

REMARKS BY GEORGIA TECH PRESIDENT G. WAYNE CLOUGH  
Presidents' Dinner, May 30, 2003

I am proud to join Bob Hall and Buck Stith in welcoming all of you to this year's Presidents' Dinner, which is our way of expressing our appreciation to everyone who has made a significant contribution to Roll Call.

Three lines from the poem Thomas Lux just read – “You make the thing because you love the thing, and you love the thing because someone else loved it enough to make you love it” – those three lines capture in a few brief words the essence of what we are celebrating here this evening. Each one of you is a partner and participant in working to make Georgia Tech better than ever, because you love this Institute. And that love is handed down to each successive generation of students and alumni.

There are many things that separate Georgia Tech from the typical public university, but one of the most significant is our outstanding alumni. You continue to support us with such strong enthusiasm long after you have “gotten out.” If you look at the other nine public universities that are up there with us in the nation's top ten, not a single one can match the level of support we get from our alumni. You are the number one group of alumni in the United States.

We are especially grateful to you for giving so generously to Roll Call. Roll Call fulfills a very important function in the financial life of Georgia Tech, helping us fill in the gaps between the designated gifts and giving us the flexibility we need to explore new directions, take advantage of unexpected opportunities, and test new ideas for improving our curriculum and our programs. Your gifts help to provide the resources that will allow us to seize our opportunities and rise above the level of a good, solid school to become the standard by which others measure themselves. And I want to express my heart-felt thanks on behalf of the Institute and its students, faculty, and staff for your generosity.

These are challenging times. The state budget is undergoing cut after cut, and our endowment is laboring in the shadow of a bear market. But these are also times of opportunity for those who are strategic and focused in their efforts. Everybody looks good when times are flush. It is in difficult times like these that the true leaders emerge and move out ahead of the pack. And that is our goal at Georgia Tech – to be careful and strategic about how we use the resources you provide to us, so that we continue to be well positioned and prepared to take advantage of the opportunities that open before us even when times are somewhat austere.

Our model is the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets, who won three games totaling 28 innings in the space of a little less than 12 hours last Saturday to win the ACC baseball championship. Very few teams ever play three games in one day, let alone win all three of them. That level of focus and determination is the hallmark of a champion, and the hallmark of Georgia Tech.

Focus and determination were demonstrated in a different arena earlier this month when a business venture team of Georgia Tech students won \$250,000 in the Carrot Capital Business

Plan Challenge in New York. Their venture, Torex International, offers a revolutionary, patented Steel Fiber Reinforced Cement that makes structures safer at a lower cost. The venture team had already won \$47,500 in other competitions before competing in New York.

Focus and determination also garnered some of the world's most prestigious individual awards for our students during the past few months – a Fulbright Fellowship as well as Churchill, Truman and Goldwater Scholarships.

And as all of you know, it takes a considerable amount of focus and determination just to “get out” of Georgia Tech. Our students are doing that, too, in record numbers. On May 3 more than 2,000 students walked across the stage at Alexander Memorial Coliseum in the largest commencement in Georgia Tech history. And their places will be taken in August by an equally outstanding group of new students entering Georgia Tech.

This year was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the enrollment of Georgia Tech's first female students, and we celebrated the focus and determination that enabled Georgia Tech's women to break through barriers and establish new hallmarks as students, faculty, and staff of this institution. An exhibit featuring the first 50 years of women at Tech is on display in the Neely Lobby of the library, and I encourage you to stop by if you have not yet seen it.

As we look ahead to the next 50 years, we are working with focus and determination to make Georgia Tech one of the few universities in the world to emerge as truly global in their scope. At home, we are offering new academic programs like the bachelor's degree in international affairs and modern languages, which quickly exploded from just four students to more than 100, and the new global economics/modern languages degree.

At Georgia Tech Lorraine in Metz, France, our graduate student body has grown to 240 and start-up companies have begun to emerge from our research labs. We have 170 undergraduates spending the summer in Metz, and we will begin a year-round undergraduate degree program this fall.

One of the most visible signs of our aspiration to become a technological leader in a changing world are the beautiful new buildings that continue to sprout from the fertile soil of our campus. These buildings are not only tools that will enable our students and faculty to perform at higher levels, but they are also indications of the goals Georgia Tech is striving toward.

Two weeks ago, we dedicated the Ford Environmental Science and Technology Building, the largest academic building in Georgia Tech history. This is the second building in our life sciences and technology complex, and the Whitaker Biomedical Engineering Building, which is the third, will soon be completed. These new state-of-the-art academic buildings are icons of our focus and determination to develop world-class education and research programs in emerging new interdisciplinary fields.

Next week we will celebrate the opening of the Joseph B. Whitehead Building, housing our new Edward Roe Stamps III Health Services to promote health and wellness for the Georgia Tech community. This is one of several buildings that provide the tools we need to improve campus

life. The others include the new recreation center, which is enclosing and surrounding the Olympic swimming pool; the Landon Learning Center for the babies and toddlers of our community, which was dedicated this spring; and the coming renovation of the Houston Building to provide expanded space for student organizations.

Then on October 23 and 24, I hope to see all of you at the grand opening of Technology Square, which will feature an interactive, international tele-symposium on technology in a global economy, with former Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin as special guest. Technology Square is a tool for outreach and engagement with the business community around us, from the business community of Midtown to the business community of Georgia to the global business community whose ties to Georgia Tech are electronic.

As we develop and build these new facilities, our goal is to create a campus that has integrity because its pieces join together to form a functional whole that is more than the sum of the constituent parts, and because what you can see on our campus tells you about the distinctiveness and the meanings which cannot be seen.

However, even as we shape a campus that says here is an important place where significant things are happening, we also are keenly aware that it is the efforts of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni that have lifted Georgia Tech to pre-eminence among world-class universities that far exceed us in size and wealth. It is the human tide that has flowed through the decades of Georgia Tech's life that has made this Institute great. And each one of you is an important part of it.

On behalf of the students, faculty, and staff of Georgia Tech, thank you for joining with us in our endeavors. Your love for Georgia Tech, expressed in your Roll Call contributions, enables us to step forward and provide new levels of technological leadership in a changing world. Or, as Thomas Lux expressed it so well, it is your work and your love that enables Georgia Tech to grow, "solid but with a soul, a life of its own."