

Tech Continues to Make Its Presence Felt

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To all our students, returning and new, welcome back to campus and another academic year! I hope each of you found some time to expand your horizons over the summer months — whether it involved taking a vacation, pursuing hobbies, or, to paraphrase the novelist Marcel Proust, “learning to see the world with new eyes.” It is important to stretch yourselves.

At Georgia Tech, we enjoyed a productive and noteworthy summer. In June, we saw the impact just one individual can have. Through his [\\$50-million transformational gift](#), Ernest Scheller Jr., a 1952 alumnus, has helped position us to further strengthen the reputation of our renamed Ernest Scheller Jr. College of Business as one of the world’s very best.

Among the reasons Ernie shared for making such a commitment was: “Georgia Tech taught me the importance of perseverance and persistence.” While his generosity has had an unprecedented impact on our College of Business, I believe its impact will inspire the larger Georgia Tech community to continue to boldly envision a future of globally renowned excellence and quality.

As we have each of the past three summers, [Val and I spent a week in June traveling around Georgia, trying to understand how Georgia Tech can better serve the state’s needs](#). We traversed a 900-mile route through south Georgia, meeting with alumni, legislators, regents, the media, industry partners, as well as current and potential students. Over a four-day period, we visited 43 of Georgia’s 159 counties, and participated in more than 20 events across the state.

During our travels, we tasted boiled peanuts for the first time in Plains, saw live alligators at one of our alum’s “alligator farm” and experienced our first “low country boil” in Jesup. Most of all, we enjoyed the opportunity to see the Institute’s impact firsthand.

From the large metro areas to the small rural communities, Georgia Tech truly serves the entire state, not only through the students we educate, but also through our programs to assist local businesses and industries, helping them improve efficiency and streamline operations. We saw examples of that engagement both across the educational spectrum and through our business partnerships. Hearing the many stories of our impact — how the expertise developed at Georgia Tech resonates beyond our campus boundaries — makes me realize how important Georgia Tech is to the state’s economy.

In July, we learned that the National Science Foundation had selected Georgia Tech, along with Stanford and the University of Michigan, to be among [one of three initial Regional Centers in its Innovation Corps \(I-Corps\) program](#). This is an exciting effort to couple scientific discovery with technology development and societal needs. It is also the latest addition to the entrepreneurial culture that is thriving in Technology Square.

Today, Tech Square is an innovation ecosystem, bringing together needed resources, expertise and opportunities for collaboration. It’s an environment where innovation can flourish, and serves as a unique resource for the Southeast.

Georgia Tech is also partnering with the [Georgia Department of Economic Development](#) to attract new businesses and industries to the state. Tech Square serves as the home for [Flashpoint](#), Tech’s startup accelerator that offers entrepreneurial education and access to innovators, mentors and investors. Panasonic recently announced that its new auto innovation center would be located in

Tech Square, and said that a driving factor was the company's interest in enhancing its partnership with Georgia Tech. Our economic development center, [Enterprise Innovation Institute \(EI²\)](#), is also headquartered in Tech Square. It is home to both the Technology Association of Georgia and the state's Technology Hall of Fame.

This month, we have had the unique opportunity of participating in the production of a major motion picture, "The Internship." Some of you may even have been among the more than 200 individuals chosen to be a part of the filming. Despite some inconveniences, I believe the net impact will be a big plus for Georgia Tech; it is, after all an exceptional compliment to Georgia Tech to be favorably compared to Google's campus. I thank you for your patience with any challenges the filmmaking process may have presented.

Finally, I would like to invite all of you to join me for [Georgia Tech's annual Institute Address](#) on Tuesday, Aug. 28, at 11 a.m. in the Clough Commons. The event is an opportunity to celebrate our past accomplishments as well as outline our goals for the upcoming year. I hope to see you there.