

OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

## Election reveals many results

*Bridge building between SGA and students needed*

Congratulations to all the candidates who won or are moving on to the run-off in the SGA elections. All the elected persons will no doubt serve Tech well, and we look forward to continued efforts from the other candidates. One of the other outcomes of the election was the position that some candidates were running as ‘SGA outsiders.’ Students voiced concerns that SGA seems exclusive and disconnected from the student body, and low voter turnout, albeit higher than last year, reinforces this notion.

Many of the viable candidates came from within SGA, which tends to influence the outcome of these elections more than the issues. This clouds the true intention of the elections. It is important to remember that the SGA representatives are not simply leaders of SGA, but elected leaders of the student body. These positions set the tone for the student body when dealing with the administration and outside bodies.

One of the key breakdowns that has contributed to this conundrum is the lack of awareness of issues within the student body. Part of the responsibility for this breakdown rests with this publication, the *Technique*, as we must do everything possible to inform you about the problems that face the campus. We accept the challenge to work harder to keep you informed. However, part of the problem also lies with SGA and the seeming disconnect with students.

SGA must mitigate this situation by actively recruiting more student leaders to participate in SGA and encourage more students to get active on campus. Use the resources that made I <3 GT Week so successful and inform the student body about the issues that truly matter. Make sure that all students know how to get involved in the SGA process and the positive impact SGA has on campus. Biggest issue for the coming year: informing students about the issues.

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

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### EDITORIAL CARTOON BY ROSE PENG



YOUR VIEWS LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Ticketing mishaps degrade Saturdays

I have had opportunities to experience a phenomenon unlike any other—college football Saturdays (and Thursday Nights). Many schools do not have the opportunity to have a college football program, and for that we are blessed as a campus. But, in the three years that I have been a student at the Institute, when the ticketing system changed, I began to dread Saturday afternoon.

As a loyal member of the Yellow Jacket community, who proudly bleeds white and gold, I have been sorely disappointed by the actions taken by the current SGA to protect our rights with their collaboration with the Athletic Association (AA) this past year with our ticketing program. As a ‘block captain’ I was inundated with unorganized lists, a bevy of misinformation, and a slew of emails that I was forced to trudge through without the help of SGA. These issues were magnified on game-days when ushers did not know where one block began and one block ended, and did little to protect the integrity of the blocks.

It is incomprehensible to many in the student body, myself included, how SGA could not protect some semblance of sanity in the ticketing process. Though I understand the power of the AA in terms of money, alumni support, and power on campus, it is amazing that SGA was simply steam rolled by the AA. This program allowed many, who last year would have been given a seat, to be turned away simply because they missed a deadline or did not have a voucher (which was supposed to be deemed irrelevant by our new ticketing system).

Our student body leaders are put into place to protect the rights and voices of the students. We should hold them to that standard as we move forward into a new football season. We cannot simply shake our fists at the AA when we have an outlet that has been given the presence of the AA and Institute President G. P. ‘Bud’ Peterson.

So, it seems inconceivable to continue to allow those in the campus affairs wing of SGA continue this practice, so hopefully this new administration will take a strong footing against the AA and will not crumble in the face of upholding students’ rights and privileges as we cheer on our Jackets this fall.

Hari Gopal  
Third-year MGT

### Tin Building demolition hurts students

The school’s actions with regard to the Tin Building illustrate everything that is wrong with the administration here at Tech. Take points in order from the article. [*Tin Building to be Demolished*]

Write to us:

letters@nique.net

We welcome your letters in response to *Technique* content as well as topics relevant to campus. We will print letters on a timely and space-available basis.

Letters should not exceed 400 words and should be submitted by Tuesday at 7 p.m. in order to be printed in the following Friday’s issue. Include your full name, year (1st, 2nd, etc.) and major. We reserve the right to edit for style and length. Only one submission per person will be printed per term.

1) It is claimed that this is part of developing the alley way between the Skiles Building and the Weber Building but this is unlikely since the Tin Building is between the Weber Building and the Coon Building.

2) It is claimed this will become the main thoroughfare while Skiles walkway is closed but a look at the campus map shows that the main thoroughfare will be the alley between Skiles and Weber.

3) They say this will allow construction on the CULC to proceed more quickly. I take this means the finish date will not be Fall of 2011 as said previously but will move up to Summer 2011.

4) They talk about how the transit system serves they proposed new location and how they have the Stingerette service. The Green route does go there but doesn’t run on weekends or late at night. The location at 14th and Hemphill is outside the Stingerette’s service area.

A simple visit Parking and Transportation Website would have revealed this.

5) It is claimed they are committed to having student involvement but the quote in the article shows that they aren’t even sure if they have tried to get student involvement.

I expect that the school will make appropriate noise and then go ahead and shaft the students anyway. I also expect that some of the issues I have raised here (ignorance of the campus and of school policies on the part of a high ranking school administrator, etc) to be swept under the carpet with an appropriate show of concern toward the problems.

If Tech’s administration wants to show that they do care about the students then these issues will be handle in a fair public manner. If not then Tech will continue to be ‘The Place Where Students Come Last’.

Andrew Flett  
Fifth-year AE

# Social Security reform key to fiscal health

With the passage of landmark healthcare legislation three weeks ago, the United States took a huge step towards ensuring healthcare coverage for all Americans and reducing the country's national debt in the long-term. While no bill of such magnitude can be perfect, the legislation is a far cry from what some Tea Party "socialism" alarmists would have you believe. The mere fact that Americans can no longer be denied healthcare coverage based on pre-existing conditions (starting in 2014) is remarkable, and well worth the price of reform.

Unfortunately with such legislation, the costs are much more visible on a daily basis than the benefits. However, I am confident that over time, Americans will come to appreciate many of the reform's provisions. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that the bill will reduce projected budget deficits by \$138 billion during its first decade and by nearly \$1.2 trillion over the second. While fiscally this is a step in the right direction, additional measures need to be taken in order to put America's financial house in order and bring down the national debt.

While Republicans have recently taken to grandstanding about the national debt, this problem is one that has resulted from over-exuberant spending on both sides of the



**"Unfortunately, Social Security reform is a political hot-potato that neither side of the aisle wants to tackle."**

**Vijai Narayanan**  
Assistant News Editor

aisle. The numbers show that the national debt decreased rapidly during the post-war years until the tenure of the Reagan administration, when the national debt began to increase again to its current level.

The U.S. national debt currently stands at approximately \$12.3 trillion (86.1 percent of GDP), and is expected to rise to \$18.4 trillion by 2014. Rising national debt leads to more borrowing by the federal government, increasing interest rates over time and ultimately hinders economic growth.

The healthcare reform bill is projected to make reductions to the amount of government spending for Medicare and slow down the projected rise in national debt. With healthcare reform now complete, the federal government must now turn its attention to other areas of government spending in order to rein in the national debt. Social Security looks to be the most promising avenue for achieving this goal.

Last month, the Social Security Administration (SSA)

paid out more in benefits than was collected through payroll taxes for the first time in 1983. This tipping point underscores the precarious financial state of the program and its potentially explosive effect on the national debt.

According to CBO estimates the program was not supposed to enter insolvency until 2016, but the financial crisis hastened cash flow out of the program as more Americans availed Social Security benefits. This problem is likely to be exacerbated as the baby boomers reach age of retirement.

Perhaps the simplest way to increase the financial stability of Social Security and solving the national debt problem is to increase the retirement age to 70, which decreases the length of time for which retirees receive Social Security benefits. While it may seem harsh to force older generations to postpone their retirement, few people realize that when FDR signed the Social Security Act into law in 1935, the average

life expectancy for an American was only 62 years of age (with 62 being the earliest age for Social Security collection). Today the average life expectancy for an American is 77.7. My generation is being asked to provide longer care for a greater number of people than previous generations.

Former President George W. Bush proposed the partial privatization of Social Security, whereby a percentage of revenue collected by the federal government would go towards private retirement accounts, allowing the funds to grow over time and help pay for the price of the Social Security benefits. However, as we saw, even the Republican Congress was hostile to the idea and little came out of President Bush's attempt to overhaul Social Security.

The task of reforming Social Security is one that is far less complex than that of reforming healthcare. It still won't be easy, and it isn't the only thing that needs to be done in order to reduce the national debt. However, it is the next most logical step after healthcare reform. Unfortunately, Social Security reform is a political hot-potato that neither side of the political aisle wants to tackle. Nevertheless, it is crucial that reforms be passed soon before it becomes too late and America is burdened with a more crushing national debt.

# Get out of your dorm; experience college

"I hate this school," is heard around all campuses around the world. There are always going to be those disgruntled students, even though I hear more students at Tech feel they are notoriously one of the worst schools. "Only at Tech," is a great example of this type of behavior, and only fostered by the public eye. So why is it that these students feel obligated to share their misfortunes? Is this school really one of the worse schools out there for students?

Students complain about the on-campus transportation, food at Britain or Woodruff, "the shaft," registration, etc. But are these really determining factors on how your college lifestyle is defined? There are opportunities out there to discover yourself, different cultures and discover important people that may stay with you for the rest of your life. Instead, let the programs, events, and faculty define how you should gauge a good or bad college.

Not all institutes offer study abroad programs, but Tech is part of a list of many that do. In fact, Tech has many partnerships and surprisingly campuses around the world for students to discover. Usually these opportunities are hard to come by, being a personal venture to find a program that would give you both credit for classes and an enriching experience. Tech is an institute that regurgitates its ideals onto



**"People should take advantage of their situations, ditch the masquerade and be optimistic about new ventures."**

**Kelvin Kuo**  
Photo Editor

you, sometimes without any obvious signs. The accessibility of study abroad information makes this opportunity one of the must do's. The satellite campuses offer major classes that would not cause you to fall behind.

People may wonder how some students from certain universities receive job offers quicker and with a higher percentage than others. Internships and the co-op program are the answer to these prayers. Nearly three thousand out of the thirteen thousand undergraduates participate in the co-op program, which is labeled as one of *U.S. News and World Report's* "Top Ten" co-op programs in the nation. So why risk a lost opportunity for both the present and the future? Seize the opportunity.

Every campus has student organizations that will fulfill an empty space inside of you. From the culture clubs like the Taiwanese-American Student Association to the more creativity sparking Photography Club, there are many

different things that will fill in the voids present after the mundane class life. These are all not exclusive entities that screen for particular individuals but clubs that invite everyone with any interest in their subject matter.

Hopefully, everyone knows the wonders of college sports and college life. It is a must do for anyone. These events foster a sense of school spirit and pride for everyone. Tech has consistently provided teams with nationally ranked programs. What is there not to love about rubbing the glory of a win over other schools into the faces of the losing student body. We should be more involved to help support the team as well as create a national presence to promote our school in general.

Too many students do not take advantage of all the Atlanta has to give. Concert venues like the Tabernacle, the Masquerade, Center Stage and the Variety Playhouse bring big names into the city. All these venues are only minutes

from campus. Students fail to explore the opportunities to travel to Stone Mountain, Centennial Olympic Park, Amacalola Falls and other tourist spots because they are always there. But why not explore what Ga, and surrounding states can offer? Why not go to these "typical" spots and soak up the beauty of it all?

Parks and recreation are a must do for anyone that lives on or around campus. Piedmont Park is a wonderful place to relax and read a book. Or if you feel inclined, to go play some kickball and other sports. Events such as Dogwood festival, 420 Fest, and the Redbull Soapbox Derby give a unique form of entertainment.

I know that I haven't taken my own advice, letting three years of my college career sift through my fingers. And while I was upset with my current situation, I learned to Houdini the handcuffs that suppressed the potential of Tech and the surrounding areas.

People should take advantage of their situations, ditch the masquerade and be optimistic about new ventures. I started late, but it is not too late to figure out that you are attending one of the best and diverse technical institutes in the nation. So why not listen to our famous American Transcendentalist Ralph Waldo Emerson, "We are always getting ready to live but never living."

## BUZZ

### Around Campus

**What was the most important issue of the SGA elections?**



**Jeffery Kuo**  
First-year ECE

**"Being able to combine the diverse cultures on campus to do more together."**



**Matt Davis**  
First-year PHYS

**"I heard they were trying to get rid of block seating. I didn't like that."**



**Sahitya Jampana**  
Third-year ECE

**"More environmentally friendly campus."**



**Kat Compton**  
Third-year ID

**"More activity from SGA officers."**

OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

# HOT-or-NOT



### Active cultures

The blitz of cultural events on campus have provided students with everything from tons of food to smiling animals in the center of campus. Night Market was highly successful this year and provided students with a Far East fare on Friday night. Israel Fest of course provided its usual favorite attraction of the year, camels. Earlier, CultureFest gave students a nice reprieve.



### Alarming reaction

Students in the Student Center Commons on Monday during lunchtime got an unusual experience as the fire alarm sounded, lowering the gate between the Commons and the Student Center. The lack of the concern by students and staff in the Commons at the time is quite alarming considering the high potential of problems because of the densely occupied location.



### Ballin' baseball

There are some things that make spring so wonderful: flowers blooming, sun shining, Tech dominating, UGA failing. The baseball team picked up its second win over UGA this season on Wednesday stomping the Bulldogs in Athens, 25-6, clinching the yearly series against UGA. Hopefully, the Jackets can keep the momentum going in the final game at Turner Field, Tuesday of dead week.



### Package ordeal

The suspicious package found in Tech Square on Wednesday morning provided so much unneeded commotion to the normal morning bustle. The package was determined to have hazardous material, which raises very unsettling question as to what might have happened if the package had not been discovered when it was. This is a sobering reminder that the Tech community must be vigilant.

# I am proud to have served Tech during this monumental year

Every April upon our return from Spring Break, something about the Tech campus changes. The fraternities play music a little louder, pollen fills the air, it gets harder to study and the campaigning begins for SGA elections. Most importantly, about one quarter of the campus begins counting down the days until graduation. Especially for those walking across the stage and receiving degrees in 22 days, there is no doubt that the 2009-2010 school year has flown by.

On some levels it has been a year like any other. It is a year that began with FASET orientations and move-in, and one that will end with finals and Midnight Breakfast. It is a year in which Homecoming was celebrated and thermodynamics classes were still held. Most of us got a few parking tickets and freshmen still attended 8:00 a.m. calculus classes.

But more than any other time in Tech history, we should consider ourselves lucky to be students at Tech—above the normal, day-to-day life, it was truly a transformational year for the Institute. It was a year that began with the inauguration of a new Institute President, but was met with concerns about safety in off-campus neighborhoods. It was a year when the student body tore down a goalpost and our football team won the ACC Championship. We officially broke ground for the CULC, named two new Institute Deans, and dealt with unprecedented budget cuts.

I have been so honored to serve as your Student Body President over the past year. Above the late nights and early mornings, and the thousands of meetings (literally), serving as SGA President



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**Alina Staskevicius**

Undergraduate Student Body President

has been the most challenging and draining, yet exceptionally rewarding experience of my life. I am so grateful to all of the members of Student Government and the student body for their dedication to building a stronger Tech community. My goal for SGA has always been that we leave Tech a better place than we found it—and we have accomplished that.

For student government, it has been a strong year of building relationships with administrators, the Board of Regents and legislators. We involved the student body in discussions that were happening at the Institute level about topics such as safety and the strategic plan. We presented a Diversity White Paper, and elevated concerns about quality of faculty-student interaction. At the state-level, we managed to involve the student body in the concealed carry discussion, advocated for a fair and transparent distribution of mandatory fees, and participated in talks of budget cuts through a rally at the Capitol.

We worked to strengthen connections amongst students to Tech. We roped in the freshman class through the first-ever freshmen elections, and celebrated the start of a new school year through a Campus Welcome Back party and the second annual football White Out. Later, we established

the first-ever GT Day at the Capitol and “1 <3 GT” Week.

We also tried to make life easier for students through passage of a new, stronger Dead Week policy, establishment of a Trolley stop at Publix, insurance of a close Wingnuts relocation, greater control of heating and cooling in freshmen dorms and revisions of the new athletic ticketing system (and an improved launch for next fall).

We tried to gain more student feedback to prioritize projects; we sought student opinion through surveys on dining, parking and transportation, Buzzport and online resources, and academics. We increased the transparency of SGA by launching a new website.

What you and I will both remember as Tech students are the late nights we spent with friends, the laughs we shared and the relationships we built. And for that, I will always be thankful to Tech and its students.

For those of you who will be here for another one, two... or five years, remember to never take your time for granted. Build relationships, establish roots, and be proud to be at Tech. And for all of you folks graduating on May 8—never forget where you learned more than you thought possible, what place you called home for 4+ years, and the answer to a simple question: *What's the good word???*

## Study breaks were never this much fun!

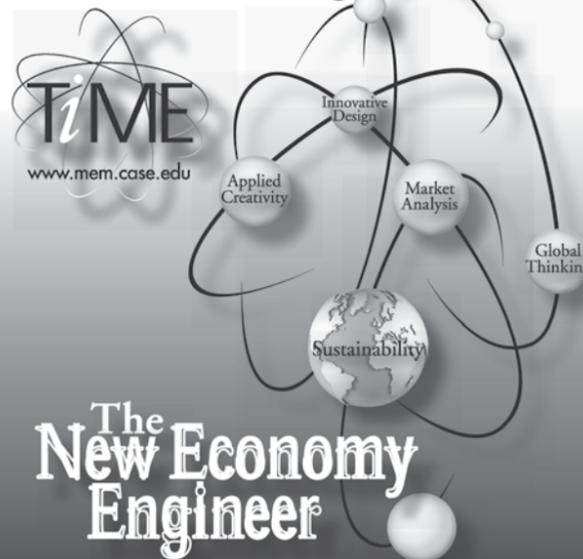


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