You win some, you lose some
The men’s basketball team ended its losing streak this past weekend, triumphing over Wake Forest (87-79) but lost to Virginia (76-74). Page 28

Trances Arc throws down
Trances Arc, an indie rock band from Athens, took the stage last Saturday night at the Earl opening for the Dropoutnic album release party. Page 35

Campus Civican, Innocence Atlanta, One Voice band together to shed light on sex trafficking in city

By Hamza Hasan
Staff Writer

Last Friday the newly formed student organization One Voice hosted Laleo, a benefit concert at The Under the Couch. The concert’s purpose was to inform participants of the reality and horror of child sexual exploitation, especially in Atlanta. To emphasize the purpose of the concert, One Voice decided to name the event Laleo, a Greek word meaning “to speak.”

Several months ago, five second-year Tech students decided to create an organization dedicated to informing the public about sexual exploitation of children after hearing discussions about the atrocious acts. After hearing the facts from their pastor at Midtown Community Church, the group decided to act.

According to Innocence Atlanta, a nonprofit organization similar to One Voice, Atlanta ranks among the top cities in America for child sex trafficking. “We feel like it’s an issue that’s completely hidden,” said Hannah Clement, a second-year Industrial Engineering major and one of the founders of One Voice. She also revealed the fact that of the four major hotspots of sex trafficking in Atlanta, the corner of North Avenue and Peachtree Street is the most striking location for Tech students, as it lies in the campus’ backyard.

TBD seeks projects

This year for Tech Beautification Day (TBD), the TBD committee wants Tech students to expose the ugliest parts of campus. In an effort to completely rebuild and redesign the event, the members and executive committee of TBD have initiated multiple programs in order to stir up excitement for TBD ‘08, which is taking place on April 5. Of those programs, the Stop the Ugly photog-raphy and idea contest is one of the ways that TBD is trying to appeal to more students. “We completely rebuilt our website, and our [theme] is ‘Think Beautiful.’ The Stop the Ugly contest and rebranding is part of our push to really get people excited about TBD ‘08,” said Stuart Lawder, second-year Math.

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Students unite in advocacy

By Maria Carter
Contributing Writer

With increased awareness in the media about living green and buying organic, it is no surprise to students attending Tech that sustainability and the Student Move-ment on campus is sprouting up all over campus. Students Organizing for Sustainability (SOS) runs grass-roots campaigns on a wide range of environmental, political and social issues in order to promote the greater goal of building a more sustainable campus, community and world,” said Carly Queen, SOS president and fourth-year Mechanical Engineering major.

SOS originally formed in response to a lack of environmental and sustainability initiatives at Tech. Both groups advocate environmental awareness by working with members of the surrounding community.

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Advocacy from page 9 allow them to continue advocating sustainable practices long after graduation.

The Tech chapter of the Student Movement for Real Change (SMRC), is part of the national SMRC, a non-profit organization that was founded in 2001.

The Student Movement for Real Change seeks “to be a leadership development organization that provides students in the United States a vehicle to advocate for positive change in neglected regions of the world,” according to www.studentmovementusa.org.

“I found the Student Movement’s website and decided that as a college student, starting a chapter at Tech would be the best way I could help those rural citizens of South Africa and Kenya,” said Fengning Yu, president of SMRC at GT and first-year International Affairs major.

According to Yu, the chapter’s goal is to help the children of Kenya and South Africa who are at risk of being exposed to contaminated water.

“The majority of Kenyans who die annually from water contamination are children…we are cleaning up water in Atlanta to parallel the importance of water all around the world and making both Atlanta neighborhoods and ourselves aware of the Kenya Water Crisis,” Yu said.

To date, SMRC at Tech has completed its first project: a clean-up of the pond at Glen Emerald Park. Some of SMRC’s upcoming initiatives include pen pal and mentoring projects with students of Atlanta public schools and campus wide film screenings to raise campus awareness of the water crisis in Kenya and the AIDS epidemic in South Africa. Fledgling student advocacy organizations often face unique problems; many as a result of their participation in the political arena. Queen cites political polarization as the largest difficulty she has faced as the leader of a student advocacy group.

“Some people are so focused on belonging to a certain political party that they forget to think for themselves. Anyone can be an environmentalist, regardless of political affiliation.”

Carly Queen
Fourth-year ME

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The members of the Student Movement for Real Change (SMRC) take a picture after their first community service/awareness project.

Members of SMRC completed their first project cleaning up a pond in Atlanta’s Glen Emerald Park. SMRC is a student-organized effort.
Every summer, thousands of Recently Acquired Tech Students (R.A.T.S.) participate in a Tech tradition dating back to 1972, FASET: an acronym for the Familiarization and Adaptation to the Surroundings and Environments of Tech, is an orientation program for freshmen, transfer students, and their guests.

FASET introduces students to the academic environment of Tech, as well as the support services that are available to them and the actual campus. Students are able to register for classes, meet fellow students, academic advisors, faculty and staff as well as get a feel for what it’s like to be part of the Tech community. This year, FASET has a new director. Bethany Naser has recently been named the new director of FASET orientation and transition programs.

"I'm still learning so much. My days are pretty fast-paced and involve a lot of interaction...I provide direction for the staff in the office."  
Bethany Naser  
Director of FASET

"I've only been here for a month, and I've already been really happy here. The people I have met have been welcoming and willing to help me. The students that I work with, the FASET Cabinet, are incredible. They are so motivated and very helpful. They really reflect what Tech says it is," Naser said.

Naser will be in charge of introducing incoming students to what life at Tech will be like. The weeks and months leading up to FASET are hectic and filled with a lot of preparation. Because she is new to the FASET process, Naser spends much of her time interacting with the Cabinet and the campus community to learn more about FASET.

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Although Naser does not have any specific plans for FASET, she is excited to make FASET '08 successful.

"We really want students to come through and leave FASET with a better understanding of the Tech community. I really want them to know what the academic and social aspects of Tech are. It’s important that they know what to expect in their classes, what daily life on campus will be like, and what Georgia Tech has to offer," Naser said.
Speaker series promotes Islamic awareness

By Andrew Ho
Contributing Writer

Last Thursday marked the second event in a four-week long series of lectures, film screenings and open discussions held by the Muslim Students Association. Taking place in the Student Success Center’s Clary Theatre, MSA invited speakers from the Council on American-Islamic Relations and Islamic Speakers Bureau of Atlanta to speak with students about the topic of Islamophobia.

Students learned about a variety of topics within the Islamic religion, such as the history and reasons behind Islamophobia in society. Participants also discussed how they could address the issue.

Executive Director Soumaya Khalifa of the Islamic Speakers Bureau of Atlanta, a native of Egypt who was raised in Texas, and Chris Burke from the Council on American-Islamic Relations, were first on hand to talk.

The first issue that was brought up was the definition of Islamophobia, which is defined as a prejudice or discrimination against the religion of Islam or Muslims and their culture.

The stereotypical perspectives of Muslims and Islam and underlying reasons for these stereotypes were then discussed, such as the association of Muslims with a monolithic, ideologue notion that seeks the downfall of Western society. Such associations are often due to mass media portrayals of Muslims in movies or TV shows, along with highly controversial comments made by certain talk show hosts and political leaders.

Attendees were encouraged to ask questions that they had about Islam to clarify those subjects. A point was made that education is the best way to combat prejudice of any sort.

The crowd was later separated into groups to describe other ways to fight Islamophobia. Ideas that were presented included encouraging people to interact with others outside of their comfort zone, allowing open debate, never ignoring other perspectives and a willingness to learn.

One topic of particular interest was Islamo-Fascism Awareness Day, also held at Georgia Tech and sponsored by the College Republicans on campus. Opinions in the crowd, some of whom were Muslims and part of the MSA, generally ran along the lines that such events are also protected by free speech, but should be open to civil debate and questions from dissenting parties.

MSA at Tech has stated its purpose as tending to the needs of Muslim students at Tech and the community as a whole through education, as well as fostering friendship between Muslims and non-Muslims.

Ahmed Salim, president of MSA and a native of the Kashmir region, stated that the Islamic Awareness Series is likely to continue in this four-week format to better accommodate the students and association members.

The MSA has held this event for four years now. In addition, MSA has hosted and organized other events such as Friday prayers, information tables and notably, the annual Fastathon which raises money to fight hunger and homelessness in urban areas.

Khalifa of the Islamic Speakers Bureau spoke highly of the crowd that night, regarding them as a “very intelligent, open-minded group” of people. Additionally, some of the Muslim students attending expressed that they had never experienced any instances of prejudice on Tech’s campus.

“This everyone here interacts positively on such a diverse campus, from students, to staff, to faculty.”

Musheer Ahmed
Third-year CS

The Islamic Awareness Series is set to continue March 6th and 11th, with the last event titled “The Gospel of Jesus according to Muhammad.”

Hisham Mahmoud of Princeton University will be on hand to lecture on the Islamic perspective of Jesus’s role and story as a prophet.

For more information, search for the Islamic Awareness Series event on Facebook or visit MSA’s website at cyberbuzz.gatech.edu/msa.

Soumaya Khalifa, the Executive Director of the Islamic Speakers Bureau of Atlanta, speaks to a group of Tech students last week.

2/29 - Women’s Night on the Wall
3/03 - International Coffeehouse
3/04 - Kickoff! WST Speaker
3/08 - Women’s Day of Service High School Outreach
3/11 - Take Back the Night
3/12 - Stress Management
3/25 - Self-Defense Lessons
3/26 - Graduate Women’s Lunch
3/28 - Paula Poundstone
3/29 - Girlscout Outreach
3/31 - Cap and (Wedding) Gown

For more information on our events, visit http://cyberbuzz.gatech.edu/wam
Laleo from page 9

event,” Clement said. Though the broad range of styles was refreshing, the performers up-held a constant vibe that kept the audience aware of the reason behind the concert. Like most concerts, the performers were situated on a stage with a stream of effect lights illuminating their perch. Warm and cozy, the atmosphere, combined with the relaxed music, instilled the audience with the feeling that people were listening—important for the cause of the event—to the injustice neighboring Tech’s campus.

Treated to free coffee from Starbucks, the audience members were free to donate to One Voice’s cause of eliminating the sexual exploitation of children. However, One Voice’s objectives remained clear. “The whole purpose of our group is awareness,” said Shelley Eckert, a second-year Biomedical Engineering major and one of the founders. “The only way to combat this issue is to have people know about it,” Clement said.

“The only way to combat this issue is to have people know about it.”

Hannah Clement
Second-year IE

Beth West, second-year Environmental Engineering major and also one of the founders, expressed her thoughts on the involvement of Tech students in the group’s cause. “It’s important that [they] be involved in fixing the city...once they recognize it’s a problem, [most] people have been very receptive,” West said.

“Laleo was also well-received by the audience, who walked away from the event with more than a good listen.”

“It’s something I didn’t realize was such a pressing issue in Atlanta,” said Meagan McElroy, a first-year Industrial Engineering major.

The event not only revealed the horror in the city’s streets, it emphasized the power of music made for a purpose.

As One Voice strives to make its cause heard, the organization is reaching out to Tech students and faculty alike in the hope of bringing to light the atrocities occurring seconds away from campus.

To learn more about the realities of adolescent sexual exploitation, visit www.innocenceatlon.org and look out for future updates and events from One Voice.

Ugly from page 9

In addition to the creation of the Stop the Ugly Contest, TBD also has changed its availability to Tech students by redesigning the website. With a new green-colored, grunge floral design, the website now includes a way for Tech students to personally log-in, sign up for projects and check out backstage happenings under TBD4ME. In addition, groups and individuals can sign up as well through the website for projects and positions such as Project Coordinator.

“We’ll be finishing building out the site this weekend to launch the contest on Monday, so check back over the weekend for more details,” Lawder said. This year’s TBD is estimated to have 500-1000 participants. Although group registration ended March 5, interested students can still sign up as an individual from March 10 until the day of the event on April 5.

“As $100 donations from an organization and a $25 gift card for second place and a $5 gift card from Starbucks for third place. Interested students can enter online at www.gtb.org/stoptheugly; however, the entry allows for image codes for pictures. ‘It will work because they are filling out a quick form for each submission, the site will send them an email, and if they have a design or photo, they will attach the photo and reply to the email to complete the submission,’ Lawder said.

Fraternities and sororities can also get philanthropy hours and Greek Week points for their participation.

For more information about TBD08, the executive board, or to register to volunteer, visit www.gtb.org.

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