



HONORS

PROGRAM

September 6, 2007

THE VIEW FROM HERE

BY DR. MONICA HALKA

Our second year! What fun it is to welcome new faces and rejoice at the returning ones. I have heard fabulous tales of summer experiences and expressions of relief to be back with friends here. Be sure to talk to your HP colleagues about their travels in India, Columbia, Italy, Spain, Mexico, Ecuador and where else? Carola Conces has collected some interesting factoids about what students did over the summer break (see below). In this issue you'll also find the text of the delightful freshman convocation speech given by Honors Program students K.C. Young and Alina Staskevicius. Please congratulate them on being selected for this distinction. If you haven't met the students mentioned above or in the rest of the newsletter, be sure to keep coming to our receptions. We'll be sending out notices and listing them on our calendar (located on the Honors Program website under "News and Events"), so stay tuned. And go to class!



Habitat for Humanity Build in Ecuador

Summer 2007: Fun with Numbers

COMPILED BY CAROLA CONCES

- 6 - number of HP students who took summer classes at Tech
- 8 - the number who voted Harry Potter VII the favorite book of the summer. HP loves HP!
- 12 - study abroad participants
- 16 - community service volunteers
- 23 - HPsters who worked, interned, or did research
- 33 - miles run by Matt Hoffman when he took a wrong turn in his first marathon

It's All There

BY MADDIE STODDART

I have faced a barrage of questions these past two weeks, and all of them the same. "How was India?" or "What in the world were you doing in India?" or just a disconcerted puzzle of a face with the word India in question format. I guess it is to be expected. How many people spend their summers on the other side of the world? After these questions are thrown at me, I have to take a deep breath and look down at my hands. There, on my palms, are the fading remnants of the mehendi my coworkers bought for me as a going away present. The design is almost the same color of my skin now, and soon it will be entirely gone – almost like a shadow of my life in the past three months.

See pg. 2

All There (cont.)

No one else can understand that if I trace the lines with my eyes, I can see sitting on an Indian train in a sandstorm in the middle of the Rajasthan desert, talking about everything and nothing with other interns around the world. Being blessed by a Hindu priest at the top of a mountain, discussing the Dalai Lama's teachings with Buddhist monks at a Himalayan waterfall, and learning about the meaning of community while eating on the floor of the Golden Temple with a Sikh guru. Dancing in a Punjabi music video. Watching the impact that I made on the kids that I taught, on their communities, giving them the opportunity to strive for something better than life in a slum. Learning things about myself that I would never be able to on our side of the world. It's all there, embedded like the henna is in my skin.



"So? How was it?"

I look up, smile, and say, "India was indescribable."



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Arts & Leisure

The Best Blockbuster Of The Summer... And The Best Summer Movie You've Never Heard Of

BY SARAH GILBREATH

As far as movies go, it was an uneven summer – a few great movies, several crash-and-burns, and lots of expensive disappointments (for example, *Hairspray*...for a movie on such an important topic in our nation's history, it's sad when the best thing you can say afterwards is "Well, that was cute.") Still, there were some excellent movies, among them such films as *Ratatouille* and *No Reservations*. Of all the good movies, there were two standouts – blockbuster *The Bourne Ultimatum* and under-the-radar *Waitress*.

The third film in what is easily the best action series of the decade (and way cooler than *Bond*), *Ultimatum* picks up quite literally where the second film left off and never slows down. And for the record, it's always awesome when you can beat the snot out of your opponent with whatever form of reading material (magazines, paperback books, etc.) happens to be on hand. It is interesting to see the impact that reality television has had on our generation – while the CIA-type action films of the 1960s saw the rise of the suave hero who used expensive gadgets and was only filmed with smooth camera shots, today's action star is gritty, fights with what's on hand, and is shot in the incredibly jerky "documentary style" (steady-cam? Ha!). Like its predecessors, *Ultimatum* is packed with plot twists, car chases, and plenty of "That was awesome!" moments. The best part, though, is how the entire movie retraces through the first two. Suffice it to say that this film easily lives up to all the hype.

A film you may not have heard of, though, is the much quieter *Waitress*. Set in a poor, rural town, the movie centers around a young woman, Jenna, with an abusive, possessive husband who forces her to remain in a dead-end job as a waitress in a pie diner. He takes all of her money, tells her what to say and do, and then he gets her pregnant. In the midst of all this, Jenna's friends and fellow waitresses attempt to find love (despite the fact that one of them is already married) and Jenna begins an affair with her new doctor. There's lying, cheating, adultery, and infidelity galore. Surprise! – it's a comedy! I don't know how, but this film will have you in stitches. True, you'll cry because it's really sad, and true, you'll be on the edge of your seat because it's dramatic, but for the most part... it's just really dang funny. Nathan Fillion is in it (Mal to all my fellow *Firefly* fans), which is always wonderful, along with Kerri Russell and Andy Griffith, but actors aside, the script is simply masterful. It makes you think: you will question love, you will question obsession, and by the end of it, you will have a new definition of inner strength.

So there you have it – the best two movies of the summer. If you haven't seen them...well, what are you waiting for?

CS. PL. TA. BME. FC. AE. GPA. TL. SGA. COC – Even though you’ve just moved in, some of these acronyms may be familiar to you already. But it will probably be a while before you stop coming across new ones. Today, rather than confuse you with more seemingly random letters, we’re going to give new meaning to one acronym that you already know: GT. On students’ T-shirts and baseball caps, on buildings, signs and flags, you’ve undoubtedly seen this symbol—GT. Of course we all know these two letters stand for Georgia Tech, but throughout our freshman year, this acronym came to mean a great deal more. And so now, we would like to share with you what we see in GT.

So first, we’ll give you our favorite GT – Girls, and Take-Home Tests. Yes, you’ve guessed it, the two best things at Georgia Tech. Now, some people think that you are just as likely to come across a woman on campus as you are a take-home test. Well, it’s not true. We are here. So, if you’re a guy, be happy you’re here now and not in 1950, when there weren’t any women on campus. And if you’re a girl, be proud to be continuing Tech’s tradition of producing ambitious and talented women. Oh, and by the way, we can’t make any promises about open book take-home tests. So be grateful if you do ever stumble upon one – because you’ll quickly learn that in-class tests are even less favorable to you than the ratio.

But this brings us to another GT – Great Teachers. Your professors are arguably some of the most intelligent people you will ever meet. Learn from them during lecture, work with them on research, and say hi when you see them walking around campus. They have dedicated their lives to enriching yours.

GT has also come to stand for Good Times. You’ve probably heard this before, but college really is going to be the most amazing 4 (or 5 or 6) years of your life. So take that 2 AM trip to Wingnuts, watch an entire season of 24 in 24 hours, and camp out for days to get UGA-Tech football tickets. More than your GPA or the organizations you were in, random moments like these are the ones that you will surely treasure forever.

As much as you will not want to admit it sometimes, GT also stands for Grades and Textbooks. Grades are important because good ones ultimately will allow you to maintain your scholarships, and eventually land you the job of your dreams. Feel honored to be in a place where you have an opportunity to learn challenging concepts. Never let a day go by that you have not learned something new. As far as textbooks go, sometimes you’ll think that they are almost as expensive as tuition. So as long as you’re paying for them, why not read them so you can take Saturdays off for another GT – Game Time.

Georgia Tech is a Division One, ACC University. Where else could you end up with a floor seat to see your school beat Duke University in basketball? Well, last January, two of our closest friends ended up with their pictures on ESPN.com and on the cover of the AJC, as they congratulated the game’s all-star, Ra’Sean Dickey on the floor after the game. You only have a few short years to stand in the student section. So take advantage of them! Still, though, if you’re more of a participant than a spectator, join one of the many club teams, or intramural groups organized through Greek life, housing, or the Rec Center.

Up to this point, most of our speech has been about your

FRESHMAN CONVOCAATION SPEECH

future at Gerogia Tech... But while you are here, it is important to remember the GT graduates that came before you. So whether your new boss, your grandfather, or the person next to you on the plane is a GT alumna or alumnus, remember

this GT: Gee, Thanks! As you will see in the video, people who graduate from Tech do some pretty amazing things. Remember that you too are part of this legacy.

It is this legacy that brings us another GT: Golden Traditions. When you sent in your deposit, you decided to become a part of the Yellow Jacket tradition and of the Georgia Tech family. Starting tomorrow morning – probably at 8AM – you will be continuing the tradition of academic excellence at Georgia Tech. This fall, you will continue the tradition of supporting Georgia Tech athletics by standing in Bobby Dodd Stadium, and singing the Ramblin’ Wreck fight song. Over the next four years, you will continue the traditions of Homecomings, Midnight Breakfasts, Basketball Games, and walks up Freshman Hill. Tradition is what holds Georgia Tech together, but new traditions are made at Georgia Tech every day. So never forget that you have the opportunity and responsibility to make your own.

But traditions cannot survive with only one person. And thus, every single aspect of life as a Tech student can be summed up into one GT: Growing Together. When you were accepted to Georgia Tech, someone at this Institute saw something in you. He or she saw someone who could change and be changed by this university, someone who could both encourage and lean on his or her peers, someone who is meant to belong to this class, the 119th freshman class of Tech students. Over the next few years, you will each change individually – you might gain the freshman fifteen or dye your hair, but we’re not just talking about appearances. You will change your opinions about your friends, you will alter your views of the world, and most importantly, you will redefine who you are and who you want to be. And without the influence of the people around you right now, these changes would be impossible.

While you’re at Tech, it’s going to be very easy to think about yourself in terms of what you do. That’s not to say that you shouldn’t get involved – Find organizations and causes that you care about, and surround yourself with people you respect. Don’t let the things you do, however, crowd the things that you are.

Before we introduced you to all of these different meanings behind the acronym GT, you knew that GT stood for The Georgia Institute of Technology. And that is the most important thing it stands for, because without it, there would be no Great Teachers, no Good Times, no Grades and Textbooks, no Game Time, no Golden Traditions, and no Growing Together.

GT is for – Georgia Tech....An institution consistently ranked among the top 10 public universities in the United States. Georgia Tech, the first university in the Deep South to admit African American students without a court order. Georgia Tech, with campuses in places like Savannah, France, Singapore and China. Georgia Tech, the place we call home. Georgia Tech, the best choice we have ever made. We hope it will be for you too. Good luck, and welcome.

GIVEN BY ALINA STASKEVICIUS AND K.C. YOUNG, FALL 2007

Message from the Director

BY DR. GREG NOBLES, DIRECTOR

Let me begin the year with a special word to the new Honors Program students: Welcome to Georgia Tech, welcome to the Honors Program, and welcome to a tradition much older than Tech itself.

In her address to a FASET convocation a few days before the beginning of the semester, my friend and fellow historian Carole Moore reminded us that incoming students today have a lot in common with counterparts from centuries past – as far back as those in the earliest European universities in Bologna, Paris, Oxford, or Cambridge. Then, as now, students complained about classwork, griped about the food, worried about covering tuition, and, always tapping that first and last resort, wrote their parents to beg for more money.

Dr. Moore's talk almost got me humming the old student song, "Gaudeamus Igitur," which may date as far back as the thirteenth century and has been a staple of student life certainly since the eighteenth century. Gaudeamus igitur/ Juvenes dum sumus – Let us therefore rejoice/ While we are young. Not a bad idea, especially since the first verse goes on to point out that we'll all eventually get old and die: Nos habebit humus – The earth will have us. Maybe being buried in the ground might take some of the edge off of being buried by school work, or at least put it in perspective, but that's a subject for another issue of The Hype. For now, I want to focus on the gaudeamus bit.

The song offers a coeducational celebration of students and has good words to say for the government and

generous benefactors that make the university possible. There's even a burst of school spirit toward the end: Quivis antiburschius/ Atque irrisores – Let whoever is against our school/Who laughs at it, perish! (The Tech translation: To Hell with Georgia!)

But here's my favorite part of the song: Vivat academia/ Vivant professores, which you can probably translate yourselves – Long live the university! Long live the professors! "Gaudeamus Igitur" was originally a party song, I realize, so maybe the students were joking. Still, even if it sounds self-serving, I do like to think that even centuries ago, students could raise a toast to the faculty.

I especially like to think that all of you will find a few faculty members worthy of a hearty Vivant! during your academic career here. One of the things we try to provide in the Honors Program is an intellectually respectful relationship between students and faculty members in the classroom and, better still, opportunities to interact informally outside of class. I hope you'll take advantage of both and get to know some of your professors, who, believe it or not, would give a good Vivat! or two for you.

In the meantime, I wish you all the best for the beginning of a great academic year.

Gaudeamus igitur, y'all.

The logo features the letters 'GT' in a large, bold, serif font. Below 'GT' is the word 'HYPeD' in a similar serif font, with the 'e' in 'HYPeD' being smaller and positioned between the 'Y' and 'P'. The 'GT' is significantly larger than the 'HYPeD'.

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