV or resume and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile.

WittKieffer is assisting Vanderbilt University College of Connected Computing in this search. The review of candidate materials has begun and will continue until an appointment has been made.

Application materials should be submitted using WittKieffer's [candidate portal](#).

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to Shelley Arakawa, J.D., and Ethan Robles at:

VanderbiltCCC_CMO@wittkieffer.com

Vanderbilt University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action employer. Women, minorities, people with disabilities, and protected veterans are encouraged to apply.