

Notes from the President

Georgia Institute of Technology

G.P. "Bud" Peterson, President

Fall 2018 Welcome Back Message

08/20/18

(Aug. 20, 2018) As we begin the start of a new academic year, I want to extend a warm welcome to our new students and to welcome our returning students back to campus. The start of a new academic year is a great time to become reacquainted with familiar faces of friends and faculty, and begin to make new acquaintances. Our Omicron Delta Kappa (ODK) chapter, the national leadership honor society, has invited faculty, students, and staff to gather on Tech Green anytime between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Aug. 20 to wear a nametag and meet some of your fellow students, faculty, and staff on this first day of classes. There will be a number of special events throughout the day, and it's a good way to meet some new people and make everyone feel welcome.

This fall, for the 10th consecutive year, we are welcoming the best-qualified and one of the largest and most diverse freshman classes in Georgia Tech history. In addition to welcoming our 23,000 students studying on the Georgia Tech campus, we are also pleased to welcome the 7,000 students studying in our online master's programs, students at Georgia Tech-Lorraine, and those on our new campus in Shenzhen, China.

As you walk around our 400-acre Atlanta campus, you'll notice quite a bit of construction. The largest project on the east side of campus is the library renovation project. Through state support and philanthropy, we're transforming the facility to meet our changing research, learning, and teaching needs. In Tech Square, we are topping off the Coda building, which will house Georgia Tech's high-performance computing center, scheduled to open in March 2019.

Yesterday (Aug. 19), we gathered with nearly 3,000 new students in McCamish Pavilion for our annual New Student Convocation, where I encouraged our first-year and transfer students to take full advantage of all the resources and opportunities that Georgia Tech has to offer. And on Aug. 29, we will have a similar number of students at our inaugural Graduate Student Convocation in McCamish, followed by a picnic for that group and their friends and families on Tech Green. About 40 percent of our student enrollment is composed of graduate students, a vibrant and growing segment of our campus community.

I also want to encourage all our students to get involved and to think about what you want from Georgia Tech besides a degree. Whether it is through one of our more than 500 student organizations, the many study-abroad or internship opportunities, our living-learning communities, or our co-op programs, every student should *get involved*.

Georgia Tech is a global university, attracting some of the world's brightest scholars, researchers, and teachers. Our students come from all 50 states and more than 120 countries. They bring with them a broad range of cultural, ethnic, and diverse backgrounds that makes us all better and strengthens and greatly enriches our campus community. This diversity helps each of us grow intellectually and socially as we share different traditions, beliefs, knowledge, and perspectives with one another. We remain steadfast in our commitment to fostering a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment for the entire community, regardless of race, nationality, ethnicity, gender, beliefs, or perspectives.

I am enormously proud of the Georgia Tech community for its broad global perspective, its welcoming and inclusive environment, and its ability to come together to address some of the world's biggest challenges and most pressing problems in a positive and constructive manner. The same problem-solving abilities that we exhibit in our classes and research can be translated into how we interact with each other, on campus and in the community. We expect nothing less.

I hope you'll join me for my annual Institute Address at 11 a.m. Thursday, Aug. 30, in the Clough Commons. We'll cover some exciting new initiatives, along with messages on other important topics and time for Q&A. Our goal is to offer students the educational experience of a lifetime. Again, welcome! The year holds much promise for each and every one of us, and the opportunities are unlimited. Welcome back — we're glad you're here.

G.P. "Bud" Peterson