

Dr. Peterson

Reception for Hong Kong Alumni, Admitted Students, Parents and Developmental Council

5:30-8 p.m. Wednesday, April 23, 2014, Sheraton Hong Kong Hotel and Tower

Good evening. We are very honored to be with you in Hong Kong. It is so good to be able to visit with admitted students, parents and their guests. I understand you have met several of us who are here from Georgia Tech, including Georgia Tech's First Lady Val Peterson.

I would also like to give special thanks from our whole delegation to Vincent Cheng, who is the father of Georgia Tech student Yam Sut Cheng. Yam received his B.S. in math last year at the ripe old age of 15 and is completing his M.S. this year at age 16. Next, he'll be going for his Ph.D.

Vincent has been so helpful. He arranged our ground transportation in Taipei and will do the same in Hong Kong, Shenzhen, and Shanghai. He has also made a generous contribution to support development of a newsletter and other communications in Mandarin, along with activities to help graduate students acclimate to life in the U.S. Vincent, thank you very much.

Georgia Tech is a global institution. Universities, companies and governments from around the world continuously look to Georgia Tech in their efforts to grow science, business, and technology, as well as literacy about these fields.

Georgia Tech partners internationally on everything from research and teaching to logistics. The Institute has almost 1,100 academic faculty, 21,500 students, and 140,000 alumni living and working around the world. It is getting more difficult each year to be admitted to Georgia Tech, and I commend the admitted students for being accepted to our prestigious institution. Congratulations. Georgia Tech is ranked as the seventh-best public university in the United States. It has America's largest engineering program, and it is one of the best in the U.S. and in the world. The

Academic Ranking of World Universities, or Shanghai Rankings, lists Georgia Tech number eight in the world in engineering/technology and computer sciences. Georgia Tech also has outstanding programs in architecture, computing, liberal arts, business, and the sciences.

Our total enrollment from Asian countries is 3,645, and 1,248 of those are undergraduates. Georgia Tech students represent 115 different countries, including of course, China. In fall 2013 Georgia Tech had 465 undergraduate students and 1,005 graduate students from China. The Institute's visibility in the Chinese academic community is increasing dramatically. For example, in 2007 Georgia Tech received 36 applications from Chinese students. For fall 2013, we received 1,854. In fiscal 2013, Georgia Tech conferred a total of 343 degrees to students from China — 44 bachelor's, 237 master's and 62 doctoral. For fall 2014, we have 233 admitted students from China.

In fall 2013, we had 21 students from Hong Kong enrolled — three at the undergraduate level and 18 at the graduate level. We would like to add to those numbers in fall 2014, when we have 11 students from Taiwan who have been accepted for admission. We hope a substantial portion of those 11 will decide that Georgia Tech is the place for them.

To help international students succeed at Georgia Tech, Dr. Tong Zhou, herself once a stranger to the United States who understands how difficult the adjustment can be, has created a mentor program to help acclimate students to the American culture. We also offer a GT 1000 class, providing mentorship for first-year students' entire first semester. There are more than 400 student organizations, including the Hong Kong Student Association, that help students become more involved and offer leadership opportunities while in college.

When students graduate from Georgia Tech, they are prepared as innovators and leaders. Students are an active part of research and discovery, and in fact, over 70 percent of invention disclosures name one or more students among the inventors. Most are offered good jobs immediately upon graduation. For two years in a row, *SmartMoney* magazine has named Georgia Tech as number one in the U.S. for return on investment.

Almost five years ago the faculty, staff, students of Georgia Tech, along with alumni and community leaders joined together to create a 25-year strategic plan, called “Designing the Future.” It was launched in fall 2010, and is posted on the Georgia Tech website. One of the five main goals of the plan is to “Expand Our Global footprint and Influence to Ensure That We Are Graduating Good Global Citizens.” Our global positioning strategy includes the goals of

- expanding the world’s footprint at Georgia Tech in Atlanta,
- expanding and leveraging Georgia Tech’s impact around the globe,
- and embracing and supporting globally engaged students.

Currently 46 percent of Georgia Tech graduates have some form of international experience during their undergraduate career, compared to the U.S. national average of 10 percent.

Georgia Tech partners in research and education in several countries around the world. Georgia Tech faculty, staff, and students have a global impact. For example, our faculty have created a model to forecast flooding in Pakistan as many as 10 days in advance. They are developing logistical solutions for the Panama Canal. They’re involved in interdisciplinary research to find new, more effective ways to fight diseases. They are working on solutions to such global challenges as air pollution, energy, and clean water all over the world, as well as big data, cyber security, and advanced manufacturing.

I wish all of you could visit the main campus. It is 400 acres located in the middle of the city. In addition to being beautifully landscaped and winning awards for sustainability, the campus offers outstanding resources for learning.

For those admitted students here, you should know that you are among a select group of students to get into Georgia Tech. Of the some 25,000 who applied for fall 2014, only about 2,500 were offered admission. Most of those have a grade-point average of above 4.0. You were selected not only for your impressive academic ability, but also because you have demonstrated leadership skills in your schools and communities.

While you are at Georgia Tech, we will partner with you and help you develop as a leader and innovator. Even before you graduate, you will have opportunities to start your own companies and create inventions that will make our world a better place. At Georgia Tech, we have a number of traditions. One that I particularly like occurs every year during the first week of May, when I personally get to shake the hand of every student who graduates. I look forward to seeing you at Georgia Tech and shaking your hand when you walk up to accept your diploma.