

**Dr. Peterson**

**North Avenue Apartments LEED Award**

3:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 9, North Avenue Apartments bus turnaround

Thank you Mike. Georgia Tech's first LEED Existing Building Operations and Maintenance certification is more than another certification. It is more than a story of going green. It is a living laboratory of team building, of being a role model, of working to maximize our students' opportunities to learn while they are in college at Georgia Tech.

LEED certification is a massively resource-intensive process. To undertake a project of this scale, with this variety of living space is remarkable. In fact the 2,000-bed student apartment community is the largest university housing complex in the world to achieve the LEED EB O&M certification. It includes five buildings representing nearly 1 million square feet. It is highly-visible, and will be a powerful symbol of Georgia Tech's leadership in sustainability and innovation.

Sustainability, at its best, can drive innovation. Things like smart irrigation systems come to mind. Those flashy light -sabre like bottles of ionized water and cleaning with microfiber cloths comes to mind. Sustainability means using energy efficient heating and cooling like an enthalpy wheel that has a five-year payback and uses waste heat/cooling recovery and pre-conditioned air.

While new technologies are impressive, the big payoff comes from team building and helping to change behaviors. People learn by doing what they see, not just what they are told. Housing is known for doing the right thing, for going the extra mile to enrich the student experience. This certification is one more example of that. The Housing team has implemented a creative outreach to students, and retrained its staff about the changes wrought by this certification process. Working together, they are providing an environment that offers our students who chose to live in residence halls a study/live/work/play/stay environment that better contributes to their health and ability to take full advantage of their college experience at Georgia Tech.

This building complex is one of the biggest and contains the most varied types of building uses. Upgrading cleaning, operations, and maintenance for all these systems and processes was a massive task. It could only be done in three short years by people who are committed to a common vision and are committed to our students. Roz Meyers, Mike Black, Fran Gillis, Bob Canada, and many others have made this happen on a scale that otherwise simply could not be achieved in such a short time without their vision and commitment. I would like to offer a personal “thank you” to everyone involved.