REMARKS BY GEORGIA TECH PRESIDENT G. WAYNE CLOUGH
Present Distinguished Professor Award to C.P. Wong
Faculty-Staff Awards Luncheon, April 7, 2004

I want to begin by thanking the classes of 1934 and 1940, which have provided us with the means to honor and reward outstanding performances by the Georgia Tech faculty. As our alumni see the value of their Georgia Tech education demonstrated in their careers, they invariably pay tribute our superb and hard-working faculty as the critical factor in that education. The classes of 1934 and 1940 understood how important it was to encourage and recognize excellence demonstrated by the faculty, and the endowments they created are what make Georgia Tech's top faculty awards possible.

With so many outstanding faculty to choose from, narrowing the field down to one person to receive Georgia Tech's highest faculty honor is always a difficult task. But each year, the committee somehow manages to come up with just the right person to recommend for the Distinguished Professor Award.

This year is certainly no exception, because Regents Professor C.P. Wong from Materials Science and Engineering does it all. He is a world-renowned researcher who has generated 26 patent applications, published over 400 technical papers plus three books, done over 280 presentations, and raised over $17 million in research projects – just in the seven years since he came to Georgia Tech.

But it would be a mistake to infer from these incredible research numbers that he is not interested in students. Since he came to Georgia Tech in 1996, he has developed two graduate courses and one undergraduate course in Materials Science and Engineering, plus one cross-discipline, hands-on course between MSE and Electrical and Computer Engineering. His students rank him very highly in both the graduate and the undergraduate courses he teaches. He has graduated seven PhD students and 14 master's degree students, and advised 14 undergraduates as well as 12 post-docs and visiting scholars.

He is a strong advocate for life-long learning, emphasizing both theoretical and practical, and involving students of all types in his research lab at the Microsystems Packaging Research Center. Every summer since he came to Tech, he has taken participants from four unique Georgia Tech programs into his lab and under his wing. They include:

- SURF, a Georgia Tech summer research program for undergraduates;
- SURS a Georgia Tech summer undergraduate research program for under-represented minority students;
- the GIFT program, which exposes high school science and math teachers to work in their disciplines through summer fellowships;
- And the Summer Research Experience Projects for high school students. Last summer he served as the advisor for one and co-advisor for a second of six high school students who did summer research projects with the Microsystems Packing Research Center.

In fact, it was the opportunity to teach and interact with students that drew C.P. Wong away from a successful career at AT&T Bell Laboratories and brought him into the classroom at Georgia Tech.

Dr. Wong started out in chemistry, earning his B.S. at Purdue University and his Ph.D. at Penn State University. His work as a student was so outstanding that he was awarded a two-year post-doctoral fellowship with Nobel Laureate Henry Taube at Stanford University. During his post-doctoral work he attracted the attention of the world's scientific community by becoming the first person to synthesize the first known lanthanide and actinide porphyrin complexes. Porphyrin comes from the Greek word for purple, and it describes a ring of 16 atoms that combines readily with metals.

C. P. Wong's ground-breaking work at Stanford opened the door of opportunity, and in 1977, he joined AT&T Bell Laboratories, one of the corporate world's largest research labs. During his 19-year career at Bell Labs, he was involved with the research and development of polymeric materials for electronic and photonic applications. In 1992, he was elected an AT&T Bell Laboratories Fellow, which is the most prestigious award bestowed by Bell Labs, for his fundamental contributions to low-cost, high-performance plastic packaging of semiconductors.

Dr. Wong's excellent work has continued at Georgia Tech's Microsystems Packaging Research Center. As a research director, he coordinates research thrusts in electronic assembly, reliability, thermal management, and electrical testing, which involve 10 faculty, 5 post-doctoral fellows, 50 graduate students, and 15 undergraduates. And as a director of industrial liaison and technology transfer, he has personally recruited 16 member companies to the PRC. His efforts have helped to make to make the Packaging Research Center one of NSF's top centers, and he has been specifically cited in NSF reports for his exceptional contributions and leadership in fostering interdisciplinary research and education.

If I were to try to enumerate all of Dr. Wong's many honors, we would be here all afternoon, so let me just give you a brief sampling of some of the most prestigious ones. He is a member of the National Academy of Engineering, and a fellow of both IEEE and AIC. In fact, he has served the IEEE-CPMT Society as both technical vice president and president. He has received over 25 Outstanding and Best Paper awards from IEEE and IMAPS – the International Materials and Packaging Society – since coming to Georgia Tech in 1996. And his work has been so outstanding that in 2000 he became the first professor ever to be named a Regents Professor before achieving tenure.

It is a great honor to present Georgia Tech's highest faculty tribute, the Distinguished Professor Award, to Regents Professor C. P. Wong of Materials Science and Engineering.