

**Dr. Peterson**  
**D.C. Intern Reception**

Tuesday, July 7, 2015

Glad to be here with you. I wish I could have made it a few days earlier for the fireworks on the National Mall. How many of you participated in that? For you interns especially, that is a great memory to see one of the best fireworks shows in the world over our national monuments.

Last month we did our 7<sup>th</sup> annual summer tour through Georgia, where we traveled 650 miles meeting with government, community, and business leaders, students, and alumni. It's nice to be able to extend that a bit and meet with you here in DC this evening. Georgia Tech has some of the best students and alumni in the world. One of the benefits of having the alumni events on the tour was the opportunity to connect Georgia Tech alumni with students. Tonight's event is an opportunity to help current Georgia Tech students interning in DC plug into the network of policy-focused alumni in the DC area.

As interns and alumni in Federal public policy, you are Georgia Tech ambassadors inside the beltway and on the Hill. Those of you who are interns are gaining invaluable experience that will serve you well. For Georgia Tech's sake, I hope many of you build upon what you're learning and enter a career in public policy. In fact, you're already representing Georgia Tech. We need to tell our story, and to have a voice in the decision-making process. You're helping to raise Georgia Tech's profile on a national scale.

Five years ago, Georgia Tech launched its 25-year Strategic Plan. Our internship program aligns with one of the five strategic goals to help ensure that public service is a fundamental characteristic of our graduates. (When I ask graduates what was the most memorable part of their Georgia Tech experience, they say it was that internship, or the study abroad program.)

This is a time of great momentum for Georgia Tech. Incoming freshman class: best and brightest. They are leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs, even before they step foot on campus. We're working to make sure that they have opportunities to reach their full potential through a wellness program, courses, competitions, and research to build entrepreneurial confidence, leadership initiatives, student organizations, opportunities for engagement in the community, study abroad, and internships. Glad you're taking advantage of this opportunity in DC. To you alumni and other friends, I thank you for your work here, and hope you'll have an opportunity to come back to campus soon.