Good morning. It is a pleasure to be with the members of Georgia Textiles Manufacturing Association and the Textile Education Foundation.

Georgia Tech’s relationship with the GTMA and the Textile Education Foundation go back a long way. This is a productive and positive linkage I intend to maintain. in the course of my remarks I will return to this important collaborative effort. But let me tell you first that it has been a great week for Georgia Tech.

With the dedication this week of the Olympic Plaza project and its striking campanile and fountain, we celebrated the completion of most of the preparation for the Olympics – this effort included 2,300,000 sq. ft. of renovated or new construction of facilities. Among these are seven new residence halls, a recreated basketball arena, a sports performance center, the new building for the Georgia Center for Advanced Telecommunications Technology, and the MRDC Phase I building which now provides offices and laboratories for our School of Textile and Fiber Engineering!

This week also signaled the announcement of our “Beginning of a New Era,” $400 million capital campaign during our first annual Advisory Boards’ Day on May 3, 1996. The kickoff was capped by the announcement that our enthusiastic friends and alumni have already contributed $125 million in gifts or pledges. The campaign funds will allow Georgia Tech to address critical needs for faculty, scholarship support and infrastructure to allow us to compete above the level that would otherwise occur if we only had our state support.
Finally, this week has seen evidence that our state budget will be a good one thanks to Governor Miller, the Georgia Legislature, the Board of Regents and the Chancellor’s Office. Our state, perhaps more than any other, is showing its commitment to higher education and allowing us to offer an every improved product to the students and state we serve.

As an institution with a research mission we are also looking carefully at this dimension of the Institute. Funding for research is under enormous pressure and the targets of research are shifting. Probably in no area are we more vulnerable and in need of a carefully crafted strategy. To put it simply, we believe the future of the Institute and its research agenda depends on continued partnerships with industry, government, and other institutes of higher education. This has an important spinoff in that as we do research with industry, the effects are immediately felt in our curriculum and educational programs.

The partnerships formed are beneficial to all. On our part we provide government and industry with research, co-op students, and trained graduates. In turn, we are provided with funded scholarships, research dollars, and opportunities to participate in real-world research.

We want industrial collaboration, cooperation, and partnership to be the rule—rather than the exception at Georgia Tech. You should therefore take it quite seriously when I say that our relationship with Georgia’s textile and fiber complex is quite uncommon—even for an Institute where collaboration is commonplace.
Our partnership began in 1897 with the creation of Georgia Tech’s School of Textile and Fiber Engineering. We have worked with you—to some degree—for almost 100 years and I think it is safe to say that we collaborate with your industry more than any other. It is a partnership we value.

For example, your industry helps Georgia universities recruit prospective college students. Through this very organization, you hold recruitment dinners encouraging students to consider the field of textile and fiber engineering and to consider Georgia Tech.

In addition, the efforts you undertake with the Governor, the state legislature and Congress cannot be overlooked. In particular, I would like to thank Roy Bowen for all the work he has done to secure funds for important textile initiatives at Georgia universities.

Perhaps the most visible links between Georgia Tech and the textile industry are the organizations NTC, AMTEX, and CCACTI. Together, they form a seamless closed-loop system that is revitalizing as well as revolutionizing the textile complex. As you well know, global competitiveness can no longer just be a part of our wish list for a better future. In order to survive—Georgia’s textile complex must be nationally and internationally competitive—and NTC, AMTEX, and CCACTI are helping Georgia’s textile complex get—and stay that way.

You are probably aware of their functions. NTC is a fundamental, long-range, ground-up research base for the textile complex. It is a partnership between Georgia’s textile industry, the government, and four southern universities—Georgia Tech, Auburn, NC State, and Clemson. These four universities are the 800-pound gorilla of textile education programs. Together, we graduate more than 90 percent of
America's textile graduates. We also do more than 90 percent of the funded research.

NTC's very existence can be traced back to Georgia Tech. Back in 1989, Fred Cook, chair of Georgia Tech's School of Textile and Fiber Engineering saw that the textile complex lacked a fundamental research base and called a meeting between the four schools I mentioned to see what they could do to remedy that fact. NTC is the result.

AMTEX grew out of NTC. It is modeled after NTC and with the help of national labs and vendors takes NTC's ideas and brings them forward into prototype systems.

The last phase of the closed-loop system is CCACTI. CCACTI was initiated by Governor Zell Miller. In a speech, the governor made the point that Georgia was spending millions trying to attract new industry, but wasn’t spending a dime on the traditional industries that were carrying the state.

CCACTI is industry and education's response. CCACTI's focus is not research or equipment, but technology transfer and direct plan assistance. Through CCACTI, faculty from seven Georgia universities work directly with industry to alleviate technical problems and implement new technology. Through CCACTI, funds are put back into the textile complex.

As one of the creators of and participant in NTC, and an active supporter and participant in both AMTEX and CCACTI, Georgia Tech sees these partnerships as key to the future of both Georgia Tech's School of Textile and Fiber Engineering—as well as the textile industry.

To show you what I mean, I'd like to give you an example.
At Chipman Union, a large rural Georgia hosiery manufacturer, Georgia Tech researchers have developed a hydrogen peroxide bleaching process to replace the sodium hypochlorite bleaching process. This replacement was necessary to prevent shut-down of the plant due to environmental impurities generated by the chlorine in sodium hypochlorite. Through NTC, Tech researchers came up with the solution of putting Chipman Union on the first viable hydrogen peroxide scour bleach process in the industry. As a bonus, the researchers also figured out how to directly reuse the baths. Then, at a later date, through CCACTI, Georgia Tech researchers helped Chipman Union implement the ideas generated by NTC researchers.

One of the most exciting aspects of the research at Chipman Union is its ramifications for the rest of you. Chipman Union, along with several other companies agreed to serve as a beta site—meaning research methods and results developed are available to all—not just Chipman Union.

Together, NTC, AMTEX, and CCACTI are a formidable weapon in the war to gain global dominance. You’ve seen what they can do for your industry. Because they’re all set up for the long haul, their future potential has also barely been tapped. Unfortunately, these organizations are currently being threatened by a decrease in the amount of funds coming from Washington. Despite our successes, we are having to fight to keep our funding.

Most of you have probably received letters from Tom Malone of Milliken asking for your support. Likewise, I also hope you lend your voice to the fight. To complete globally, the textile complex needs those funds. And it is up to you, to see that we keep them.
As you can see, our future is strong—yet holds pockets of uncertainty. The last segment of my talk this morning concerns that future.

As I said earlier, at Georgia Tech we believe success will come—not to those who wait, but to those who form partnerships.

In our school of Textile and Fiber Engineering, a short-term partnership was initiated recently to help realize long-term success. We asked a committee of industrial representatives to help our faculty revamp our textile and fiber engineering curriculum. Alan Ray chaired that committee. The result of their work was a new concept that addresses industry’s needs in terms of a student’s hands-on education. What they developed was the Textile Manufacturing Labs concept.

Today, through the Textile Manufacturing Labs, our students spend a quarter working as paid employees within GTMA companies in Georgia.

It’s a win-win situation for all of us. You gain workers and a trained future workforce; we are able to provide a better education for our students.

What else does the future hold?

Georgia Tech is in the process of developing two new research centers in areas that hold considerable potential. The first is our Sports Materials Research and Technologies Center—or SmaRT for those of us who must have an acronym for everything. Sports materials are a relatively new area and cross the board from materials such as thermal blankets for trauma victims and surgical gowns to sports equipment such as tennis racquets to soft and hard body implants. Sports materials are
different from other fabrics and materials in that they serve additional functions aimed at reducing injury and ensuring comfort such as heating or cooling certain parts of the body.

A second exciting new center is our Waste Fiber Utilization Center. The WFU Center is a multi-company consortium center that is developing research to find cost-effective ways to convert waste fiber into a variety of products—including wood products, concrete, molded and extruded, and nonwovens. This area is especially important to those of you in the carpet industry.

As you can see, we have an exciting future ahead of us. By working together, I have no doubt we can accomplish our goals—and continue to further the global competitiveness of the textile complex. The Greek mathematician Archimedes once said, “Give me a firm place to stand, and I will move the earth.” With the partnership between education and the textiles complex, our commitment to research excellence, and our network of support, I feel the same way.

Thank you.