Get to Know Your Community

Georgia Tech's legendary heritage is intricately woven into the fabric of Atlanta. In 1885, just 38 years after Atlanta was officially established, the Georgia School of Technology was chartered to provide an education based on the principals of leadership and industrial expansion. The city was growing rapidly, and Georgia Tech was vital in helping to support and encourage further development.

Today, Atlanta is the largest city in the southeast, home to the third-largest concentration of Fortune 500 companies in the nation and the birthplace of major media networks such as CNN and TBS. Many of Georgia Tech's faculty, staff, and students have been integral to this growth and progress. Iconic, Atlanta-based companies such as Waffle House, Delta, UPS, and Coca-Cola were all founded, led, or significantly influenced by Tech graduates.

The 1996 Summer Olympic Games helped to focus the world on Atlanta with Tech serving as both a venue for events and Olympic Village. Thirty years earlier, all eyes were on Atlanta as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. led the civil rights movement, converging on the very streets we travel today. And in 1961, Georgia Tech was the first school in the "Deep South" to peacefully integrate following a student vote endorsing the acceptance of qualified applicants regardless of race.

Today not only can you walk in the paths of former Olympians and Dr. King, you can also take advantage of events hosted by our Ferst Center, exhibits featured at our Robert C. Williams Paper Museum and a broad range of athletic events. As you embrace the many opportunities on our campus, I also want to encourage you to become acquainted with your surrounding community that extends far beyond our traditional boundaries.

The Atlanta History Center will give you a great overview of our city. You can also tour the Margaret Mitchell House where *Gone with the Wind* was written. Besides learning about the rich history of Atlanta, the city has an abundance of parks, music and theater venues.   The Woodruff Arts Center houses the Atlanta Symphony, the High Museum of Art and the Alliance Theater.   The Fabulous Fox Theater, the Atlanta Ballet, the Martin Luther King Historic Center and The Carter Center are among the many other attractions within a short distance of campus that offer experiences that will broaden your perspective of Georgia's capital city.

Tech is only a short distance from Piedmont Park, which offers plenty of green space for picnics, social gatherings, concerts and other events. Val and I walked there from campus last month to the Paul McCartney concert. With views of skyscrapers, a pond and trees, it reminds me of Central Park in New York City.

Not far is the Atlanta Botanical Garden where you can also explore an exhibit by Henry Moore and beautiful plant collections and check out what's blooming. Or visit the Fernbank Science Center for a different perspective on science!

Atlanta is also home to a wonderful zoo and a world class aquarium. If you want to see animals in their natural habitat, take a walk at the Chattahoochee Nature Center.

For those of you who like to spend your free time at athletic events, Atlanta has plenty of those to offer too with the Georgia Dome where the Falcons play to Turner Field, home to the Atlanta Braves.

The Varsity is a cultural icon, but just for a change try Mary Mac's Tea Room for a taste of home cooked southern food. You might be tempted to say that some of this is very expensive, but be sure to check out the student rates and volunteer opportunities!

The Atlanta we know today would not be the same without the presence of students like you. So, while I challenge you to study hard, I also encourage you to seek out opportunities that expand your horizons by taking advantage of the many experiences that are right at your fingertips. Embrace the many opportunities available on campus, but also to look around for other new experiences in the city you now call home.