Good evening. It is a pleasure to welcome you to the Engineering Awards ceremony—our first-ever program honoring members of the Engineering Hall of Fame, the Academy of Distinguished Engineering Alumni; and the Council of Outstanding Young Engineering Alumni.

I myself am a member of the Academy of Distinguished Engineering Alumni and although I still have a chance to make it into the Hall of Fame, I have been told repeatedly—because I ask repeatedly—that there is no longer any chance of my becoming a member of the Council of Outstanding Young Engineering Alumni.

Each year I enjoy the opportunity to speak at awards ceremonies such as this one because through the success of those inducted, I see—over and over again—not only the value of a Georgia Tech education, but also the high caliber of students the Institute attracts. To tonight’s inductees, I would like to offer my congratulations and my thanks—although you may not realize it, your success serves as an example to Tech’s current and future students of the heights which can be built from the firm foundation of a Georgia Tech education.

*The Alma Mater*—the song, not the Institute itself is probably a song many of you may have forgotten. The primary reason being that it’s a little slower and not as much fun to sing at football games as the Ramblin’ Wreck. However, *The Alma Mater* has a few lines that I believe have much relevance for us tonight. The song speaks of the shared bond between
Techalumni and the can-do spirit that enables most Tech alumni to do what others fear to even attempt. The song states, “But when the battle seems in vain/Our spirits never falter,/We’re ever one in joy or pain/And our union is a lasting bond.”

Tonight, that can-do spirit is evident as I think about the success and the achievements of those of you being honored tonight. I also see the bond we all share—whether you graduated in the 1940s, the 1960s, or the 1990s. It is a bond that stems from shared hard work during our student days and grows to shared appreciation as we view the results of our continued hard work.

In conclusion, I would like to leave you with the words of a fellow alumni of Georgia Tech. Although he did not graduate from the Institute, I believe his words have much to say about success, particularly the success of a Georgia Tech graduate. Although he meant his words as a charge to the students graduating this past spring, I think they are especially appropriate tonight as they describe the ideal for Tech students to strive for—an ideal those of you being honored tonight have both lived up to and made your own.

The words are from Georgia Senator Sam Nunn and are as follows:

“Remember that in America today, you must be a hell of a parent, a hell of a neighbor, a hell of a citizen, and a hell of a role model. Then, you will truly be a hell of an engineer.”

Tonight, we honor more than three generations of “hell of an engineers.” Some of you have just begun, others are in themiddle, still others are at the apex of your careers—however,
all of you have much to offer Georgia Tech as well as your professions—and we welcome your continued participation, guidance, and support of your alma mater.

Thank you for making Georgia Tech proud, and congratulations on being selected for this prestigious honor.