

GTL Anniversary Event in Metz

Tuesday, June 15, 2010

Dr. G.P. “Bud” Peterson

President, Georgia Institute of Technology

(As written; not necessarily as delivered)

Background

An anniversary event with a number of dignitaries and special guests to celebrate Georgia Tech’s presence in France and sign the Lafayette LOI and MOU GA-DOE/Rectorat.

Key participants:

- Bernard Niquet, Préfet de Région et de Département
- Jean Pierre Masseret, President Regional Council of Lorraine
- Philippe Leroy, President Département de la Moselle
- Jean Luc Bohl, President Metz Metropole
- Dominique Gros, City Mayor of Metz
- Jean Marie Rausch, former Mayor of Metz
- Pascal Le Deunff, Consul Général de France à Atlanta
- Jean-Jacques Pollet, Rector and Chancellor of the Universities of Lorraine
- Dr. Bud Peterson, President Georgia Tech
- Yves Berthelot, President Georgia Tech Lorraine
- Abdallah Ougazzaden, Director UMI and Georgia Tech Lorraine

Bonjour.

On behalf of Georgia Tech, I would like to extend our thanks to our many friends in government and business and industry who have partnered with us to make Georgia Tech Lorraine the success it is today. I would also like to welcome those who are joining us by satellite, the cultural attaché of the French Embassy in New York, and members of the Department of Education as well as other government officials and special guests in Atlanta, Georgia.

Today, we are celebrating a shared vision and an international partnership with a proud past and a limitless future. In many ways, Georgia Tech Lorraine is symbolic of the direction of our Institute. About one third of Georgia Tech’s 20,000 students have an international experience before they graduate, and we would like for that number to increase. It is interesting to note that about one fifth of our students study a foreign language, even though it is not required. Here in Europe, speaking multiple languages is more common, but we’re catching on in the States!

In the past 20 years, more than 2,500 students have participated in the Georgia Tech Lorraine program. Many of them have studied both here in France and on our campus in the U.S., and they represent 25 nationalities. When they graduate, they not only have a degree from a top research university; they also have experience learning, working and living alongside some of the best and the brightest students from throughout the world, and are uniquely prepared for success in an increasingly global environment.

In the last four years, GTL has seen a tremendous growth in its research program thanks to a very successful partnership with CNRS (the UMI laboratory), which enables transatlantic research cooperation. Another benefit of Georgia Tech Lorraine is the opportunity it presents for business, industry and government from both countries to work together to take advantage of mutually beneficial opportunities, such as the Institute Lafayette. Yves will talk about the tremendous potential of that agreement in a few minutes.

Georgia Tech Lorraine was Georgia Tech's first international campus, and we're proud to say that it is a unique model that has been studied by many other institutions. We have since added international programs in Singapore and Ireland, and dual degree programs in China, Germany, Great Britain and Mexico.

When I accepted the position as president of the Georgia Institute of Technology more than a year ago, an important first step was to lead the process to develop a 25-year strategic plan to take the Institute to its 150th anniversary in the year 2035. We have almost completed that process. Our vision is that Georgia Tech will define the technological research university of the 21st century. As a result, we will be leaders in influencing major technological, social and policy decisions that address critical global challenges. Included in our mission is leadership in improving the human condition in our state, the U.S. and across the globe.

Georgia Tech Lorraine fits very well with our 25-year strategic vision. We are committed to fostering international alliances to enhance learning experiences, build research collaborations, and promote economic development. We believe that the most pressing challenges in business, industry and society cross national boundaries, and by working together, there is no limit to what we can accomplish.

Merci.