

Dr. Peterson

Welcome: 2013 MLK Institute Lecture

3-5 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 16, 2013

Thank you Dr. Ervin. Thank you for joining us today. We especially want to welcome our guests from the community for this second annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Lecture.

We're among thousands of people from throughout the country, as well as the world, to commemorate the life, and work, and the dream of Dr. King over the next few days. But, there is something special about the people of Georgia Tech and the Atlanta community joining together to commemorate a man who lived in our city, raised his family here, made many of his sacrifices within a 200 mile radius from where we are today, and just a few miles from here wrote and spoke words that changed, and are still changing, the world. We are very honored to have Dr. King's oldest son Martin Luther King III with us today.

Georgia Tech recently held a year-long commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the matriculation of African Americans at Tech. The matriculation of Black students at Tech didn't make headlines as many other universities in the South did. While we can be proud of that, we also acknowledge the struggle and sacrifices of many through the years on campus and in our community — People like Atlanta Mayor Ivan Allen whose courage in the 1960's inspired Tech to put into place the annual Ivan Allen Jr. Prize for Social Courage. Or Dr. King's colleagues Ambassador Andrew Young, Jesse Hill Jr., Congressman John Lewis, and of course our special guest today, Martin Luther King III.

This April marks the 45th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Many of the people in this room, and virtually all of you students, were not born. In fact, some of your parents were not born or were small children. Yet, you are part of

the journey. This is a time for us to look back and appreciate the sacrifice and vision of leaders in the past, and to catch that vision as we pass the baton to a new generation.

Georgia Tech has a strong commitment to diversity, and we are proud of the fact that we graduate more black engineers than any other institution in the country. We are purposeful in creating an inclusive environment where diversity can thrive. We must continue to enhance a culture of collegiality, close collaboration, global perspective, intercultural sensitivity and respect, and thoughtful interaction among a diverse community of scholars that includes all of our students, faculty, staff and alumni.

Today's event is part of that journey. Thank you for joining us.