

Notes from the President

Homecoming 2015: Celebrating a Time of Momentum

11/11/2015

Homecoming 2015 provided a wonderful opportunity to share the momentum that Georgia Tech is experiencing. Thousands of alumni and other supporters returned to the Georgia Tech campus on Oct. 22-24 for a perfect fall weekend filled with reunion activities and a chance to see firsthand the changes all over campus – the renovations in Harrison Square, the new Engineered Biosystems Building (EBB), the dedication of our new Einstein sculpture, (a stunning addition on the northwest corner of Tech Green), all the new “innovation centers” that have located in Tech Square, and many others.

Alumni and their families also had the chance to interact with our remarkable students. Two of those outstanding students, Henderson Johnson II and Missy Pittard, were announced as the new Mr. and Ms. Georgia Tech. Both are student leaders. Henderson is a fourth-year Aerospace Engineering major, active in the Georgia Tech chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers, the Georgia Tech Student Ambassadors, OMED, and ODK, and co-founded a nonprofit called “The Black Burdell.” Missy is a fourth-year Chemical and Biomedical Engineering major, serving on the Executive Board of Alternative Spring Breaks, as a GT Ambassador, as a member of Omicron Delta Kappa Honor Society. She is also the founder of TechList and serves as president of Moneythink, dedicated to financial education.

As proud of we are of Missy and Henderson, all of our students are outstanding. This year’s freshman class is the best qualified and most diverse in Georgia Tech history. We’re proud to say that for the first time in Georgia Tech history our freshman class is more than 40% women and includes the largest number of African-Americans in Tech history. Word is getting out that this is the place to be. In October we closed out early applications for Fall 2016. We received almost 15,000 early applications, a 28% increase over last year.

I shared these and other facts with alumni who attended my annual homecoming update in the Global Learning Center. In response to requests that it be posted online, you can find the slide presentation [here](#).

While it was a time for talking about what we have accomplished this past year, it was also a time to continue to build momentum for the future. Our three reunion classes, 1965 (50th), 1975 (40th), and 1990 (25th), came together and presented amazingly generous gifts that will help support everything from student scholarships and endowed faculty chairs, to facilities and special programs. Their gifts have provided a significant boost to an already tremendously successful Campaign Georgia Tech in its final months, helping us to not only surpass our \$1.5 billion goal but also to meet almost all the individual goals within the campaign. The Class of 1965’s gift was a record-setting \$41 million, and all three classes together presented checks totaling \$58.2 million to the Institute. Outstanding!

And then there was the game. Persistence, discipline and quick thinking resulted in a win over previously undefeated Florida State that rocked Bobby Dodd Stadium. Highlights were shown on network sports recaps and YouTube, labeled the “Miracle on Techwood,” it is a victory that many will remember for years to come! As a result of the hard work of our students, faculty, and staff and the tremendous support from our alums and many others, we continue the momentum and have much to celebrate.

G. P. "Bud" Peterson
President, Georgia Tech