

REMARKS BY GEORGIA TECH PRESIDENT G. WAYNE CLOUGH
Awards Luncheon, State Charitable Campaign, May 1, 2001

Thank you, Commissioner Young, for that kind introduction. It has been an honor to serve as the chair of this year's State Charitable Contributions Campaign.

One of the earliest and best-known observers of life in the United States was an outsider named Alexis de Tocqueville. And in his 1835 treatise, *Democracy in America*, he wrote, "When an American asks for the cooperation of his fellow citizens, it is seldom refused; and I have often seen it afforded spontaneously and with great good will."

Last August, I asked for your cooperation in encouraging your employees to be generous in coming to the aid of their fellow Georgians. Today I can report that I have seen it "afforded... with great good will." And I am pleased to join with Commissioner Marjorie Young and Dianne Cohen, who is here on behalf of Governor Barnes, in thanking you and honoring you for your generosity.

This year's campaign totaled \$2,614,257. That amount is slightly less than last year, largely because the hospital of the Medical College of Georgia was privatized, and all of its staff ceased to be counted as state employees. Last year those folks donated about \$90,000 to this campaign, and we hope they are still making that contribution, but we can't count them as a state agency any longer.

However, many of your units increased your giving this year over last, and I am very proud to say that Georgia Tech is among them. Today we are here to celebrate your generosity and community spirit, and to recognize those who achieved new heights in their level of giving with special awards.

All of us in state government and the University System of Georgia are engaged in the business of making Georgia a better place. We get up every the morning and go to work with that purpose in mind. But our position in the midst of state government also makes us keenly aware of its limitations.

We know that government simply cannot do all that needs to be done. We know that there is no law that government can pass that will take the place of people caring about each other and helping each other. There is no appropriation we can

put in the state budget that will replace the efforts of the organizations we support through this charitable campaign.

Much of the day-to-day, frontlines work of helping needy neighbors and responding to emergencies in our communities is done by the non-profit community service organizations that we support with our charitable campaign giving. Their role complements what government is able to do.

We also know that government should not be counted on to do all that needs to be done. There is a big difference between the tax dollar that is taken out of our paycheck before we ever see it and the dollar that we choose to give voluntarily out of our own pocket, because we care. Every time we delegate to government a job that is now being handled by the private sector, we add another layer to the bureaucracy that insulates us from concern for our neighbor and our neighbor's concern for us.

We might think that the worst thing we could do to our fellow citizens is to hate them, but in *The Devil's Disciple*, George Bernard Shaw wrote that the essence of inhumanity is not hate, but rather indifference. The cruelest thing we can do to our neighbors and fellow citizens is not to care, to be indifferent to their needs, to wave them aside as somebody else's responsibility.

The State Charitable Campaign offers us an opportunity to demonstrate our caring, and we have responded generously to help the injured and ill, to serve children and families, to support literacy programs, and to provide disaster assistance, food, clothing and housing.

Most of us think of ourselves as "givers" to the Charitable Campaign, but we are also "receivers" in two senses of the word. First, sharing our resources with those who need a helping hand puts our own problems into perspective and gives each of us a sense of making a difference in the world around us. As Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life, that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself."

But second, I suspect you would be amazed to discover how many state employees are actual, literal "receivers" of the assistance that the State Charitable Campaign supports and provides. At Georgia Tech we've found that many members of our faculty and staff have personally benefited from this program. They are usually well-respected, well-established members of our community – not the sort of people you would think of as needing social services. But they tell

stories of how the Visiting Nurses Association helped them care for a family member who was ill, or how community service organizations helped put them in touch with the special resources they needed in a time of family crisis.

Their stories serve as an important reminder that all of us are vulnerable. Nobody knows which one of us, which one of our families, will be next to face a crisis in which we need help from one of the many service organizations that our fellow state employees have supported through this campaign. This is our chance to make sure that help will be there for our families, our friends, and our neighbors in times of need.

I was honored to be your chair this year, and I thank you for joining in support of this year's campaign. Our collective efforts give meaning to our own lives, touch the lives of our friends and neighbors, and go a long way toward making the state of Georgia a better place.