Good morning and welcome to the official naming and dedication ceremony of the Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans Building.

This grand old building was one of the first two structures completed in 1888 that allowed Georgia Tech to open its doors to its first class of students. Before 1888, Georgia Tech only existed as an act of the Georgia Legislature, which was passed in 1885. Before 1885 Georgia Tech did not exist at all other than as a gleam in the eye of a few farsighted individuals, including the great newspaper editor, Henry Grady.

Of those first two buildings, only this one survives, and as such, it symbolizes the great oak whose seeds spread and helped grow a campus which now consists of 170 buildings. In 1888, Georgia Tech enrolled a class of less than 130 students, and they passed daily through this building to take classes. Today our campus is home to 13,000 students and while this building is no longer central to all of our activities, it is the center of our history and of the hearts of all Tech grads.

This building was built for a grand total of $43,250, and an 1887 edition of the Atlanta Constitution said the structure presented an appearance of "symmetry and beauty," and labeled its location as a "commanding one," demonstrating that "the light of the school will not be hid."

From 1888 till now, this beautiful structure was known as the Academic Building, or more recently, the Administration Building. Today, we are here together to celebrate its naming for a benefactor with a large and giving heart, Mrs. Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans. Associating her name with our most historic building is highly appropriate as my remarks will subsequently show.

Mrs. Evans was a remarkable woman who was entertained by royalty, yet asked in her will that her name "be perpetuated in some fitting and unostentatious manner."

Mrs. Evans was born in 1872—just 16 years earlier than the Georgia Institute of Technology. She grew up in Virginia, and in 1894, she married Joseph Brown Whitehead of Oxford, Mississippi.

Joseph Brown Whitehead, a lawyer by trade, was in fact a business entrepreneur, and he made history when he and his friend and fellow lawyer, Benjamin F. Thomas, conceived the idea of selling Coca-Cola in bottles. They were then successful in securing an
exclusive contract to bottle and distribute Coca-Cola throughout much of the United States.

We all know how successful this venture turned out to be. Unfortunately, tragedy struck in 1906 when Joseph Brown Whitehead passed away at age 42, well before the full potential of his extraordinary business venture was realized.

An extraordinary woman herself, Lettie Pate Whitehead then assumed complete command of the family's business interests. Rising to the challenge, she became a savvy businesswoman. She made history in 1934 when she was appointed to the Board of The Coca-Cola Company, becoming one of the first female directors of any major American corporation. She held that position for almost 20 years.

Seven years after her first husband's death, she married Colonel Arthur Kelly Evans, a retired Canadian Army officer. They remained together until his death in 1948.

During her life, Mrs. Evans contributed to over 130 different charities. At Georgia Tech, she was responsible for the construction of the Joseph Brown Whitehead Memorial Hospital, Tech's first on-campus infirmary. The November 17, 1911 edition of the Technique states, "The hopes of fond parents for years past were realized when on Monday afternoon, last, many friends of Tech gathered for the formal opening of the new Joseph Brown Whitehead Memorial Hospital. The first five thousand dollars and more since then was given by Mrs. Whitehead as a memorial to her late husband."

In 1953, one year after the first four women were admitted to Georgia Tech, Mrs. Evans passed away. Before her death, however, she established a lasting legacy, the Lettie Pate Evans Foundation. The income from this endowment is allocated for many charitable purposes, but there are 11 principal beneficiaries, all of which are located in Virginia and Georgia. Georgia Tech is one of those institutions that Mrs. Evans designated as one of the principal beneficiaries.

Today, total contributions to Georgia Tech from the Lettie Pate Evans Foundation total more than $30 million, and the portion of the endowment set aside for Georgia Tech is now worth approximately $330 million.

The most significant gift in Georgia Tech's history, funds from the Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans fund have been used to improve almost every central building on our campus, including those you see all around us. Recent projects include work on the renovation of the historic Guggenheim aerospace building, the Chemistry building, the Architecture auditorium, the Mason classroom and laboratory in Civil Engineering, and the Skiles classroom building. In addition, funds from the endowment have been used for laboratory equipment, to buy library books, and to support many other projects on campus.

Thanks to generous friends like Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans, Georgia Tech has been able to move forward and take its place among America's top research universities. Thousands of young people have benefitted from an education from this great Georgia
institution and are working among us in our state making it a better place. And yet, thousands more will stream through in the future helping to add to our state's quality of life, and each and every one of them will have been touched by Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans.

For all of the reasons I have mentioned, we are proud to have Mrs. Evans' name grace our most historic building. It is a most appropriate acknowledgement of her contributions to our past and our future, and the high esteem in which they are held on our campus.

Thank you.
From: andrea.ashmore@vpea.gatech.edu
X-Sender: aa71@pop.prism.gatech.edu
Date: Wed, 3 Jun 1998 07:54:51 -0400
To: Carol Gue <carol.gue@carnegie.gatech.edu>
Subject: Re: Calendar

Carol:

Thank you so much for the dates for the Centennial Place school meeting. Paul Ohme and I prefer the earlier date of June 15 at 3 p.m., and we would need to utilize the conference room in lower Carnegie. I will send Dr. Clough a list of participants and an agenda next week. I would like to meet with him for approximately 15 minutes before the meeting (next week sometime would be fine) to update him on a few related projects.

Have you had any luck with finding a lunch date for Dr. Clough and I to meet with Cynthia Kuhlman, the new principal at Centennial Place school? Last night he mentioned to me that he was anxious to have the lunch meeting. Let me know as soon as you can and I'll arrange it.

Andrea