

Dr. Peterson

President's Scholarship Finalist Weekend Dinner

6:30 p.m. Friday, March 6, 2015, Georgia Tech Hotel Ballroom

Good evening, and welcome to the President's Scholarship Finalist Weekend Dinner. This weekend you'll undergo your final interview as we try to determine who will be the best fit for this coveted scholarship. But you'll also be taking measure of Georgia Tech. We understand that just by the fact that you're here with us this weekend, you have several options as to where you will continue your education. So tonight I want to share with you some of the reasons I believe Georgia Tech is one of the world's great technological universities.

As you know, President's Scholars are selected from the most outstanding students who apply for admission by our early-action deadline. I thought you might find it interesting to know a bit about the students we have invited to join the Georgia Tech community.

- The Early Action admits span all 50 states and 40 countries, plus Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico.
- They average 1488/2196 on the SAT and 32 on the ACT, and have taken an average of 10 college-level classes before even finishing high school.
- The Early Action group includes almost 41 percent women, the highest ever for this group, and more African-American and Hispanic students than last year.
- Applications for the Early Action admission period totaled 11,702, a slight decrease from last year, yet more were admitted and the class has a higher academic profile. Nearly all of the students — 97 percent — have taken AP calculus or a higher level of math.

If you decide that Georgia Tech is the place for you, you will study with a world-class faculty. No matter which of our six colleges you choose, you will encounter nationally and internationally known educators with the same passion for learning that you have.

At Georgia Tech, you will become immersed in an innovation culture. We have competitions throughout the year in which our students move their ideas from the classroom into the practical realm. One example: our InVenture Prize, which is the nation's largest undergraduate competition. Last year's winner was Team Sanivation, composed of three young women who invented an inexpensive mobile toilet to help nearly 2.6 billion people who lack access to hygienic bathrooms. They received a free patent filing in the U.S. Office of Technology Licensing, plus the \$20,000 first prize to develop their invention, and they traveled to Kenya last summer for field trials.

We recently selected our six teams for the InVenture finals, which will take place April 1. As a side note, I should tell you that about 60 percent of all of Georgia Tech's invention disclosures list at least one student.

At Georgia Tech, you will have opportunities to travel and learn abroad. We strive to produce globally competent graduates who are flexible, able to successfully adapt to different work styles and cultures, and who are knowledgeable about the global market. Even though students may not plan to work in a "global" environment, they will inevitably work in a diverse setting or have clients, colleagues, suppliers, manufacturers etc. from various countries.

Forty-eight percent of our undergraduates have an international experience prior to graduating.

Georgia Tech has more than 400 student organizations. If there's an interest you have in almost any field, academic or otherwise, you're almost sure to find like-minded people here who share that interest.

You've probably already heard about the Tech Challenge, which we expect all our students to take on by not just meeting the demands of our rigorous curriculum, but exceeding them. We ask something more of our President's Scholars. When you

accept the PS Challenge, you will demonstrate not only significant progress in your chosen field but also in leadership and service endeavors.

Thank you for your time and attention, and we wish you the best as you go into your interviews and consider whether Georgia Tech is the place for you.

One person who did decide that Georgia Tech was the place for her is our speaker tonight. Sandra Magnus was born and raised in Belleville, Illinois. She received a physics degree and a master's in electrical engineering from the Missouri University of Science and Technology. We're proud that she then headed east and earned her doctorate in 1996 from Georgia Tech's School of Material Science and Engineering. We sometimes say that a degree from the Institute helps "launch" our graduates into a great future. In the case of Dr. Magnus, that was literally true.

She was selected to the NASA Astronaut Corps in April 1996 and flew her first space mission, STS-112, in October 2002 as a mission specialist. She also flew in the final shuttle flight, STS-135, in 2011. As the president of Georgia Tech, I've received hundreds of invitations since I came here in 2009. I've always been something of a space-program geek, so one of the most meaningful invitations I've had gave me the chance to watch the launch of Atlantis for shuttle flight STS-135, on which Dr. Magnus was part of a four-member crew. My son Keith, who worked for a NASA contractor, accompanied me. We're very proud at Georgia Tech that the first shuttle flight, Columbia in 1981, was commanded by John Young, AE 1952, and the final shuttle flight also included a Yellow Jacket, Dr. Sandra Magnus.

In between her first and last flights, she flew to the International Space Station on STS-126 in November 2008, served as flight engineer and science officer on Expedition 18, and returned home on STS-119 after four-and-a-half months onboard. Her last duty at NASA after STS-135 was as the deputy chief of the Astronaut Office.

Dr. Magnus has received numerous awards, including the NASA Space Flight Medal, the NASA Distinguished Service Medal, the NASA Exceptional Service Medal, and the 40 at 40 Award, given to former collegiate women athletes to recognize the impact of Title IX.

Today, Dr. Magnus is the executive director of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA), the world's largest technical society dedicated to the global aerospace profession, with more than 35,000 individual members in 79 countries. She's been in that position since October 2012.

We're very pleased and honored to have her with us tonight as our speaker. Please welcome Dr. Sandra Magnus.