

**Dr. Peterson**

**Tech Promise Student Luncheon**

12:30-1:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 7, 2015, Bill Moore Student Success Center

Welcome to all our Georgia Tech Promise scholars here with us today. On behalf of Georgia Tech, please accept our heartfelt congratulations at what you have accomplished. My understanding is that we have 25 Tech Promise scholars who will graduate in May. You should feel extremely proud that you will have earned a degree from one of the world's great technological universities, but I want you to know that we are just as proud of you.

It's difficult to measure how important the G. Wayne Clough Tech Promise Program is to the institution, to our state, and to the young people whose lives it touches. One of Campaign Georgia Tech's goals was to fully endow the Tech Promise Program. Through the heartwarming generosity of Tech alumni, friends and corporate supporters, along with a successful challenge grant program, we have surpassed our \$50 million goal for that endowment a year ahead of our deadline. This is an invaluable investment in Georgia's future, and we are extremely grateful to all of those who are helping Georgia Tech prepare the next generation of leaders and innovators and ensure that a Georgia Tech education within reach of all the people of Georgia.

As a public institution, Georgia Tech remains committed to educating the citizens of Georgia and continuing to identify ways to make a Georgia Tech education more affordable, particularly for the in-state students with the highest needs. The G. Wayne Clough Georgia Tech Promise program, unique in the University System of Georgia, offers a debt-free Georgia Tech education to academically qualified Georgia residents from families with annual incomes of less than \$33,300 per year. More than 600 students have participated in the program. Almost 350 Georgia Tech Promise students have graduated from Tech.

The success of the Tech Promise program is measured in the success of our

graduates, alumni such as Duane Carver, now a second-year law-student at Cal Berkeley, who at one point was living in a car with his mother and sister. Stephen Webber, a former Ramblin' Wreck driver and Mr. Georgia Tech, is working for Home Depot in its management-training program.

And this graduating group has done some pretty interesting things, too. I have a list of some of the highlights of your time at Georgia Tech:

- One student who is a part of Dr. Stefan France's research group and is working with a graduate student toward the complete synthesis of a compound that could potentially be used to treat malaria
- Co-op at Delta for four (4) semesters
- Working on research with Dr. Capolungo on analyzing the patterns from plastic deformation on magnesium crystals — writing a program that analyzes the picture of deformation patterns
- Research with Dr. Yongsheng Chen — water recycling and algae as a biofuel as part of the ATP3 project in collaboration with the Dept. of Energy
- Volunteer with Adopt-a-Stream project
- Study-abroad program in Australia that led to obtaining Skipper's License, which allowed him to work in the Split-Dalmatia area in Croatia. If you ever need a Skipper for your sailing holiday, we have someone for you.
- Co-op at McKenney's Inc. — a company that has recently endowed a Tech Promise Scholarship.
- A student who is in love with the railroad industry and interned at Norfolk Southern at the rapid locomotive repair facility — has accepted a full-time job with Norfolk Southern
- Co-op at Gulfstream Aerospace Corp. for four (4) semesters and has accepted a full-time job offer there

- Interned with the Smithsonian Institute National Air and Space Museum. As you may know Dr. Wayne Clough, for whom the scholarship program is named, recently retired as the Secretary of the Smithsonian
- Member of Georgia Tech Glee Club
- Played on Georgia Tech's club soccer team
- Volunteer activities so numerous time does not allow for my listing them

Those are some of the things you have done. Now we can't wait to see what you are going to do as you head into the next chapter of your lives. We're grateful that Georgia Tech has been able to play a role, and we know that you will make us proud. Congratulations, Georgia Tech Promise Scholars, for being so close to that day when you can say, "I am a Georgia Tech graduate."