When I came to Georgia Tech in 1994, I was fortunate to find a number of individuals on whom I could rely who were outstanding professionals and who understood the need to change. Tom Galloway was one of these people. He was highly respected in his profession and on campus and he became an ally and dear friend.

Tom and Sharon welcomed Anne and me to the Georgia Tech community and made us feel at home. We enjoyed getting to know them and being invited to visit their lovely home near Piedmont Park. Their choice to live in the city and pioneer the improvement of an urban neighborhood in Atlanta was a statement about their principles.

Tom’s commitment to Atlanta was proven time and again by his willingness to give of his time and talents to address some of the toughest challenges facing downtown and Midtown. And Atlanta and Georgia Tech were lucky to have his immense knowledge about these issues, because he guided us towards solutions that worked and were sustainable.

We will all miss Tom greatly, but he leaves behind an impact that will live on. He hired the majority of the faculty in his College and he attracted remarkable leaders to its programs. Their future accomplishments will reflect back on Tom. And then there were the innovative new programs that I often learned about in unusual ways. I always knew I was in trouble when I saw Tom and Jean-Lou Chameau talking in the hallways in hushed tones. That inevitably led to a meeting in which some great idea, like doubling the number of our music faculty, was presented to me as something I could not turn down. All I had to do was to help find the money. And we did, and it was a great idea that will enrich our students’ opportunities into the future. It was such a good idea that Tom Friedman wrote it up in his book – an endorsement that will have its lasting impact on Georgia Tech.

Tom Galloway was also a co-conspirator with Bob Thompson in setting up our campus-based Planning and Design Commission that has guided the growth and transformation of our campus. As I walked across campus to this service today and enjoyed how it felt with the emergence of spring, I thought of Tom. His fingerprints will be on our campus for generations to come. I remember a while back that I asked Tom and Ellen to turn their students loose on what could be done to bridge our campus across the freeway as we were building Technology Square. The concepts they developed were astounding. Our new bridge/park is modest by comparison, but it benefited from the ideas Tom and Ellen and their students helped spark. And, as they say in South Georgia where I was born, it ain’t over yet – there are still rude bridges to tackle and unattractive spaces left to span that creative minds can and will bring to life. Tom helped us get over the first big hurdle, so that the work that is needed will be easier to do in the future.

But Tom’s impact is larger than even our campus, and we can see it when we see the renaissance of Midtown, the development of Atlantic Station, the growth of the Beltline concept and what is yet to come in improvements like the streetscapes of our urban corridor.
Tom had a hand in all of this, sometimes behind the scenes, and it too will have a lasting effect.

My guess is that Tom is up there somewhere chuckling about all of this. He is probably saying all of us need to get back to work because there is so much left to do. On behalf of Georgia Tech, I thank Tom for all he did for us and the vision he left with us.