

# OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, January 21, 2005



"The South's Liveliest College Newspaper"  
**TECHNIQUE**  
 Serving Georgia Tech since 1911

## Quote of the week:

"The one serious conviction that a man should have is that nothing is to be taken too seriously."  
 —Nicholas Butler

## OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

### Helping hands

Upon students' return to campus from winter break, student organizations immediately sprang into action to raise money to help victims of the catastrophic Dec. 26 earthquake and tsunami in Southeast Asia. At least 50 student organizations led by Omicron Delta Kappa, SGA, Alpha Phi Omega, and Ambassadors are working together to raise \$60,000 in aid by Jan. 26, the one-month anniversary of the disaster. The goal is to reach every student and members of the faculty and staff in the campaign and for each person to contribute at least \$3.

Student organizations have done an excellent job of coordinating fundraising tasks and making an effort to reach the Tech community in a variety of different ways, from door-to-door collections in dorms to the planned Jan. 25 benefit concert. This is not the first time that student organizations have worked together to help those in need. Campus leaders held a similar fundraising campaign after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. We hope, and expect, that this drive will be just as successful, if not more so.

It is important that we demonstrate our continued solidarity as a diverse international community and help the victims of this tragedy. For more information about how you can help, please visit [ttr.gatech.edu](http://ttr.gatech.edu).

### Right stuff

The Office of the Dean of Students and the Student Rules and Regulations committee have drafted changes to the Student Code of Conduct that will positively affect students' rights if approved by the Faculty Senate next month. The proposed changes increase the level of professor participation in student academic misconduct cases. They also include a definition and sanctions for acts of harassment. The final change is a guideline that sets a maximum amount of time that students and student organizations have to respond to honor code violations.

Currently, students accused of academic misconduct only hear about it when contacted by the Dean of Students office and not their professor directly. If the changes pass, students will be able to hear about the allegations from their professors and talk to them about the allegations directly. Alternatively, students have the right to opt out of the new system. The changes will make the resolution process more efficient. It is important that the Faculty Senate approve these changes.

Students must also become more aware of their new rights and responsibilities before they are faced with a violation. We encourage you to read the code of conduct, available at [www.deanofstudents.gatech.edu](http://www.deanofstudents.gatech.edu).

*Consensus editorials reflect the majority opinion of the Editorial Board of the Technique, but not necessarily the opinions of individual editors.*

## EDITORIAL BOARD

Daniel Amick, *Editor-in-Chief*

Jennifer Schur, *Executive Editor*  
 Stephen Baehl, *News Editor*  
 Jennifer Lee, *Focus Editor*  
 Hillary Lipko, *Entertainment Editor*  
 Kyle Thomason, *Sports Editor*

Kimberly Rieck, *Opinions Editor*  
 Jamie Howell, *Photography Editor*  
 Joshua Cuneo, *Online Editor*  
 Lauren Griffin, *Advertising Manager*  
 Art Seavey, *Development Editor*

### Copyright Notice

Copyright © 2005, Daniel Amick, Editor-in-Chief, and by the Board of Student Publications. The *Technique* is an official publication of the Georgia Tech Board of Student Publications. No part of this paper may be reproduced in any manner without written permission from the Editor or from the Board of Student Publications. The ideas expressed herein are those of the Editor or the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Board of Student Publications, the students, staff or faculty of the Georgia Institute of Technology or the University System of Georgia. First copy free. Subsequent copies \$1 each.



By Erin Gatlin / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

## Five-year plan? How about seven?

All hail the coming of the great and powerful master! I am in total control and can break your wretched existence! Stand in awe at the magnificence of my creations! Bow before me, for I am Root!

Whew!

Sorry about that, but I had to take this opportunity to satisfy my wild megalomaniacal computer scientist cravings.

See, I'm the new guy in charge of the *Technique* server, which is a dream come true for any CS major. I've taken over from my predecessor, who graduated just last month after an extremely productive two and a half years in office.

That in itself isn't very unusual, since the average turnover time for the Online Editor position is two to three years.

What is unusual is that I'm now halfway through my fourth year at Tech and just starting this job.

After all, your average college student usually doesn't wait this long to accept such a prominent leadership post. Even on the *Technique*, most students apply for an editorial position during their second or third year.

This is supposed to be my final semester on campus, so it really doesn't make sense to take on new responsibilities without much time to carry them out.

Why did I even bother accepting this position, then, if I'm only going to be around for another few months?

That would be a really good question if one was to assume that I plan to graduate after four years.

Or five.

Or six.

In fact, I really don't plan on leaving Tech until this country starts gearing up for the next presidential election.

Due to both professional and personal motivations that are too



"In fact, I really don't plan on leaving Tech until this country starts gearing up for the next presidential election."

**Joshua Cuneo**  
 Online Editor

cumbersome to discuss here, I'm not going anywhere for awhile.

But, you know, I'm okay with that. Yes, it's going to be hard watching a lot of my friends graduate before I do, but it's worth it to be able to move at my own pace and to maintain a sense of balance.

Over the years, I've watched as more and more of my friends have burdened themselves with so many academic and extracurricular commitments, that it's a wonder they even had time for a social life. They pushed themselves to complete the program in three or four years while trying to cram in as much leadership and career experience as they could on the side.

I would much rather extend my stay and stave off much of the overwhelming frustration and stress that plagues students who rush through their degree.

In an era when college students nationwide are taking five or more years to graduate, there's no shame in deciding to stick around for a while.

All of the experts even seem to agree that a longer undergraduate career works to the benefit of both students and employers: students have more time to adapt and grow and explore their own interests and gain valuable work experience, and employers end up with a more productive employee.

I would not be ready for a full-time career if I graduated this semester. But at the rate my education

is progressing, when I finally walk across that stage three years from now, I'll feel much more confident and prepared to take on the real world.

And with the extra time, I can pursue other courses of study outside my computer science degree.

I can throw more effort into my extracurricular activities. I can find time to work out at the gym and hang out with my friends and family and even have a little personal time to myself.

I'll have opportunities to teach, travel abroad and conduct research. And I can do that without being in a perpetual deadline panic.

In the end, I'll be able to walk out with a couple of extra degrees, a good GPA and a lot of life experience to show for it.

So here I am, year four and just now taking my seat on the *Technique* editorial board. I spent my first couple of years limiting my extracurricular involvement so that I could adjust to Tech's academic rigors.

Now I'm a couple of laps behind many of my fourth-year classmates. But I don't care.

I'm happy and content, and I have plenty of time to decide where to go from here.

And now, having said that, I'm off to go rig...er...fix the server. Mwa-ha-ha!

Okay, I'd better stop before the Editor-in-Chief throws me any more menacing glares.



# Self-examination challenges news media

Last semester, the *Technique* won a Pacemaker award for the 2003-2004 school year. The Associated Collegiate Press and the Newspaper Association of America Foundation award Pacemakers to about 25 college newspapers around the country based on coverage and content, quality of writing and reporting, leadership on the opinions page, evidence of in-depth reporting, design, photography, art and graphics. The Pacemaker is one of the most prestigious awards in college journalism, and this is the first time the *Technique* has ever won one.

But you didn't read about the award in the pages of this newspaper until now. We didn't cover it at the time because we don't want to give the appearance that we're tooting our own horn, that we're biased in favor of ourselves or that we're ignoring other, more important stories.

Or at least, that's what we tell ourselves. The real reason is much simpler: we, like all news organizations, just don't like to be the subjects of our own reporting.

But what would happen if the news about the *Technique* wasn't good? What happens when a news organization, an organization dedicated to reporting events accurately and without bias, has to look critically in the mirror and report its own failings?



"We, like all news organizations, just don't like to be the subjects of our own reporting."

**Daniel Amick**  
Editor-in-Chief

The question is not academic; all over the country, respected institutions are being put in that position.

The issue first started percolating in my mind when CBS News admitted a few months ago that it ran a faulty story about President Bush's National Guard service. The sight of Dan Rather reporting his own failures to the nation, failures that probably cut his otherwise illustrious career short, was the nightmare of every journalist.

Last Tuesday, an independent panel appointed to find out what went wrong released the results of its investigation. Its findings were scathing.

The panel found that CBS News failed to follow basic journalistic principles in preparing the piece, that a "myopic zeal" blinded individuals to flaws in the evidence, and that when faced with criticism, the organization responded with a "rigid and blind defense." CBS

News responded to the report by firing the producers responsible for the story.

*The New York Times* has faced similar challenges. The incident most people have heard about began when a young reporter named Jason Blair admitted that he had made up stories that appeared in the paper. After an investigation, the Times printed a lengthy article that detailed how editors had failed to check up on Blair, and how Blair exploited their lack of attention. Several top editors lost their jobs.

A second incident is less well known: the flawed, incomplete coverage of the WMD issue in the run-up to the Iraq War. When it became clear in 2003 that the weapons everyone expected to find in Iraq did not exist, the Times went back and reviewed all of its pre-war coverage. In another lengthy article, the Times found multiple instances when reporters failed to question basic assumptions and statements

made by administration officials. They found a tendency to place inflammatory intelligence on the front page while relegating crucial follow-up articles to the inside. In some cases, follow-up articles never appeared.

In March 2004, *USA Today* found that one of its reporters had plagiarized material and fabricated evidence. After an investigation, two top editors resigned.

Fortunately, the *Technique* has not had to deal with screw-ups of this magnitude. But if problems can happen at these respected organizations, one has to admit that something similar could happen to us. We have a responsibility to admit that possibility to our readers, and to think about responses before a problem emerges, not after. First, we should admit the possibility of error from the start. Second, we should be open with our readers when errors do occur. Journalists love to air other people's dirty laundry, but we have a hard time when the tables are turned.

Finally, we should be open to criticism, whatever the source. You are our first and most important check in this regard. Send us your comments. Tell us we are wrong, that we have no idea what we're talking about, that we are missing something important. We cannot correct a problem unless we know it exists.

## BUZZ Around the Campus What was your New Year's resolution?



**Andrew Howard**  
CS Fourth-year

"To get more sleep."



**Stephen Chin**  
BME Third-year

"To dunk over a 6'4" man while blindfolded, preferably while wearing spandex."



**Jennifer Nelson**  
CompE Freshman

"To make it to New York for next New Year's Eve."



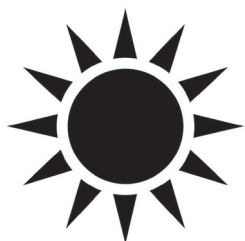
**Ellica Moore**  
BME Freshman

"Eat healthy and work out."

Photos by Michael Skinner

### OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

## HOT- or -NOT



### Pages galore

The Office of Information Technology gave students a late Christmas present upon their return to campus with the modification of their printing policy that caused so much discontent last semester. OIT's move is in response to student feedback. While not perfect, the new arrangement does make it easier for students to print professors' numerous slides and handouts.



### Swatted

Not a week goes by lately that hasn't brought bad news to our beloved men's basketball team. The team is hurting from the injuries to B.J. Elder and Jeremis Smith, not to mention the two back-to-back losses to ACC opponents. This should be the Jackets' time to shine in the spotlight and receive their due credit. We hope our beloved team recovers soon before we drop any further in the rankings.



### Non-trivial

Finally we have an on-campus place to play trivia with the beginning of Trivia and Poker nights at Pandini's. Our wallets also thank GT Dining for all of the new food promotions and specials in the Student Center Commons and food court. Now if they can only work their magic on the dining halls' food.



### Anti-truancy

To the horror of physics and chemistry students, professors are now requiring attendance in the large intro-level lecture classes. It is ridiculous to require students to attend large, boring lectures. Professors should let students make up their own minds. After all, it is their grade on the line.

### YOUR VIEWS LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Johnson will not be forgotten

[Editor's Note: This letter is about Kenneth Johnson, a Student Center employee, who passed away during his shift shortly before winter break.]

I could imagine that nights in the Student Center are not quite same because the life of the party has gone on to a better place. The Tech community lost a dear member of its family shortly before the Winter break when Kenneth Johnson passed away while working his normal shift as the night custodian in the Student Center.

Johnson, better known as Kenny, was a beloved figure to the Student Center staff and all

that passed through its doors from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. His title was that of night custodian; but his job was more of divine messenger.

"There are not enough words to describe how much he will be missed by all that had the honor to stand in his presence."

I remember nights when the stresses of life at Tech would get me down, and I felt like giving up; Kenny would just happen to walk by and remind me that there was a light at the end of the tunnel.

Kenny was the kind of person that would see you looking down and come ask you how you were doing, listen to what you had to say, and keep you focused on the

See Johnson, page 10

### Letter Submission Policy

The *Technique* welcomes all letters to the editor and will print letters on a timely and space-available basis. Letters may be mailed to Georgia Tech Campus Mail Code 0290, emailed to [editor@technique.gatech.edu](mailto:editor@technique.gatech.edu) or hand-delivered to room 137 of the Student Services Building. Letters should be addressed to Daniel Amick, Editor-in-Chief.

All letters must be signed and must include a campus box number or other valid mailing address for verification purposes. Letters should not exceed 400 words and should be submitted by 8 a.m. Wednesday in order to be printed in the following Friday's issue. Any letters not meeting these criteria or not considered by the Editorial Board of the *Technique* to be of valid intent will not be printed. Editors reserve the right to edit for style, content and length. Only one submission per person will be printed each term.

### Advertising Information

Information and rate cards can be found online at [www.nique.net](http://www.nique.net). The deadline for reserving ad space and submitting ad copy is noon on Friday, one week prior to publication. For rate information, call our offices at (404) 894-2830, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Advertising space cannot be reserved over the phone. The *Technique* office is located in room 137 of the Student Services Building, 353 Ferst Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0290. Questions regarding advertising billing should be directed to Corey Jones at (404) 894-9187, or Rose Mary Wells at (404) 894-2830.

### Coverage Requests

Press releases and requests for coverage may be made to the editor-in-chief or to individual section editors. For more information, email [editor@technique.gatech.edu](mailto:editor@technique.gatech.edu).

# Politics non-issue in disaster relief

By Allison Cullin  
*Independent Florida Alligator (U. Florida)*

(U-WIRE) - While there's nothing I love more than a sound political argument, it's hard to see justice in the politicization of human tragedy.

We've done it countless times—when senseless death occurs, we return to the comfortable Republican vs. Democrat discourse rather than the uneasy discussion of our personal stake in the relief work that follows. The reaction to the tragic tsunami in Southeast Asia has been no different.

It's time for us to turn away from political debate and toward the reality of action.

It's clear America's role in the relief efforts will be huge. Gov. Jeb Bush, in personal diaries from his visit to affected areas, recounts the extreme devastation and the need for substantial aid. The initial pledge of \$350 million will go a long way, but it is the donations of American citizens that will define the scope of the relief efforts.

---

**Johnson** from page 9

job that you came to Tech to do. All the while doing everything that was asked of him before it was asked of him and making life better for all around him.

He was always there to offer words of encouragement to students studying hard for exams, talk, share a laugh or a little worldly advice with

Now, almost a month after the Dec. 26 tragedy, we can clearly see the monumental task that lies ahead for people affected by the earthquake and the tsunami. While they rebuild their lives and mourn their dead, it is heartless of us to divide America along political lines.

The tsunami had no political agenda, so let us not dishonor the dead by assigning partisan politics to their tragedy.

As we examine our response, we must remember the first pledges were remarkably low. The United States and other global leaders could not have imagined the magnitude of the damage. Much in the same way, White House officials reminded us our \$350 million pledge "will continue to be revised as the full effects of this terrible tragedy become clearer."

While we continue to pledge aid, we must not forget that the tsunami relief effort is not a bidding war. We must have a clear assessment of the needs of the people ravaged by the deadly wave before we attempt to help. It would be irresponsible to assume the U.S. dollars pledged anybody that stopped to listen.

As a Building Manager, I had the privilege to be around him a little more than most. Yet I would see him talking to students just passing through in much the same way he would talk to me. I soon came to realize that he was just the kind, all-embracing person that we all hope to be.

There are not enough words to

would be more effective than the help of U.S. military aircraft for the transportation of relief items. It would be absurd to assume the American government knows the needs of the affected from so many thousands of miles away.

We are beginning to see the long-term picture. We can begin to target aid to the places that need it most. We can attempt to help people rebuild their lives.

It's time to stop talking about the president's response and start planning your own. The contributions of individual American citizens will amount to far more than the government could ever pledge to the victims.

Stop blaming the government, and stop passing the buck. America will lead, as it always does, from the bottom up.

Our contributions should not come just from an overarching governmental body, but also from the citizens who comprise the heart and soul of the nation. It's time for each of us to step up and do what's necessary.

Say a prayer, and send a check.

describe how much he will be missed by all that had the honor to stand in his presence.

Yet when I think of all the things that Kenny was for me the best thing I can think to do is to say "Thank You."

Nyere Hollingsworth  
B.S. INTA 2003  
[nyerehollingsworth@yahoo.com](mailto:nyerehollingsworth@yahoo.com)

# A King among men

By Michael Kreicher  
*The Dartmouth (Dartmouth College)*

(U-WIRE) - Martin Luther King was perhaps the greatest social visionary and leader in our country's history. I have great difficulty recalling another figure in our nation's short history who possessed his ability to mobilize and rally support for a controversial cause. Not only should his specific message be practiced by all Americans, but the way in which he led his life should be considered a goal that ought to be attained by everyone.

Martin Luther King Jr., a man with whom I share my famous initials, preached above all else a message of peace and harmony among all races of human beings. He truly believed that all men were created equal and should thus be treated as equals. He did not wish to place himself or his race above others, as his white opponents surely did. Instead, he strived to establish a culture in which people did not judge one another by superficial characteristics such as the color of their skin but by the quality of their heart.

Most importantly, despite the fact that Dr. King faced overwhelming and often violent adversity, he continued to preach a non-violent method of protest that ultimately prevailed in the 1960s. His contributions to American society were unparalleled in his time and remain some of the most important changes in this country's history.

The teachings of Martin Luther

King Jr. are too frequently forgotten or not followed in today's America. Violence is still used as the answer to many of life's problems. Hate crimes remain frequent in our country and, despite efforts to increase the penalties for committing such crimes, a culture of hate and violence continues to exist. Even in trivial circumstances such as a bar or a frat basement, the use of violence is occasionally threatened as a solution to a conflict. If people were sincere in their honoring of King's legacy, the fact that America stands as one of the most violent societies in the world would be reversed.

Martin Luther King Jr. also represented a man who was willing to die for his cause. He told us that life is not worth living unless we exhibit passion and faith in our beliefs and causes. This way of life should be followed by all, but it rarely is. I question if I have a cause of belief that I would be willing to die for. Unless we dedicate ourselves to our work and our beliefs, I don't believe that we will have led a fulfilling life.

The true meaning of Martin Luther King Jr. Day is for each and every American to look at his own life and consider what causes he holds closest to his heart. What causes would you devote your time and energy to and what beliefs would you stand up and defend? We should all thank him for the difference he made on our society and, more importantly, seek to live our lives with even half the dedication and devotion that he showed.