Opinions

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Kasim Reed for mayor

Technique endorses Reed’s reforms in crime, MARTA

Since we as Tech students are going to be directly affected by the results of the mayoral election and the policies that follow, it is important to take an interest in the election and vote on Nov. 3.

The candidate who will best represent Tech’s interest is Kasim Reed. Reed has a comprehensive plan for change within Atlantas that would benefit Tech students. His plan for addressing crime includes an addition of 750 police officers to Atlanta PD. This will be paid for in part by cost-cutting measures within the city, such as scaling back pension liabilities and cutting employee overtime, but much of this cost is proposed to be covered by an increase in property tax for Atlantans.

We disagree with this part of the platform. We hope that the necessary increase in police will be covered by an increase in sales tax or other means that also tax the many people who commute into Atlanta to be safe. However, we hope these measures will exert enough pressure on the state legislature on Atlanta’s issues.

One Reed’s most appealing stances is on transportation. He supports the necessary development of the Beltline trains as a means of city transit. Reed also has acknowledged that Atlanta is a hub city for the Southeast region and supports the idea of a high-speed DC commuter train. Reed also intends to expand MARTA to make it easier to access in the larger reach of the city.

One of the more interesting parts of Reed’s platform is his proposal of a program to keep inner-city youth in school by sending reformed ex-cons into the schools and teaching them to stay away from drugs and crime.

We have high hope for progress through Reed and support him for mayor. We hope Tech students will support him at the polls, but even more so hope that they will go vote.

The Consensus Opinion reflects the majority opinion of the Editorial Board of the Technique, but not necessarily the opinions of individual editors.

Opinions Editor: Kaitlin Goodrich

“...”

John Malkovich

Focus on the next generation of Tech leadership

By Emily Chambers

Editor-in-Chief

When I first took the job of Editor-in-Chief, I received advice on how to do things than I will ever use. I was advised to never open a paper on Friday, as it would only reveal to me all of the errors I should have caught.

I was told to always have the door to my office open so anyone angry at the paper could find me, rather than yelling at poor inno- cent contributing writers. I was taught to always assume my writ- ers were correct and to fight for them based on that assumption. Most importantly, I was taught that I had one semester to do my job as an Editor before I inherited another, higher calling.

As Editor-in-Chief you have semester, the fall, to teach your editorial board what is ex- pected of them. While you might improve layouts over the spring, and you will have continually en- hance the quality of writers you are working with, you won’t convince anyone to redesign a section or branch out into online content once seniors has set in and everyone knows how long it takes to complete a section.

The spring however, is still the most important time for the Tech- nique as an organization. It is during the spring that we pick our new leadership, train our new editors and let a new genera- tion of students into the cloistered world that is the Student Publica- tions office.

Recruitment and training is now the most terrifying responsi- bility on my plate.

All of the work that I have put into the paper, that all of the writers, photographers and edi- tors have put in this year and in the almost 100 years before us, will mean nothing if the talented new writers we have on our staff don’t take on more leadership, responsibility and quite honestly, learn to love this organization and through it this campus.

Every organization I am in is this way. My sorority spends hours for weeks all summer on emailing, planning and perfecting the ex- perience of our new member class for the upcoming year.

The Mock Trial team (it is dorky but I love it) agonizes over team line-ups in desperate hopes of teaching our new members good technique and presentation.

For every hour spent on the personal experience and oppor- tunity of the upper leadership of an organization, two hours are expended on the opportunities for the new membership. New members make an organization worthwhile, and good organiza- tions will exert effort equal to that worth to entice new members into leadership roles.

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Opinions Editor: Kaitlin Goodrich
Fantasy football fans are fair-weathered

I spend most of my Sun-
days devoted to watching pro-
football. I know that not ever-
one is an NFL fan, but there are cer-
tain aspects people can relate to when talk-
ing about team loyalties. Like die-hard fans in any sport, I find a bit of dis
taste with “fair-
weather” fans. However, with even more
distaste, I do not like sitting around spectators that cheer for an in
dividual player and personal statistics over the integ-
ty of the game and team success itself.

I do not like sitting around spectators that cheer for an individual player... over team success itself.

Steven Cappetta
Assistant Sports Editor

Fantasy football fans take vital aspect of fandom away. Non-loyal fans act like they know what they are talking about when it comes to foot-
ball for the week, when in real-
ity, they just repeat what they heard on SportsCenter for the day. These people will go to the bars and move from television to television to see how Jay
Cutter, Ronnie Brown, Reggie
Wayne, Robbie Gould and the Jeri’s defense are doing.

They do not have any inter-
est in the game nor care about any scores or division stand-
ings. They will cheer after a running back breaks for a big gain in the fourth quarter, even though the team itself is down by three scores and has no chance for a comeback. They probably will not be able to recall the final score, but they sure know how to tell you how Phillips Rivers fared on the day.

Fantasy sports also take away the pure respect people have for athletes on game day. I say this because statistics that people are awarded for in fan-
tasy games are only for certain aspects of the game. They do not account for nice blocks or smart time management play.

A friend might say, “Oh, Hines Ward had a horrible game,” when in fact, he might have had a spectacular day blocking for runs and splitting on routes to get Santonio Hol-
mes open down the field. Sta-
tistics only tell half the story in football and even if a player does not score touchdowns or make any receptions, they could still have a productive game in contributing to their team.

With the amount of disgust that I have shown in fantasy sports, I have to admit that not everyone who plays them should be regarded as those that I expressed above. Some people are lax about how they select their team and just seem to play it by ear. They will fun by laying back, enjoy the games themselves and probably forget what play-
ers they started on the week. I find this an appropriate al-
teriorative to those who watch games to cheer for individual players.

This season I am playing in a fantasy football league and sometimes it find hard to keep my eyes away from the bottom bar that flashes the top fan-
tasy players on the day. I feel that no matter how big a fan you are, you are becoming one. I need to have to let my days of map-
drawing stay in my past, I am going to make an effort to stay informed and be an active global citizen while at Tech.
Almost all of us are guilty of Facebook-ing excessively. Whether it's to stalk people's pictures when we're bored in class, get people together for an event or send messages, we find many ways to stay true to Facebook's goal of helping to "connect and share with the people in your life." Did the creators of Facebook, now one of the fastest-growing and most-recognized sites in the world, know it would become the platform for an actual civil society in the Middle East?

In Egypt, freedom of speech and the right to assembly are limited; however, to the almost 800,000 Egyptians on Facebook, they have found their outlet for activism. In a country where newspapers and websites are monitored and censored by the government, walls and groups on Facebook become places not just for keeping in touch, but also for news stories and true personal accounts of events. Perhaps one of the most impressive examples of this is the April 6th Youth Movement. Now standing at just over 70,000 members, this group is dedicated not to being a political party, but a way for young Egyptians to dissent and organize protests. In the Iranian elections this past summer, social networking sites played a role they never dreamed for their sites when the government stepped past their already stringent censoring policies to shut down text messaging capabilities.

Both FaceBook and Twitter became the sole means for people to express honest opinions and arrange the endless protests that took place across the country. Twitter even delayed a regular maintenance shutdown because they recognized what that would do to the tens of thousands of users in Iran that were updating each other via a #IranElection tag. Part of these sites' successes are that they are more difficult to block than standard webpages created by groups in the past. "The government can't simply shut down Facebook, because doing so would alert a large group of people who they can't afford to radicalize" said Mark Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook.

Facebook is used by so many for non-political purposes that angering the wider population would only hurt governments. Twitter is difficult to block because posts are submitted in so many ways. People in countries like Iran and Syria can download free proxy software from groups like Global Internet Freedom Consortium and even individual technology experts all over the world believe in aiding the effort.

The US State Department has not let this surge of interest and activity go unnoticed. They recently announced a $5 million pilot program to help expand social networking efforts in the Middle East and North Africa. The State Department also created its own Facebook group, called the "Alliance of Youth Movements" that brought together members from different political groups across the world, including some from the April 6th group. They recently organized a conference for some of these members, as well as representatives from Facebook, MTV and Google.

All efforts by the State Department should remain quiet and be executed very carefully, however. With a Gallup Poll approval rating of just 19% in the Middle East and several websites in the Middle East are very hesitant to accept any sort of US funding, as it can lead to a loss of credibility by many in the region.

While a third of Egypt's population is between the ages of 15 and 29, 67% of this group is unregistered to vote. Similar statistics exist across the Middle East, which hosts the second largest ratio of people in this age bracket behind Sub-Saharan Africa. Until social networking sites, these young people had no motivation to become involved with the slow moving, corrupt governments in their country. Young people begin so many revolutions, both of thought and of change. From Tiana to Invisible Children, student-led movements have drawn some of the most recognized global attention that has led in actions—they just need to find an outlet for their voice.

Fed up with ancient politics, this new Middle Eastern generation has finally found something to develop ownership of, and engaging this massive group is key to any sort of success for peace and democracy in the region. With these sites they can do what they can't do in reality: meet in large groups, talk freely about ideas and disagree with their government. In doing so, we hope they will redefine the way their society operates and demand a change from a leadership dominated by radicalism.

So next time you're on Facebook, instead of just looking at pictures from last weekend, explore the new ways it's being used. Arab Youth Emergence, Syrian Secular Youth, the list of groups goes on and on. You may be surprised to find something we take for granted every day is actually changing the world.

Amira Choueiki
President of AISEC