

REMARKS BY GEORGIA TECH PRESIDENT G. WAYNE CLOUGH
Ribbon-cutting, Library East Commons, Sept 18, 2006

- Georgia Tech has described our mission as defining the technological university of the 21st century. Important component of that quest is to define the university library of the 21st century. Can see it here today.
 - This is not your father's library – far cry from my own student days when a cabinet-style card catalog literally contained little paper cards.
 - Not even the library you will find at most other universities today. We are pushing the envelope farther than virtually any other university campus in the nation. Evidence: This was the only campus the Association of Research Libraries visited last week as they explored digital roles for libraries.
- Over past several years, our library has been undergoing transformation into a customer-friendly place that is rich in technology.
 - First phase was Library West Commons – enhanced multi-media learning center where information technology intersected the traditional library reference desk.
 - Result: staggering 56% increase in library users during the first 12 months it was open.
- Today, celebrate the opening of second phase, Library East Commons
 - Place where you and your physics lab partner can grab a quick lunch at Jazzman's Café, then put together a high-tech, color lab report.
 - Place where the members of a small group from a history, technology and society class can create their class presentation, reserve a rehearsal studio, then record and save their practice session to a streaming server for 30 days so that they can get some feedback from the professor before they do the actual presentation.
 - Place where you can take a break from studying for that calculus exam, grab a late-night cup of coffee, and relax with some music and a popular magazine.
- In short, a place that enables students and faculty, as individuals or in groups, to tackle projects with the technology, resources, and flexibility to get the job done as effectively and efficiently as possible.
 - Furniture that is meant to move; flip-top tables; curtains that can be drawn to reconfigure spaces into a small theater.
 - Group computer stations that can accommodate two to eight group members comfortably.
 - Ports for your own laptop, and computers with oversized display screens for those class presentations.
- Library East Commons the result of a collaborative effort between the Library and the Office of Information Technology, with input from a 10-member Student Advisory Council that brainstormed and analyzed feedback from campus focus groups.

- Today's celebration does not mark the end result of their efforts, but is actually just the beginning.
 - As Library Associate Director for Public Service Crit Stuart would say, this space is "over-supplied with potential."
 - Flexible design means it will continue to evolve in design and function. Spectacular as it is today, we expect that it will only get better and even more sophisticated as our creative students and faculty learn how to use it and begin to put it to work in new ways we haven't even thought of yet.

- Realize that the donors who made this possible will be recognized later in the program, but I want to take this opportunity to thank them for being our partners in this visionary quest to create the technological library of the 21st century.