Cheerleader balances life off-field

By Kamna Bohra
Focus Editor

Some students struggle to balance engineering classes alone. Others find distress in taking classes and participating in extra-curriculars. But for Wendy Brown, a fifth-year BMED major and an Atlanta Falcons cheerleader, the work loads of two entirely different activities are manageable both on the field and in the research laboratory.

“Academics and my career goals are important to me, but my personal goals like dancing and cheering are too. I maintain that if it’s important to you, you’ll find a way to make it work,” Brown said.

Brown has been dancing for her whole life, becoming more involved when she began high school. During her college years, she was on Gold Rush, Tech’s official athletic dance team, for her first four years, and she became captain her last year on the team.

Brown’s collegiate coach, who is a former cheerleader for both the Atlanta Falcons and the Atlanta Hawks, first introduced her to the idea of cheering for a professional athletic team.

“Before then, I had thought of cheering for the NFL as a niche—like something only a select group of special people got to be involved with. Once I saw it as a tangible opportunity, I knew I wanted to do it,” Brown said.

In addition to six hours of weekly practice and workout sessions, Brown is required to be at weekly practice and workout sessions, Brown is required to be at the field and in the research laboratory.

“For the NFL, I had to have 15 cans of food to be able to participate in the event. These teams were then provided with a set of cans and were asked to test and utilize a protection system unlike anything else seen,” said Akhil Modi, a second-year ME major.

“Three events are designed to promote teamwork, creativity and fun,” said the E-Week organizers on the E-Week website.

The week was initiated by the Humpty Dumpy Drop, which encouraged participants, both individuals and teams, to design an innovative apparatus that would protect an egg from breaking when dropped down the entrance stairwells of the Bobby Dodd Stadium. Among the four competitors, the winner was Allan Visocek, a first-year AE major.

“The competition was won by Visocek on the tie-breaking basis of weight and creativity. The judges unanimously agreed that his device had the most merit because it did not reach terminal velocity in the test and utilized a protection system unlike anything else seen,” said James Fisher, an E-Week chair and a third-year SE/E major.

E-Week also included a Rubik’s Cube Contest. Among 22 contestants, Chris Tran, a first-year BCHM major, solved the cube with the fastest time of 22.38 seconds, five seconds faster than any other contestant.

The following event was the Build-a-Thon in which the teams were required to bring in 15 cans of food to be able to participate in the event.

These teams were then provided with a set of cans and were asked to make a creative and unique structure using the cans and other allowed items.

“Three teams competed in the event: Tau Beta Pi, Pi Tau Sigma and the Society of Women En-
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Tech CHEFS supports healthy eating

By Amira Saleh
Contributing Writer

On Saturday, Feb. 26, the second annual Tech Chef competition was hosted in Brittain Dining Hall. Tech Chef is a nutritionally-based cooking competition, and it was the closing event of GT Body Image Week.

The event was created through the combined efforts of GT Dining, Auxiliary Services, Health Promotions and Cooks for Heritage, Education, Fellowship and Service (CHEFS), a student-run organization that promotes cooking and healthy eating habits.

The different Tech student teams each had an executive chef and two “sous chefs,” who are direct assistants to the executive chef.

These teams competed throughout the day in breakfast, entree and dessert rounds. Each team had 65 minutes to create a dish of their choice that was composed of 45 percent of the key ingredient: low fat ricotta cheese.

“We chose low-fat ricotta cheese because it is healthy, can be sweet or savory and is a versatile enough ingredient to be used in breakfast, entrance and dessert,” said Julia Turner, CHEFS president and a third-year STAC major.

Each round was scored by a different panel of three judges including staff members from around campus. Judges evaluated teams based on taste, ingredients, cleanliness and presentation with tie breakers being determined by the lower fat recipes.

“I like food, and I like to judge people,” said Brett Hulst, an area manager for the Freddie’s Exper-ience dorms, of his decision to participate as a judge.

Hulst also wanted to make sure teams followed proper food safety guidelines.

“No one likes food poisoning,” said Dorin Martin, the event’s em-cee and marketing manager for GT Dining.

Tech Chef generated a crowd of students and staff. Some stu-dents stayed for the entirety of the six-hour competition just to sample the different student-created dishes.

As far as school work goes, I have finished a lot of my degree requirements already, so that helped me not completely overload myself. I have definitely had some very late nights in Whitaker this year, though, between studying for the GRE, doing homework and trying to finish my undergraduate thesis. It’s funny, though, because I almost don’t mind the work load,” Brown said.

Brown notes that she is not the only member of the Falcons cheerleading team with a diverse career path.

“Every Atlanta Falcons cheerleader has a career, it’s actually a requirement to be on the team, and interests vary a lot. We have everything from lawyers, nurses, financial analysts and financial advisors to TV producers, full-time students and moms on the team,” Brown said.

Pursuing two entirely different career paths is feasible to Brown, and she works to dispel the stereotypes associated with cheerleading.

“I definitely think there is no reason you can’t have it all, and I would like to work to discredit stereotypes and discourage the tendency for people to automati-cally assume that women pursu-ing things like dancing or cheer-leading or modeling aren’t smart,” Brown said.

“My advice to people encoun-tering this type of discrimination is to just stop listening and work toward accomplishing your goals for yourself,” Brown said.

Students competing in the Tech Chef competition were scored based on taste, ingredient choice, presentation and cleanliness.

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The winning dish of the breakfast round was called "Whey Out There" Breakfast Burritos. "It's a reference to the large amount of whey in ricotta cheese," said Nathan O'Connor, executive chef of the round's winning team and a fourth-year ISyE major.

"My biggest challenge was definitely creating a recipe that met the 45 percent ricotta cheese requirement," O'Connor said. O'Connor, however, enjoyed the competition and plans to compete again next year.

During the entrée round, a power breaker shorted out, and the Tech chefs faced more challenges than just cooking under a time constraint.

However, the entire team led by executive chef Aya Ishizu, a fourth-year ISyE major, worked beyond the distractions and won the round with a Vegetarian Friendly Ricotta Noki. Turner will return again next year.

The final dessert round was locked away in a hermetically sealed room closed to the public in Tech's rare book collection. The moisture and temperature are strictly controlled to ensure the longevity of prized historical possessions.

Among the influential literary works stored there are Rene Descartes' Philosophica published in 1656, Gottfried Leibniz's Combinatoria from 1690 and Blaise Pascal's treatise on his triangle theorem from 1665.

"Tech Chef 2012 will be hosted at the newly built North Ave Dining Hall. Students do not have to have a meal plan to participate or to come watch the event," Martin said. Turner will return again next year as student coordinator for the event.