

GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

TWO HUNDREDTH AND FIFTEENTH
COMMENCEMENT EXERCISE

ALEXANDER MEMORIAL COLISEUM

May 3, 2003, 3:00 P.M.

(Faculty and President's Party will assemble at 2:00 p.m. in the Hyder Room, second level of the Coliseum).

Processional	Georgia Tech Commencement Ensemble Dr. Frank Clark
Master of Ceremonies	Dr. G. Wayne Clough President
Reflection	Mrs. Denise Shepard-Moss Episcopal Chaplain for College Ministries
National Anthem	Georgia Tech Commencement Ensemble
Commencement Address	Dr. Julie Gerberding Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Presentation of Honorary Degree	Dr. Clough

Presentation of Doctoral Degree Candidates	Dr. Charles Liotta, Vice Provost for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies
Conferring of Degrees	Dr. Clough
Presentation of Master's Degree Candidates	Dr. Liotta
Conferring of Degrees	Dr. Clough
Induction into Alumni Association	Mr. Robert Hall Class of 1964 President, Georgia Tech Alumni Association
Alma Mater	Georgia Tech Commencement Ensemble, Graduates and Audience
Faculty Recessional	Georgia Tech Commencement Ensemble
"Ramblin' Wreck"	Graduates and audience

May 3, 2003 - Ceremony Script (GRADUATE CEREMONY)

(Dr. Clough)

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. Will everyone please stand for the reflection by Denise Shepard-Moss, the Episcopal Chaplain for College Ministries, and remain standing for our national anthem.

(Denise Shepard-Moss) Reflection

(Commencement Ensemble) National Anthem

(Dr. Clough)

Please be seated. Once again, good afternoon. It is my pleasure to welcome everyone to Georgia Tech's two-hundred fifteenth commencement exercises.

Today we are celebrating the largest commencement in Georgia Tech history, with the individual recognition of about 2,000 graduates. Fortunately for you, we have already awarded almost 1,350 bachelor's degrees at the undergraduate ceremonies this morning. This afternoon we are focused on awarding the graduate degrees.

This ceremony takes me back to when I completed my own PhD at U-Cal Berkeley. The difference between then and now is greater than simply the years that have elapsed, because when I finished in 1969 more things than just academics were happening on Berkeley's campus. To file my dissertation I had to design a travel route around the demonstrations and figure out how to avoid pockets of tear gas.

Nevertheless, I look back on my years in graduate school as some of the most intellectually stimulating and satisfying experiences of my life. Lots of great colleagues, wonderful faculty, and all of us involved in creative research.

Today you are probably feeling a great sense of relief from the stress of theses, dissertations, and comprehensive and oral exams. But for the rest of your life you will look back and value the experience of these years. And you will discover that graduate school will continue to shape your life in ways that you do not yet anticipate.

I can tell you from personal experience that the level of freedom to develop your mind and pursue your interests during graduate study is rare. The pure intensity of investigating a tough problem for days and weeks at a time and finding a solution, is intoxicating. And, if you are like me, the friends you made during this time will be life-long.

Today, as we celebrate the successful conclusion of one chapter of your lifelong education, it is important to acknowledge that you have not done it alone. With you every step of the way – at least in spirit – were your parents and your spouses, who made all the difference in your success. The faculty and staff of Georgia Tech and our graduates would like to thank you for your support. Would our parents and spouses please stand so that we may recognize you.

(LEAD APPLAUSE)

Additional support for our graduates came from the Georgia Tech faculty. I know that when you got papers or tests back you did not always feel loved by the faculty, but today they are here to testify that you earned their respect. So now is the time for all of our graduates to say thanks for all the help they received from the faculty and I would like to ask the entire faculty present today to rise and be recognized.

(LEAD APPLAUSE)

Of course, those who deserve the most recognition on this momentous day are the graduates, who entered this room as students and who will leave as Georgia Tech alumni. Would all of you please stand so that we may recognize you and your achievement?

(LEAD APPLAUSE)

Over the course of the past year we have been celebrating the 50th anniversary of the first women to enroll at Georgia Tech. And one of the most enlightening things about our celebration has been to see the many ways in which the same women who overcame barriers here at Georgia Tech have continued to set new precedents after they graduated. So this afternoon it is very appropriate that our commencement speaker is a woman who has been a trail blazer for one of the most critical challenges facing our nation today.

Even as medical care has reached new levels of sophistication and offers new possibilities for treatments and cures, past few decades have also brought new health threats that the world must contend with. New infectious diseases from AIDS to the ebola virus to SARS are not only emerging but demonstrating an ability to spread rapidly around the globe. We must also now prepare for the possibility that infectious diseases will be used deliberately as weapons of terror.

It is clearly a time that calls for strong, steady, and competent leadership at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and we are fortunate to have just that in Dr. Julie Gerberding. She is not only the first woman to head the CDC, but Dr. James Curran of Emory University also describes her as “somebody who has been able to withstand the pressure and take the heat and always use good science-based judgment to make decisions.”

Dr. Gerberding was Phi Beta Kappa at Case Western Reserve University, from which she received a B.A. magna cum laude in biology and chemistry, then an M.D. She is also a fellow alum of mine, having received a master’s degree in public health from the University of California at Berkeley.

She is a specialist in infectious diseases and brings a stronger medical school background to her position at the CDC than any of its previous directors. She began her career in academe at the University of California in San Francisco, where she remains an associate

professor of medicine. She is also an associate professor of medicine at Emory University.

During her time at UCSF, she served as chief medical resident and was director of the Prevention Epicenter, a multidisciplinary service, teaching, and research program focused on preventing infections in patients and health care providers. In this capacity, she pioneered new techniques to protect health care workers exposed to the HIV virus which causes AIDS.

Dr. Gerberding came to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 1998 to run a program that combats hospital-spread infections, antibiotic resistance, and medical errors. When the anthrax attacks occurred in the fall of 2001, she was acting deputy director for science – one of a four-member team in charge of the CDC while a search was underway for a new director. She quickly emerged as the CDC's most unflappable investigator and its leading spokesperson in explaining the risks of anthrax.

Her competence and confidence led to her appointment as director of the CDC in July 2002. That job has not gotten any easier over the past year with the emergence of severe acute respiratory syndrome – known as SARS. This new infectious disease has kept the CDC busy on many fronts, from unraveling the gene sequence of the virus, to tracking cases in the United States, to issuing guidelines for schools and workplaces.

We are deeply honored that Dr. Gerberding agreed to take time from challenging and important tasks like those to be with us this afternoon, and I am pleased to introduce her at this time.

(DR. GERBERDING'S REMARKS)

Thank you, Dr. Gerberding. As a token of our appreciation for taking time to be with us and share your thoughts with our graduates, I would like to present you with this special

gift.

(PRESENT GIFT)

Before we begin the process of awarding degrees, we are going to take a few minutes to recognize a very special Georgia Tech alumnus and bestow upon him an honorary degree, which is not a common thing at Georgia Tech. But few are more deserving of this rare mark of distinction than person we honor today.

If anyone can lay claim to the title of “father of high-tech industry in Georgia,” it is Glen Robinson. He was co-founder and the first president of Scientific-Atlanta, which was arguably the state’s first high-tech company, and has founded several other successful high-tech businesses. He is also one of Georgia’s most prominent and prolific inventors, with 35 patents ranging from solar energy devices to antenna systems.

Glen Robinson earned his bachelor’s degree in 1948 and his master’s in 1950, both in physics from Georgia Tech. As a master’s student, he worked at the Georgia Tech Engineering Experiment Station, as the Georgia Tech Research Institute was called in those days, where he built the first television set in the state of Georgia. Glen worked towards his PhD degree while at Tech, but as you will see he became involved in other activities that consumed his very creative mind and he did not finish.

While still working on his advanced studies at Tech, Glen joined with six other Georgia Tech alumni to found Scientific-Atlanta. Each of them chipped in \$100, and Glen, who was designated to run the company, began seeking contracts to design electronics for the federal government. Today, Scientific-Atlanta is a world leader in antenna instrumentation and in broadband and satellite communication, and a mainstay of Georgia’s high-tech community. The company has more than 6,000 employees and is represented in 70 countries around the world.

Glen Robinson served as president of Scientific-Atlanta for 20 years, then was chairman of the board for another eight years until he retired – that is to say, he retired from Scientific-Atlanta. While other retirees were off playing golf, he was beginning another company, called E-Tech, to develop and manufacture leading-edge heat-pump technology.

Eight years later E-Tech merged with the Marvair Company to become Crispaire. Under Glen's leadership, Crispaire became the world's leading supplier of sophisticated cooling equipment for telecommunications systems. The company also offers high-efficiency, environment-friendly, heating and cooling ventilation systems for schools. Crispaire has since merged with several other firms to form AirExcell Inc., with annual sales of \$100 million.

In 1997, Glen Robinson retired again – that is to say, he retired from Crispaire. Once again, instead of hitting the golf course, he focused on another new company, which he had founded in 1994. Lasercraft, Inc., of which Glen is chairman and CEO, was incubated at Georgia Tech in the Advanced Technology Development Center. The company is now the world's largest manufacturer of laser products for law enforcement. They make laser speed guns, which are rapidly replacing radar guns, and laser cameras to catch drivers who run redlights. So, if you are ever tempted to break the traffic laws, remember that some of Glen Robinson's technology might be nearby.

I would also note that a good market never escapes Glen's attention, so while law enforcement officers were busy buying his equipment to catch speeders, he also developed a device for drivers to detect if laser speed guns were checking for errant road behavior. When Glen told me this story, I couldn't help thinking this was just the kind of thing an imaginative Georgia Tech graduate would think of.

Throughout his auspicious career, Glen has retained his close ties to Georgia Tech, serving in leadership positions with the Georgia Tech Research Institute and the Georgia Tech

Foundation, and presently sitting on the Advisory Board for the College of Sciences. He has endowed chairs for eminent faculty scholars in nonlinear science in the School of Physics and in electro-optics at GTRI.

He is a member of the American Physical Society and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. And his long list of community involvements range from the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce to Emory University's Board of Visitors.

Glen is a lucky man in many ways, and one of these is his marriage to his remarkable wife, Jan who is with us today. I would like to ask Jan and Glen's other family members who are here to stand and be recognized.

Glen also was endowed with a generous sense of humor that at times takes an irreverent streak. When asked to say grace at a meeting I attended, Glen started off politely, but then launched into a short lecture for the Lord about how good Georgia Tech was, concluding with his hope that the Lord could appreciate the virtues of all those who could be called a "hell of an engineer."

So today we are going to make up for the fact that we didn't get a chance to give a Ph.D. in physics to Glen back in the early 50s by asking him to come forward and receive an honorary doctoral degree from the Georgia Institute of Technology, authorized by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, in recognition of his extraordinary contributions to advancement of technology, to high-tech industry in Georgia, and to Georgia Tech. Our vice provost Dr. Liotta will assist me with the hooding ceremony.

(PRESENT HONORARY DEGREE)

We come now to the time that all of you have been waiting for – the conferring of your degrees. Dr. Charles Liotta, Vice Provost for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies, will present the candidates for the doctor of philosophy degree.

(Dr. Liotta) Will the candidates for the doctoral degrees please rise.

(Dr. Liotta) Mr. President, I have the honor of presenting to you for the doctoral degrees those candidates who have completed all requirements for those degrees.

(Dr. Clough) Upon the recommendation of the faculty of the Georgia Institute of Technology and by authority of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, I confer upon each of you the degree of doctor of philosophy with all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities thereunto appertaining.

Congratulations on earning Georgia Tech's highest academic degree. Will you please come forward and receive your diplomas.

(Dr. Liotta presents diplomas, Dr. Clough shakes hands, and advisors step on stage to hood their students.)

(Dr. Clough) Please join me in congratulating these doctoral graduates.

(LEAD APPLAUSE)

(Dr. Clough) Dr. Liotta will now present the candidates for the master's of science degree.

(Dr. Liotta) Will the candidates for the master's and master of science degrees please rise?

(Dr. Liotta) Mr. President, I have the honor of presenting to you for the master's and master of science degrees those candidates who have completed all requirements for those degrees.

(Dr. Clough) Upon the recommendation of the faculty of the Georgia Institute of Technology and by authority of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, I confer upon each of you the master's degree, with all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities thereunto appertaining.

(Dr. Clough) We shall now present the diplomas. Will the faculty marshals please bring the candidates forward.

(Dr. Liotta presents diplomas, Dr. Clough shakes hands)

(Dr. Clough) Please join me in congratulating these master's graduates.

(LEAD APPLAUSE)

(Dr. Clough)

Near the close of the 1800s, a young man sent a sheaf of poems to the foremost American writer of the day to be critiqued. Ralph Waldo Emerson read the manuscript, which was entitled "Leaves of Grass" and was destined to become one of America's best-loved volumes of poetry. And he wrote back to the young Walt Whitman: "I greet you at the beginning of a great career."

And as I look out over this sea of newly minted Georgia Tech alumni, I echo his words. I greet you at the beginning of a great career.

As of this moment, you are no longer merely graduate students. You are the scholars and technological leaders of tomorrow... the role models for future generations of aspiring scientists and engineers.

I would like to offer my personal congratulations on your accomplishment in attaining a degree from one of the top institutions of higher education in the nation. It was true for me and it will be even more true for you that your degree from Georgia Tech will open doors for you.

You have helped Tech achieve the highest national rankings of its storied history. So you can see that you are leaving our campus with a degree that means something special. Still, the pace of change today means that education has become a “K to Gray” activity. Anyone who does not continue to learn will be left behind, so I encourage you to never stop learning.

You are primed to be the technological leaders of tomorrow. Nurture your talents, balance your career with your family and service to your community, and you will become one of those Tech graduates we read about and brag about as great success stories. I wish you all the best in the future!

At this time, I would like to present Robert L. Hall, who retired a few years ago from a career of more than 30 years with IBM. He is now a senior consultant at Executive Strategies, Inc., and recruits mid- and senior-level managers for a variety of industries. He is also the president of the Georgia Tech Alumni Association and will induct our new graduates into the Alumni Association.

