

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT WAYNE CLOUGH
Los Angeles Roll-out
May 24, 1999

Good evening. It is a pleasure to be here with my fellow Georgia Tech alumni in Los Angeles. This town is the heartbeat of the movie universe right now, with the release last week of the film so many people have been awaiting for 15 years and more. And I have to report that Atlanta has its share of Wookie wannabe's and Jedi look-alikes.

We're pretty excited about "The Phantom Menace" back on the Tech campus, too. After all, "Star Wars" gave us the technology we needed to animate a computer model of the heart that doctors can use to diagnose coronary problems. So who knows what exciting technological advances we might get from this latest Mount Everest of computerized special effects.

Even the ultimate computer nerd, Bill Gates, was on hand for a special \$1,000-a-head advanced screening two days before the

movie opened to the public. He claimed to have liked the costumes best, but who knows what new tricks might turn up in Microsoft applications as a result.

Speaking of Microsoft, did you know that the two most powerful men in the world have two things in common? They are both named Bill. And they both got into trouble for the same thing: they neglected to disconnect their browser from their operating system.

“The Phantom Menace ” is full of the latest gee-whiz movie technology, but it also carries forward the rich legacy of the original movie trilogy to a new generation of Americans, born since the first “Star Wars” movie opened 22 years ago at Mann’s Chinese Theater here in LA.

That's sort of what we are trying to do at Georgia Tech – to cherish the traditions and the enduring foundations that have made us great, and carry them with us as we make the changes and meet the challenges that will keep us on the cutting edge in the days ahead.

This event tonight is nominally about our Capital Campaign, but of course what it is really about is Georgia Tech and its future. So tonight I want to take a bit of time to talk about Georgia Tech... how far we have come and where we can go in the future.

Technology has made Georgia Tech a special university with a special opportunity. We are a technological institution in a world ever more driven by technology. And we have the advantage of a foundation built by generations of Tech people who stayed the course and did not let themselves stray from the basics.

When I returned to Tech as president back in 1994, we faced some very real challenges. Yet in my heart of hearts I knew Tech was

poised to achieve remarkable things. To do so, required us to remain focused, to respect the power of our traditions, to attract the best talent, to apply our energies in the right places, and to build the resources needed to take advantage of our opportunity.

To a large extent, we have succeeded in doing many of these things. For example, our state-of-the-art Olympic housing is running close to 100 percent occupancy, and our new athletic facilities are being used to best advantage. Techwood Homes no longer exists. Centennial Park, a brand new neighborhood of multi-income housing, has replaced it. And we are in the process of changing other neighborhoods around our campus by attracting high-tech companies that want to be close to a knowledge-driven institution.

We are also attracting top faculty. Three years ago the National Science Foundation introduced the CAREER Award, a recognition given to the young faculty who show the greatest promise in

engineering and science. To date, Tech's faculty has received 33 CAREER Awards. We rank third in the nation by number of awards, and we lead the nation with the highest concentration of CAREER Award winners among our faculty.

In the last four years, our faculty have helped to bring four national centers of excellence to Georgia Tech, ranging from semiconductor design to biotechnology, from earthquake engineering to tissue engineering. The most recent of these is the semiconductor design center, in which Georgia Tech is the leading agency for a coalition that includes MIT, Stanford and Cornell.

At the heart of all of this activity are our students. We have 164 students from California on the Tech campus right now – 86 undergraduates and 78 graduate students. That's an exceptional number, considering the great distance between Georgia and California and the many outstanding universities you have here. And, having gotten my Ph.D. from UC-Berkeley and served on the

faculty of Stanford, I am fully aware of how outstanding higher education is in this state.

With a new and more informed admissions procedure, we are doing a better job of selecting well-rounded students to attend Tech. While we continue to choose the most academically talented young people from the thousands who apply, we are also seeking those who have heart and desire. This year's freshman class is the largest in our history by 400 students. It is the most diverse, the most talented, and it has the most Georgians.

Am I biased about how good our students are? Last year 1,300 companies, a record high, came to campus hoping to hire some of our good folks. That's what you call the bottom line, and it shows the power of combining a Tech education with hard-working, talented young people.

Take our faculty, our students and our focus, and you have a rate of growth in recognition that hardly any other university has achieved. Today *U.S. News & World Report* ranks us as one of the top ten public universities in the nation. Our College of Engineering recently moved into third place nationally, behind only MIT and Stanford. In addition, the College of Computing plus 15 other schools and programs at Tech are ranked in the top 15.

And at a time when universities and colleges are under increasing criticism for high cost, Tech remains a remarkable bargain. Last August, the Kiplinger report evaluated over 1,000 universities and colleges and named Tech as one of the top ten best educational bargains in the nation. In a world where celebrity and fluff often win over substance, Georgia Tech stands out as a real deal. As Dizzy Dean said, "It ain't bragging if you can do it."

So what's left for us to do? The answer is, a lot, particularly if we are to measure up to our potential and our goals. Georgia Tech has the capability that few do in that it can become one of the small number of universities that are called world-class.

Achieving world-class status calls for hard work and funding to invest in new facilities, in hiring more top faculty in emerging fields, and in creating a campus that will serve our future. Since 1994, we have completed or have under construction over \$200 million in new buildings.

This is a good start, but we have a small campus where half of the buildings are 25 years old or older. Today's cutting-edge science and engineering cannot be done in buildings with antiquated wiring and plumbing. The remarkable markets for distance learning and executive education cannot be served in old classrooms.

Each year we attract thousands of applications for President's Scholarships, but we can award only about 75. We are losing a lot of top students to other schools, because we cannot compete with the breadth of scholarships they are able to offer. We can improve our ability to attract outstanding students by expanding our scholarship programs to be more competitive.

One of the most critical measures of excellence at a university is the excellence of its faculty and the level of resources it provides for faculty. Schools like MIT and Stanford consistently outrank us because of their ability to attract outstanding faculty across the board in all programs. Georgia Tech has a strong faculty, but we can make it even better by expanding our endowed chairs. The capital campaign has already endowed 32 chairs, more than doubling the number we had before the campaign began. And we are hoping to be able to endow another 10 or more chairs before it's over.

That Gator Bowl victory was so sweet and made all of us so proud to be Yellow Jackets. But we cannot compete in one of the nation's top athletic conferences with only half the sports programs of our fellow universities. Stanford offers 34 inter-collegiate sports. The average for our fellow members of the ACC is 22. Tech offers only 16. We need to develop a broader, more well-rounded program of inter-collegiate athletics.

These are some of our challenges.

Yet as you well know, Tech has never shied away from a challenge. And we certainly are not going to start now on my watch.

You, our alumni... you who built our strong foundations... can help us get to the ranks of the world's top universities.

You who survived drownproofing; who pulled dozens of all-niters studying for exams; who rode, marched or cheered in the Ramblin' Wreck Parade... You who know that "the Hill" has nothing to do with our nation's Capitol, and that Rose Bowl Field is not in California, but on Fowler Street... You who continue spend cool fall nights in front of the tube, cheering on your favorite team and wishing you were back at Grant Field... who continue to insist that the Varsity is a culinary experience second to none... who continue to shout "To Hell with Georgia" like your parents before you... And, finally, you who have "gotten out" but have never gotten over your love for Georgia Tech.

You are the key.

You know I am committed, and I seek your help in realizing our dream for a great future for our alma mater and all those who come after us.

Thank you.