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Tech tops nation in graduating African-American engineers

Report cites Institute's 'long-term commitment'

Larry Bowie
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

Georgia Tech is the number one producer of African-American engineers in the country, according to a recent issue of the journal *Black Issues in Higher Education*.

The report states that during the 1999-2000 academic year, Tech awarded more bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees to African-American engineering students than any other university or college in the nation.

The latest ranking underscores Tech's efforts not only to recruit and retain African-American students, but also to encourage them to pursue professional academic

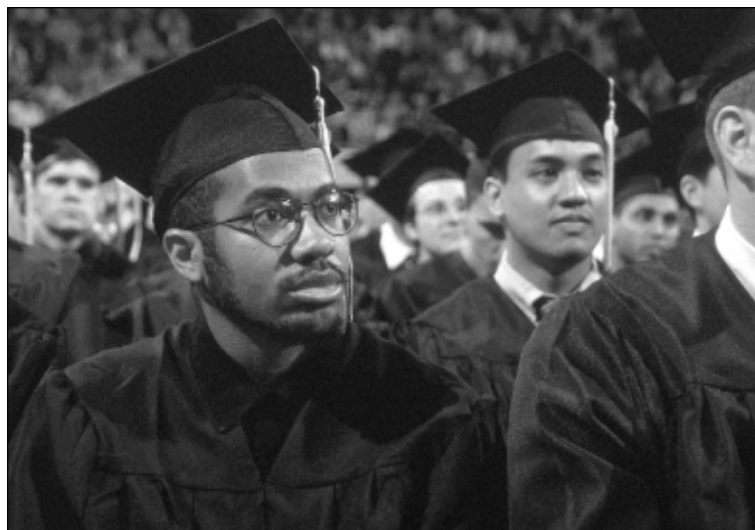


Photo by Stanley Leary

Georgia Tech is the first non-HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) to hold the top spot.

positions within the field of engineering.

"Georgia Tech was early to recognize the importance of developing a strong minority recruitment effort, as well as an environment supportive of the education of

minority engineers," said Provost Jean-Lou Chameau. "We are pleased and proud of our success in this area and, more importantly, of the successes of our minority graduates."

The report noted that Tech

awarded 147 bachelor's degrees in engineering to African-American students, or 11.9 percent of the number of undergraduate engineering degrees the Institute conferred. In addition, Tech awarded 36 master's degrees in engineering to African-Americans, amounting to 6.3 percent of master's degrees in engineering, as well as 11 doctoral engineering degrees, which accounted for 6.9 percent.

Georgia Tech enjoys a good relationship with the traditionally black institutions in the Atlanta area that represent the Atlanta University Center – Clarke Atlanta University, Morehouse College, Morris Brown College, Spelman College, Morehouse School of Medicine, and the Interdenominational Theological Center. At any given time, about 150 African-American students are enrolled in a joint-degree program in which students obtain an

Top ranking continued, page 2

Associate dean selected as president's executive assistant

Michael Hagearty
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

President Wayne Clough has announced a change in his office, naming a new executive assistant to replace Mark Smith, a man he said "served Georgia Tech remarkably well" during his four-year appointment.

His successor will be April Brown, current associate dean in the College of Engineering and the Pettit Professor in Microelectronics in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering. Pending approval from the Board of Regents, Brown will assume her new duties September 1. Smith plans to return to the faculty as a professor in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering.

"April is known for her excellence as a faculty member in service, research and teaching,"

Clough said. "She comes to the job with high recommendations from all who know her. Without question, April will bring abundant energy and talent to the position, and I am looking forward to working with her."

The executive assistant is selected by the president from the faculty pool, typically for a period of three years.

"This rotation comes as a matter of course," Clough noted. "Mark actually stayed four years, but this was unusual," he said, because some of the projects Smith was developing at the time made a transition untenable.

In many respects, the executive assistant acts as the president's chief liaison, serving as a link to and providing feedback from the numerous constituencies on and off campus. In many instances, the executive assistant is also empowered to carry out actions on behalf of the president.

In discussing her new role, Brown said, "My experience as associate dean has significantly broadened my perspective as a faculty member, and has allowed me to contribute in exciting and new



Photo by Stanley Leary

April Brown will succeed Mark Smith as executive assistant to the president.

ways, such as strategic planning, support of emerging interdisciplinary research areas, and faculty development. I am honored to succeed Mark Smith and I look forward to serving Georgia Tech in this new capacity, as well as continuing and enhancing some of my current projects."

Clough was unrestrained in his appreciation of Smith and his four years of service.

"Mark was a superb executive assistant and I was privileged to work with him," Clough said. "He served Georgia Tech remarkably well in keeping the Office of the President attuned to issues and concerns of the faculty. Through it all, he maintained substantive research and teaching activities, setting a great example for everyone. Lastly, he worked untiringly to help Georgia Tech improve participation of minorities in the

Assistant continued, page 3

Pollution expert and EAS chair Glen Cass dies

Sean Selman
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

Noted air pollution expert Glen R. Cass, chair of the School of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences at Georgia Tech, died of cancer July 30 in Durham, N.C. He was 54.

A memorial service for Cass will be held at 2 p.m. September 21 in the Bill Moore Student Success Center.

Cass came to Tech as chair of the School of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences in January 2000. He held a joint professorship in the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering and maintained an appointment at the California Institute of Technology, where he taught for 24 years.

William Glaze, editor of Environmental Science & Technology, a journal of the American Chemical Society, called Cass “one of the most prolific publishers in ES&T and, more importantly, one of the most significant research directors in the field of atmospheric sciences in the world.”

Cass’ research focused on air pollution, with a particular emphasis on the control of airborne particles, photochemical oxidants, and improved visibility. He was instrumental in identifying the complex mix of airborne chemicals that pollute urban areas, especially in Los Angeles and the Northeastern United States.

Of special concern to Cass were very fine particles that can be inhaled and that contribute to haze and poor visibility. He once described haze as a “problem of worldwide note and local disgust.” He made a name for himself beginning in the 1980s by painstakingly seeking the myriad sources of air pollution in Los Angeles.

The long series of papers that resulted from this ongoing study “constitutes the definitive body of work on the chemical composition of organic aerosols,” according to

John Seinfeld, a professor in Caltech’s Department of Chemical Engineering.

“His analytical chemistry was so meticulous that Glen was able to find traces of nicotine and cholesterol in atmospheric particles, markers for cigarette smoking and meat cooking in the ambient atmosphere. This body of work is of inestimable importance to air pollution research,” he said.

“I will miss Glen Cass,” said Gary Schuster, dean of the College of Sciences. “He was a friend, a colleague and an inspiration. As a scientist, he had a clear vision of the future for the School of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences and he had the drive, integrity and the personal skills to make that vision a reality. His loss is a tragedy.”

Cass graduated summa cum laude in 1969 with a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Southern California. He earned his master’s degree in mechanical engineering a year later from Stanford University. Cass’ thesis, “Sulfate Air Quality Management,” earned

him his doctorate in environmental engineering science and economics from California Institute of Technology in 1978.

Survivors include Cass’ wife, Jeanie, and son, Rob; his mother, Marie Cass; and a sister, Norine Berdahl. Cass was cremated and his ashes transported to Maine, where the family has a home.

William L. Chameides, Regents’ professor and the Smithgall Chair in Atmospheric Sciences, will assume the role of acting chair of the School of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences. A search committee to find a new chair is planned.



Photo by Stanley Leary

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to the Georgia Tech Foundation for the Glen R. Cass Scholarship Fund. For more information contact Rita Bryan, 894-3955 or rita.bryan@eas.gatech.edu.



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Georgia Tech is a unit of the University System of Georgia.

Top ranking, continued from page 1

undergraduate degree in liberal arts from the Atlanta University Center, then move on to obtain an undergraduate degree in engineering from Tech.

“The one factor that contributes to Georgia Tech’s success is the Institute’s long-term commitment to a program to attract and retain minority students,” said Frank Matthews, publisher and editor-in-chief of Black Issues. “The vast majority of the top engineering schools in the country started some type of program during the past 20-25 years to attract and retain minority students. Unfortunately, they did not sustain the momentum needed to enjoy the kind of success that Tech has earned.”

Robert Haley, director of special projects in the College of Engineering, said Tech has approached minority recruitment on a number of fronts from elementary to graduate school. Haley is creator and coordinator of FOCUS, an annual event designed to attract the country’s finest minority undergraduates to Tech’s graduate programs.

Each year almost 200 African-American students from more than 80 colleges and universities attend the three-day series of lectures, tours, panel

discussions and social events. According to Haley, the program’s record of enrollments, retention and graduation rates is high — more than 90 percent of FOCUS participants have subsequently enrolled in graduate school at Tech or have already graduated.

“The leadership at Georgia Tech has made a strong commitment toward encouraging and achieving diversity in the academic setting,” Haley said.

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—FRANK MATTHEWS, PUBLISHER,
BLACK ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

“Georgia Tech has implemented a series of diversity programs for minority students commonly referred to as a seamless pathway from kindergarten through Ph.D.”

Other programs at Georgia Tech aimed at attracting and supporting African-American students are:

- SURE (The Summer Undergraduate Research in Engineering/Science Program) — a ten-week summer research program designed to attract qualified minority students into graduate school in the fields of engineering and science.
- FACES (Facilitating Academic Careers in Engineering and Sciences) — a collaborative effort of Tech’s Colleges of Engineering and Sciences and Morehouse College to increase the number of African-Americans receiving doctoral degrees and encourage them to become faculty members.
- The Georgia Tech Chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), which seeks to increase the number of culturally responsible black engineers who excel academically, succeed professionally and positively impact the community.

Black Issues, a Fairfax, Va.-based publication that covers minority issues in education, used data submitted to the U.S. Department of Education by universities and colleges for the academic year 1999-2000.

Corporate partnership creates new GTREP academic program

Larry Bowie
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

Georgia Tech’s engineering degree program in southeast Georgia will boost its academic offerings through a new partnership between the state of Georgia and Savannah-based Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation.

This fall, the Georgia Tech Regional Engineering Program (GTREP) – designed to raise the number of engineering professionals in a portion of the state that lacks opportunities for engineering students – will initiate an undergraduate program in electrical engineering with an emphasis in aviation electronics.

The new degree is part of a \$1.6 million partnership between the state and Gulfstream that will create 200 jobs during the next six years through a train and hire program.

“This is an incredible opportunity for the state to strengthen our relationship with Gulfstream,” said Gov. Roy Barnes. “As a

company, they have been a tremendous corporate citizen, and this partnership ensures that we will continue to work closely together for years to come.”

As Savannah’s largest private sector employer, the partnership will support Gulfstream’s need for electrical engineers by expediting the education of more than one-fourth of the engineers the company needs to hire during the next few years.

“As far as Gulfstream, General Dynamics and the Savannah region goes, this is a tremendous opportunity to partner with Gov. Barnes and the University System of Georgia to meet our high-tech hiring needs,” said Dan D. Nale, vice president of engineering quality at Gulfstream. “I think this announcement is just the onset of important moves to bring ‘knowledge jobs’ to the Savannah region.”

It is anticipated that more than 80 people will complete the undergraduate degree program during the next six years, earning a Georgia Tech Bachelor of Science degree in electrical

engineering with emphasis on aviation electronics (EE-AE). Individuals who already have engineering qualifications can receive additional, targeted education to be trained for employment at Gulfstream.

GTREP allows students to earn a Georgia Tech degree while studying at one of three collaborating universities in southeast Georgia. Now in its third year, GTREP offers undergraduate degree programs in civil and computer engineering plus online graduate programs in civil and environmental engineering, electrical and computer engineering, and mechanical engineering.

Beginning with only 60 students in its 1998 inaugural class, GTREP has grown to more than 200 in less than 14 months. The program offers students the opportunity to earn a Georgia Tech engineering degree while studying at one of three collaborating universities: Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, and Armstrong Atlantic State University and Savannah State University, both in Savannah.

The Alumni Association is currently seeking candidates for the 2001 **Dean Griffin Community Service Award**.

Nominations should capture the full extent of community service activities of the nominee. These activities should include service in a long-term volunteer capacity, the impact on the quality of life of others, demonstrated leadership and creative ability to deal with societal problems proactively, and setting an example others can follow.

The eighth annual award will be presented during Homecoming Weekend, October 18-20. Nomination forms are available upon request by writing to: Dean Griffin Community Service Award, Georgia Tech Alumni Association, 190 North Avenue, Atlanta, GA 30313, or log on to gtalumni.org.

For further information contact Kimberly Miller at 894-9272 or kimberly.miller@alumni.gatech.edu

The deadline for nominations is September 7.

McKnight named new chair in School of Modern Languages

Elizabeth Campell
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

The new chair of the School of Modern Languages, Phillip McKnight, brings experience in expanding a foreign language program through business partnerships and new academic offerings.

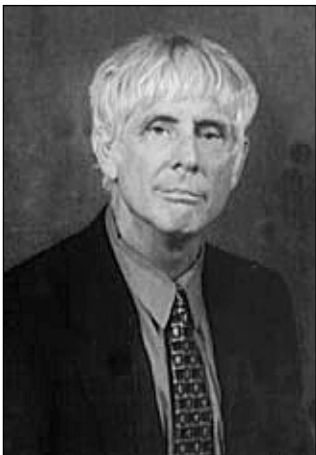
McKnight fills the School chair position left by Heidi Rockwood, who returns to full-time teaching as a professor.

“Ivan Allen College is especially pleased to have attracted an individual with the particular expertise and proven track record in combining language with business and technology held by Phillip McKnight as chair of the School of Modern Languages,” said Sue Rosser, dean of Ivan Allen College. “While he was chair of his department at Kentucky, he developed a very successful program with top executives from foreign-owned manufacturing companies, which he is eager to modify to fit the Atlanta community. We look forward to working with him as he continues to build upon the strong foundation laid by Dr. Rockwood and the faculty in

Modern Languages.”

McKnight comes to Tech from the University of Kentucky, where he was professor of Germanic Languages and Literatures and chair of that department from 1991-1998. At Kentucky, he increased student enrollment with the implementation of a joint degree with International Economics, began a teaching curriculum in German for business and the professions, reinforced interdisciplinary links with several academic programs, and established an organization of German-owned businesses with direct ties to curriculum development at the University.

“In the School of Modern Languages, we plan to develop interdisciplinary majors and programs that will fit the character of Georgia



Phillip McKnight

Tech and impart a sense of cultural differences in both business and social environments,” said McKnight. “Students can gain international experience by working intensely in their discipline and studying a language tailored to the content of that discipline.”

“The faculty in the School of Modern Languages is a hard-working dynamic group with a strong dose of creative thinking abilities,” he added. “I look forward to discovering the strengths and excellence of each faculty member and then meshing my ideas with their aspirations and suggestions.”

McKnight earned a bachelor’s degree in German and philosophy and a master’s degree in Germanic Languages and Literatures from the University of Colorado. He received his doctoral degree in German from Brown University. His academic preparation also includes studies at three German universities — Bonn, Tübingen and Berlin.

Assistant, continued from page 1

student body and the faculty and was the key person in creating the national alliance known as EMERGE, which now has membership of major universities and is sponsored by the National Science Foundation. Georgia Tech owes Mark a debt of gratitude for his contributions over the last four years.”

Smith, who will return to research and teaching full time, said he is looking forward to focusing on academics.

“What I’ve missed most over the last four years is the daily time I used to spend with my graduate students fleshing out new research ideas and my regular interactions with students in the classroom,” he said. “It will be fun returning to the ECE neighborhood next semester.”