

REMARKS BY GEORGIA TECH PRESIDENT G. WAYNE CLOUGH
Gold & White Honors dinner, March 20, 2003

Thank you, Robert. It is a great pleasure to join with the Alumni Association in honoring a select group of very special people who have given so much and meant so much to Georgia Tech through the years.

The renowned photographer Yousuf Karsh has taken portraits of the world's most famous people for the past 60 years, seeking to capture what he referred to as the "essential element that has made them great." In the process, he has personally encountered an incredible number of world-class leaders from a wide variety of fields.

So someone asked him what, if anything, great people have in common. He replied, "I have found that great people do have in common... an immense belief in themselves and in their mission. They also have great determination as well as an ability to work hard. At the crucial moment of decision, they draw on their accumulated wisdom. Above all, they have integrity."

I think we all agree that the alumni we are honoring tonight meet Yousuf Karsh's definition of great people. They certainly have great determination and an ability to work hard or they never would have gotten out of Georgia Tech to begin with. But they are also persons of integrity who have continued to apply their abilities and to use the wisdom they have accumulated throughout their lives and careers.

They believe in Georgia Tech's ability to excel, and they have helped to shape and support a vision for Georgia Tech's future. So I am very pleased to have this opportunity to thank them in person for all they have done for Georgia Tech.

A great university produces great alumni, so I think Georgia Tech can take a little credit for producing these outstanding leaders. And great alumni, in turn, give back to their alma mater, helping it become even better. Tonight we recognize and celebrate the great supporters of Georgia Tech – the winners of the Joseph Mayo Pettit Distinguished Service Award, the Outstanding Young Alumnus Award, the Dean Griffin Community Service Award, and the Honorary Alumni whose devotion to the Institute exceeds that of many actual alumni.

Your devotion to the Institute has helped Georgia Tech reach new heights in our quest for excellence. We have benefited enormously from your gifts of time and resources to the Institute. We are grateful for everything you have done, and we are here tonight to extend to you some of the honor and recognition you so richly deserve.

Over the years, we have been presenting these awards at commencement. They came at the end of the commencement ceremony, after literally hours of diploma presentations, and they were the only thing that stood in the way of the celebrations of graduates and their families. As a result, they did not get the special attention they deserved. So tonight

we begin a new tradition, with a festive event that focuses specifically on recognizing and honoring the outstanding alumni who have given so much to Georgia Tech.

I want to express my congratulations to each one of you, and my personal appreciation for all you have done to help and support Georgia Tech.