

What: Student Honors Luncheon

When: May 30, 11 a.m.

Desired Length of Speech: 3 minutes

Who: Student honorees and parents, selected faculty, and industry representatives

Good morning. On behalf of the Institute it is a great pleasure to welcome everyone to the 1996 Student Honors Luncheon.

Today we recognize Tech's most outstanding student scholars and leaders. To those students who are being recognized today, I would like to say congratulations. At an institute where excellence is expected and the competition is fierce, you have proven yourself the best of the best.

I would also like to congratulate the parents of today's honorees. As you well know—and your son or daughter has probably been reminded—you played no small role in your daughter or son's accomplishments.

In addition, I would like to thank those of you from industry who have sponsored many of today's awards. Your support and recognition of our students helps to foster an environment of continual success here at Georgia Tech.

You, who are being honored, have proven yourself to be outstanding. Through hard work, innate intelligence, and sheer determination, you have made your mark at Georgia Tech.

In fact, if Georgia Tech was a Saturday morning cartoon, you would be the roadrunner—constantly able to out-think and outwit the not-so Wylie E. (WILEY) Coyote.

Many of you will soon graduate. Others are still working toward

your degree. Wherever you stand in your career path, be assured that the excellence you've demonstrated here at Georgia Tech will stand you in good stead. Former chairman of AT & T Frederick Kappel was once asked about his hiring practices. His answer was that you could pinpoint an above-average employee by hiring an above-average student, saying: "a drive already demonstrated will be sustained."

I quite agree. In fact, with the foundation of excellence you have built here, I have no doubt you will achieve great success throughout your life and I look forward to hearing of your accomplishments.

Throughout your career here, you have learned many facts, memorized hundreds of formulas, and demonstrated your knowledge on hundreds of tests. For those of you who are graduating, you may be looking forward to a rest from this. Instead of a rest, I would urge you not to abandon the learning process. More important than all the facts and figures you have crammed into your head is the knowledge you have gained regarding how to learn.

In his book, *The Road Ahead*, Bill Gates explains it well, saying, "Great educators have always known that learning is not something you do only in classrooms."

No matter what career you choose, you will find that lifelong learning will be vital to your success. As an example, consider the 1899 commissioner of patents. No one knows his name, yet he worked very hard. But he didn't work smart or commit himself to lifelong learning. Papers that he authored have survived and in those papers he is quoted as saying, "I ask that

my office of patents be closed. Everything that can be invented—has been invented.”

Is it any wonder his name is not remembered? Where would we be today if others had shared his belief?

In closing, I would also urge you to be flexible. Your chosen career path might not yield what you expect, yet through a commitment to lifelong learning and excellence, you can excel in any endeavor. Consider the example of Tech alumnus Gil Amelio, current chairman and chief executive officer of Apple Computer. Back in his student days, while earning bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in physics, I doubt he ever considered that he might one day lead a multinational computer corporation.

But today he does just that—and many are saying he will be the man to save the struggling corporation.

So when you find yourself facing new opportunities, remember his example—and remember as well the benefits of a commitment to lifelong learning and flexibility.

Thank you very much and once again, congratulations.