

Notes from the President

Georgia Institute of Technology

G.P. "Bud" Peterson, President

Veterans Serve and Protect, Add Richness to Life at Georgia Tech

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From our country's beginning, American veterans have stood on the frontlines of freedom. As the United States has grown from a fledgling nation to a world power, our service men and women have served as protectors of self-determination and liberty, both here at home and around the world, sometimes in places where those concepts may be completely unfamiliar. Today, our military forces live and work on more than 40 bases outside of our borders, serving as an extension of us, the American people, and helping to provide stability in an often turbulent world.

On Veterans Day 2016, we honor and thank all of our American military veterans — men and women who have played such a vital role in our country's history, and who are a treasured part of Georgia Tech as students, faculty, staff, and alumni. When we play Tennessee Tech on November 11 in McCamish Pavilion, we will recognize all of our veterans, with a special salute to our student veterans. Although relatively small in number on a campus of 25,000, they and their fellow service

members contribute significantly to our academic and campus life.

Here at Georgia Tech we are committed to the success of our veterans. In 2013, we opened our **Veterans Resource Center** at the Smithgall Student Service (Flag) Building. I invite you to stop by the VRC on November 10 for an open house that will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. And on November 11 — at the historically significant 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month — Georgia Tech will hold its annual Veterans Day Ceremony at the Campanile from 11:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Georgia Tech's veterans bring a rich background of life experience and intellectual diversity to our campus. With an average age of 27 for our veteran undergraduates and 34 for veteran graduate students, they are typically a bit older than our traditional students and as a result bring with them substantial wisdom and life experiences. We have 210 veterans enrolled this fall

and another 300 or so on our faculty and staff. In addition, we have 200 veterans enrolled in our Online Masters of Computer Science (OMS-CS) program.

Two of America's highest-ranking military officers of the past decade are Yellow Jackets. General Philip Breedlove, a 1977 CEE graduate, retired in May 2016 as NATO's Supreme Allied Commander in Europe. Admiral Sandy Winnefeld, a 1978 AE graduate, retired in 2015 from his position as the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the nation's second highest-ranking military officer. Both have returned to Georgia Tech as Distinguished Professors in our Sam Nunn School of International Affairs.

(I recommend to you a couple of articles from our *Georgia Tech Alumni Magazine* about these two military leaders. One is a **clear-eyed Q&A** about today's global threats, the other a **lighthearted remembrance** of their days together as Georgia Tech fraternity brothers.)

I am also proud to report that we have on campus with us Colonel T. Christopher Perry, a recipient of the U.S. Army War College Senior Service Fellowship. He is studying during this academic year at our Sam Nunn School of International Affairs, where he will audit classes and conduct independent research on issues critical to the Army and Department of Defense.

We are actively working to reach out to our veterans in several ways: Our Veterans Pathway Program helps veterans who have completed active duty within the past five years to pursue non-engineering degrees. Through Georgia Tech's College of Business and Computer Science, active-duty military members can earn our Online Masters of Computer Science degree. Our Scheller College of Business helps veterans transitioning to civilian life to study via Evening and Executive MBA programs.

In addition, our Veterans Education Training and Transition Program (VET², also called Vet-Squared or Vet-Two), is a four-week program, offered at no cost to active-duty service members and veterans, that ties professional education with an internship with veteran-friendly employers. When the program started three years ago, the veteran unemployment rate was at 13.9 percent for post-9/11 veterans in Georgia. Today, the VET² program has a 91 percent job-offer rate for service members completing the program. With the help of VET² and similar initiatives across the state, the unemployment rate for post-9/11 veterans in Georgia has dropped below 6 percent.

Other points of pride:

- America's military planners often want to know "What Does Georgia Tech Think?" Earlier this month, Margaret Kosal, associate professor in the School of International Affairs and Director of the Sam Nunn Security Program, spoke at the Association of the U.S. Army Conference on future technologies the Army needs to invest in and how to best prepare ground forces.
- Georgia Tech is among the nation's top recipients of Department of Defense research funds. In Fiscal 2015, GTRI had \$374 million of DOD research expenditures.
- Our cutting-edge research works on problems such as traumatic brain injury, regenerative medicine/tissue engineering for wounded service members/veterans, prosthetics and orthotics, and countless innovations for virtually all parts of the military.
- We have an active **Military Affinity Group**.

As we always do at Georgia Tech, we will honor our service men and women with a Veterans' Day Ceremony in which we pay public homage to their service. I encourage all of you to join us, and to be mindful throughout the year of how much we owe our veterans, past and present, who have often faced existential threats in their everyday work. The powerful sense of duty that binds them together also inspires them to serve as a shield for Americans — and many other nationalities — throughout the world. As representatives of our shared values of liberty, justice, and self-determination, they are indispensable, and we honor and thank them for their service.

G.P. "Bud" Peterson