

Dr. Peterson

Georgia Tech Retirement Dinner

6-9 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2013, Historic Academy of Medicine

On behalf of Georgia Tech, welcome to our retirees and your special guests.

Congratulate all of you on your retirement and thank you for your service to Georgia Tech. I would like to extend a special thanks to family members for your support.

Many times our jobs require that we go above and beyond, often requiring sacrifice on the part of our family and others closest to us.

Tonight we are celebrating the retirement of 114 Georgia Tech faculty and staff. I can't help but reflect on all the mindpower and experience that is going out the door. I did some quick math, and you might be impressed to know that you represent 2,274 years of service to the Georgia Institute of Technology, along with your historical knowledge.

In these times of continual change it is impressive to see individuals like each of you who devoted the better part, if not all, of your career to one institution. This type of service provides a level of continuity that greatly benefits Georgia Tech and our students. Thank you for investing your career at Georgia Tech.

Nineteen of you have been here 30 years or longer, including six of you have been here 35 years or longer. Mike Harris came to Georgia Tech 40 years ago. He retired as Principal Research Engineer and Associate Laboratory Director of the Electro-optical Systems Laboratory. In 1973 when he started, the median household income, in current dollars, was \$10,512. A first-class stamp cost eight cents.

Probably the most interesting experience was shared about Andrew Licausi, (Le KOW se) who came to Tech in 1980. During a business trip to Eglin Air Force Base, he was chased by a black bear. Now that begs some questions. That is also going above and beyond the call of duty.

No matter how many years you have been a part of Georgia Tech, we are where we are today because of you and others like you who have devoted their careers or portions of their careers to our Institute.

You all have interesting Tech stories and memories, and I am looking forward to Dr. Bras and Scott Morris sharing a bit about everyone tonight.

Whether you know it or not, you have made an impact on hundreds, if not thousands of lives. Your institutional knowledge, your expertise in your fields, and the relationships you've developed are irreplaceable. It could be large projects that took months, if not years, to complete.

Or, it could be the little things you did as you went about doing your job on a daily basis. You'll never know how an encouraging word, a note, an e-mail, or taking time to help or mentor a co-worker, or student or representing Georgia Tech to a visitor, a parent, or another community member made an impact on someone's life.

You're leaving something very valuable behind. You've all contributed to Georgia Tech's success. We didn't get to a national top ten ranking among public research universities and an international reputation for excellence without a lot of hard work from faculty and staff throughout the campus.

As you know, Georgia Tech is a special place. It should make you feel proud to know that you have been a part of an Institute where students are preparing to be leaders and innovators, and we're addressing some of society's greatest challenges, including everything from finding cures for diseases to developing solutions for energy and clean water. Somehow, your work will go on, but the real legacy that you are leaving is people—the lives you have touched, the difference you have made.

And let me clarify. You are not really leaving Georgia Tech. Some of you, in fact, have come back part-time or hope to do so. I know you will be watching with interest, coming back to campus for special events, and serving as an ambassador for Georgia Tech everywhere you go in this next chapter of your life. Congratulations, and thank you for making a lifetime investment in the people of Georgia Tech.