

GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
TWO HUNDREDTH AND TWENTY NINTH COMMENCEMENT EXERCISE
ALEXANDER MEMORIAL COLISEUM

Friday, December 14, 2007, 7:00 P.M.

(Faculty and President's Party will assemble at 6:00 p.m. in the Hyder Room, second level of the Coliseum).

Processional	Georgia Tech Commencement Ensemble
Master of Ceremonies	Dr. G. Wayne Clough, President
Reflection	Rev. Chris Hannum Episcopal Campus Ministry
National Anthem	Ogechi Nnadi, 2 nd Year PhD student
Commencement Address	Dr. Robert H. Grubbs, Victor and Elizabeth Atkins Professor of Chemistry, California Institute of Techonology
Presentation of Honorary Degree	Dr. Clough
Presentation of Doctoral Degree Candidates	Dr. Mark Allen, Senior Vice Provost for Research and Innovation
Conferring of Degrees	Dr. Clough

Presentation of
Master's Degree Candidates

Dr. Allen

Conferring of Degrees

Dr. Clough

Induction into
Alumni Association

Mr. C. Meade Sutterfield, Class of 1972
Chair, Georgia Tech Alumni Association

Alma Mater

Ogechi Nnadi

Faculty Recessional

Georgia Tech Commencement Ensemble

"Ramblin' Wreck"

Graduates and audience

Friday, December 14, 2007, 7:00 p.m. (GRADUATE CEREMONY)

(Dr. Clough)

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Will everyone please stand for the reflection by Rev. Chris Hannum from the Episcopal Campus Ministry at Georgia Tech. Please remain standing for our national anthem.

(Rev. Chris Hannum)

Reflection

(Ogechi Nnadi)

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 sixth commencement exercises.

This evening we are celebrating the achievements of 740 graduate students who will be awarded Ph.D. and master's degrees. Then tomorrow, we will award the bachelor's degrees in two ceremonies. So if you are still around campus and enjoy the ceremony and pageantry of commencement as I do, I invite you to come back to the Coliseum at 9:00 a.m. or 3:00 p.m.

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)

Today we are honored to welcome to our campus and to this ceremony Dr. Robert H. Grubbs, who is the Victor and Elizabeth Atkins Professor of Chemistry at the California Institute of Technology and the 2005 Nobel Laureate in Chemistry.

Dr. Grubbs was born on a small farm near Possum Trot, Kentucky, in a house his father built. And the story of his childhood reminds me very much of my own – growing up in the rural South with two siblings and parents who placed a high value on education. Dr. Grubbs says that as a child he used his spending money for penny nails rather than penny candy, with the result that he was rather skinny, but knew how to build things out of scrap wood. True to his roots, he earned money for college by working on neighboring farms, and started his college career as an agricultural chemistry major at the University of Florida.

There he discovered that building organic compounds was as much fun as building with wood, and that the organic chemistry lab smelled better than the barnyard. After completing his bachelor's and master's degrees at the University of Florida, he earned his Ph.D. in chemistry from Columbia University, then worked as a postdoctoral fellow at Stanford University.

When he finished his fellowship, Michigan State University was the only school to offer him a position on the faculty, so he went. And there he began his research on a number of areas of catalysis, including the development of the metathesis method in organic synthesis that eventually won him the Nobel Prize. This is a controlled organic reaction that enables a chemist to strip out certain atoms from one compound and replace them with atoms that have come from another compound – essentially engineering a custom molecule.

The custom molecules that could be created by the powerful new catalysts for metathesis developed by Dr. Grubb turned out to be valuable to pharmaceuticals and the creation of

new polymers with novel properties. The result has been new industrial and pharmaceutical methods and materials that are more efficient, less wasteful, simpler and more environmentally friendly. As the Nobel citation said, “This represents a great step forward for ‘green chemistry,’ reducing potentially hazardous waste through smarter production.”

Dr. Grubbs moved to CalTech from Michigan State in 1978, and continued his work in the development of transition metal catalysts. Along the way, he synthesized a two-generation catalyst that is named for him. Grubb’s Catalyst is a transition metal carbene complex that is extremely versatile because it is tolerant of other functional groups and compatible with a wide range of solvents.

In addition to the distinction of have a catalyst named for him, Dr. Grubbs has more than 450 publications and more than 90 patents to his credit. He has had more than 200 students and postdocs working for him over the years.

In addition to the 2005 Nobel Prize in Chemistry, he was won a long list of other awards, both in the United States and Europe. Some of the more recent ones include the Benjamin Franklin Prize in Chemistry, the American Chemical Society’s Tetrahedron Prize for Creativity in Organic Chemistry, the Paul Karrer Gold Medallion from the University of Zurich, several awards from Germany, and the Golden Plate Award from the Academy of Achievement.

He was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 1989, and is also a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Honorary Fellowship of the Royal Society of Chemistry.

It is a great honor to present Dr. Robert Grubbs to deliver our commencement address.

(DR. GRUBBS' REMARKS)

Thank you, Dr. Grubbs, for your inspiring comments. It is an honor to have you with us. At this time, it is my privilege to present you with 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 your extraordinary contributions to scientific research and teaching.

The honorary degree reads: "To all whom these presents may come, Greeting: Whereas Robert H. Grubbs has been recognized for his outstanding leadership in the development of transition metal catalysts and for his lifetime commitment to teaching, now, therefore, we, under the authority vested in us, do hereby confer the degree of Honorary Doctor of Philosophy with all the rights, privileges and honors thereunto appertaining."

(PRESENT DEGREE)

In addition, as a token of our appreciation for taking time to speak, 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. Mark Allen, Senior Vice Provost for Research and Innovation will present the candidates for the doctor of philosophy degree.

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

(Dr. Allen) 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. Allen 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. Allen will now present the candidates for the master's and master of science degrees.

(Dr. Allen)

Will the candidates for the master and master of science degrees please rise?

(Dr. Allen)

Mr. President, I have the honor of presenting to you for the master's and master's 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. Allen 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.

The cumulative effect of your accomplishments has been to help 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 Mr. C. Meade Sutterfield, class of 1972. He is president and CEO of SSPCS Corporation, a holding company that he co-founded after he sold the first company he founded, called PowerFone, to Nextel Communications. As this year’s chair of the Georgia Tech Alumni Association, Mr. Sutterfield will welcome the members of this graduating class into the fellowship of Tech alumni.

(Mr. Sutterfield) 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 evening. Thanks also to Dr. Paul Foster for calling the graduates’ names. And many thanks to all my associates for arranging this important event.

At this time, Ogechi Nnadi 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.)