

OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

HOPE not hopeless

Scholarship program needs massive overhaul to last

The HOPE Scholarship program faces what seem to be insurmountable problems in its immediate future. A victim of the poor economy, the rising cost of education and a rapidly growing state, the scholarship program that many Tech students have come to know will most likely become a shell of its former self. Massive cuts are needed to sustain the program in any meaningful way. Aid for students attending private or for-profit colleges should be cut immediately. HOPE needs to be clearly focused on accomplishing its most fundamental goal of aiding in-state students to attend in-state schools.

Increasing the requirements to initially obtain the scholarship also needs to be considered. Grade inflation has been rampant in secondary education, resulting in more students who qualify. Often times this increase is a result of the GPA requirements for HOPE. Incorporating a national standard such as the SAT or the

ACT into a formula to determine HOPE eligibility could help ensure that people who receive it will be more likely to fulfill the requirements to keep the scholarship in their higher education. Still, the standard to keep HOPE once it has been obtained should not be raised. This would unfairly target students who attend universities with more rigorous grading standards and push students from those schools more than it already may do.

Considering the important role HOPE plays in the State of Georgia, no options should be taken off the table. Alternative sources of tax revenue should be considered, including lifting restrictions on some commodities so that a large tax pool can be developed for the program. HOPE has also been one of the few checks on the rising cost of higher education in Georgia. If HOPE is lost and the state does have to try balance the scholarship budget against tuition, there could be even more drastic increases for students.

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EDITORIAL CARTOON BY VIVIAN FAN



Science should rule in medicine decisions

By Yaroslav Mikhaylov
Massachusetts Daily Collegian

Amherst, Mass.—When Al Gore dubbed his climate change documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*, he perfectly captured how science is viewed by those who would build popularity or a fortune through the use of public ignorance.

This past month, science and medicine have colluded to inconvenience the “Playboy” model-turned-parenting expert Jenny McCarthy and Andrew Wakefield—formerly a doctor. Wakefield became famous in 1998 for publishing a study linking the mumps, measles and rubella vaccination, commonly known as MMR, with instances of autism in children.

The study received much media attention, despite a heavy opposition to its methodology or the conclusiveness of its findings from the British medical community. As a result, vaccination rates across Britain and the United States significantly decreased.

However, over the next couple of years allegations of data manipulation and conflicts of interest arose surrounding the study’s findings, and these discoveries eventually prompted several of the study’s co-authors to distance themselves from their findings or even speak out against the study.

In 2010, the General Medical Council tribunal found Wakefield guilty of manipulating data and acting against the best interests of his patients, stripping him of the right to practice medicine in Great Britain indefinitely. Finally, on Jan. 11, 2011, the *British Medical Journal* published a series of articles exposing the 1998 study as a fraudulent operation designed to win massive settlements from vaccine manufacturers and the British government.

According to the *BMJ* articles, Wakefield was working with a law firm in order to manufacture evidence that vaccines were harmful and secure a settlement which would include sizeable attorneys’ fees for the firm, part of which would then go to Wakefield.

Also, Richard Barr—the attorney in charge of preparing the case—searched for autistic children that fulfilled Wakefield’s requirements and were likely persuaded into joining the study through promise of seeing the settlement money involved. Because Wakefield had access to patients pre-selected to suit his conclusion, his “study” could do nothing but support the case that Barr was building. The revelation that the research was financially motivated eventually led to the *BMJ*’s exposé that put the final nail in the coffin of the 1998 study.

Jenny McCarthy, a former “Playboy” model, became one of Wakefield’s strongest supporters in the U.S. after her son was diagnosed with autism in 2005. Through several books and an appearance on the *Oprah Winfrey Show*, she became the American

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letters@nique.net

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Letters should not exceed 400 words and should be submitted by Tuesday at 7 p.m. in order to be printed in the following Friday’s issue. Include your full name, year (1st, 2nd, etc.) and major. We reserve the right to edit for style and length. Only one submission per person will be printed per term.

spokesperson for Wakefield’s fraudulent theory. After he was banned from practicing medicine in Britain, Wakefield moved to the U.S. and continued to advise McCarthy, who continued to defend his theories.

Immediately following the *British Medical Journal* report, McCarthy wrote a *Huffington Post* editorial denouncing the article and attacking the investigative reporter who uncovered the story, Brian Deer. In it, she defends Wakefield because he “listened to parents and reported what they said.”

McCarthy goes on to decry the opposition of the medical community to Wakefield’s fraudulent and self-serving “research” as a “media circus.” Her rebuttal featured no discussion of the science involved except an out-of-context snippet from the 1998 paper and quotations from two of the parents involved in the study—both clients of the law firm that was paying Wakefield a retainer of £150 per hour and helped him defraud a government fund set up to defray the legal costs of low-income Britons to the tune of £50,000 or more.

Wakefield is indirectly responsible for killing at least two children—the first fatalities from measles in the U.K. since 1992—through his campaign against vaccines. It is unknown how many more suffered from inadequate vaccination due to his personal get-rich-quick scheme.

McCarthy, however, isn’t even trading children’s lives for money. She has built her own celebrity around her crusade against vaccines, and to back down and concede defeat now would be to sink back into the obscurity of a former adult star.

The responsibility of the news media is to provide accurate information to the public. Why do they then give such a high profile to a proponent of a fringe belief that preys on fears of parents in order to promote her own fame?

It is nothing short of a failure of the media that it allows such “medicine by public opinion” to take place. Scientists have boring papers and figures. McCarthy has the testimonies of concerned parents and pictures of sad children. As mentioned above, she has no

Ethanol adoption riddled with caveats

Billions of dollars disappeared in the dark expanse of BP's recent oil spill; gas prices continue to fluctuate due to political unrest in the Middle East; environmentalists continue to point to the emissions from gasoline use as the cause of the global warming phenomenon. As hundreds of issues have come to light in the past decade, both citizens and policymakers have begun to re-evaluate the extent of our dependence on petroleum and other fossil fuels.

Proposed solutions have mostly focused on alternative energy sources, such as solar energy, hydroelectric power and, perhaps most well-known to the common man, ethanol. Created from corn, wheat and grains and already implemented in many gas stations across the U.S., ethanol looks to be a promising solution to our financial, political and environmental stresses. While I agree that ethanol is one of many possible fixes to the energy problem, it is important to recognize that ethanol alone can exacerbate some of the issues caused by petroleum use.

One major problem in the production of ethanol is the dichotomy of the needs and resources in both developed and developing countries. Developed countries have a high need for alternative energy resources because they generally have large industrial sectors, but these same countries do not necessarily have large ag-



"Global industries should be careful in the production, implementation and consumption of ethanol."

Kamna Bohra
Focus Editor

ricultural economies. On the flip side, developing countries depend on their agricultural sectors for their livelihoods, but these countries do not have a large need for energy.

To produce ethanol on a large scale, these countries would have to collaborate heavily with one another. While global cooperation is important in today's economy, energy availability is far too crucial to a developed country's daily processes and will be of chief importance in the case of an international political conflict. On the same note, the amount of money a developing country could receive in exchange for its agricultural products is similarly imperative to the country's mere survival. Even in using fossil fuels, citizens of the U.S. presently face somewhat unpredictable hikes in gas prices due to unrest in the Middle East, the countries of which account for a large portion of OPEC.

Additionally, harkening back to the years past of Europe's imperialism in Africa for its rare resources, private companies' entering small,

developing countries and exploiting and depleting their resources is a very real possibility. In future years moving forward with ethanol as a major energy source, countries that are either major consumers or producers should develop international laws to control the exchange of ethanol.

As of now, U.S. gas stations that choose to use biofuels sell fuel that is 10 percent ethanol. This means that for the same volume of gas, there must be production of both gasoline and ethanol, which becomes very expensive very quickly. The key financial aspect here is that in the case of an expanded ethanol industry, the agricultural sector would become tied up in both food and fuel production. With an increased demand for products that were previously household-only, such as corn and wheat, the prices of food would increase very quickly, driving up household expenses for products as simple as bread.

On another financial note, implementation of ethanol as an energy source equal to fossil fuels would require the

retrofitting of technologies in industries that consume large amounts of energy. The cost of this retrofitting and establishing gas stations that sell pure ethanol is too high for any company to want to invest in these economic times.

While it is true that ethanol production requires fossil fuels, the amount of fossil fuels that go into this process has been cut in half as research progresses. Still, the fact remains that biofuel production uses some amount of fossil fuels, indicating that ethanol might not be as self-sustaining as a long-term resource. Additionally, the production and use of ethanol depends heavily on the climate and environment, neither of which has been particularly predictable in recent years. For example, if a geographical location that is a major ethanol producer faces drought, flooding or any other climate-oriented issue, it would no longer be able to provide ethanol, and industries would have to move quickly to garner other energy sources, causing anything from an economic hiccup to a financial crisis.

Global industries should be careful in the production, implementation and consumption of ethanol. Much like with fossil fuels, ethanol alone creates a problem by "putting all our eggs in one basket," and creating multiple venues for a crash in the availability of reliable energy.

College football has off-season work

With the college football season now complete, the countdown to Labor Day begins. Still, there are several challenges the conferences need to address before the kick-off so that they can lay the ground work for more success in future seasons.

With a lockout by the NFL owners looming and the possible shortening or cancellation of the 2011 season, the conferences need to begin to develop a strategy to fill the void that will be left for football on Sunday. The networks are going to need something to help keep the advertising coffers full during this potential lockout, and all the major networks that carry NFL games all have contracts with major college football conferences. CBS, for example, has a very lucrative contract with the SEC to carry the conference's premier weekly matchups. By giving the conferences modest, one-year increases in TV dollars, it can be a win-win situation.

Besides the money aspects, the conferences will have a chance to expand their national reputations with some fans that might not traditionally be die-hard college football fans. NFL loyalists are going to want to watch football on Sundays. For many of them, going to the bar or a friend's house to watch football on Sundays is a weekly tradition. While they might not be able to watch their favorite profes-



"In a revamped BCS system another bowl would need to be added in order to keep the same number...of bids."

Matt Hoffman
Opinions Editor

sional teams, offering them an alternative might further endear college football in the hearts of some who are going through NFL withdrawals. And considering many conferences will be rolling out new members next season, an extra Sunday timeslot would help to further the branding of the recently realigned conferences.

Another potential change that needs to be contemplated is the post-season system currently in place. While the current contract is not set to expire for another three seasons, it is well known that few things take longer to change than the college-football postseason system. Many of the top brass in the college football world agree that a playoff is unlikely in the near future, since college presidents are reluctant to change a system and a sport that generates so much money.

A plausible alternative is the so called "plus-one" option, whereby a last set of polls is released after the bowls and one more game is played between the No. 1 and No. 2. This

would give teams vying for a national title another chance at playing a strong out-of-conference opponent and further strengthen their resumes to be a national title contender before the final game.

In a revamped BCS system, another bowl would need to be added in order to keep the same number of automatic and at-large bids. Presumably the best and most logical option would be the Cotton Bowl, since it has a long and distinguished history. With the BCS National Championship game already being a week or more after New Year's, the logistical issues of scheduling another game have already been conquered and arguments that the expansion would interfere with academics is a meaningless point.

Instead of sticking solely with conference ties with the bowl games, however, a slight tweak should be made so that undefeated teams would face each other in the BCS Bowl games. If there are more than two undefeated teams, the

higher ranked team should 'host' another undefeated in their traditional bowl game. For example, this year, since there were three undefeated teams, Oregon would have hosted TCU in the Rose Bowl with the winner to likely play in the National Championship game. Auburn would have faced Stanford in the Sugar Bowl since Auburn should play a quality opponent to even the playing field.

Granted this system breaks down in the unusual circumstance that there are more than four undefeated teams, but this could be a possible compromise between the current system and a playoff. In years where there are less than two undefeated teams, the standard bowl ties would be honored.

The last and by far the stupidest error that needs to be corrected during the off-season is the names of the Big Ten divisions. The only thing 'Legendary' about the Big Ten this bowl season was its perfectly imperfect record for New Year's Day bowls, which proved how they are not 'Leaders' of anything either. I am a big fan of the 'Rust' and 'Dust' divisions myself but would be open to any other ideas.

With some work this off season, college football could broaden the appeal of the sport and increase the revenue stream to secure its status for years to come.

BUZZ Around Campus

What did you do during the snow days?



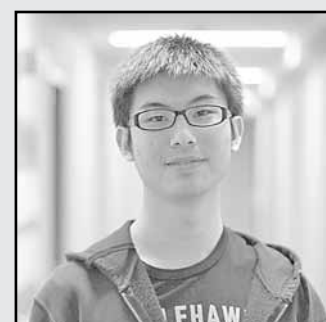
Calvin Govela
Third-year ChBE

"Sleep, sleep and more sleep. I slept a lot."



Simon Turgeon
Third-year ID

"I hung out with friends and played Minecraft."



Tim Lin
First-year MSE

"I hung out with my roommates and other people from the dorm."



Sean Lee
First-year ME

"I read some books."

OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

HOT^{or}-NOT**Ballin' B-ball**

The women's basketball team racked up its 13th consecutive victory, a streak which includes kicking off the ACC schedule with four wins. The men's basketball team also had two commanding victories over UNC and Wake Forest. With this sort of success, maybe a few more fans will go and see their Jackets play and root on the team through the ACC schedule.

**Snow much**

While a snow day is nice every once in awhile, three and a half days worth is just inconvenient. Mother nature: please lay off the snow and ice for the rest of the semester. Considering all the emails that Tech spams to students, it does seem slightly odd for the Institute to not send out an email notifying students that classes were cancelled the next day. Maybe next time.

**Newly staffed**

The Institute welcomed its new Vice President for Institute Diversity, Archie Ervin. With his leadership and knowledge, Tech can craft an institute-wide diversity program to help unify all the different current efforts. Robert McGrath will also be joining the Tech as the new Director of GTRI in the coming weeks. He should be a valuable asset to the Institute.

**T-screwed**

T-square has been about as reliable as the Falcons' secondary. If you did not see the game last Saturday night, this is not a compliment. With a whole college dedicated to computing, hopefully we can find a way to make this vital part of campus more reliable for the rest of the semester. Professors are already bad enough about uploading content; they don't need another excuse.

Campus construction for long-term benefit of community

As we return from break this semester refreshed and ready for the new challenges and opportunities ahead of us in 2011, there is one challenge I know all of us would prefer to do without.

No doubt all of you have seen the dramatic increase in construction within the center of the campus. Most of you will, if you haven't already, experience the inconvenience of navigating around safety gates and fencing, and taking alternate routes as you traverse through the heart of campus. While I know that detours are inconvenient for all of us, we are asking for your patience as we push Tech into its next phase of renewal and renovation.

Historically, Tech, like any other world-class research institution, has had to endure the pains of construction during growth. Whether it has been construction before the 1996 Olympics or the creation of Tech Square, Tech has endured the sometimes-painful challenges of construction in order to reap the rewards of new facilities and venues for the campus community's long-term benefit.

Although students, faculty and staff will be the beneficiaries of the current construction, we will all have to be a little more patient the next few months as we make sacrifices that others have made before.

Several projects that are part of our sustainable design initiative, as well as the completion of the Clough Commons, will alter



"Our Facilities office understands the challenges that accompany this type of construction and is working diligently."

G.P. "Bud" Peterson
Institute President

routes through the center of campus.

Tech Green will still be closed along with projects to renovate the Campanile, redesign Skiles Walkway and create a new Transit Hub. Most of these projects are targeted for completion by the fall.

Due to some events beyond our control, the timing of these construction efforts happened simultaneously. We made the decision to continue with each project as planned to minimize the duration of the total construction and its impact on the campus.

In the meantime, it will be necessary to give yourself a little extra time as you make your way across campus. As a result of the extensive construction, pedestrian pathways are reconfigured to allow sufficient detours through the center of campus. As construction progresses through its various phases, there will from time to time be a need to move the construction safety fences, and that too will result in modifications to these alternative pathways. So the route you take today may not be the route you take in the weeks to

come.

One of the main arteries through campus, of course, is Skiles Walkway, the corridor that provides the most direct access between the Library and the Student Center. Because of this, crews have created an alternate path on the opposite side of the Skiles Building, which will tie in with existing sidewalks to provide pedestrian access across campus.

Our Facilities office understands the challenges that accompany this type of construction and is working diligently to make sure that routes are properly lighted and made as user-friendly as possible.

Val and I frequently walk the campus, and we understand the frustrations caused by so much construction in the center of our campus. However, we also know overcoming these challenges for the next few months brings the promise of a better campus for all of us to enjoy. Our patience will pay off.

Thank you all for your understanding and cooperation, and welcome back!

MMR from page 6

intention of debating science or medicine with her opponents. She is merely looking to secure better

publicity than the people who can actually call her out on her self-serving quest.

It is the role of the media and the role of the American people to

recognize that and take steps to make sure that we hear from the real experts, not the people who find experts' opinions inconvenient to their own celebrity.

GT CHORALE

Yes, we're here! And No, it's not too late to join us!★

Chorale (male/female)
CRN 21198
M&W, 4:30-6:00 pm

Women's Chorus (all-female)
CRN 29297
T&Th, 6:00-7:30 pm

*registration not required- just show up next week

For more information, contact:
Courtney Brown at cbrown35@gatech.edu

sliver

www.nique.net

shields shields shields shields
clarinet, you're worthless
big boy weights
kevon loves catfood
flockavelli
wakka flocka
i want to practice the right hand rule on you while watching Star Wars
mrow?
front back side to side.
no matter where i sit in howey L1, my seat is wobbly.
true life: my calc teacher is secretly Spiderman
If you don't put this in... stuff will start to go missing in the technique office.
Girls singing Cee Lo Green during the fire drill: you made a very miserable day into a very excellent one.
To guy that hit that other guy in crosswalk with a dodge: ceramic brakes or pay attention
Seriously... Russia and Qatar...can we secede from FIFA yet?
go in loco for them lokos
I can speak enough spanish to drive the ambulance!
brown hall voyeurs: hope you enjoyed the show
Those icecicles have been known to kill people.
Saying I'm better than you at Guitar Hero doesn't make me like you. Expert is easy.
Anybody for a GT minecraft server? I've got one on an EC2 server -[JVC]
oregon has a good football team, auburn has a good cam newton
Supply Chain Engineering? We already have one Imaginary Engineering program. We do not need another.
Linds - I'mma get get get you drunk get you drunk on my lady junk!
Leggings aren't pants, but tights certainly ARE NOT pants
to the guy who works behind the circulation desk: I like you, and I think you like me too, so ask me out...but wait until after finals ;)