

REMARKS BY GEORGIA TECH PRESIDENT G. WAYNE CLOUGH
Dedication of Marvin Mitchell Civil Engineering Chair's Suite
Mason Building Foyer, May 17, 2002

I am pleased to have an opportunity to thank my fellow Georgia Tech civil engineering alumnus Marvin Mitchell and his wife Margaret for their generous gift.

Civil engineering is one of engineering's oldest disciplines. We could say the first civil engineers were the Egyptians who built the pyramids. The Roman Empire was another demonstration of civil engineers at work. Civil engineering is also one of Georgia Tech's oldest disciplines, begun in 1896 within the first decade after the Institute opened its doors. Together with electrical engineering it was part of the first expansion of the curriculum beyond mechanical engineering.

Today, with 50 faculty members and 900 students, Georgia Tech's School of Civil and Environmental Engineering is one of the largest in the country. It is also one of the best, *U.S. News & World Report* ranks Georgia Tech fifth in civil and eighth in environmental engineering in the nation for graduate programs, and third in civil and sixth in environmental engineering in undergraduate programs. I am proud to be an alumnus of this program and to be back at Georgia Tech as President of the Institute that is its home.

Civil engineering may not get the attention of newer exotic disciplines like biomedical engineering or nanotechnology, but it continues to be the bedrock on which society is built. Civil engineering grew up at the place where the building of human societies intersects the natural environment. We build the infrastructure society needs to survive and thrive.

That task has become much more challenging than it used to be. The combination of a growing world population and the human tendency to delay dealing with infrastructure and environmental needs until they have reached crisis proportions, means that our profession is becoming more essential than ever before. The world needs the expertise of civil engineers to meet the requirements of population growth, while at the same time reducing the production of pollution and healing the environmental wounds of the 20th century. That will involve educating a new breed of civil engineer who sees our profession through the prism of environmental sustainability. And it will require research that creates new materials, technologies, and approaches that meet society's needs in environmentally sustainable ways.

Georgia Tech intends to be a leader in educating the next generation of civil engineers and conducting the research that will move our world toward environmentally sustainable prosperity. Marvin and Margaret Mitchell's gift will help to give us the resources we need to do that.

At this time I would like to invite the Mitchells to join me in unveiling the plaque dedicating the Marvin G. Mitchell Chair's Suite in the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering.