

**Dr. Peterson**

**Welcome: Gold & White Honors Gala**

Thursday, Feb. 12, 2015, InterContinental Hotel Buckhead

We're glad you could join us for our annual Gold & White Honors Gala. Georgia Tech has some of the most loyal alumni in the world.

The Georgia Tech Alumni Association (GTAA) is a rapidly expanding network of more than 142,000 alumni worldwide. In just the past five years, we have had 32,000 graduates, or more than 20 percent of the total alumni base, so your numbers are growing rapidly.

Tonight we celebrate and show appreciation for our outstanding alumni and friends for their service to the Institute, contributions in the community at large, and for the inspiration they provide for the alumni leaders of tomorrow. Your presence here tonight also helps support the Alumni Association's three student organizations — our Student Ambassadors, the Georgia Tech Student Foundation, and the Georgia Tech Student Alumni Association.

These organizations are nationally recognized, and this year the Student Alumni Association and Georgia Tech Student Foundation working together will break the student giving record, with more than 5,700 undergraduate, graduate and PhD students giving back to Tech through Roll Call. To put this in perspective, this is an over 26% giving rate.

You are helping ensure that the Georgia Tech Alumni Network and your Georgia Tech Alumni Association will be the nation's strongest for years to come.

We're enjoying a time of tremendous momentum:

**Engineered Biosystems Building (EBB):** When it opens in June 2015, it will significantly impact Georgia's economy by driving innovation; commercializing new devices, drugs, and technologies; forming new companies; and creating high-skill, high-paying jobs.

**Tech Square:** Last month, Home Depot joined our already strong lineup of innovation centers in Tech Square. It will take advantage of their location on campus by hiring Georgia Tech students and graduates, identifying joint research areas, and engaging faculty in employee development. NCR also recently announced that it will be moving from the suburbs to Tech Square.

**High Performance Computing Center (HPCC):** Across the street from Georgia Tech Hotel. With about 600,000 square feet, it will be 20 to 27 stories high, and Georgia Tech will use about one-third of it to house its state-of-the-art research computing.

**Campaign Georgia Tech:** Met its goal a year early, but pressing on to meet some specific goals. We're getting close to our goal of establishing 100 endowed chairs. We'll be concentrating on helping individual schools reach their fund-raising goals.

Georgia Tech alumni are in the public eye, nationally and internationally. We're excited that two of them will be featured speakers at our Commencement ceremonies in May. Former Georgia Tech President Dr. Wayne Clough, who in his most recent position served as the Smithsonian Institution secretary, will address the Friday-night session. And General Philip Breedlove, the Supreme Commander of NATO, will speak at the Saturday-afternoon session.

It's really a great Commencement lineup this year. Although he's not an alumnus, Arne Duncan, the U.S. secretary of education, will speak at the Saturday-morning session.

We are very grateful that you remain engaged and that you honor the Institute with your time, your gifts, and your service. Georgia Tech could not function at the high level it does without you. And a special congratulations to our alumni and friends who are about to receive awards. Thank you all for your loyalty and support, and please enjoy your evening. GO JACKETS!