Good evening. I would like to thank you for inviting me to be with you, the members of the Gwinnett Alumni Club on what is propitious occasion. Let me ask you to do something pleasant and think about Georgia Tech and help me identify something very important about the next three days?

Yes, football season begins. BUT, in the course of the next three days, I have to add my personal thought that I will celebrate my first anniversary as the president of Ga Tech and that this has been the best time of my life thanks to folks like yourself. Even more importantly, we will hold our summer graduation for some 700 happy students.

We also count off three less days that will be left to us to prepare for our substantive role in the 1996 Olympic Games. The reason I mention all of these things together is to point out that as opposed to the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, Georgia Tech is not only preparing for this event of a lifetime, but also continuing to do its normal job - educate young people for their start in life. There is a big difference in these two approaches to the Olympics.
Historically, we can see how important the link is between the Olympics and higher education.

Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the father of the modern Olympics was asked once why he restored the Olympic Games. His answer:

“To enoble and strengthen sports...and to enable them to better fulfill the educational role incumbent upon them in the world.”

The 1996 Olympics fulfill Baron Coubertin’s idea more than any other Olympics. Never before in Olympic history has higher education played such an integral role in the planning, construction, staging, and outcome of the Games. And Ga Tech is the key to all of this.

In fact, were it not for Georgia Tech, the Olympics might not be heading to Atlanta at all. If you remember, back in 1990, the odds were very much against Atlanta winning the Olympic bid. Athens, Greece—not Georgia—was the sentimental favorite and much of Atlanta’s venue sites could only be found in the dreams and plans of Atlanta Olympic planners.
That’s where Georgia Tech made the difference. Through a state-of-the-art 3-D, interactive video and multimedia presentation, Georgia Tech helped make Atlanta’s Olympic vision a reality. The presentation combined animation, computer graphics, aerial photography, video, and even satellite topographical photographs to depict the Atlanta of the 1996 Olympiad.

As we head towards the Olympics, we will serve as the Olympic Village, site of five Olympic events, the Paraolympic village, the site of four Paraolympic events, and a key technological resource. Never before in Olympic history has one school played such an important Olympic role.

To demonstrate just how intricately linked the Olympics and Georgia Tech are, let’s take a quick poll. When you think of the Olympics, what symbol comes to mind? I’ll tell you right now, Izzy is not the correct answer. (Take audience answers until they bring up the torch).
Right. The torch. Well, creating the torch of the 1995 Olympics was the responsibility of Georgia Tech researchers. And, as you would expect from a torch created by Georgia Tech, the torch design is both high tech and practical. Features of the torch include the ability to burn for 30 minutes without refueling; withstand wind and rain; and withstand temperature and altitude changes.

In Olympic planning, construction, and even the athletic events, technology has played a key role—and so has Georgia Tech.

For example, to an Olympic athlete, milliseconds matter. So to help athletes find the best possible stroke, movement, or position, a team of Georgia Tech and Olympic scientists are engaged in a motion and mechanics study—using new computer monitoring technology to analyze the movements of Olympic athletes to help them achieve peak performance.

For the first time ever in Olympic history, a special force-measuring device will be installed in the 10-meter tower in the Aquatic Center. The instrument will measure the forces acting on the diver as each diver
initiates a dive. This information, together with position and time data captured using high-speed video of each dive, will enable divers and scientists to reconstruct each dive for performance analysis.

But not all Olympic research is sports-related. During the Olympics, Georgia Tech personnel will use their active research work in telemedicine to set up mobile health sites in rural Olympic venue sites. These sites will be connected to Georgia Baptist Hospital via telecommunications technology—providing a telemedical link between Atlanta physicians and the rural Olympic venues.

Georgia Tech researchers are also hard at work to help alleviate the biggest problem feared by Olympic planners: Traffic. During the Olympics, a computer command center created by Georgia Tech researchers will monitor Atlanta traffic, suggesting alternate routes when roads become too crowded. Another group is working on a plan to use helicopters instead of trucks to deliver supplies to Atlanta locations during the summer games.
After the Olympics, the world’s second largest sports competition, will arrive in Atlanta: the Paralympics. These disabled athletes will also benefit from Georgia Tech research. A team in our Center for Rehabilitative Technology is creating a wheelchair tie-down system for athletes to utilize during the javelin, shot-put, and discus competitions.

Never before in Olympic history has one campus held an entire Olympic Village. The Georgia Tech Olympic Village will include 33 residence halls housing 16,000 athletes and officials. But the Village will be much more than a “hotel” for athletes.

As part of the “Futurenet” telecommunications technology, athletes will have the latest, state-of-the-art computer and telecommunications information available. From their rooms, athletes will be able to access information about their upcoming athletic event; they will even be able to preview a computerized picture of their venue.
If our role as the Olympic Village were not enough, we will also host two athletic venues. Diving and swimming—including synchronized swimming, competitive swimming, and water polo will be held in our new Aquatic Center.

And semi-final boxing rounds will be held in the newly renovated Coliseum. Renovations in progress include adding air conditioning, dropping the floor to ensure visibility from all seats, and adding skyboxes.

Finally, let's don't forget that Tech will contribute world-class athletes to compete. Tech alum Derrick Adkins is the world champ in the 400 m hurdles this year - he is a true gold medal aspirant. Alum Derrick Mills and students Jeanine Jones and Octavius Terry are strong candidates to make the US team in track and field. Alum Barbaro Ponce has qualified in to compete in marksmanship in the Paraolympics. And, our own Bobby Cremins is one of the coaches of the Dream Team 3.
If one of our students wins an Olympic medal they will join a storied list of Tech people who have won medals - beginning with Ed Hamm in 1928 and his gold for the long jump and continuing to 1984 when Antonio McKay won two golds and a bronze.

As you can see, Georgia Tech is committed to making the 1996 Olympics the best ever and is an integral part of them.

It’s a lot of hard work. Which brings us to the question. What’s in it for Georgia Tech?

The Olympics will leave an impressive legacy. The most obvious is housing. After the Olympics, seven new residence halls and 2,700 more beds will be available to Tech students enabling Tech to be able to provide on-campus housing for approximately 70 percent of the student body—compared to the current 40 percent.

ACOG has provided $27 million for this housing. The remaining debt for Tech is $93 million; which will be retired over 20 years through fees charged to students for their rooms.
The Futurenet telecommunications technology is yet another legacy. Once the athletes are gone, our students will have cutting-edge computer and communications access within their residence halls—allowing our students to get a jump on students in other universities lacking such equipment.

The Olympics will also affect the way our intercollegiate and intermural athletes do their jobs after the Games are over. To improve Georgia Tech sports, the Center for Sports Performance is currently being constructed on campus. This Center is designed to follow-up with knowledge gained in the Olympics help Tech athletes improve their athletic performance through sports science, nutrition, psychology, and training.

Finally, the Olympics will bring Georgia Tech into the worldwide spotlight. The world will learn who we are and what we stand for—as well as many of our academic and research achievements.
Never before in Tech’s history has such an opportunity presented itself. And, it is our goal to make the most of this opportunity to showcase Georgia Tech to the world. When the Olympics are over, we want the world to leave Atlanta knowing the following:

• that Georgia Tech is a nationally competitive research university;

• that our students and faculty are world-class; and

• that we are a research institute providing useful, innovative research to government, industry, and business.

Of course, there’s much more we’d like the world to know:

• that all of our engineering schools rank in the top 20—many in the top 10 and top 4;

• that our School of Architecture is ranked in the top 10; our School of Management 26th;

• that we enroll the highest percentage of National Merit Scholars among publicly supported institutions in the U.S;
• that we have the number one voluntary co-op program in the nation;

• that we graduate more underrepresented minorities and woman with engineering degrees than any other institution;

• that Institute research funding totaled more than $185 million in FY95;

During the next year, you will undoubtedly hear much more about Georgia Tech. And as you do, I’d like you to bear in mind a quote from baseball great and philosopher Dizzy Dean.

"It ain’t braggin’ if you kin’ do it."

At Tech, we can do it. Our goals for the future are ambitious—but achievable. They include:

• Solidify and improve reputation as one of the top technological universities in the nation—improve in non-engineering areas essential to being a major university.
• Develop potent programs in the overarching issues of the day—e.g., biotechnology, telecommunications, environmental technology.

• Capitalize on Olympic facilities to create a powerful learning environment for our students on campus—promote increased student volunteerism.

• Increase presence in continuing ed. and distance ed.

• Work in partnership with Georgia to see it develop as a state known for high technology and a place where people want to live. If Georgia succeeds, we succeed. If we succeed, Georgia succeeds.

I’d like to conclude by introducing you to the future of Georgia Tech. Would all of the young men and women who will be attending Georgia Tech in the fall, please stand and allow us to congratulate you and thank you for choosing Georgia Tech.

Thank you.