

# The WHISTLE

The Georgia Institute of Technology

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## Tech alumnus and pioneer of ‘sustainable technologies’ receives environmental award

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Institute Communications and Public Affairs

Ray Anderson is probably not the type of person you think of as your stereotypical eco-warrior. He isn’t leading marches in the streets, initiating boycotts or railing at industry leaders from afar about the consequences their products have on the environment.

The truth is, Anderson, who graduated from Tech in 1956 with a degree in industrial engineering, is not in the street because he doesn’t have to be — he holds considerable sway in the boardroom.

As a result of his sustained efforts to implement the principles of environmental sustainability — doing no harm to the ecosystem — not only in his own company, but also those with which he does business, Anderson was recognized on January 29 as the recipient of the 2001 George and Cynthia Mitchell Prize for Sustainability at The Woodlands Conference in Houston. Anderson is the award’s seventh recipient since it was established in 1974.

In announcing the award, George Mitchell called Ray Anderson a “pioneer in using innovative approaches to change past practices and to eliminate waste.” He added, “His vision of how sustainable technology can be used as a core principle in doing business is exemplary.”

As the 66-year-old chairman and CEO of Interface Inc., an Atlanta-based global manufacturer of carpeting and textiles, Anderson has

been championing the green movement from the inside. His goal: to be the first company to achieve sustainability, followed by a move toward becoming restorative. Put another way, he wants to transform his manufacturing facilities into a fully recyclable environment using renewable resources and producing benign emissions before evolving into a company that returns more to the earth than it takes. As the number one manufacturer of modular floor coverings in the world, his dedication to these principles — and the profitability in these changes — is already having an impact within his industry.

“My competitors,” he chuckles, “they’re all on an environmental tear.”

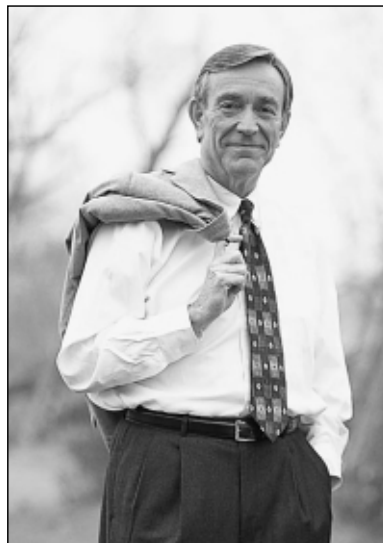
The seeds of transformation from industrialist to environmentalist began to germinate six years ago. In a speech he made to fellow corporate leaders in 1998, Anderson said he felt like “a plunderer” upon learning how much of the planet’s limited natural resources his

company exhausted in a given year.

“In the future,” he ventured, “people like me will go to jail.”

He may have overstated the fate of himself and his peers, but Anderson’s primary message was unambiguous: every ecosystem on the planet is in decline, and only business and industry has the size, the money and the capacity to alter the course. To use parlance reminiscent of his southern upbringing, you can only go to the well so many times before you come up dry.

To that end, Interface has been setting the example. To date, Interface has implemented dozens of new and existing technologies in its factories, all aimed at climbing what Anderson refers to as “Mount Sustainability.” From utilizing solar power at his factories, to developing recyclable fibers and producing lighter weight/better durability carpeting, Interface’s improvements have drawn raves. Even in uncertain economic times, the company’s stock runs against convention, almost tripling in value since last July. National magazines have



Ray Anderson, chairman and CEO of Interface.

*Anderson continued, page 2*

### “Think this thing will play any Clapton?”

Students, professors and the curious convened last week in the MRDC Building last week for the Mechatronics Project Showcase. The project charges graduate students in mechanical engineering with creating new products with everyday applications using existing engineering designs.

Two of the featured projects pictured here are, from left, the Ca\$h-o-Matic 2000, which dispenses currency accurate to the penny, and the Crazy J, an automated guitar-playing machine. Other projects can be viewed at the Mechatronics Lab website: [http://www.me.gatech.edu/mechatronics\\_lab/](http://www.me.gatech.edu/mechatronics_lab/).



Photo by Gary Meek

Anderson, continued from page 1

dubbed Anderson “The Green CEO.”

In speaking about Anderson’s accomplishments, President Wayne Clough said, “His courage, commitment and willingness to pursue sustainable technologies typifies why Ray is such a unique individual. We are proud that we can call him a Tech alum and I am proud to call him my friend.”

Still, Anderson sees his company as having achieved only 25 percent of its goal. And while becoming more resource-efficient represents a sizable savings both ecologically and financially, he readily admits these changes are

**The mission:  
Climbing ‘Mount Sustainability’**

- Eliminate waste
- Close the loop with recycling
- Produce benign emissions
- Use renewable energy
- Create resource-efficient transportation
- Create awareness among customers, suppliers and shareholders
- Reinvent commerce

tantamount to plucking the low-hanging fruit.

“So far it’s been easy [to implement these changes],” Anderson said. “The hard part is still ahead —

and it will take technology that hasn’t been invented yet.”

Anderson’s demand for new, sustainable technologies is evident in his commitment toward its continuing research. More than two years ago, Anderson endowed a faculty chair at Tech — the Anderson-Interface Chair in Natural Systems — in the School of Industrial and Systems Engineering. The individual who ultimately occupies the professorship, he said, will be charged with “learning from the natural system how to better organize the industrial system.”

“When we understand how a whole forest works,” he said, “and apply its myriad symbiotic relationships to the design of industrial systems, we’ll be on the right track.”

Anderson is also serving in his second term on the Georgia Tech Advisory Board, a committee he previously chaired in 1995.

The Mitchell Award, which comes with a \$100,000 cash grant, was created out of concern for the long-term implications of population growth, resource depletion and environmental deterioration. In his pronouncement, National Academy of Sciences President Bruce Alberts said of Anderson that “no corporate leader in the United States has done more to set an example that moves us into the world of the future, where new models of operating sustainably must become the standard.”

# Library now open around the clock

Night owls can now escape distractions by seeking refuge in the Library & Information Center. A long-anticipated, all-night study hall is now available to Tech employees and students from midnight to 8 a.m., Sundays through Thursdays, whenever school is in session.

Access to the Library during study hall hours is provided through the disabled access door in the rotunda. This door, now fitted with an intercom and camera, requires students and employees to announce their presence and produce a BuzzCard in order to gain entry. Only Tech employees and students will be allowed to enter or remain in the Library after midnight, while all non-Tech visitors will be required to leave.



**Responding to sizable demand, the Library will now keep its doors open around the clock.**

Traffic will be restricted to the first and second floors west and the ground west tunnel for refreshments and restrooms. All books must be checked out by midnight as no services will be provided during study hall hours, other than a debit card-operated photocopy machine on first floor west.

For more information, call the Library Reference department at 894-4528.



## The Whistle

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## People

**Kurt Wiesenfeld** (School of Physics) was elected Fellow of the American Physical Society. The citation reads: “For seminal theoretical contributions to nonlinear dynamics and complex systems theory, including co-discovery of self-organized criticality and for theories of stochastic resonance and Josephson-junction phase locking.”

**Thomas Galloway** (College of Architecture) has been appointed to a review panel for the United Arab Emirates University to assess its proposal to create a new College of Architecture.

**Nicholas V. Hud** (School of Chemistry and Biochemistry) received a Research Innovation Award from Research Corporation to support his research into

the development of novel methods for controlling DNA condensation (or compaction).

**C. David Sherrill** (School of Chemistry and Biochemistry) was selected to receive the International Journal of Quantum Chemistry Young Investigators Award.

**Imme Ebert-Uphoff** (School of Mechanical Engineering) won the 2001 Robert W. Galvin Outstanding Young Manufacturing Engineer Award from the Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME).

**Charles Ume** (School of Mechanical Engineering) has been named the co-editor-in-chief of Mechatronics: An International Journal.

**Barbara Blackburn-Jansma** (School of Modern Languages) was nominated as International Poet of the Year. She has also been named International Poet of Merit and was invited to compete at the International Society of Poets Spring Convention and Symposium in early March for International Poet of the Year 2001.

**Chris Nelson’s** (College of Architecture) article, “Prosperity or Blight? A Question of Stadia Location,” has been published by Economic Development Quarterly.

**Greg Nobles** (History of Science and Technology) has been elected to the board of directors of Planned Parenthood of Georgia.

## Faculty Notice

The General Faculty Assembly and Academic Senate will hold a joint meeting at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 6 in the Student Center Theater. “Continuing Education, National and Institutional Perspectives” will be discussed by Joe DiGrigorio and Ed Reedy. Proposed changes to promotion and tenure practices will be introduced. Full agenda details may be found <http://www.facultysenate.gatech.edu/>.



Spotlight

Meet Gordon Moore

**Full Name:** S. Gordon Moore, Jr.

**Age:** 31

**Occupation:** Managing Partner (Director)  
OMED: Educational Services

**Current projects and/or research:** Designing, implementing and running a variety of retention and performance programs, work-shops and seminars targeted for Georgia Tech’s underrepresented students, along with other students. Various projects involving bridge and transition efforts for incoming Georgia Tech students (GT Transitions, Challenge, FACES, SUCCEED, Team Coach to name a few).

**What I find most challenging about my job:** Politics.

**Years at Tech:** Thirteen years, going back to my undergraduate years from 1987-1992.

**Education:** Bachelor of Science in Management degree, Georgia Tech ('92); Master of Science in Management (MSM) degree, Georgia Tech ('97); working toward a Master of Science degree in Economics.

**Marital Status:** Single

**The last book I read, and enjoyed, was:** “Rich Dad, Poor Dad” by Robert T. Kiyosaki and Sun-Tzu’s “The Art of War”

**My ideal weekend would include:** Getting some sleep and relaxation.



Photo by Stanley Leary

**One thing I would like to improve in today’s society:**  
Economic access

**When I was younger I wanted to be:** Everything and nothing at the same time.

**The best advice I ever received was:** “What goes around, comes around”; and, “A hit dog will holler”

**My most important achievement is:** Moving from the street corner to the classroom, getting my education!

**My daily routine would be incomplete without:** Some quiet time (QT).

Last chance to make faculty committee nominations

With committee elections approaching, the Nominations Committee is seeking interested candidates. Forward your nomination, including self-nominations, by February 5 to Doug Allen, Chair, Nominating Committee, by e-mail ([doug.allen@arch.gatech.edu](mailto:doug.allen@arch.gatech.edu)) or campus mail (College of Architecture mail code 0155), indicating for which committee or committees the nominations are designated.

Elections will be held during the spring semester. For a complete listing of present memberships, minutes of the committees and further details of the election procedures, visit the faculty governance web site at <http://www.facultysenate.gatech.edu/>. Contact committee chairs or other members to find out more about their activities.

February training seminars from Organizational Development

February 1  
Improving Interpersonal Communications  
(OPC Level Two requirement)  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Location to be determined

February 6  
Introduction to Excel 97  
8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Savant Building, Room 203

February 7  
Proofreading Made Easy  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Location to be determined

February 7  
PowerPoint Enhancing Presentations  
8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Savant Building, Room 203

February 8  
Introduction: Creating Webpages with Dreamweaver  
8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Savant Building, Room 203

February 8  
Building Workplace Trust through Communication  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Alumni Faculty House Ballroom

February 12 and 13  
Microsoft 2010 - Designing Microsoft Windows 2000  
Migrating System (2-day class)  
8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
Savant Building, Room 203

February 13  
Building Fair and Effective Performance Evaluations  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Alumni Faculty House Ballroom

February 14  
Supervisor Skills for Conducting Performance Evaluations  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Alumni Faculty House Ballroom

February 15  
Customer Service with (Positive) Attitude (OPC Level One requirement)  
8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
Location to be determined

February 20  
How-to-Do-Business Sponsored Program Management  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Alumni Faculty House Ballroom

February 21  
Building Better Work Relationships (OPC Level Two requirement)  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Location to be determined

February 22  
Preventing Discrimination for Managers  
9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Alumni Faculty House Ballroom

February 28  
Telephone Techniques (OPC Level One requirement)  
8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Location to be determined



For more information on the above programs, visit [www.training.gatech.edu](http://www.training.gatech.edu)