

What: Coffee County Academic Boosters

Good evening. It is my pleasure to welcome you to Georgia Tech.

Boxing great and former Olympic athlete Muhammad Ali once said, “To be a great champion, you must believe you are the best...If not, pretend you are.”

In reaching the National Science Olympiad you have proved you are the best. No pretending is necessary, and I would like to congratulate you on your participation in this elite competition.

Although Georgia Tech will host Olympic athletes from around the world in a few short months, due to your academic prowess and your commitment to striving for intellectual excellence, your presence on our campus is more gratifying to us. Indeed, it is an honor to have so many intelligent young minds—and potential Georgia Tech students!—visit Georgia Tech.

In addition, it is altogether appropriate that Georgia Tech host both the National Science Olympiad and the 1996 Olympic Games. We all have much in common.

Both the Olympic and National Science Olympiad events encourage participants to achieve new levels of excellence. Both events take dedication, perseverance, and hard work. At Georgia Tech, our students also know the meaning of those three words. In fact, our students are recognized worldwide for their intellectual and academic capabilities.

Likewise the participants in both the National Science Olympiad

and the Olympics and the students at Georgia Tech are the best of the best. You and the Olympic athletes have proven yourself through competition and now compete on the highest level. Georgia Tech students have proven themselves through laboratory work, test scores, and team projects. They too compete at the highest levels and are rewarded through job offers and graduate school acceptances.

The father of the modern Olympics, Baron Pierre de Coubertin once said: “The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not winning, but taking part...The essential thing in life is not conquering, but fighting well.”

I think his statement has meaning for all of us. As participants in the National Science Olympiad, your training will not go unrewarded. During the upcoming competition, not all of you can win, however,—because of your participation—all will be able to say you fought well. Likewise, not all of the Olympic athletes can bring home the gold medal, however, they—like you—have the satisfaction of knowing they competed at the highest level.

In conclusion, I’d like to congratulate you on your achievement in reaching the National Science Olympiad. I’d also like to urge you to continue in your quest to excel—in all areas of your life—especially in the all-important area of intellectual curiosity.

Thank you and good luck.