Tech’s melting pot

Diversity is never in short supply at Tech. Take a stroll around campus and chances are you will meet all kinds of people, people who come from hundreds of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and speak dozens of different languages.

The multitude of difference that can be found in the student body enriches the quality of campus life, making it more vibrant and interesting. Such difference is the main ingredient in Tech’s ‘melting pot’ of diversity.

So how diverse is Tech?

Rankings

Tech seeks to provide the best academic opportunities for students of every race, ethnicity and color. According to Diverse Issues in Higher Education, this is how the Institute stacks up in that regard:

1. Engineering master’s degrees awarded to African American and Hispanic students
2. Engineering bachelor’s degrees awarded to African American students
3. Engineering bachelor’s degrees awarded to all categories of minority students
4. Engineering doctoral degrees awarded to all categories of minority students
5. Engineering master’s degrees awarded to all categories of minority students

Events

There are many ways to find out more about Tech’s many cultural and ethnic communities or learn about issues relating to diversity in general. Student organizations and places like the Office of Diversity Programs host a number of events every year to promote cultural awareness and cross-cultural interaction.

Check out a sample of upcoming opportunities below:

- Sept. 29: Indian Classical Music
- Oct. 6: Mid-Autumn Festival
- Oct. 19: Justice in Palestine Talk
- Oct. 20: Diwali Dinner
- Nov. 4: Taste of Africa Festival
- Nov. 7: Diversity Week
- Nov. 13: International Education Week

Enrollment

Every year, Tech recruits the best and brightest while also attempting to bring the most talented and diverse students to campus.

How diverse is the student body? The graph below depicts this semester’s undergraduate demographic composition.

- Fall 2006 Undergraduate Enrollment by Ethnicity

- Asian
- African American
- Multiracial
- Hispanic
- Indian

Institute-supported organizations like Focus and the Office of Minority Education Development aim to increase minority enrollment and retention.

I-House offers students international flair

In the midst of ethnic and racial tensions in the world, one multicultural community at Tech is thriving.

Established to foster an environment that is enhanced by diversity, this community is composed of undergraduate students from around the world—New Zealand, Sweden, Korea, Pakistan, Turkey and others.

Here, languages flow from Urdu to Swedish to Korean, and religious celebrations, such as Rosh Hashanah and Ramadan, are shared and observed by all regardless of their backgrounds.

This mesh of eclectic cultures and lifestyles converges on East Campus in the Fourth Street Apartments, the International House, or 1-House. I-House, according to INTA professor Kirk Bowman, is a program established to encompass a diverse group of students with an interest in international culture, events and politics.

Bowman was one of the founding members of I-House, which had its start last year. Since then, the program has grown extensively. 20 residents started the program, but now, students have to be placed on a waiting list if they want to live in 1-House.

“The I-House includes a diverse group of students with an interest in international culture, events...”

Kirk Bowman

INTA Professor

Residents of 1-House chat after the Japan I-Dinner, one of several international activities the program hosts every year.

The wide range of cultural activities, some of which are funded by the Institute, sets 1-House apart from other housing communities on campus.

Another unique aspect of 1-House is its communal quality of life. On a daily basis, many residents of 1-House come together to keep their residence a safe forum for students to talk about issues facing them at their schools and communities.

The POP Summit is organized by the Anti-Prejudice Consortium (APC), a non-profit organization in Atlanta that provides year-round planning and support, as well as funding and volunteers for the event. The APC has helped the POP Summit gain recognition throughout the metro Atlanta area, allowing it to become partnered with numerous county school systems, private schools and religious organizations.

I-House offers students international flair

Members of the local YMCA perform a skit for children attending this year’s Power over Prejudice Summit. The summit was held at Tech and educated the children about stereotyping, discrimination, bullying and their harmful effects on people.

Last week, Tech hosted the Power Over Prejudice (POP) Summit for 45 middle schools around the metro Atlanta area. Approximately 450 students attended the event over its three-day duration.

For the last 10 years, the POP Summit has taught students the value of tolerance and cooperation among different racial, religious and ethnic groups. They strive to increase the awareness and understanding of different forms of prejudice and to provide a forum for people to talk about these issues facing them at their schools.

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I-House from page 11

to work on their homework, watch TV, cook or play ping-pong.

“I-House makes you think on a global scale,” said Craig Miller, a second-year Management student.

Talha Khan, an I-House resident and third-year Electrical Engineering major from Pakistan, said that he initially assumed that “we would attend the eight mandatory activities and afterward, disappear to work on our homework, watch TV, cook or play ping-pong.”

“I-House also hosts a weekly Coffee House on Mondays at 6 p.m. Students at the Coffee House interact with each other, learning about each other’s languages and origins.

“You can find people from everywhere here,” said Bruno Van-Dunem Martins, a Mechanical Engineering graduate student from Angola.

Everyone is welcome to connect with the international community at I-House’s coffee hour in the Fourth Street Apartments. Students can mingle with professionals and students, enjoy free tea and coffee, discover something new and forge friendships with people of different cultural and ethnic backdrops.

After all, diversity is what drives me, especially because it is something that I have personally dealt with,” said Amanda Padgett, a facilitator for the summit.

“When I was looking for an organization to volunteer with, it was right after Hurricane Katrina so I really wanted to do something to help those victims. But when I saw the APC on www.volunteermatch.com, I knew it was the thing I had to do,” Padgett said.

Richard Welch, executive director of the APC, has helped organize the POP Summit since its inception in 1996.

“We really try to address problems by looking at their root: first impressions and judgments based on a superficial nature,” Welch said.

Welch has helped shape the program into one that students consider the needs of their school based on the level of diversity present there.

“Each school is different. Each one has its own personality and specific problems that need to be addressed,” Welch said.

The POP Summit targets students at the middle-school level because this is a pivotal time when students begin to form their own opinions about the world and how they perceive it.

“The summit gives students the opportunity to learn about the effects of stereotyping and prejudice and how those effects can be damaging to others.”

Joy Franklin, a seventh-grader at Union Grove Middle School, explained that the conference was an eye-opening experience for her.

“People don’t want to change because it’s too hard to change. This has really helped us realize that we need to change,” Franklin said.

Georgia Tech HEROs

Supporting HERO for children, Georgia’s only non-profit benefiting children in Georgia affected by HIV/AIDS.

9,000 children in Georgia are affected by HIV/AIDS.
You can make a difference.

Become a HERO Philanthropist and help make our first year at Tech a success.

Recruitment & Information Sessions
See website for locations.
Thursday, October 5
5:00 East Campus
7:00 West Campus

Join Coach Paul Hewitt
HERO Board Member
in supporting HERO

Join our Facebook group “Are you a HERO?”

www.gtheros.org
Hispanics celebrate culture

By Beena Bhuian
Contributing Writer

The Hispanic population is the fastest growing demographic group in the country and on campus. Since 2001, the number of Hispanic students coming to Tech has increased for every freshman class. A number of Hispanic organizations are available at Tech to help these students adjust to college life.

The two largest groups are the Society of Professional Hispanic Engineers (SHPE) and the Spanish Speaking Organization (SSO). These groups seek to unite Hispanic students and provide them with support, professional opportunities and a home away from home. They are also committed to increasing cultural awareness on campus.

"Over the last couple of years we have increased Hispanic awareness on campus and united the Hispanic community at Tech," said Lucas Posada, president of SHPE. "SHPE has been able to achieve this by having a balance between professional or academic development activities and social or cultural activities that bring together all Hispanics on campus," Posada said.

SHPE and SSO host several events throughout the year to promote cultural diversity. Such events include tertulias or coffee hours, film festivals, expositions, salsa lessons and social events often related to Hispanic culture. These events are aimed at exposing participants to Hispanic traditions and cultures.

"While academic success is important, we believe this supplemental knowledge is just as important. Ultimately, we envision each member going beyond Tech to become a contributing member in the African American community," said James Holder, president of AASU. "Unfortunately, both organizations have a large number of members, so there is definitely more we can do in the future.

"I think that in terms of the academic realm, the increase in black faculty and staff has definitely made the experience more pleasant," said James Holder, AASU President. "I think that in terms of the academic realm, the increase in black faculty and staff has definitely made the experience more pleasant."
A test on football night....
Only at Tech: qv33 is good in bed
was anyone else pissed about the gay bashing this week?
why am I here...
Whenever found my flash drive in the student center, please return it.
Girl 1: Can I give you a hug?
Girl 2: I’m not the touchy feely kinda girl
Girl 1: Oh. You looked like you needed one.
Girl 2: Well, then I guess....

Weekly Activities

**LIVE LUNCH SERIES**
11 am - Noon
Every 3rd Thursday of the month!
Thursday, October 19, Campanile
Thursday, November 16, Commons Stage

**RANDOM ACT OF FUN!**
11 am - Noon, Skiles Walkway
Every 2nd Thursday of the month!
Petting Zoo - Thursday, October 12
Oxygen Bar - Thursday, November 9

CASH PRIZE
 Prize

**PAUL RUSESABAGINA**
Thursday, October 5 @ 7pm
Student Center Ballroom
Do not miss this opportunity to meet a true hero! Hotel Manager Paul Rusesabagina, author of *An Ordinary Man*, and subject of the excellent film "Hotel Rwanda", appears at Georgia Tech to tell his story. Book signing to follow program.

Feature Movie: "Pirates of the Caribbean 2: Dead Man’s Chest"
Friday, October 6 @ 8:45 pm, Free outdoor movie @ Yellow Jacket Park.

**9 BALL POOL TOURNAMENT**
Every Thursday @ 6:30 p.m.
Double Elimination – $8 to enter, $6 with Frequent Player Card
Location: Tech Rec, 1st floor of Student Center

For more information on all these events and more visit our website: www.fun.gatech.edu

Weekly puzzle:

Name a well-known American of the past consisting of eight letters. This is the person’s full name, as he or she was known. Six of the letters are consonants, and all six of these consonants are Roman numerals. Who is this famous person?

(Find the answer at http://www.gtwf.org/puzzle.htm.)

The Weekly Puzzle was originally broadcast on National Public Radio’s “Weekend Edition Sunday” on July 2, 2006. Copyright 2006 NPR. All rights reserved.

Culture from page 11

President of SSO.

Despite the effort to increase cultural awareness, these organizations agree that cross-cultural interactions at Tech are still a work in progress.

“There is some cross-cultural interaction, especially in campus-wide events such as Culture Fest where we have food fairs and cultural performances. However, on a regular basis, cultural organizations seem to keep to their cultural group and not expand cross-culturally. This is something that Tech could improve by having more campus-wide events,” Rodriguez said.

“As a Hispanic student though, I can say that there is a large interaction amongst the different Hispanic organizations,” Rodriguez said.

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Yooa Balogun said there is not enough cross-cultural exchange on campus, both groups strive to promote cross-cultural exchange through meetings and personal conversations.

“We try to promote our culture so people ask questions and then we educate them,” Balogun said.

“One of our most successful meetings of the semester focused on the issue of the new free speech codes on campus. It featured a panel discussion with representatives from several campus groups including the Interfraternity Council, Chinese Student Association, College Republicans, College Democrats and AASU,” Holder said.

“We also encourage members to participate in campus leadership and activity initiatives including Leadership, SGA, Student Center Programs Council and Hall Council. Just last year, we had our first annual Best of Both Worlds Cookout with the members of Alpha Tau Omega Fraternity,” Holder said.

Both organizations feel that racism, though not as apparent and brutal as it was years ago, is still present in day-to-day lives.

“The fact that minority students are in fact in the minority is enough in and of itself to create a sense of inferiority among minority students who don’t appreciate and cherish their own culture,” Balogun said.

“As Africans, a lot of members of our organization also say that many people here are used to the idea that Africa is all about war, hunger, AIDS and death, which is what they see on TV anyway, so I don’t blame them. This is one of the reasons we try to show the beautiful side of Africa with the events we have at Tech, while still recognizing the problems back home,” Balogun said.

Holder and Balogun said that racism is still an issue facing the community.

“Racism is always a relevant issue for black people, and there is no exception when it comes to the Tech campus,” Holder said.

The discouragement we face ranges from constantly being harassed by the police...to being called then-word or some other inappropriate racial slur...One of the biggest problems we face on campus today is that many people perceive us in a way that we don’t approve of,” Balogun said.

There are so many misconceptions about black culture and society which are fueled by the media that are totally false and certainly inapplicable to the students here,” Balogun said.

“Citing one example, Balogun said, “Just this weekend, upon leaving a white frat party, one of our members was asked by a white female ‘why are you here?’ as if to say that he didn’t belong. It’s the types of occurrences that lead black students to feel unwanted and depressed.”

To make African American students feel welcome at Tech, and to give them a sense of belonging, both organizations host numerous events that are open and free to everyone.

These events include AASU’s Kwanzaa Celebration, Martin Luther King Talent Show and Black History Month amongst the different Hispanic organizations,” Rodriguez said.

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