

Address at U.S. Department of Commerce Innovation Forum Held at Tech

On July 15, 2010, President Peterson spoke at a U.S. Department of Commerce University Innovation Forum held on the Georgia Tech campus attended by about 120 leaders from U.S. universities, business, industry and professional organizations. Tech was selected by the Department of Commerce to host one of four forums to throughout the country.

Good Morning. It is my great pleasure to welcome you to Atlanta and to Georgia Tech. We are very excited to be able to serve as the host for this, the fourth of four forums held by the Department of Commerce over a two-week period, including one on June 29th at the University of Massachusetts; July 8th at the University of Southern California; and one held this past Tuesday at the University of Michigan.

I would like to extend a special welcome to the Honorable Gary Locke, Secretary of Commerce. We applaud the Obama administration for recognizing the pivotal role that universities have in technology commercialization and economic development – And, for taking definitive steps to identify ways in which we can maximize their role to help drive economic growth. We are honored to work together with the Department of Commerce to help implement the President's innovation strategy.

Research universities across the country are making significant contributions to the economic strength and vitality of both their local communities and our nation.

Here in Georgia, these contributions have been highlighted in a newly released report that reveals that the University System of Georgia, led by Georgia Tech and the University of Georgia had a \$12.7 billion dollar economic impact on the state's economy during Fiscal Year 2009, up 65% from 1999.

As part of this impact, the combined university system generated over 112,000 jobs. 62 percent of which are jobs that are not part of the USG payroll, but rather jobs that are the direct result of the technologies and impact of these universities and colleges on the local economies.

In addition to the direct impact, our research universities serve as incubators for scientific and technological innovation. We can thank America's research universities for

- seatbelts, Gatorade, the LCDs that paved the way for laptop displays and digital watches, and the Hepatitis B vaccine in the 1960's,
- CAT Scans, MRI, and recombinant DNA technology in the 1970's,
- the first instrument for LASER cataract surgery in the 1980's, and
- among numerous other things, drugs to treat HIV in the 1990's.

Breakthrough research continues, with many solutions now being developed at the intersection of traditional disciplines. And many of the most powerful outcomes are the result of partnerships between universities, business and industry, and the government.

Universities have a very special role in the innovation agenda—performing the nation's and the world's leading edge research, but also helping to commercialize the results of that research.

At Georgia Tech, we believe that innovation and technology are going to be some of the most important drivers of a diverse and thriving 21st century economy.

Here at Georgia Tech, commercialization is deeply ingrained in our mission

We are actively and aggressively working to develop and commercialize the technologies developed here at Tech, moving the discoveries made in our laboratories to the marketplace and building the companies that will create the jobs that will drive our economy and stimulate economic growth.

Perhaps most importantly, we are we are preparing our students to be innovative entrepreneurs and leaders.

Last month we celebrated the 30th anniversary of the ATDC, our Advanced Technology Development Center, headquartered just down the street.

To date, the ATDC has incubated more than 120 start-up companies, and since 1980, its companies have generated more than \$13 billion in revenue and more than \$100 million dollars in profits.

ATDC has just been named by Forbes Magazine to its new list of the “10 technology incubators that are changing the world.”

These changes are being motivated, not just by Georgia Tech, but by the partnerships we are forming - let me give you just one example.

This spring Georgia’s Governor, Sonny Perdue, announced that GE Energy, a world-leading supplier of power generation and energy delivery technologies, will open its Smart Grid Technology Center of Excellence in Cobb County, just a few miles from Atlanta. This project represents a \$15 million dollar investment, and will create more than 400 jobs over the next three years.

GE Energy initially partnered with Georgia Tech, to develop its workforce and conduct research and now is expanding that partnership to develop coursework for a Professional Masters in Systems Engineering degree in smart grid systems and technologies. They are also partnering with the University System of Georgia’s Intellectual Capital Partnership program (ICAPP).

Universities have a special role in training the next generation of inventors and entrepreneurs. At Georgia Tech, we pay particular attention to equipping our students with the tools they need to make discoveries, and the skills necessary to turn those discoveries into products – helping them to realize that an idea is not an invention; an invention is not a product, and a product is not a business. We are doing this through programs like our InVenture Prize competition for undergraduate students -- a sort of American Idol for those who “invent” rather than “perform.”

This year’s competition drew 300 entries. Not only do the winners receive cash awards; the first and second place finishers \$15,000 and \$10,000; perhaps more importantly they received a commitment for Tech to help them commercialize and license their technologies. First and second place winners are promised a free U.S. patent filing from the Georgia Tech Office of Technology Licensing, each valued at approximately \$20,000.

We also have a very successful program called TI:GER, or Technological Innovation: Generating Economic Results, a partnership with Emory that puts together teams consisting of PhD, MBA, and law students to focus on the commercialization of student generated ideas and research.

It is interesting to note that in 2008, nearly 40% of the individuals filing invention disclosures here at Tech were either graduate or undergraduate students.

This morning, I have tried to share with you, some of the innovative things we’re doing at Georgia Tech.

Today, we’re looking forward to hearing from you as you share your ideas on the ways that business and industry, government, and our research universities can join together to stimulate economic growth.

To start us off, it is now my pleasure to introduce our keynote speaker, the Honorable Gary Locke. In his first year as Secretary of Commerce, Secretary Locke has launched a new Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, as well as a National Advisory Council on Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

He is leading the federal economic development agenda, and has been tasked with the goal of creating ten million jobs in ten years.

Since assuming his role this past year, Secretary Locke has been promoting the Administration’s efforts to help America’s entrepreneurs succeed by freeing up credit markets, increasing investments in America’s physical

and intellectual infrastructure, and instituting tax credits and other incentives to help foster promising industries like renewable energy and smart grid technologies.

Prior to his appointment as Secretary of Commerce, Mr. Locke assisted U.S. companies to move into international markets as a partner in the Seattle office of the international law firm, Davis Wright and Tremaine. He was a two-term governor of Washington, the nation's most trade-dependent state, and broke down trade barriers around the world to advance American products.

Please join me in welcoming our Secretary of Commerce, the honorable Gary Locke.