

Notes from the President

The Dream and the Journey Continue

01/10/2014

Several events over the past year have caused me to pause and reflect on the lasting impact that a number of leaders have made in the pursuit of social justice throughout the world. The passing of Nelson Mandela is the most recent example.

In addition, last spring Georgia Tech presented the Ivan Allen Jr. Prize for Social Courage to Georgia Congressman John Lewis, one of the early leaders in the civil rights movement who was mentored by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Congressman Lewis put his life on the line for many years during the 1960s to bring about equality under the law for all Americans. He has been arrested more than 40 times, standing up for what he believes. His most recent arrest was in October 2013 at age 73, when he took part in a protest advocating reform of the nation's immigration laws.

This month, Georgia Tech joins people and organizations around the globe in celebrating the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., one of our state's most influential native sons. A team of students, faculty, and staff, working with the Office of Institute Diversity, has planned and put together the most ambitious slate of events ever organized by the Institute to commemorate Dr. King's legacy, and if you haven't already done so, I hope you will take the opportunity to participate in one or more of these special events on campus.

The celebration started with a campuswide student event in the Student Center Jan. 9 and will conclude with the Memphis Civil Rights Tour Feb. 1-2. We are fortunate to have Rwandan diplomat and current Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations, His Excellency, Ambassador Eugene-Richard Gasana, giving the MLK lecture on Jan. 15.

On Jan. 20, students, faculty, and staff will have an opportunity to participate in the Institute's fourth annual MLK Day of Service, volunteering to work on teams and engage in service projects with metro-Atlanta community partners. Hosting Tech's involvement in this "Day On" is the Office of Leadership and Civic Engagement.

As we reflect upon the lives and work of these heroes, we are reminded that the dream and the journey must continue with this next generation and we all need to engage.

G. P. "Bud" Peterson
President, Georgia Tech