By Raisa Simoes

On the evenings of February 13 and 21, the IAC hosted its annual Networking Nights events in the Wardlaw Center. Each night focused on different career fields and offered students the opportunity to speak with representatives from companies and organizations in the corresponding fields. The first Networking Night revolved around the domains of international affairs, security, law, and humanitarian work, among others. The second one focused on the areas of management, public relations, business, marketing, and media production.

Upon entering the Wardlaw Center, my initial impression of the event was one of high professionalism. Among the table of light refreshments, the young men and women in tailored suits and skirts, and the formality of it all, I sensed a greatly sophisticated quality. This was not a surprise given that the Networking Nights are targeted specifically at undergraduates looking to make professional connections for their prospective careers. Through their outstanding résumés and conversational charisma, these students showed that they had much to offer to the organizations represented. In granting undergraduates who are perhaps otherwise unsure of their future career path the permission to showcase their education and personal achievements to industry representatives, these Networking Nights made confidence and unrestrained curiosity absolutely legitimate.

By touring the various tables (each with a representative from a different company or organization) and sitting in on conversations, I garnered a genuine feel for the nature of the event. From this I was able to notice the confident conversational skills of the students present. Dressed in professional clothing and using the most eloquent of language, freshmen and seniors alike posed compelling questions to officials from organizations ranging from the FBI to the Carter Center. This chance to approach important professionals with substantive questions about their work and possibly even the job opportunities they offer is one of the greatest benefits of the Networking Nights. Not only is it an occasion to meet potential employers and network, but it is one in which a young aspiring Tech graduate can develop his or her capabilities to communicate in the real world.

By far the most interesting part of Networking Nights was being able to hold personal talks with important delegates from an array of career fields. I had the pleasure of conversing for quite a while with a retired CIA analyst who specialized in Japanese and Korean affairs. I, as well as those partaking in the conversation with me, felt completely at ease asking her about her career at the CIA, the qualities the agency looks for in job candidates, and the career possibilities available there. For those interested, she stressed the importance of acquiring language skills, especially unconventional languages such as...
A Scenery of Two Souls in Atlanta

By Gi Sun Burke

I’m driving along Peachtree Street in downtown Atlanta, where tall ridged contemporary buildings sit side-by-side with remarkable colonial architectures from early Georgian history, showcasing the city’s classic beauty as well as sorrowful memories of its aged power. In Centennial Park, a place for hippies and the homeless, a few streetcart shops display such cheap items as female belts and handbags. A couple of tourists are taking pictures of obscure city scenes while the fading rays of the sun escape between the high-rises, inducing longer shadows that merge onto the afternoon figures and streets.

To the south, the edge of downtown is rife with signs of neglect: abandoned shops with broken windows blocked by particle boards; written slang on the walls; and groups of African American pedestrians walking towards their racial boundary, with noises coming from the project buildings, the affordable Spanish-speaking laborers constantly chopping down the humble marks of American history.

Driving back towards Buckhead, the gridlock traffic promises a two-hour long meditation for a mere ten miles distance from West Peachtree Street. The commuters, unwilling participants in this daily parade, mindlessly watch the homeless African Americans; they seem to have nowhere else to go. This contradictory and double-sided society has existed for almost 500 years in various forms throughout American history.

The double souls in this society evidence themselves in the American psyche. A university professor voices her opinion: “… African Americans [have] two souls within one body, the soul of a person of color and that of a U.S. citizen… In my case, it meant that I should do nothing to embarrass the race… I worked extremely hard because I had on my shoulders the burden that I had to be one of the best students, to prove that people of color could excel.” She goes on to share her experience: “One day while shopping in one of the antique stores on Piedmont Avenue, I noticed that wherever I went, a man followed. Finally, I whirled around and asked him why he was always on my heels. Then it dawned on me. He was following to make sure I didn’t steal anything.”

Our perceptions are constructed from personal, cultural and institutional intelligence, and racism exists in all these aspects. It is personal in how one feels about certain races, cultural in how one looks down on other races’ customs and traditions, and institutional in terms of rules and practices that discriminate based on racial criteria. Is it something we should live with? Bargain with? Be immune to? Or leave behind and move beyond?

In racism, who is the victim and who is the offender? Just by counting the facts from many historical records, the victims of racism in America have commonly been of non-Anglo-Saxon descent. The paradox is that it has existed in the same racial society as classicism, regardless of wealth. Racism is nothing less than a form of territorial fighting, a reaction to pressures both economic and cultural. Sadly, it has had a long and bloody history in human society. Victimized mentalities keep producing blamable and hated scapegoats within this society, but throwing mental rocks at each other will not change anything.

Racism in all its ferocity has survived longer than a great society such as ours should endure. Especially at a school like Georgia Tech, where the average students and faculty members are of above average intelligence, racism should be eliminated because it can only be perpetuated in an environment of ignorance. How many people are there still being affected by racism who cannot escape it? If an artist were to paint a picture of our school and American society, would we want it painted a monochrome black and white or should the artist use all of the colors to create a more beautiful and truthful representation? We should remember why the beautiful rainbow has many different colors, not just white and black. Wouldn’t it be better to produce a vibrant scene of a society if we use all the colors given to us?

KUDOS

Congratulations to the following two Georgia Tech delgates to the annual ACC Undergraduate Research Conference to be held April 12-14 at the University of Virginia:

Ms. Amaris E. Gutierrez-Ray, LCC
“A Cross-Disciplinary Look at Landscapes”
Advisor: Dr. Ron Broglio, LCC

Ms. Summar Shoaib, INTA
“Women’s Empowerment After the Fall of the Taliban”
Advisor: Dr. Sylvia Maier, INTA

Michael Rohling secures PURA grant to fund undergraduate research project with Georgia Tech’s Living History Program.

Congratulations to Ben Callner, STAC, whose film “Raymond” was selected as one of the top movies from CMF 2006 in Atlanta, Florida, and Boston.
Opportunity to talk about what’s going on in the Gulf Coast.

I was going to give a talk about Atlanta, specifically the neighborhoods I have been involved in—Reynoldstown, Egg Hunt and build a playground for local children. For more sponsors another trip to New Orleans to host an Easter temporary housing for residents. Also “Geaux to the Gulf” is in the community. There is an alternate spring break trip to in which Tech students are able to help make a difference.

Any opportunity to create time and space in people’s lives to stop and consider what is happening with Katrina Relief or any kind of social issues is a huge success to me. Tech students are overwhelmed with what they have to accomplish in their day to day lives, but we need to take a step back to see and hear what is happening outside of our campus,” says Amanda.

I agree with Amanda. Programs like these are beneficial to the student body because they deal with reality. Catastrophic events like Katrina happen constantly, and people need to take the time to realize this and do what they can to help. The students that get involved in these community service events to go down to the Gulf and help out are taking the time to think about others and make a difference. It is inspiring to know that people that I go to school with have such an important impact on the nation and its problems.

If other students are similarly interested in getting involved in events like these, the MOVE (Mobilizing Opportunities for Volunteer Experience) Office is always promoting activities in which Tech students are able to help make a difference in the community. There is an alternate spring break trip to Pearlington, Mississippi through which students can build temporary housing for residents. Also “Geaux to the Gulf” is sponsoring another trip to New Orleans to host an Easter Egg Hunt and build a playground for local children. For more information, go to www.move.gatech.edu.
Dr. Molly Cochran is an associate professor and director of undergraduate programs in the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs. She currently teaches Ethics in International Affairs, International Strategy and Policy, and International Relations Theory. The LINK sat down with her to better understand her background and motivations in international affairs.

LINK: What influenced your decision to study international affairs?
Molly Cochran: oddly enough, my parents discouraged the talk of politics in my household. Their reason was that it just results in family discord. So I think maybe it was a kind of rebellion or frustration towards this policy. Also, when I was young I proclaimed that I wanted to be a professor, so it was just a matter of what subject I went into.

LINK: Do you mind sharing some of your research?
MC: A research project that I’m still writing up is from when I worked with the Human Rights Watch (HRW), which is a humanitarian group like Amnesty International, in New York. I worked with British Parliamentarians in London on a few issues important to HRW. I established the connection to HRW through the Council on Foreign Relations, a nonpartisan agency that connects the worlds of academia and research and analysis. The primary issue that I discussed with the Parliamentarians was the International Court of Justice and its development.

LINK: What were your first teaching experiences like?
MC: My first teaching experience came almost by chance. I was a graduate student at the University of Kent when Mervyn Frost (a professor heavily invested in international ethics) urgently needed someone to fill a teaching position at the University of Natal in Durban, South Africa (now a part of the University of KwaZulu-Natal). He asked the graduate student supervisor at Kent and I was recommended. I started teaching in the middle of heavy racial tensions on campus that surrounded apartheid. It was here that teaching the principles of individual freedom and international ethics really excited me. Ideas like equality that we so often take for granted were foreign to these kids. Experiencing countries unlike our own is not only a great learning experience, but also a chance to broaden your view of the world, to see something from a different perspective.

The Ivan Allen College is hosting an awards reception on April 11, 2007 to honor students who have exemplified excellence in leadership, service, extracurricular pursuits and research. The Ivan Allen College Student Advisory Board has developed this event as a way of recognizing and publicizing noteworthy accomplishments of Ivan Allen students. This event will be a high-profile and well-publicized event. The whole college as well as a number of important college representatives including deans, school chairs, advisors, and other faculty and staff will be personally invited to help celebrate our students. Students, Faculty, Staff and Administration are invited to nominate students who are outstanding examples of any of the award areas. Details on the nominations process are found below. All nominations should be sent in by Monday, March 12th to gleo@gatech.edu.