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Update from Georgia Tech President Ángel Cabrera  
May 2025



## From the Desk of the President



More than 6,600 Yellow Jackets graduated during the Spring 2025 Commencement, making it the largest Commencement in Georgia Tech history. *(Photo by Allison Carter)*

Dear Friends:

On Friday morning of Commencement weekend, as we were robing for the ceremony, one of our graduating students, Madelyn Novelli, couldn't hide her excitement as she shared with me that her parents had just made it to town in time for the ceremony. Their flight from New Jersey was canceled the day before, but nothing was going to keep them from being there on their daughter's special day. So, they got in the car and drove 14 hours straight through the night. They made it — and then had an even bigger surprise during the ceremony when I introduced Maddie as the reflection speaker. Their priceless reaction was [featured on NBC's Today](#).

Think about it: When they decided to drive from New Jersey, they had no idea their daughter would be delivering the student address to a packed McCamish Pavilion. They didn't need to know that. All they wanted was to see their daughter walk across the stage. That's how much that moment mattered to them. And that is the best possible reminder of why we do what we do.

This Spring Commencement was the largest in Georgia Tech history, with more than 6,600 Yellow Jackets earning their degrees. All told, we conferred 3,115 bachelor's degrees, 3,320 master's degrees, and 225 doctorates. Together with the 6,400 degrees we conferred this

past December, we set another record for the most degrees ever conferred during a single academic year — more than 13,000! Ultimately, what makes Georgia Tech one of the best universities in our nation is not rankings or even research funding — and we're grateful for those too — but the lives we help transform for the better. Let me share a few of them.

[Gianna Fiduccia](#) is a chemical and biomolecular engineering major from Yardley, Pennsylvania. Gianna was inspired to follow the example set by her mother and grandmother, both chemical engineering pioneers, who showed her that there's nothing she couldn't do. Her longtime goal has been to work in pharma and biotech. As an undergraduate, she completed internships at Merck and Moderna and worked in the lab of [Mark Prausnitz](#), where she assisted with the development of a revolutionary microneedle patch to administer vaccines and other medicines. She's now on her way to the University of Pennsylvania to begin her Ph.D.

A mechanical engineering major (and *Star Wars* fan) from Bonaire, Georgia, Lucas Garza spent a lot of his time as an undergraduate at the Flowers Invention Studio. There, he helped lead one of the premier student-run makerspaces in the nation. Over the years, he served as president, vice president of finance, and director of safety and sustainability, all while also assisting students with their design and fabrication projects as a peer instructor. He also made a [Tech-themed set of Mandalorian armor](#) that he frequently sported at football games! Along the way, he took an internship at Mercer Engineering Research Center in Warner Robins, which he has since parlayed into a full-time job. Once he gets settled this summer, he'll continue to work on engineering specialized tooling kits for the F-15 Eagle.

Said Gomez, a bachelor's administration major from Lawrenceville, Georgia, graduated alongside his brother (and fellow business major), William. As undergraduates, the brothers interned together at Amazon Web Services (AWS) in Arlington, Virginia, and even founded their own company, [WISEFYI](#), which provides consulting services to help students earn valuable scholarships and internships. (As you might have guessed, they happen to be experts!) This summer, they're both heading back to AWS to launch their careers.

At Georgia Tech, these stories are not exceptions; they're the norm. With the help of the state, we've kept tuition low — in-state students pay less in tuition and fees today than they did when I arrived as president six years ago. We deliver one of the best graduation rates in the nation, and we work with industry to help our graduates land the highest-paying jobs. This is why Bloomberg ranked Georgia Tech No. 2 among public universities for return on investment and why The Princeton Review named us No. 1 for both best value and career placement. If you're ever drawn into a debate about the value of a college degree, you can confidently use Georgia Tech as an example.

This year's record-setting new class is a perfect picture of our value in action. We're honored to attract thousands of the best and brightest students the world has to offer, and nothing else we do at Georgia Tech takes priority over their development and success. We are proud of the impact we get to have on their lives, their families, the organizations that employ them, and the communities they live in and enrich. And, with your help, we're becoming an example of value for students and one of the largest top-tier universities in the world.

Thank you for everything you do to support our students and our mission, and please join me in celebrating our new graduates, their outstanding accomplishments, and the bright futures ahead of them. Go Jackets!

In Progress and Service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "David", written over a horizontal line.

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## Chris Klaus Empowers Grads to Launch Startups

Christopher Klaus, a renowned tech entrepreneur and Georgia Tech alumnus, announced during his Spring 2025 Commencement address that he will personally cover the incorporation costs for any graduating student aspiring to launch a startup.

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## 2025 Regents' Awards Recognize Georgia Tech Faculty and Programs

The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia honored Georgia Tech with 17 distinctions and awards, reflecting the Institute's ongoing commitment to academic excellence, innovative practices, and impactful leadership.

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## Karie Davis-Nozemack to Serve as Interim Provost

Karie Davis-Nozemack, associate provost and executive chief of staff in the Office of the Provost, will serve as interim provost beginning June 1, following the departure of Steven McLaughlin. A tenured faculty member in the Scheller College of Business, Davis-Nozemack has made significant contributions across the Institute since arriving in 2011.

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## **Willie Pearson Jr. Receives Class of 1934 Distinguished Professor Award**

Willie Pearson Jr., Regents' Professor in the School of History and Sociology, was awarded this year's Class of 1934 Distinguished Professor Award. The highest honor given to a Georgia Tech professor, the award recognizes significant, long-term contributions to teaching, research, and public service.

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## **Artistic Innovation at the Heart of Georgia Tech's Newest District**

Georgia Tech is announcing its newest district, an arts and innovation hub called Creative Quarter. Running along North Avenue and Marietta Street, Creative Quarter will serve as another connection point between Tech and the city — this time through the arts and creative industries — in a space where new technologies for producing art are created and shared.

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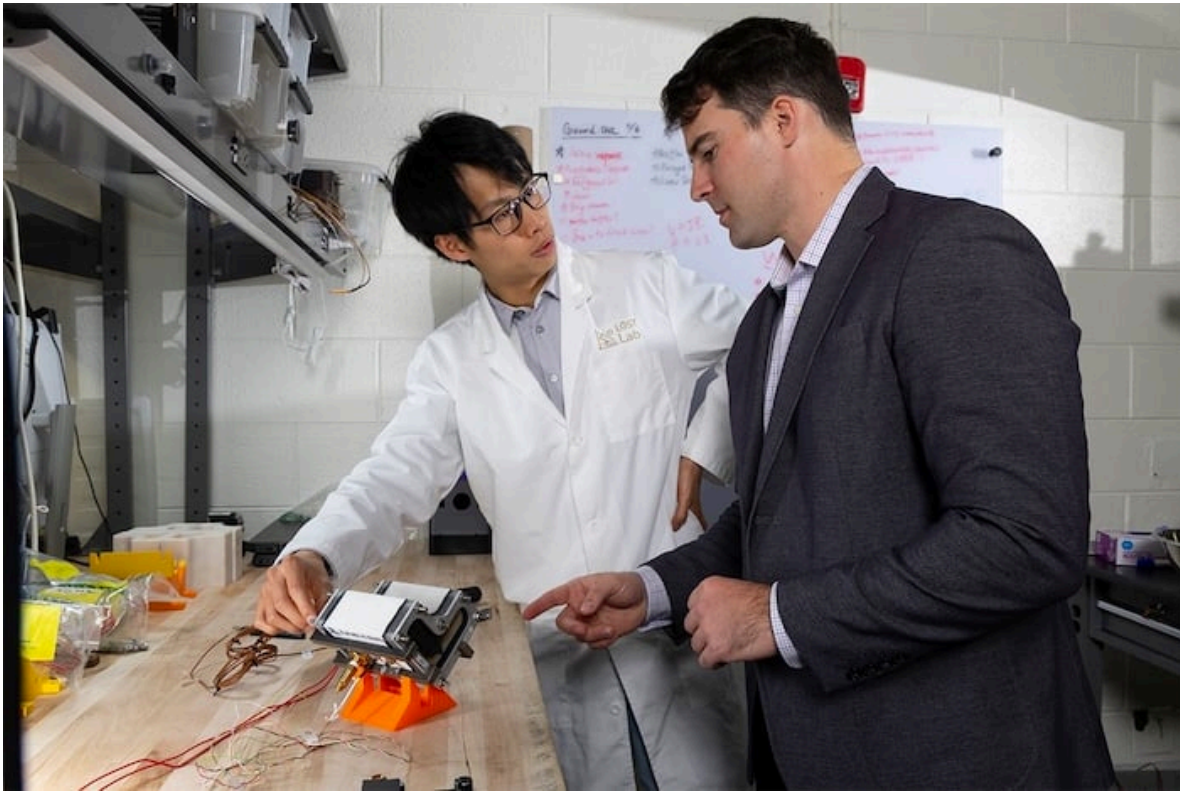


## Spidey Sense: How a Triple Jacket Makes Microelectronics Matter

Just like Peter Parker didn't intend to be a superhero, Mikkel Thomas didn't plan to be a research engineer. When he came to Georgia Tech in 1993 as an undergraduate, a bit of serendipity led him to the field of microelectronics. Three decades later, his superpower is demystifying the world of microelectronics for students.

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## Propelling Georgia Tech to the Final Frontier

In July, Georgia Tech will launch the Space Research Institute (SRI), one of its newest Interdisciplinary Research Institutes. The SRI will bring together the best engineering, computer science, policy, and business research across the Institute to establish collaborations covering space exploration, colonization, commercialization, tourism, national security, and more. It could also help engineers and computer scientists think with a more business-minded approach to pitch their innovations to the commercial space sector.

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