

Update from Georgia Tech President Ángel Cabrera
September 2021



From the Desk of the President



Twenty years ago this month, Georgia Tech broke ground on the first construction projects that would become Tech Square. Part of President Emeritus' G. Wayne Clough's vision to make Tech more of an integral part of the Atlanta community, the development has played a major role in Georgia's emergence as a thriving hub for innovation and entrepreneurship.

Dear Georgia Tech Friends and Supporters:

If you haven't had a chance to read President Emeritus G. Wayne Clough's new memoir yet, I strongly recommend it. [***The Technological University Reimagined***](#) tells the story of Georgia Tech's journey during President Clough's 14 years at the helm — a period of growth that set us on a course to become the powerhouse we are today.

One particularly interesting chapter is dedicated to Tech Square and the decade-long journey — full of ups and downs and twists and turns — that would lead to the creation of one of the most remarkable innovation districts in the nation. It is a tale of visionary leadership, partnership, and long-term commitment, and a great example of how a leading research university can catalyze innovation, energize an economy, and transform a city.

Twenty years ago this month, Tech joined state and local officials along with private sector and community leaders to break ground on the first construction projects on Fifth Street, an area President Clough described as a wasteland of high chain-link fences, broken windows, abandoned buildings, and worse. Investments by Georgia Tech and the Georgia Tech Foundation would be followed by other projects from The University Financing Foundation

and the private sector — a process that would continue under the leadership of President Peterson. Today's Tech Square and the surrounding Midtown neighborhood are home to iconic companies, modern condominiums and apartments, retail, and restaurants alongside a thriving community of startups, business incubators, and corporate innovation centers.

A successful innovation ecosystem requires not just good hardware — the right buildings in the right locations — but also good software: the right talent and programs and a culture of innovation. There, too, Georgia Tech has been the driver. Through programs like the Advanced Technology Development Center, CREATE-X, VentureLab, and Engage, Georgia Tech has partnered with private and public organizations to attract, develop, and support entrepreneurial talent. In January, faculty-led battery startup Sila Nanotechnologies raised \$590 million to bring the company's valuation up to \$3.3 billion. And earlier this month, a student-led startup called Stord closed a \$90 million round of funding that raised the company's value to \$1.1 billion. With that, Stord became CREATE-X's first unicorn.

Our commitment to championing innovation remains as strong as ever. Last month, we appointed Professor Raghupathy "Siva" Sivakumar, co-founder and director of CREATE-X, as our first chief commercialization officer. A founder of three companies himself, Siva will lead our efforts to move intellectual property into the marketplace, strengthen our startup ecosystem, and help Atlanta and Georgia become examples of inclusive entrepreneurship.

While I reflect on our recent history, I'm happy to report that life on campus remains as vibrant as ever. As I was proud to report in my third Institute Address on Sept. 2, the 2020-21 academic year was one of the most impactful in our history. Despite the curveballs and complexities of the pandemic, we recruited our largest and most diverse class ever, received more applications than ever before, graduated our largest class, and received the greatest amount of research awards in Institute history. Our donors, alumni, and friends stepped up to give us one of our best fundraising years to date, and our endowment, under careful management from the Georgia Tech Foundation, grew into record-breaking territory.

Covid-19 remains a real concern, but thanks to our community's consistent, responsible behavior — high vaccination and surveillance testing rates, regular use of masks and face coverings in classrooms and labs, improvements in ventilation, and more — cases have been declining on campus for the last three weeks. Just like we did last year, I have no doubt that we will once again navigate the situation successfully and that our momentum will not slow down.

We indeed owe much to decisions that were made 25 years ago when visionary leaders like President Clough set us on this trajectory. I'm grateful for their leadership in the past, and I look forward to working with our entire community to build on our momentum even further, leading and inspiring by example through deliberate innovation in everything we do.

In Progress and Service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "David", written over a horizontal line.



President Cabrera's 2021 Institute Address

President Cabrera highlighted accomplishments from a record year for Georgia Tech at his annual Institute Address on Thursday, Sept. 2, to a masked audience in the Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons and nearly 750 viewers on YouTube.

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Georgia Tech Ranked Among Best Public Universities in the U.S.

In the 2022 *U.S. News & World Report* "Best Colleges" rankings, Tech was named the No. 10 Best Public University, and 20 degree programs ranked among the top 10 in the nation — 10 in engineering, five in business, and five in computer science.

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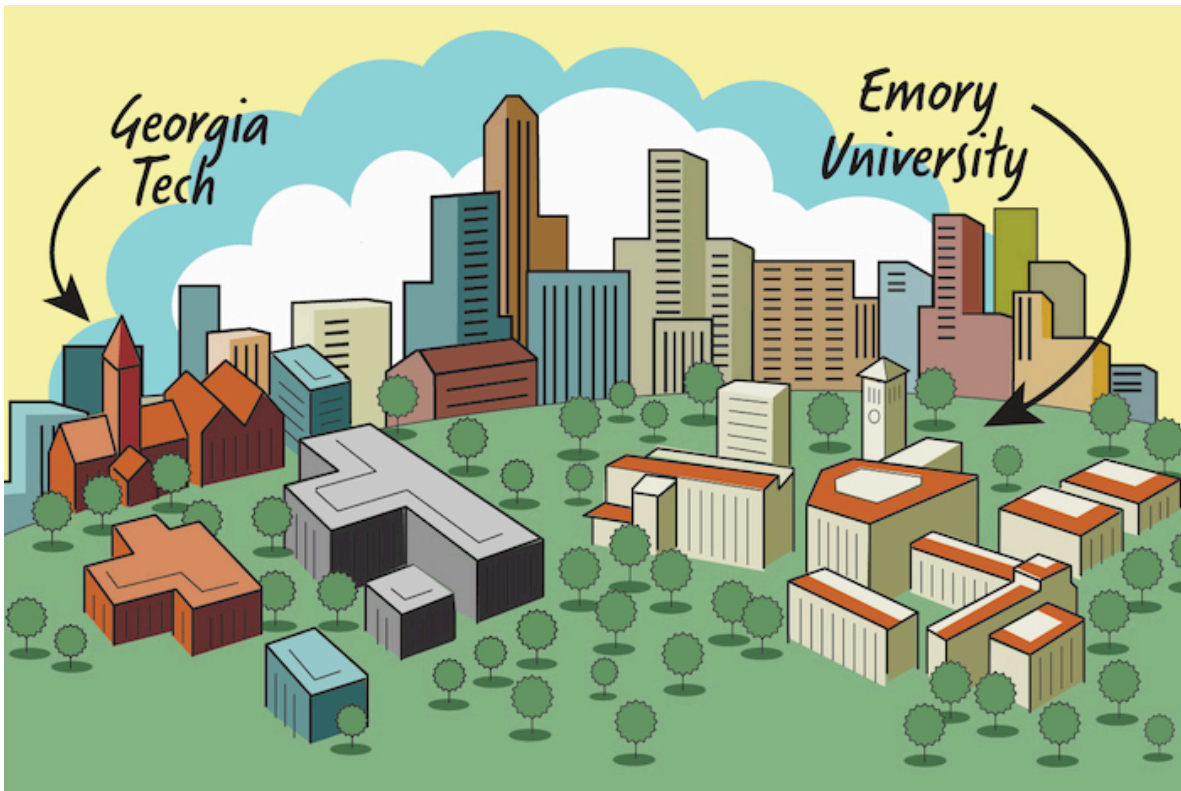




The Toilet, Reinvented

In a recent article for *Fortune*, Associate Professor Shannon Yee, the lead on the Generation II Reinvent the Toilet program supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, explains why the world urgently needs a safe, affordable toilet that can function without plumbing or sewer connections and discusses the prototype his global research team has developed, which will soon be tested in China, India, and South Africa.

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A Perfect Match

Though their main campuses are less than six miles apart, Georgia Tech and Emory have long leveraged their expertise to make a profound and lasting impact not just in their own backyards, but also throughout Georgia and across the globe. Learn about the powerhouse partnership between the two universities in this story from the Fall 2021 issue of *Emory Magazine*, which includes the latest episode of *Conversations With Cabrera* featuring Emory University President Gregory Fennes.

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R E M E M B E R I N G

S E P T E M B E R 11

Remembering September 11: 20 Years Later

For the 20th anniversary of 9/11, members of the Georgia Tech shared their accounts and stories of the day that changed our world forever. Their stories help us all remember those we lost and honor the bravery, resilience, and strength of those who endured.

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Visual Brand Refresh



Georgia Tech has refreshed its visual identity to closely align with the Institute's 10-year strategic plan. The identity refresh unifies the community around a singular, widely recognized icon — the interlocking GT — that will now celebrate our entire dynamic community of students, alumni, faculty, researchers, and staff.

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Raghupathy Sivakumar Appointed Vice President of Commercialization

Raghupathy “Siva” Sivakumar has been named Georgia Tech’s first vice president of commercialization and chief commercialization officer. The director of CREATE-X, the Institute’s student entrepreneurship program, and a professor who has co-founded multiple technology companies, Sivakumar will lead commercialization and technology transfer efforts to expand the Institute’s global impact.

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Two Decades of Tech Square

In the late 1990s, Georgia Tech purchased 8 acres along Fifth Street “across the bridge” from its main campus. The area soon grew to 13 acres, and the Institute celebrated a groundbreaking ceremony on Sept. 6, 2001. Two decades later, this Midtown neighborhood is now the bustling, vibrant jewel that is Tech Square.

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Georgia Tech Office of the President
Institute Communications, 177 North Ave. NW
Atlanta, GA, 30313, United States
[Unsubscribe](#)