

**The State of the Institute Address
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Fellow alumni, faculty, students, staff, and distinguished visitors, I am pleased to be with you today to bring to you the 1995 State of the Institute Address. It is my second such address—my second opportunity to update you on the year at Tech—my first opportunity to do so after a full year as president.

It has been a year of achievement and success. Yet it has also been a year of planning—of preparing for the future. A time-honored proverb can be paraphrased as “to everything there is a season, and a time...a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted.” Today, I'd like to discuss both the seeds we have planted and this year's bountiful harvest.

Part of my “planting” involved a personal odyssey to learn firsthand about the people who comprise the Georgia Tech family and those outside our family circle who help us further our growth and development.

My travels took me from sea to shining sea. I spoke to 28 alumni groups—ranging from the Spacecoast in Florida to the Silicon Valley in California. From clubs in hometowns like Milledgeville, Georgia, to those in the great metropolitan complexes like Washington, DC.

During these meetings, I met hundreds of dedicated Georgia Tech alumni and supporters. One of those who stood out for his humanity, wit, and great love of Tech was Sidney Goldin, Class of '30. As our 1994 Distinguished Alumnus, Sid participated with me in my first commencement as president of

Georgia Tech. His address was witty, warm, and struck a chord with the graduating students. In the last sentence of his speech, he urged Tech's graduates to "always remember you're a Ramblin' Wreck and a helluva engineer"—a philosophy he personally lived. During his 70-year continuous association with Tech, he received the 1985 President's Award and was inducted into both the Georgia Tech Athletics Hall of Fame and the Engineering Hall of Fame. Sid passed away this year, but left us a legacy—a \$5 million endowment to create the Sidney Goldin Scholarships for Outstanding Scholars in Engineering and Science. His spirit lives on as his generous endowment will support generations of future Georgia Tech student scholars.

Throughout my first year, I also enjoyed productive discussions about Georgia Tech and the future of higher education with Georgia legislators, Governor Zell Miller, members of the Board of Regents, Chancellor Portch and his staff, and members of both the U.S. House and Senate. All of these groups were unanimous in declaring the high regard they hold for Georgia Tech.

To help me learn about our campus community, I undertook visits to all of the 22 schools and 8 GTRI labs and participated in a series of meetings with student groups. In addition, I visited many in the "extended" Tech community provided by our EDI industrial extension offices and participated in the opening of new offices in Griffin, the Clayton State campus, and Cartersville. I came away from these interactions impressed by the people who make Georgia Tech the strong, innovative technological institute that it is.

This year also allowed me to understand the full dimensions of our Olympic obligations and the demands being made of Georgia Tech. This is truly a historic undertaking for a university campus and not a day goes by that some aspect of the Olympics does not engage our time. I now better understand Lincoln's description of his experience as president during the Civil War. He said it was like the story he heard about the man who was tarred and feathered and ridden out of town on a rail. When asked how he liked the experience, the man replied, "If it weren't for the honor of the thing, I'd rather have walked."

While there was plenty of work to do, there was time for fun and the opportunity for some memorable experiences: a happy birthday serenade from the Yellow Jacket band one crisp fall morning; dedicating the Georgia Tech Aquatic Center with Billy Payne, then watching world-class athletes go for the gold; a grand inauguration highlighted by a dinner with 1,000 of my closest friends; giving amnesty to a group of late-coming penitents from the Class of '69 for stealing the "T" from the Tower (they returned the "T" along with an additional commitment of \$69,000 to the Class of '69 Teaching Fellows program); and receiving another larcenized item, the Tech whistle, from a quasi-apologetic group of students who requested anonymity. I have yet to jump off the 10-meter diving platform at the new Aquatic Center...but the year is not over yet.

A Bountiful Harvest

In addition to attention to my personal learning experiences, this year allowed me to watch with pride the harvest of achievement and recognition earned by our faculty and students and the Institute.

Our Faculty

Our young faculty showed their mettle when seven were named recipients of National Science Foundation Young Investigator Awards. The College of Computing received two, the College of Sciences one, and the College of Engineering four. The total from the College of Engineering was double the number received by faculty from any other engineering program in the nation. This brings the total of NSF Young Investigators and Presidential Young Investigators on our campus to 48. Add to this the four who are Presidential Faculty Fellows, and it is clear we have an aggregation of young leaders that suggests our future will be in good hands.

I would like to single out three faculty who received special individual recognition this year. Ray Flannery of the School of Physics, a man who has served Tech as an outstanding teacher and brought international acclaim to our College of Sciences, was named the 1995 Georgia Tech Distinguished Professor. Ben Zinn of Aerospace Engineering was named to the National Academy of Engineering—the highest professional distinction for engineers, and Oliver McGee of the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering was named the Carnegie Foundation Georgia Professor of the Year for contributions and dedication to undergraduate education.

Our Students

Driving our professors are the inquiring minds of our students. They, too, are not lacking in recognition. Our National Society of Black Engineers chapter was named the best in the nation—the second year in a row they have been honored with this distinction. In addition, the Society of Women Engineers was named runner-up in the national collegiate chapter competition, and four Tech fraternities were named top college chapter of the year.

Our entering freshmen class continues to rank among the best, with average SAT scores over 1230 and 90 percent having graduated in the top 10 percent of their high school class. This class is 29 percent female—almost a 4 percent increase from just last year and composed of 24 percent from minority groups.

I am also proud of the initiative taken by our students in establishing a Student Honor Code and the Diversity Forum. Through careful nurturing of ideals, both groups hope to realize a better Georgia Tech. The Honor Code recognizes the importance of ethical behavior, honesty, and responsibility. The Diversity Forum is a place for students, faculty, staff, and administrators to meet for the purpose of promoting cooperation between diverse cultural and racial groups. Due to student initiatives such as these, honesty, ethics, cooperation, and tolerance are successfully germinating on the Georgia Tech campus.

National Rankings

This was a year replete with academic rankings of various kinds, and while healthy skepticism should be applied in sorting the results, it is hard to ignore the positive notice Georgia Tech has received. The 1995 *U.S. News and World Report* rankings considered the relative merits of 229 U.S. universities and cites us as among the top 50, with the 27th highest ranking in terms of academic reputation. Given that the majority of first-ranked universities are private, it is pertinent to note that our academic rankings are within the top 10 among the public universities.

Individual units within the Institute fared well in *U.S. News and World Report's* first ever-ranking of undergraduate programs. The College of Engineering is tied for 3rd in the country and 10 of our engineering options are ranked in the

nation's top 15. In evaluations of management programs, our School of Management received recognition as 25th nationally.

The Gourman Report rates programs not covered by *U.S. News and World Report*. According to the Gourman ranking, our industrial design program is first in the nation and our College of Architecture eighth. *The Gourman Report* also ranks our computer science program within the top 25 computer science departments in the country.

After a lapse of more than 10 years, the National Research Council (NRC) issued new rankings of graduate and Ph.D. programs. Several Georgia Tech units achieved high rankings, including industrial and systems engineering which was rated first in the nation—providing them with a sweep of the national polls for 1995. Almost all of our units were evaluated as having improved since the last NRC rankings. Yet it is clear that several important programmatic areas need strengthening if Georgia Tech is to reach its goal of being seen as a true competitor on par with the top technological universities.

Research and Donor-Based Support

During fiscal year 1995 we were awarded \$185 million in new grants and contracts—some \$35 million above our previous all-time high. In more than a few cases, we were assisted in our success by the Georgia Research Alliance. Major additions to our research portfolio include the Molecular Design Institute, the Army Environmental Policy Institute, and the Center for Integrated Diagnostics.

Private giving to Tech also hit a record high—\$41 million. Credit for this harvest of success goes to our alumni, our friends, and our hard working staff.

The Thrill of Victory

Our students also continued to achieve in the intercollegiate sports arena. Both baseball and golf teams made their 11th straight NCAA tournament appearance—and for the first time in its history, the women's volleyball team was nationally ranked and played in the NCAA tournament competition. Fifty-six Georgia Tech student-athletes maintained an annual grade point average of over 3.0 and were named to the ACC Honor Roll. On an individual basis, golfer Stewart Cink was named the NCAA Player of the Year.

In other sports news, a key figure in our 1990 national championship, George O'Leary was tapped to lead the football program back to its championship roots and Basketball Coach Bobby Cremins was asked to serve as an assistant coach to the 1996 U.S. men's Olympic basketball team.

A Growth Spurt of Olympic Proportions

Nowhere are the seeds we are planting more noticeable than in the Olympic construction around campus. Over the course of three years, culminating in 1996, we will have completed a \$250 million undertaking consisting of the construction and renovation of 64 buildings and 2,300,000 square feet of facilities. All of this is being accomplished with minimal increases in staffing levels. What is happening at Georgia Tech is unprecedented in the history of higher education.

It is doubtful that any of our students, staff, or faculty would reply that the massive construction effort has not affected them. What is impressive is that normal operations are proceeding with few problems, and construction is largely on schedule, with 82 percent of the projects complete. We are already able to use seven of the new residence halls to house 1,300 students.

Much credit for this progress goes to our staff who are responsible for housing, Olympic development, physical plant, and athletic facilities as well as the architects and contractors of Atlanta and elsewhere, many of whom have Georgia Tech roots.

Because of the nature of the Olympic opportunity, most of the new construction is for residence halls and athletic facilities. There are some notable exceptions including the construction of the Manufacturing Related Disciplines Center-Phase I and the Georgia Center for Advanced Telecommunications Technology; the completion of a number of small, but important renovation projects; and the installation of FutureNet, a high-speed network to support our communications systems. Much needed programmatic help for the Library also has been provided in the form of a grant of \$250,000 from the president's discretionary funds and a \$700,000 increase in our state allocation from the Chancellor's Office. Renovations for the library will be underway shortly to improve storage and retrieval capacity.

Our emerging new campus look is already attracting buses of tourists—and many more will come. Hot on their heels will be the international press who are already writing articles about Georgia Tech. Yet this is only the tip of the public relations iceberg, and our vice president for External Affairs, Jim Langley, and his able staff have embarked on a number of programs to make the most of this opportunity. One of our principal goals will be to tell the Georgia Tech story on our terms—to make the effects of this once-in-a-lifetime event last well into the future.

The father of the modern Olympics, Baron Pierre de Coubertin once said: “The most important thing in the Olympics is not winning, but taking part.” As Georgia Tech prepares for the ‘96 Games, it’s obvious that we are doing both—winning through our participation.

Putting the House in Order for Post-Olympic Progress

In last year’s State of the Institute Address, I made several commitments—commitments I believe we are well on the way to fulfilling. In the process, we are cultivating a stronger, more efficient Institute.

The number one promise I made was to create a lean and aggressive administration that is as good as the students, faculty, staff, and alumni it serves—that will hold itself accountable to the highest standards.

I’ll tackle the lean factor first: to set an example for others, the President’s staff was reduced by 40 percent. In addition, three vice president slots were eliminated as we reorganized the upper level of the administration and new appointments were made of experienced individuals who bring with them an understanding of the research university and how it should work.

As part of our journey towards accountability, we have initiated two external studies. This spring we contracted with KPMG Peat Marwick to look at our financial and management structure, and they are providing us with a blueprint for improving the systems and processes that presently stand in the way of optimum staff performance. In a similar vein, we will also soon begin a comprehensive facilities study. While we are fortunate to have an Olympics facilities legacy, we face major

issues in this area. First, we must plan for a proper maintenance support system, or we will see our gains slip from our grasp over the coming years. Second, our core academic buildings are not beneficiaries of the Olympic halo, and far too many of them are in poor condition, in some cases unusable in the context of modern expectations. Our facilities are vital to our continued success; when roofs leak or buildings do not support the latest educational technology, we are disadvantaged in teaching and research. Our facilities study will provide us with the base of information needed to define our circumstances and explain our needs. This information base will then be referenced to rationally choose targets for construction and renovation.

An additional issue of importance has come from outside our campus. The Board of Regents authorized a move to the semester calendar for the higher education system, depending upon findings from a task force study. If the change to a semester system is mandated, we will request special consideration for our heavily utilized basic laboratories as well as for funding of the needed transition efforts. We also want to do all we can to protect the vitality of our successful cooperative program.

The Seeds of Success

Planting the seeds of success through planning has been a predominant theme this year. Why the planning emphasis? I like to think of it as putting down the strong root structure that is vital to our continued success. During Hurricane Opal, Atlanta trees were uprooted due to the strong winds. Trees with weak root structures toppled; trees with a stronger base stood tall and survived.

Just as Hurricane Opal presented a challenge to the plant life of Atlanta, we are faced by a time of unprecedented challenge for major universities—with students and parents expecting more for their dollar, research goals shifting, funding becoming more competitive, and questions being raised about the basic tenets and motivations of higher education. Like the trees of Atlanta, only those universities with a strong root structure will survive.

We are facing a time of challenge, yet it is also a time of great opportunity. Of great potential for improved learning through educational technology and the boost provided by the Olympic legacy of improved residential and athletic facilities; the vitality of the local economy; and the supportiveness of our state government. Fifteen years from now, we will look back and note that many institutions fell by the wayside because they could not deal with this historic time of change, but Georgia Tech was one of the few able to focus its considerable strengths to the task and emerge successful.

During the course of the past year I instigated an Institutewide strategic planning effort to position ourselves to manage the challenges we face and optimize the opportunities available to us. Teams of faculty, staff, students, and alumni worked on this guide—charting where the Institute should be in the year 2010 by developing vision and mission statements as well as the actions needed to move Georgia Tech toward greater national and international recognition. The plan is complete, but remains a work in progress as widening circles of stakeholders provide useful suggestions.

As part of our plan, areas were identified that require our effort and attention if we are to achieve our goals. These include:

- enriching educational opportunities;
- improving student life;
- maintaining and enhancing the vitality of the research agenda;
- creating a new learning environment while improving administrative service;
- defining the Institute's optimum ultimate size;
- expanding collaboration and linkages; and
- improving the infrastructure needed to sustain the high aspirations of the Institute.

Under each of these areas, we've developed action items to reach our goals. There are 48 of these in all so I won't recite them to you today. Be certain, however, that next year at this time, I will present to you a substantial list of steps taken toward the expectations set in our action items. Be certain that our resolve will be reinforced by leadership and common purpose.

If you wish to read through the action items—and I encourage you to do so—the complete strategic plan can be found on the Internet. An executive summary of the plan is also currently being developed for distribution to each Georgia Tech employee.

Nurturing Future Achievement

All of the best-laid plans will lay fallow without funding. Fortunately, as we look to the future, there is reason for optimism. Governor Miller continues to uphold his

commitment regarding more competitive salaries for higher education and is prepared to work for an enhanced Georgia Research Alliance. In this year's budget request, Chancellor Steven Portch has sent forward a new special initiative to address the needs of the state's graduate and research institutions.

Even as we look to optimize our state budget picture, we also know that we have to look to our friends and alumni to achieve our high goals. To this end, we have spent considerable time planning for our next capital campaign. We are in the formative stage of this campaign in which we are working with our major advisory boards and other key donors to amass at least \$100 million in gifts and pledges before announcing our public goal. This initial fundraising period is referred to as the "quiet phase," but I can assure you it is anything but quiet behind the scenes. We expect to make our public announcement somewhere around the Olympic Games.

To briefly recap, it has been quite a year. A year of achievement and a year of planning. A year of reaping the benefits of our hard work and sowing seeds for a successful future.

We in the Tech community will jointly write the history of what will be known as the "Olympic" year, a momentous season in our life as an institution. I am confident we will not falter in moving forward toward our larger goals as we serve with the great city of Atlanta as the host to the world for two weeks in 1996.

Great deeds demand great vision and I indeed feel fortunate to lead an Institute that has proved time and time again that it has the capacity and the capability for both. Thank you.