

What: Dublin Rotary

When: November 15

Length: 20 minutes

Background:

Groups in Dublin have commented lately that they wish there was

more i

Good afternoon. It is a great pleasure to speak to the members of the Dublin Rotary. I am also a Rotarian, serving in the Atlanta chapter.

Bob, thank you for that kind introduction. I will confess I am always somewhat nervous during my introduction. As a university president, who often travels to speak to many different groups of people, I have suffered through many introductions which, although well intentioned, have not been so kind.

I am reminded of many years ago when the senior Senator from New York, Chauncey Depew, was introducing the President of the United States, William Howard Taft. President Taft was a very large man. He weighed about 315 pounds and had a protruding stomach. Senator Depew's introductory remarks were very eloquent. Then he said, "President Taft will you please come to the podium?" As the President walked toward the podium with his stomach protruding, Senator Depew said, "Ladies and gentlemen, as you can see, your President is pregnant with integrity."

The audience laughed. Then he said, "Our President is pregnant with courage." The audience's laughter grew louder.

Finally, President Taft reached the podium. He replied, "Thankyou Senator Depew. Let me assure you, ladies and

gentlemen,” he said as he rubbed his stomach, “that if it is a girl, we will call her Integrity. If it is a boy, we will call him Courage. But, if, as I suspect, it is simply gas, we will call it Chauncey Depew.”

In light of that situation, I am indeed grateful for Bob’s warm introduction and your hospitality. As you probably suspect, I have come here today to speak to you about the Georgia Institute of Technology. Although I may be a bit biased, I firmly believe Georgia Tech is a university on the rise. As we look toward the new millennium, our goal is to move to the next level of America’s research universities—to become more well-known, more prestigious, and more valuable to Atlanta, the state of Georgia, and the nation.

We have already built a firm foundation of excellence from which to launch this venture. During the past year, we were ranked as one of the top 50 universities in the nation by *U.S. News and World Report*. In addition, *Money Magazine*, *U.S. News and World Report*, and—believe it or not—*Rolling Stone*—ranked us among the nation’s top 15 values in higher education. I will admit that I most preferred *Rolling Stone*’s tag line about its article, which read, “Cool schools! Real jobs! Rock and roll!”

In addition to rankings, our commitment to excellence is demonstrated through our research. Through high tech research, the impact we make on the world is substantial. For instance, in our Petit Institute for Bioengineering and Bioscience, we currently have researchers who are working to improve the health of thousands of people all over the world. Examples of this research include study relating to building a bioartificial

pancreas so that diabetics will no longer have to take daily insulin; research aimed at alleviating blood flow blockage in patients with sickle cell anemia; and studies designed to destroy cancer and the HIV virus. On a different level, other Tech research is aimed at improving economic development through breakthrough inventions and enhancing industry effectiveness.

Our success in these research endeavors is reflected within our research expenditures. In 1995-1996, Tech achieved a record-high research expenditures level of \$200 million—a 13 percent increase over FY 95.

As always, educating the leaders of the future is our top priority and in 1995-1996 Tech students continued to live up to the high expectations set for them. Our average entering SAT score climbed more than 5 points, and our 1995 fall freshman class, based on academic measures, was ranked number one in the country for public institutions.

Our accomplishments are all the more noteworthy when you consider the environment in which we operated for much of the year. As the official Olympic Village and site of two Olympic venues, Georgia Tech spent much of last year completing a \$315 million construction project.

Our legacies from the Olympics were many, and the improved infrastructure will support our move to the next level—helping us recruit the nation's premier high school students. Legacies include seven new residence halls, a new Aquatic Center, the renovated Alexander Memorial Coliseum, and FutureNet, a state-of-the-art telecommunications network. In addition, Tech received worldwide publicity from the event and mentions

of Georgia Tech were published, viewed, or aired for an average of 7 stories a day for 7 days/week for 7 months.

### **A National University with a Regional Emphasis**

As you can see, Georgia Tech is indeed a university on the rise—a university poised on the threshold of greater national and international recognition and prestige.

Of course, you may be saying, “That’s all well and good. But what about Georgia, South Georgia in particular?”

That’s a good question, and as Georgia Tech continues to move forward, I want you to know that we will continue to keep paramount the needs of our home state. We will be—and already are to some extent—a national university with a strong regional mission and focus.

You may not be aware of this, but Georgia Tech has a tradition of service to Georgia. In fact, we were founded by a group of far-sighted men who saw a technological university as a way to lift Georgia out of the ashes of the Civil War. Their philosophy was not universally shared. In fact, one Georgia state representative went so far as to label the idea of a technological school “a hydra-headed monster that should be strangled at birth.”

History does not record where that individual attended college, but I suspect it was somewhere in the vicinity of Athens.

Today, technology has fulfilled the dream of Tech’s founders and others like them. A report compiled by the US Department of Congress states that, “as much as 50 percent of the nation’s post-war economic growth is related to the development and use

of technology.”

As Georgia’s only university with a strict technological mission, Georgia Tech does an excellent job of serving Georgia and passing technological knowledge to future generations of leaders. Let’s look at just Laurens County. Last year, approximately 20 students from Laurens attended Georgia Tech; three of those students attended Tech on Tech’s most prestigious scholarship, the President’s Scholarship. Throughout Georgia the trend is consistent. In fact, for the entire state of Georgia, less than eight counties did not send any students to Georgia Tech at all. Across Georgia, Georgia Tech’s alumni form the technological backbone of various communities. According to membership rolls within the Georgia Tech Alumni Association, more than 50 Georgia Tech alumni live in and around Dublin, including your esteemed mayor, Bob Walker.

Most universities would consider educating the students of its state to be their only statewide responsibility. Not Georgia Tech. Our service to Georgia extends beyond educating its students. Through research, technology transfer, consulting, and other avenues, we contribute to Georgia’s economic development growth.

In a recent study by Coopers & Lybrand, it was found that “growth companies with university ties have productivity rates almost two-thirds higher than peers.” If you quizzed our industry and government partners throughout Georgia, I think you’d find general agreement with that quote.

A division of the Georgia Tech Research Institute, the Georgia Tech Economic Development Institute—or EDI as those of us

who must have an acronym for everything label it—is completely dedicated to economic development. One of EDI's offices is located here in Dublin and run by a Georgia Tech graduate and fine citizen of Dublin, Alan Barfoot.

Within Georgia, EDI helps Georgia companies through advising, technology transfer, and recruitment of companies to Georgia. In 1995-1996, EDI worked with 1,200 Georgia companies, helped 50 companies expand or relocate to Georgia, provided technical assistance to 125 communities and development organizations, and through its Advanced Technology Development Center incubated several fledgling high tech companies. In Dublin alone, EDI helped between 75 - 100 companies during the past year.

Aid rendered in the Dublin community has been diverse—ranging from helping New Holland relocate here and set up their plant to helping Southeast Paper with its ISO 9000 requirements to direct manufacturing assistance with various companies to our bi-monthly user network meetings on both environmental and ISO 9000 topics.

### **The Future**

As we look to the future, Georgia Tech plans to continue to increase its service to the state of Georgia. Although our strategic plan has mandated enrollment to not grow beyond 15,000 students, we are looking beyond the borders of our campus and plan to offer more and more opportunities for long-distance learning and continuing education. Through both of these options, industry in areas outside of the metropolitan Atlanta area can benefit from Georgia Tech's technological expertise—without its workers having to drive to the campus.

We will also continue to ask Georgia industry and Georgia government agencies what they need from Georgia Tech. In addition, we will continue to work with the Georgia Research Alliance, a government, industry, and education partnership with the goal of advancing Georgia's economic development through innovative and multidisciplinary research.

One future action that was not initiated by Georgia Tech, but which will benefit Georgia is the Board of Regents recent mandate that out-of-state students will assume 100 percent of the cost of their educations. The additional tuition and fees generated by this cost increase will go straight back into the Georgia Tech educational experience. Therefore, although our Georgia students will not have to pay additional fees, they will benefit from the enhanced curriculum.

Finally, a future development I would also like to mention is our affiliation with a neighbor of yours, Senator Sam Nunn. Senator Nunn has joined our faculty and will become a part-time distinguished professor in the School of International Affairs—which has been renamed in his honor. Senator Nunn's longtime dream of using technology to aid humankind and prevent its destruction is a perfect fit with Georgia Tech's technological mission. With his help and guidance, we will move forward to help provide a secure future for all Americans.

## **Conclusion**

As Georgia Tech moves toward that secure future, we will continue to strive for national and international recognition. Continue to aid Georgia through education, research, and service, and continue our quest to move to the next level of

research universities.

Ben Franklin once said, “Well done is better than well said.”  
Therefore, I will sit down and let Georgia Tech’s current and  
future actions and accomplishments speak for us.

Thank you.