

Update from Georgia Tech President Ángel Cabrera
April 2021



From the Desk of **THE PRESIDENT**



President Cabrera invited the No. 22 women's basketball team to visit Carnegie Hall to celebrate the team's historic season — one of the best on record at Georgia Tech — which included a trip to the semifinals at the ACC Championship and a run to the Sweet 16 in the NCAA Tournament.

Dear Georgia Tech Friends and Supporters:

What a year this has been for Georgia Tech athletics! During the year of Covid-19 and endless health protocols and complications — a year when we most needed some bright light, something exciting to cheer for — our teams showed up, did the work, represented us beautifully, and brought home some amazing wins!

When traveling abroad, I am often asked about the role of competitive sports in American universities. That's because intercollegiate athletics is indeed a uniquely American phenomenon. In my hometown of Madrid, young athletes must choose between pursuing their sport or going to college. There's no easy way to do both. Over the years, I have come to appreciate the amazing opportunity we offer young athletes in the U.S. to earn a degree and play competitively at the same time. And Georgia Tech offers one of the nation's most remarkable programs in that regard.

Our student-athletes compete at the highest level in their sport, and they complete a rigorous degree that will prepare them to succeed in life whether or not they go on to play professionally. They also develop practical, valuable skills that are in high demand by leading employers: leadership, teamwork, discipline, time management, methods for handling success and failure, and more. Led by former Athletics Director Homer Rice, the Institute actually pioneered an educational approach called the “Total Person Project” that weaves together leadership development, professional development, wellness, and community outreach. The NCAA has since adopted this model for their NCAA Life Skills program.

It should come as no surprise that [94 of our student-athletes interned with top companies last summer](#) — UPS, Cola-Cola, Lockheed Martin, Deloitte, Southern Company, and IBM, to mention a few. If you’re looking for talented individuals who can lead, work well with others, operate under pressure, solve problems, and get the job done, look no further.

During the exciting finale of the ACC Men's Basketball Tournament, the ESPN commentators highlighted the fact that Kyle Sturdivant, a terrific sophomore guard from Norcross, Georgia, was an aerospace engineering major. (They also mistakenly asserted students can only major in engineering and business at Tech, a humorous claim that was [quickly clarified on social media](#).) What may be shocking to some is the norm at Georgia Tech. And yes, this group of scholars beat the Florida State Seminoles 80-75 and brought home the ACC trophy for the first time since Beth and I were students at Tech in 1993. What a memorable night!

This season's list of athletic achievements is long! Six of our teams are ranked among the top 25. Our men's and women's swimming and diving teams joined our women's basketball and cross country teams for historic seasons and some of the best national finishes on record at Georgia Tech. Six track and field athletes rank among the top 30 in the nation for seven different events. Two weeks ago, the No. 23 volleyball team made it to the second round of the NCAA Women's Volleyball Tournament. This past Sunday, our No. 15 women's tennis team competed against the University of North Carolina in the ACC Championship final. Over on the diamond, catcher Kevin Parada is one of just four true college freshmen to make the midseason watchlist for the Golden Spikes Award, which recognizes the best amateur baseball player in the country. And so far, 11 of our student-athletes have been named All-Americans alongside seven honorable mentions. And with some spring seasons still to be completed, I bet those lists aren't complete.

But what I'm most proud of is seeing our student-athletes grow as leaders ready to change the world for the better. Accomplished scholars and competitive athletes? Yes, we can do that.

And if that weren't enough, this work was twice as hard this year. Covid-19 prescribed us to stay apart. But sports often require that we come together. That is the power of the huddle, [as our former Head Football Coach Bill Curry put so eloquently](#). It wasn't easy. But our students, coaches, and staff did it. They adapted creatively. They found a path forward. They made progress toward their degrees. And they brought excitement to our lives and gave us moments to remember.

In Progress and Service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dugel", with a long horizontal line extending to the right and a loop at the bottom.



Land Where Change Continues

Students, administrators, and guests gathered on April 20 to commemorate Georgia Tech's transformation of the former home of The Pickrick, a restaurant notorious for its refusal to integrate in 1964, into a pioneering achievement of sustainable design that weaves together history, social justice, and ecology.

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Serve-Learn-Sustain Earns National Recognition for Campus Sustainability

Serve-Learn-Sustain (SLS) was named a winner of the 2020 Campus Sustainability Achievement Award by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). The award, which honors higher education institutions for successful implementation of projects that advance sustainability, recognized SLS's Affiliated Courses Program.

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Kendeda Earns Living Building Challenge

Certification

Last week, The Kendeda Building for Innovative Sustainable Design earned Living Building Challenge certification, the world's most ambitious and holistic green building achievement. The certification from the International Living Future Institute, which requires that a building contribute more energy and water than it uses, independently verifies that The Kendeda Building is among the greenest in the world.

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Yellow Jackets Among Forbes' 30 Under 30

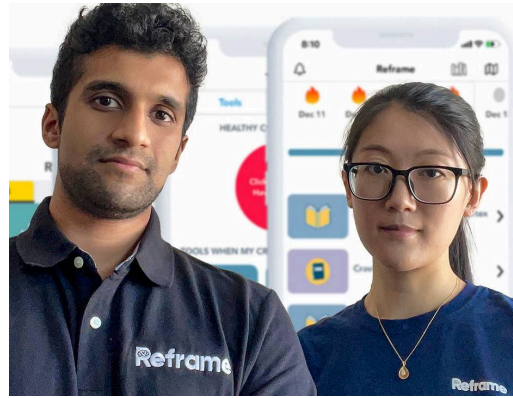
Each year, Forbes selects just 30 winners out of 15,000 nominations for their popular and coveted "30 Under 30" list. This year's honorees include many individuals with a variety of connections to Georgia Tech. From social media to consumer technology, from manufacturing to computer science, Yellow Jackets are making a splash.

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Booze Blues

With the pandemic fueling alcohol consumption, alumni Zivi Gao (IE 2017) and Vedant Pradeep (CHE/CMPE 2019) launched a sobriety app last fall. Called "Reframe," the product has attracted more than 3,000 paid subscribers as well as \$1.4 million in seed funding from investors.

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EcoCommons Grand Opening

Under construction since early last year, the **new 8-acre section of the EcoCommons** officially opened April 19 during Earth Week. The site at the corner of Ferst Drive and Hemphill Avenue is equal parts learning laboratory, sustainable design model, historic landmark, art exhibit, well-being studio, and civil rights monument.

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Conversations With Cabrera

In the latest installment of his unscripted video series, President Cabrera sits down with Diana Blank, founder of The Kendeda Fund, the charitable foundation that supported the creation of The Kendeda Building for Innovative Sustainable Design. They discuss the Living Building Challenge, new environmental sustainability solutions, and some of their favorite aspects of the building.

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