GOOD DAY ATLANTA

I’d like to begin my report by asking Tina to show a brief videotape from “Good Day Atlanta,” which was broadcast live from the Georgia Tech campus on Channel 5 from 6 to 9 a.m. last Thursday. (VIDEO)

Most electronic media reports on Georgia Tech consist of a brief story on one small aspect of what goes on here on campus, and the audience is limited to whoever happens to be watching during that particular snippet of time. It was great to have a much bigger picture of life at Georgia Tech presented over the course of three hours of broadcast time.

HESBURGH AWARD

On Monday, February 15, I went to Washington, D.C. with Dave McGill, who is the director of the Georgia Tech Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, to accept the Theodore M. Hesburgh Award from TIAA-CREF. The award was presented at the annual meeting of the American Council on Education at a luncheon that featured Elizabeth Dole as keynote speaker and was attended by about 1,200 people. (PP SLIDE OF PHOTO WITH DOLE)

The Hesburgh Award is given for faculty development to enhance undergraduate teaching and learning, and it is an important honor for Georgia Tech. We are oriented toward engineering, science, and technology, so it is a particular distinction to be recognized for cultivating the teaching and human interaction skills of our faculty.

The award also recognizes the value that our alumni place on their educational experience, and Chip Ackridge was at the luncheon to represent Tech alumni. Our alumni know that a good teacher can change your life in far-reaching and enduring ways. That understanding has led them to create endowments to fund our Teaching Fellows programs. Their commitment combined with the excellence of the programs themselves led to the Hesburgh Award.

Georgia Tech is one of only nine universities to have won the Hesburgh Award. In addition to a framed certificate and letter from President Clinton, the award also includes $30,000, which we will place in an endowment to support our teaching effectiveness programs.

While we are on the topic of awards, let me also mention that two Georgia Tech faculty – Don Giddens of biomedical engineering and Melvin Carter, who is now retired – were recently elected to the National Academy of Engineering. This high honor allows Tech to lay claim to 16 members of this prestigious organization.
STATE BUDGET

We are very actively involved with legislators in this year’s session of the General Assembly. I have made several trips to the Capitol, as have other Tech faculty, to meet with Lieutenant Governor Mark Taylor, Speaker Tom Murphy, and legislative leaders like Rep. Richard Royal, who in addition to being a Tech alumnus chairs the budget subcommittee on higher education. We have also hosted three groups of legislators here on campus. The reason for all this activity is that, in addition to the usual concerns about faculty salaries and the University System funding formula, Georgia Tech has two major initiatives, two new buildings, and several other items on the table.

The biggest of the initiatives is the **Yamacraw Mission**, which takes a comprehensive approach to attracting a major concentration of software engineering and electronic design companies to Georgia by providing both the research and the educated workforce they need. Georgia Tech is the lead institution, and seven other units of the University System will be involved in more peripheral ways. The plan is to educate 2,000 design engineers during the next five years through the addition of more than 80 professors to the Georgia Tech faculty.

The Governor has proposed **$11.5 million** for the Yamacraw Mission. The Advanced Technology Development Center will control $2.5 million to provide seed capital funding to stimulate investment in new companies. In addition, the budget proposal includes $3.9 million to reimburse the Georgia Research Alliance and Georgia Tech for the initial funding to get this project underway.

In my annual report to you last October I said we hoped to make engineering education more broadly available around the state through a **Regional Engineering Program**. We now have a specific proposal on the table to develop three undergraduate degrees and three master’s degrees in the southeastern part of the state. Georgia Tech would administer the program and use distance learning technology to provide quality courses and course materials. Three local universities -- Georgia Southern in Statesboro, and Savannah State and Armstrong Atlantic State in Savannah – would provide the labwork and other hands-on components on their campuses and at the Coastal Center, which is an educational facility they share. The Governor has recommended **$1.5 million** in this year’s supplemental budget and **$2 million** in next year’s budget to get the Regional Engineering Program started in southeast Georgia.

The budget also includes the construction funds for the environmental sciences and technology building, which is the second of the three buildings that will make up the BEM Complex. The other two are the bioengineering and bioscience building, which is now under construction, and the molecular science and engineering building, which is yet to come.
The Governor recommended $36.6 million in state funds for the environmental sciences and technology building. However, at this point the General Assembly has cut it back to $32.1 million to free up bond money for other projects they want to add to the budget. We hope to get these funds added back before the building is complete.

Our second proposed building is a $4.1 million food technology building under the auspices of the Traditional Industries Program. This research program involves a broad range of University System units in practical problem solving for three industries: pulp and paper; textiles, carpet and apparel; and food processing. Georgia Tech works with all of these industries, and the Traditional Industries Program is coordinated from Tech’s Economic Development Institute.

The $9 million budget proposal for the Traditional Industries Program also includes $750,000 to renovate labs in Tech’s School of Textile and Fiber Engineering.

Funding for the Georgia Research Alliance also affects Georgia Tech directly, and we hope to hold an appropriation of somewhere between $40 and $42 million in the supplemental budget for the current fiscal year. Of that, $1.5 million would help endow two new chairs for eminent research scholars at Georgia Tech. $2.5 million would add a technology development center to the new environmental science and technology building. And $1 million would be used for lab renovations here at Tech. Tech would also benefit from $27.6 million that has been proposed for research equipment.

We are also hoping to hold on to a $450,000 increase proposed in next year’s budget for ATDC staff at three incubator sites. $175,200 of that total would set up a one-person ATDC office for the Emory/Georgia Tech Biotech Business Park, which is being developed on the campus of what used to be the Georgia Mental Health Institute.

Last but not least, we are working to obtain just over $7 million to cover the cost of decommissioning GT’s nuclear reactor.

As you can see, Georgia Tech has a lot at stake in this year’s legislative session, and Andrew Harris is marshalling our faculty around campus and our alumni around the state to help us hang onto the funding for these projects as the budget moves through the legislative process.

RESEARCH UPDATE

I know that you are probably getting tired of hearing that research continues to increase at Georgia Tech, so I will be brief. In addition to an all-time high of $255 million in research expenditures, last year also featured GTRI’s largest research proposal ever, the first proposal that Georgia Tech submitted on videotape, and an increase in the number of proposals pending for sponsored research. We are now seeing the results of having made more proposals. As of the end of January, the sponsored research awards
for the current year totaled $128 million, compared to $107 million at the same time last year, which represents an increase of nearly 20 percent.

NEW FINANCIAL PROCESS

We have spent the last several months preparing for a change in the way Foundation funds are accounted for. The new policy has two goals: administrative streamlining and a higher level of accountability. Basically, the expenditure of Foundation funds will now be processed through the Institute, then the Foundation will reimburse the Institute at the end of each month. The exception is business entertaining, which remains outside the scope of official Institute financial transactions. This new process will cut down on paperwork, especially for the Foundation, and it will give us a much clearer record of what happens to Foundation funds once they are injected into campus units for expenditure.

During the past several months the staffs of the Foundation and of Institute Financial Services went through training. We explained the new policies and procedures to campus units and made this information available on the Georgia Tech website. We established the appropriate accounts and advised the appropriate campus units of the account numbers. Then on February 1st we took a deep breath and launched the new system. We are just now coming to the end of the month, so we have not quite completed the first cycle of this new process. But I am pleased to report that so far everything is on track and working smoothly.

While we’re talking about financial systems, February is also the first month for our new payroll system, and this transition is also moving forward smoothly. All of state government is converting to PeopleSoft computer software to allow for easier and more consistent administration and auditing of personnel systems. And we are proud that Georgia Tech is the first unit anywhere in state government to actually implement the new system.

Both of these changes required a lot of hard work from our Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance Bob Thompson and his staff. And having to implement them simultaneously certainly did not make Bob’s life any easier. But he and his staff rose to the challenge, and I want to commend them for an outstanding job.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Barrett Carson will give you more details on the Capital Campaign, but I am pleased to report that as of January 31st, the campaign has raised $365.8 million.

A recent campaign highlight for me personally was acknowledging a $10 million gift from an anonymous friend of Georgia Tech for the new BEM Complex, which
includes buildings for bioengineering and biosciences, environmental science and technology, and molecular science and engineering.

In addition to its size, there are two things of note about this gift. One is that we began the discussions at the $2 million level, and as we worked on it, the donor’s excitement grew to the point where the gift ended up at the $10 million level. The second is that we have been working on this gift for four years. It is an example of the tremendous amount of time and effort that often goes into preparing the way and shaping the proposal for a major campaign gift. That effort came mostly from Barrett Carson, Engineering Dean Jean-Lou Chameau and Sciences Dean Gary Schuster. And I want to recognize their perseverance in the lengthy process of developing a proposal that generated a high level of support and enthusiasm from the donor.

We continue our efforts to imbue Georgia Tech alumni with the spirit of the campaign. Last fall I made campaign presentations to ten alumni clubs around Georgia and across the nation. We have now begun a spring schedule of another ten alumni club Roll Out events, and next month we will have four events in the space of four days in Texas and Florida. We are also beginning to put together a schedule for next fall, looking at Boston, Philadelphia, Miami, Chicago and San Diego.

We make maximum use of these trips by scheduling development calls around the Roll Out events, which further increases the amount of work that goes into preparing for them. And I want to express my appreciation to the staffs of the Development and Alumni offices for all of their hard work behind the scenes to make these campaign trips a success.

CAMPUS VISITS

I want to conclude by reassuring you that in between all of these campaign Roll Out events, and trips to Washington D.C. to accept awards and visits to the State Capitol, I have not lost touch with what is going on here on campus. During my first academic year at Georgia Tech in 1994-95, I visited each of the academic units on campus to introduce myself to the faculty and listen to their ideas and concerns about the Institute. Last month I began another round of more than two-dozen visits, spending about an hour and a-half with the faculty of each school to give them a sense of the bigger picture of what we are working on Institute-wide and to listen again to their ideas and concerns and advice. I expect to complete most of these visits during winter and spring quarters.