

Dr. Peterson**All American Reception**

4 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 26, 2013, Georgia Tech Hotel and Conference Center Ballroom

- On behalf of Georgia Tech, I would like to extend a warm welcome to our Athletic and Academic All Americans and your families.
- Today is one day from the 100th anniversary of the first game played on Grant Field — as Brandon noted, September 27, 1913. We couldn't convince ESPN to start a new tradition of Friday night football so that it would be the actual day, so this is about as close as it gets.
- Georgia Tech has a storied tradition. Ours is the oldest FBS field, followed by Mississippi State's Scott Field in 1915. If you include all stadiums, we're the third oldest. Penn's Franklin Field is 18 years older, constructed in 1895. Harvard's field opened in 1903, followed by Grant Field, and Yale in 1914.
- It is interesting to note that President Franklin Delano Roosevelt spoke at Grant Field in 1935.
- In June of 1990, Nelson Mandela spoke to a crowd of 50,400 at Grant Field, just 4 months after being released from prison where he had lived for 27 years.
- On a lighter note, the Rolling Stones, Simon and Garfunkel, Pink Floyd and Jimmy Buffet all played concerts at Tech's stadium. Do any of you remember those?
- The Peach Bowl, now known as the Chick-fil-A Bowl, began in 1968 at Grant Field, playing at Tech for three years.
- In the early years of the franchise, the Atlanta Falcons played home games at Grant Field, as did Atlanta's professional Women's soccer team, the Atlanta Beat.
- Georgia Tech's football facility was known only as Grant Field until April 1988, when the Georgia State Board of Regents voted to add the name Bobby Dodd Stadium in honor of the legendary coach.
- Who among you played under Coach Dodd? Last September we unveiled the statue of Bobby Dodd at the North End of the Stadium, and if you haven't already, I hope you take time to see it.

We also honored the Dodd's boys, including the 1952 championship team, as well as the 1951 team.

- Bobby Dodd was a man who knew the importance of investing in people. He is known for his winning programs, including a 31-game winning streak from 1951 to 1953, a national title in 1952, and a 9 and 4 record in bowl games.
- But as the members of the 1951 and 1952 teams as well as the other Dodd's Boys will tell you, it wasn't just about winning games. It was about mentoring young people to prepare them to be winners throughout their lifetime, and equipping them to pass along that winning spirit to others in their lives. Throughout his 36-year coaching career at Tech, he encouraged student athletes to stick with it and earn their Georgia Tech degree. His impact didn't stop there. He had a 57-year association with Tech, including serving as athletic director and alumni association consultant, and during that time he continued to mentor and encourage, serving as a Georgia Tech ambassador in the community.
- You'll be proud to know that we're continuing that tradition of excellence. Student athletes at Georgia Tech learn leadership skills while combining a rigorous academic curriculum with the demands of participating in one of 17 intercollegiate sports.
- This summer the NCAA released their Academic Progress Report, or APR. Georgia Tech's APR scores have improved once again and are at a record high. Seven teams scored a perfect single-year APR of 1,000. These include golf, men's swimming, women's tennis, volleyball, men's indoor and outdoor track, and cross country.
- For the first time ever Georgia Tech football has been recognized as a Top 10 percent performer in APR among Division 1 schools. That's pretty amazing when you remember the rigor of athletic training, combined with Georgia Tech's high academic standards.
- There is simply no place to hide. We don't offer a major where you aren't required to complete two calculus classes, two science labs, and a computer course.

- This year we welcomed the best qualified and most diverse, and one of the largest freshman classes in Tech's history. For the first time, the average SAT was over 1,400. Some of you might be thanking your lucky stars that you're already out!
- Grant Field's 100th anniversary is much more than a celebration of a field, a structure or a stadium. It's a celebration of four national championships, many conference championships and many memorable games. But most importantly, it's a celebration of the players who have played on that field, their achievements, and the way you have represented Georgia Tech.
- Your group includes all-Americans from as far back as 1952, including Leon Hardman and Ed Gossage, and as recent as 2012, with Omoregie Uzzi.
- There have been 657 games played in Bobby Dodd Stadium. Our rough estimate of the number of athletes who have played football at Tech is 4,000.
- There are 16 former Georgia Tech student-athletes currently playing in NFL.
- Georgia Tech has had 113 football All-Americans (athletic and academic) over the past century years of football at Grant Field, and you represent more than a third of that group. You are the best of the best.
- Tonight as you hear your names called at halftime, and look beyond the field to Atlanta's beautiful skyline, I'm sure many memories will flood back. Many of you will be in awe of how much the skyline, and the campus have changed. I also hope you have a sense of pride at what you've accomplished, the lives you've influenced, and the Georgia Tech name that you proudly carry in your communities and on your jobs. It is only fitting that we bring back some of the greats from our history as we celebrate the past and look toward a limitless future.
- Again, welcome home. We hope you return often. Go Jackets!
- Now, please join me in welcoming Tech's Athletic Director, Mike Bobinski.