

GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
TWO HUNDREDTH AND TWENTY FIFTH COMMENCEMENT EXERCISE
FERST CENTER FOR THE ARTS

August 4, 2006, 7:00 P.M.

(Faculty and President's Party will assemble at 6:00 p.m. in the Richards Gallery in the Ferst Center for the Arts).

Processional	Georgia Tech Commencement Ensemble
Master of Ceremonies	Dr. G. Wayne Clough President
Reflection	Rev. Steve Fazenbaker Wesley Foundation at Georgia Tech
National Anthem	Georgia Tech Commencement Ensemble
Commencement Address	Dr. Bryan Norton Professor of Philosophy
Presentation of Doctoral Degree Candidates	Dr. Jean-Lou Chameau Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs
Induction into Alumni Association	Ms. Janice Wittschiebe, Class of 1978, 1980 Chairman, Georgia Tech Alumni Association

Alma Mater

Georgia Tech Commencement Ensemble, Graduates and Audience

Faculty Recessional

Georgia Tech Commencement Ensemble

"Ramblin' Wreck"

Graduates and audience

August 4, 2006 - Ceremony Script (PHD CEREMONY)

(Dr. Clough)

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Will everyone please stand for the reflection by Rev. Steve Fazenbaker, from the Wesley Foundation at Georgia Tech, and remain standing for our national anthem.

(Rev. Steve Fazenbaker) Reflection

(Commencement Ensemble) National Anthem

(Dr. Clough)

Please be seated. Once again, good evening. It is my pleasure to welcome everyone to Georgia Tech's two-hundred twenty fifth commencement exercises. As the number of our graduates has grown, we have been experimenting with ways to make our commencement exercises more manageable and more meaningful to our graduates and their family and friends. In a larger ceremony this morning, we awarded more than 660 bachelor's and master's degrees. This evening, in a first for Georgia Tech, we are holding a separate ceremony for the presentation of 143 doctoral 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 writing and defending your dissertation. 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)

I especially want to thank and acknowledge our Provost Jean-Lou Chameau, whose outstanding leadership over the past decade has been an integral part of elevating Georgia Tech to new heights and moving us into the top ten public universities in the nation. Dr.

Chameau has been named the next president of Caltech, and while we hate to see him leave, we are grateful for everything he has done for us, we are proud of his new appointment, and we look forward to the opportunity to develop closer ties with another outstanding technological institution. Please join me in recognizing and thanking Dr. Chameau for his excellent service to Georgia Tech.

(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)

The highest honor that Georgia Tech can bestow upon any member of its faculty is the Distinguished Professor Award, which is presented each spring to a professor whose teaching, research, and mentoring of students have been especially outstanding. It is a Georgia Tech tradition that the faculty member who has been chosen as Distinguished Professor has the honor of delivering the summer commencement address. This year, the recipient of that high honor is Dr. Bryan Norton.

Dr. Norton is an internationally renowned and respected expert in his field, and that is not surprising for a top-tier Georgia Tech faculty member. What IS something of a surprise is that he is a philosopher, which is not exactly what you might expect to find at a technological university. But Bryan Norton received his Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Michigan in 1970, and prior to coming to Georgia Tech in 1988, he was professor of philosophy at New College of Florida – an honors college where you can major in philosophy and would expect to find philosophers on the faculty.

So, what brought a philosopher to Georgia Tech and enabled him to become internationally renowned? Unlike most philosophers who work alone, writing books that

few people outside of their field will read, Bryan Norton collaborates with colleagues from other disciplines. In the process he attracts competitive grants from organizations like the National Science Foundation and changes perceptions and practices across the nation and around the world.

Dr. Norton is a leading scholar in applying philosophy to an area of special focus for Georgia Tech – environmental sustainability. Most faculty and students who work in sustainability focus on scientific aspects like developing chemical processes for industry that are more benign, or creating environmentally sustainable technology like solar cells or hydrogen fuel cells.

Dr. Norton explores how to communicate sustainability and make it a practical part of how we as a society interact with the environment. He started out as a philosopher of language, especially the language of science and logic. Then his career moved toward environmental policy and the philosophy of biology. Today, he combines these two areas of expertise, applying the analytical tools of the philosophy of language to the concept of sustainable development.

His work also bridges a critical social divide. If you think back over the history of the environmental movement, you will recall that it began as a pitched battle, with environmental preservation pitted against economic development. However, in recent years it has been morphing toward an acknowledgement that we as humans are part of the natural eco-system of the planet, and achieving environmental sustainability in the way we operate our societies and economies will contribute to the quality of our lives, rather than detract from it.

This shift toward a more pragmatic approach that embeds the philosophical and ethical aspects of environmentalism into a practical and adaptive management processes is the work of Dr. Norton. He is co-founder of a growing movement in environmental ethics and

philosophy called Environmental Pragmatism. His newest book, which just came out last fall, is entitled *Sustainability: A Philosophy of Adaptive Ecosystem Management*, and it focuses on developing a new, practical, interdisciplinary approach and vocabulary for sustainability that integrates science and social values. It is the latest in a string of 10 books he has either written or edited over the past 30 years. And that does not include the 28 book chapters he has written. Or the 46 refereed journal papers and research reports. Or his 170 other published papers.

His own career has been full of the kind of practical communication and engagement he advocates. For example, he was the principal investigator for a National Science Foundation grant that funded a workshop he put on together with Dr. Terry Maple of Georgia Tech's School of Psychology and Zoo Atlanta. The workshop brought together two warring factions – conservationists from zoos and animal welfare advocates – to develop consensus on how to treat wild animals in zoos and captive breeding programs.

The workshop produced a set of guidelines that were subsequently adopted by the American Zoological Association and became the basis for one of Dr. Norton's books – *Ethics on the Ark: Zoos, Animal Welfare, and Wildlife Conservation*. This book, in turn, became the template for a series of workshops and additional books sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution aimed at improving animal conservation programs and the treatment of animals in captivity.

It is with a great deal of pride and pleasure that I introduce Dr. Bryan Norton to address our graduates with a few parting words of wisdom before they leave Georgia Tech.

(DR. NORTON'S REMARKS)

Thank you, Dr. Norton. As a token of our appreciation for taking time to speak and enduring the rigors of two commencement ceremonies, I would like to present you with

this special gift.

(PRESENT GIFT)

We come now to the time that all of you have been waiting for – the conferring of your degrees. Dr. Jean-Lou Chameau, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, will present the candidates for the doctor of philosophy degree.

(Dr. Chameau) Will the candidates for the doctoral degrees please rise. *(pause)*

(Dr. Chameau) 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 your earning of Georgia Tech's highest academic degree. Will you please come forward and receive your diplomas.

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

(Dr. Clough) Please join me in congratulating these 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!

To induct our graduates into this special group, I would like to present Ms. Janice Wittschiebe, class of 1978 and 1980. She is a partner in the firm of Richard & Wittschiebe Architects of Atlanta and this year's chair of the Georgia Tech Alumni Association. Janice will welcome the members of this graduating class into the fellowship of Tech.

(Ms. Wittschiebe) Induction of graduates into the Alumni Association.

(Dr. Clough)

I would like to express my appreciation to the Georgia Tech Music Department for their participation in our program this morning. Thanks also to Dr. Vicki Galloway for calling the graduates' names. And many thanks to all my associates for arranging this important event.

At this time, the Georgia Tech Commencement Ensemble will lead us in the alma mater, followed immediately by the faculty recessional. The graduates and the audience are requested to remain standing for the faculty recessional. Then I invite all of you to join in the singing of the Ramblin' Wreck, which will accompany the student recessional.

Thank you for your attendance this evening.

(At the end of the alma mater, the mace bearer will be the first one off the stage. Dr. Clough will follow immediately, then the remainder of the President's Party, Deans, and Faculty.)