

NOTES FOR GEORGIA TECH PRESIDENT G. WAYNE CLOUGH
Earth Day Tree Planting, April 22, 1999

- Thank and commend GT Earth Day Committee:
 - Cindy Jackson, Office of Solid Waste Management, chair person
 - Evans Charles, also of Office of Solid Waste Management
 - Cherisse Stephens, Department of Housing
 - Cindy McKenzie, also of Department of Housing
 - Eva Shen, Student – representing Residence Hall Association
 - Robert Hill, Student – representing SGA
 - Kurt Neufang, Department of Parking and Transportation
 - Lisa Nickel, Alumni Association
 - Nancy Jones, Center for Sustainable Development
 - Wendi Gretz, Dining Services
- In spring, when the pollen is so thick in Atlanta that it seems you could cut the air with a knife, we might be tempted to wish we had fewer trees rather than more. But planting a tree is a good way to celebrate Earth Day, because trees are one of nature's marvelous tools for keeping things in balance across the rhythms and cycles of life and the seasons.
- Poet Robert Frost noted the important role of trees in the changing seasons, pointing out that each year the leaves "fall from giving shade above" and "go down past things coming up," routinely mulching the soil to support spring's new growth. Trees also play an important role in breaking down carbon dioxide through photosynthesis, releasing the oxygen that we as animals need to live.
- Trees help us stay cool in the summer. If you look at infrared heat-sensing aerial photos of Atlanta over years, you can see how the temperature has intensified and increased as the trees have been cut.
- The earth and the sky, the mountains, rivers and seas, and even the trees are large and long-lived compared to human beings. Their vast ecosystems move across the centuries with enormous strength and power beyond our control. Sometimes it's hard for us to grasp the fact that this natural environment that seems so everlasting, is at the same time so fragile and sensitive that small things we either do or don't do in our daily lives can spoil it or save it for generations to come. But understanding that paradox is the key to the future of the Earth and our own future as its inhabitants.
- Earth Day reminds us that the Earth is not ours to exploit, but that we are stewards of the Earth, responsible to care for its resources wisely and well, so that it will continue to sustain life for generations to come.
- We are honored to have two special guests on the Tech campus to celebrate Earth Day: Kate Lutz, who joins us from Earth Day 2000, and Renay Blumenthal from the staff of Governor Roy Barnes, where she serves as policy director on a variety of issues ranging from health care to economic development, and including the environment.

- Prior to the Barnes administration, she was the director of human development in the State Office of Planning and Budget. In this capacity, she worked on issues like Medicaid, welfare, health care and juvenile justice.
- Renay is a graduate of Georgia Tech, with a BS in Management Science. During her student days here at Tech she was a resident and R.A. of Glenn Dorm and was involved in several student organizations. She also holds an MBA from Georgia State.
- Renay, it is a pleasure to welcome you back to campus to help us celebrate Earth Day today.