

Notes from the President

Georgia Institute of Technology

G.P. "Bud" Peterson, President

2018 Georgia Tour Day Two — June 19

06/20/18

<https://youtu.be/vGMm1qwWIVg>

We headed out bright and early from Milledgeville to Sandersville, where we enjoyed a breakfast meeting at the local Waffle House with **University System of Georgia Regent Ben Tarbutton III**. Regent Tarbutton is one of our own, having earned a Georgia Tech management degree in 1994 and is a strong advocate for higher education. He has been enormously supportive of Georgia Tech and along with Sachin Shailendra, CE '00, and Dean Alford, EE '76, is one of three Georgia Tech graduates on the Board of Regents (BOR). A former BOR chairman, Tarbutton is now in his third term representing Georgia's 10th Congressional District. He is president of the Sandersville Railroad Company, a shortline railroad that has been in operation since 1893 and hauls various commodities, including kaolin, wood chips, and plastics.

If you're wondering about the venue for the meeting, the Waffle House is an iconic Georgia-based business that, like so many, has a "six-degrees-of-separation" relationship with Georgia Tech. Former CEO Joe Rogers Jr., whose father was Waffle House's co-founder, is a Tech graduate, as is current President/CEO Walter Ehmer. And at least for a time, the Waffle House located on Fifth Street in Tech Square on our campus was the **most visited in the country**.

We departed afterward for Augusta, about 70 minutes away, where we met with Board of Regents Chairman Jim Hull in his office. Hull is a lifelong Augusta resident with a long history of supporting higher education in Georgia through both his service and his philanthropy. The founder and managing principal of Hull Property Group, he has endowed the Hull Scholars Program at Augusta University, Paine College, and Vanderbilt University, among his many philanthropic contributions. It is exciting to hear him talk about his plans for the USG.

In the afternoon, we visited **theClubhou.se**, an entrepreneurial organization and space in Augusta dedicated to stirring innovation and collaboration for the greater Augusta area. The faculty from the Emerging Leaders Program joined us for this visit. As part of our Advanced Technology Development Center's (ATDC) statewide outreach efforts, theClubhou.se has been running start-up programming in Augusta in partnership with local leaders for approximately three years. ATDC has a full-time staff member, Scott Hardigree, based in Augusta running these programs.

While there, we met theClubhou.se co-founders, Eric Parker and Grace Belangia, and toured the entrepreneurial space. We also met several of the ATDC companies in Augusta and heard from local partners about the area's entrepreneurial growth. A few partners from Augusta University's Business School and the Augusta Chamber of Commerce also attended.

While in Augusta, we took a driving tour of the **Georgia Cyber Innovation and Training Center**, which is scheduled to open July 10. The center is a state-owned facility designed to promote modernization in cybersecurity technology for both the private and public sectors through unique education, training, research, and practical applications.

As a strong supporter of the **Georgia Technology Authority**, which is overseeing the construction of this \$100 million project, Georgia Tech is also at the forefront of the nation's

cybersecurity research. We are the beneficiary of \$120 million in Fiscal Year 2017 funding directed toward solving some of our country's most challenging cybersecurity problems. Seven Georgia Tech units and 500 researchers are involved in cybersecurity research. We're also training the cybersecurity experts of the future —Georgia Tech offers 12 degree pathways for future cybersecurity professionals across electrical and computer engineering, public policy, and computer science. Just last month, Georgia Tech researchers were awarded a \$12.8 million contract to develop new techniques designed to accelerate the detection and remediation of viruses in local and remote networks.

Next, it was off to ***The Augusta Chronicle*** for an interview, which provided an opportunity to tell Georgia Tech's story to an audience that doesn't always hear about the many great things taking place on our campuses. Although it's been known by various names since its founding in 1785, *The Chronicle* is credited as one of the nation's oldest newspapers and the oldest active newspaper in Georgia. Amazingly enough, the individual we met with and I went to the same high school in Kansas, although he was there six or seven years after me.

With the interview finished, we moved on to the Augusta Metro Chamber of Commerce, where we met with **Stan Shepherd**, board chairman of the **CSRA Alliance for Fort Gordon**. Camp Gordon, as it was known when it opened in 1941, was initiated for infantry and armor training for World War II soldiers. In 1956, it was renamed as Fort Gordon and became a permanent military installation. Numerous reorganizations have taken place in its history, but it is known around the world as home of the U.S. Cyber Center of Excellence and has become an integral part of the economy in Augusta and nearby counties.

The Alliance was formed in 2003 by Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) business leaders and elected officials to build on the strong bond that existed between Fort Gordon and nearby communities. Its main purpose is to grow Fort Gordon's existing missions and help it to take on new missions. We talked about how Georgia Tech could partner with the Cyber Command at Fort Gordon, Augusta University and all of the companies that we anticipate will be moving to Augusta.

That was the last "business" meeting of the day. Tuesday evening, we enjoyed meeting with more than 100 spirited Yellow Jacket alumni, friends, family, and other supporters at the Augusta County Club. Among those on hand was **Augusta Mayor Hardie Davis Jr.**, a Georgia Tech EE graduate, and **Georgia State Rep. Jodi Lott**, who represents Georgia House District 122. I enjoyed speaking with them both and also Rep. Lott's son and a number of other rising high school seniors who are interested in attending Georgia Tech.

In August 2017, we launched the **Georgia Tech Scholars Program**, which offers automatic acceptance to Georgia high school valedictorians and salutatorians from any accredited Georgia public or private high school with 50 or more graduates. It is designed to increase exposure and access to Georgia Tech for the state's most prepared students. For the incoming class of 2018, we have 169 valedictorians/salutatorians enrolling from Georgia. One of them from a local high school joined us at the Alumni Reception and received a rousing round of applause.

Tomorrow morning it is off to Elberton and then on to Athens!!

-G.P. "Bud" Peterson

For a look at the public gallery of photos from the Georgia Tour, visit: <https://gtgcr.smugmug.com/2018/GeorgiaTour>

Photos from Day Two:



*The Petersons are welcomed to the **Clubhou.se** by staff and Georgia Tech's start-up catalyst in Augusta, Scott Hardigree.*



*The Petersons chat with Grace Belangia, executive director and founding member of the **Clubhou.se**. She's also a Georgia Tech mom!*



The Petersons and Emerging Leaders hear a pitch from an ATDC @ Augusta company.



Mrs. Peterson and Leslie Sharp prepare to battle robots.



At the ***Clubhou.se*** (L to R) Scott Hardigree (ATDC's start-up catalyst in Augusta), ATDC start-up owners, Eric Parker (co-founder and innovation architect), Grace Belangia, the Petersons, Jane McCracken (ATDC interim director), Amy Love (ATDC @ program manager), Dene Sheheane (Georgia Tech VP for Government & Community Relations).



The Petersons get a tour of the ***Clubhou.se*** from co-founder Grace Belangia.



Clubhou.se and ATDC stickers



Jane McCracken (ATDC interim director) joins the ***Clubhou.se***'s founders, Eric Parker and Grace Belangia, in welcoming the Georgia Tech delegation.



President Peterson with incoming freshman Edward Frails (A.R. Johnson Health Science and Engineering Magnet High School valedictorian and thus part of the Georgia Tech Scholars program) and his parents at the Augusta Alumni Reception.



Ramblin' Wreck Driver Hannah Todd and Ramblin' Reck Club President Matt DeJonge chat with alumni at the Augusta reception.



First lady Val Peterson, the "Queen Bee," greets the crowd in Augusta.