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The WHISTLE

Alumnus supports plans for high-tech Undergraduate Learning Center

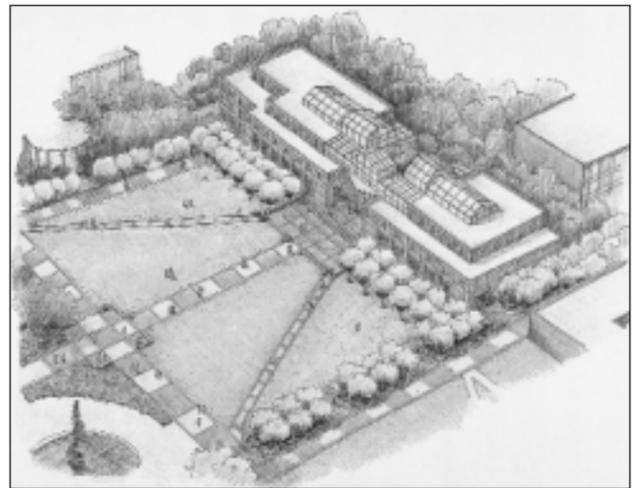
Catherine Reynolds
 Institute Communications and Public Affairs

Loralee and Alfred P. West Jr. have chosen to support a new facility that will greatly impact student life and learning at Georgia Tech. Their \$8 million commitment to the Undergraduate Learning Center will help create a state-of-the-art, multi-use building, which will expand upon the \$2 million gift the Wests made to fund the Institute's technology-enhanced learning initiatives.

"I believe that Georgia Tech can demonstrate national and international leadership by getting in the forefront of reinventing 'learning,'" West said. "Georgia Tech should lead the way in defining the new university."

The Undergraduate Learning Center will be located in the center of campus near the Library and the Student Center. Coincidentally, the Center will serve as a high-tech hybrid of those two older, more traditional facilities. In the 30 years since the Library and Student Center were built, Georgia Tech's resident population has doubled, creating a demand for student meeting and study spaces that greatly outweighs current availability.

Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies and Academic Affairs Robert C. McMath Jr. said, "Al and Loralee West's gift four years ago allowed our innovative faculty to push Georgia Tech to the forefront in educational technology. Now their vision for hands-on, high-tech and collaborative learning, coupled with another very generous gift, will allow us to make the



Undergraduate Learning Center the best of its kind in the country."

Plans for the 225,000-square-foot Center are still in the early stages, but the comprehensive, high-tech learning environment will include interactive classroom facilities, undergraduate

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PMRC awarded slice of \$11.7 million manufacturing project grant

The Precision Machining Research Consortium (PMRC) at Georgia Tech's Manufacturing Research Center is participating in a strategic alliance — comprised of two universities and six companies — that has been budgeted \$11.7 million under the grant support of the National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) Advanced Technology Program (ATP).

The four-year ATP project, entitled "Enabling Technologies for Lean Manufacturing of Critical Hardened Steel Applications," allocates \$1.7 million in funds to the PMRC. Steven Danyluk, director of Tech's Manufacturing Research Center, said that the strategic alliance is "an excellent example of how universities work with industry to create economic benefits in addition to academic excellence."

Steven Liang, professor of mechanical engineering and the project's lead technical investigator, said the ATP funding "will play an indispensable role in the success of the technology's development and diffusion."

In addition to Liang, Georgia Tech faculty participating in the project include engineering professors Thomas Kurfess, Shreyes Melkote, Ye-Hwa Chen and Min Zhou, as well as

MARC research engineer Scott Billington.

The project's goal, said Liang, is to "develop, demonstrate and commercialize new and innovative lean manufacturing technology based on hard turning and precision forging for economically shaping and finishing hardened steel components" that have "complex geometrical surface profiles and extremely stringent form, dimension, surface finish and integrity requirements for function critical applications."

Liang estimates that a 20 to 30 percent net cost reduction will be achieved through the proposed technology.

Thomas Kurfess, director of the PMRC, noted that "successful development and commercialization can lead to \$15-\$20 billion gains per year in the U.S. automotive, aerospace and aircraft industries, among others. These economic benefits can be augmented by the creation of new opportunities for technology advancements in the optics, ceramics and superalloy processing industries as well."

"The core commercialization strategy for this ATP project," Kurfess said, "is to bundle the hard turning technology into the marketing of the existing and future machine, tooling and software products."

Learning Center, continued from page 1

library resources, academic support, computer labs, group study and tutorial rooms, informal meeting spaces, and dining and retail services. Internet portals will be readily accessible throughout the building, allowing students to plug in their laptops and work as a group or by themselves.

West admits that the classroom lecture environment was uninspiring for him, and that would be putting it kindly. His most rewarding learning experience was his aerospace engineering senior design lab.

"It was practical. It gave everything that was force-fed to me a context. It was motivating. It was interactive. And it was exciting," he said. "If we can set the stage properly, we can get off to a good start at reinventing learning. That's what makes me excited and that's why I am glad to be a part of the new learning center."

Because West can see the potential for revolutionary change in the way students learn through harnessing new technology, he has made these new learning initiatives his priority at Georgia Tech.

Through these initiatives, funded by the Wests as well as unrestricted funds from the Georgia Tech Foundation, several professors have moved toward redefining the classroom, using technology as a teaching tool.

President G. Wayne Clough said, "Loralee and Al West are very genuine people who have a true interest in helping institutions that are important to them. They are also interested in supporting ideas that are innovative and make a difference in many people's lives. Already in our campaign they made a major gift that helped us make significant

curriculum changes associated with our computer initiative. Now they have stepped forward to provide the key gift to allow us to build the Undergraduate Learning Center, a facility that will not only be central to all Tech students and faculty, but one that will use technology to facilitate knowledge access and transfer."

Originally from Florida, West attended Georgia Tech with the intention of becoming a fighter pilot. But less-than-perfect eyesight cancelled his Air Force ambitions. After graduating from Tech he attended University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business, earning his master's degree. He continued to pursue a doctorate, but left school to start Simulated Environments Inc., which turned an idea taken from an educational computer game into a training system for banks.

Mrs. West said, "We try to support causes that have both touched our lives in a major way, positively or negatively, and are social issues that need addressing. Georgia Tech has definitely been a positive influence in our lives, and we believe to make learning more relevant and stimulating is a wonderful cause that Tech can lead."

"Watching the progress of our first gift toward educational technology has been rewarding," West said. "The results have been more than encouraging; many new areas of learning innovation have been seeded. We expect and also hope that the benefits to Tech will be even more rewarding with the new learning center."

In addition to his service on the Georgia Tech National Campaign Steering Committee, West is a trustee of the Georgia Tech Foundation and is a former chairman and member of the Georgia Tech Advisory Board.

Nov. 16 brown bag focuses on upcoming state legislative issues

This month's brown bag, sponsored by the Office of Organizational Development, features Andrew Harris, director of Government Relations, who will be presenting an overview of the upcoming Georgia legislative session. From 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Harris will focus on the matters affecting Georgia Tech, especially the budget, that

are under consideration by the Georgia General Assembly. This will be a great opportunity to find out more about this timely topic and ask questions. Harris will be giving his presentation in the Clary Theatre in the Student Success Center. The session is free, but participants are encouraged to register on-line.

Registration is available at <http://www.training.gatech.edu>. Click the "On-line Registration" tab to be directed to the Trains/Web registration section. Follow the instructions given to automatically register for upcoming courses. Registrants will be sent an e-mail confirmation one to two days after the registration is entered.



The Whistle

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Wardlaw Center
177 North Avenue
Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0181

Georgia Tech is a unit of the University System of Georgia.

Men's Basketball Faculty/Staff Appreciation Night

November 21
Georgia Tech vs. Charleston Southern
7:30 p.m. — Alexander Memorial Coliseum
Free Chick-fil-A to the first 200 fans
\$10 per ticket
R.S.V.P required by Nov. 17
Call 1-888-TECH-TIX



People

For his leadership in establishing the educational technology program in ECE and on campus, **Thomas Barnwell** was recently recognized for the College of Engineering's annual Excellence in Education Award.

Professor **Z. L. Wang**, professor of materials science and adjunct professor of chemistry, has received the 2001 S. T. Li Prize for Achievement in Science and Technology, awarded by the S. T. Li Foundation.

Mostafa A. El-Sayed, Julius Brown Chair and Regents' Professor in the School of Chemistry and Biochemistry, was elected Fellow to the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

Two College of Engineering research awards have been handed out, one which commended **Yedidia Neumeier** for his contributions to combustion research and the School of Aerospace Engineering. The other research award will be shared by **Ari Glezer** and **Mark Allen** for their work in

Microelectromechanical Systems (MEMS) and establishing this program on campus.

Dragomir Davidovic, an assistant professor in the School of Physics, was awarded a Packard Foundation Fellowship for his investigations of the physical properties of nanometer-scale conducting objects.

Engineering's Mentoring Award, given by the College and the Southeastern University and College Coalition for Engineering Education (SUCCEED), jointly recognized **Goutong Zhou** and **Ronald Schafer** for aiding in the development of junior faculty members.

Jillison Parks, **Rebecca Tanner** and **Sandra Parker** have received the College of Engineering's Staff Support Award, for their efforts in developing the administrative and support infrastructure for the Georgia Tech Regional Engineering Program (GTREP).

Orme Street project to begin new phase

Michael Hagearty
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

With the remaining commercial utilities having been safely detoured, the path is clear for the next phase of the Orme Street Combined Trunk Relief Sewer project to begin. Phase III, expected to be completed by August 2001, will install a 3,000-foot stretch of sewer line along Brittain and Techwood drives.

Beginning this month, construction crews will be moving south along Brittain Drive, installing the shoring, followed by the trenching necessary to permit construction of a new, 10-foot by 11-foot box culvert sewer line. The phase initiates at the intersection of Fourth and Fowler streets, moving along Brittain to its completion point at Bobby Dodd Drive. It is there that Phase III will eventually link with the Techwood tunneling effort. Completion of the entire project is scheduled for January 2002 (see schematic).

The Office of Facilities Design and Construction, while not directly involved in the construction, is overseeing the project in terms of campus impact. Fred Dolder, a senior project manager, is pleased with the spirit of cooperation in the balancing of needs between the city and the interests of the community. He commended those along Brittain Drive directly impacted over the next 10 months

— the Catholic Center, Alpha Delta Pi and Alpha Chi Omega — for taking the inevitable inconveniences in stride.

He added, "Their cooperation and understanding have really been a positive contribution."

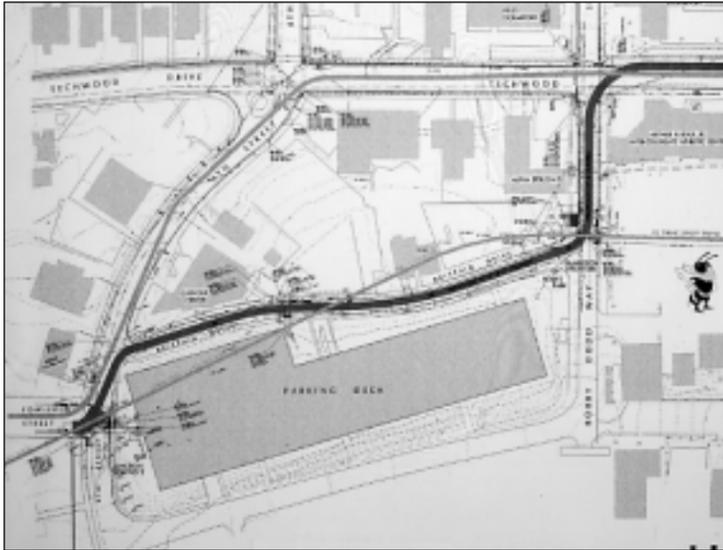
Dolder also cautioned the Tech community to be aware of the increased traffic of dump trucks and other heavy construction vehicles making their way along Bobby Dodd, Techwood and North Avenue heading toward the interstate. To minimize the risk, the contractors have taken extra precautions to ensure the safety of pedestrians and other vehicles.

"The contractor and the city have worked with us to eliminate

problems and issues as quickly as possible once they are identified," Dolder said, "Safety is going to be a very big concern, and the contractors are doing their part, but we have our part to play, too."

That improvements to the city's infrastructure were a priority was well publicized as early as 1994. The two lines that run underneath the Institute's campus are more than 100 years old and 65 years old, respectively. In addition to its deterioration, the existing sewer was no longer providing the capacity needed to serve the area. The new lines, which double as a storm sewer, will, according to Dolder, have the capacity needed for a 25-year storm.

"Now, what does that mean if there's a 50-year storm?" he mused. "Wear your boots."



A portion of the schematic for the Orme Street Combined Trunk Relief Sewer. The bold line marks the project's path. From left, Phase III will move along Brittain Drive to the intersection at Bobby Dodd Way.

Did You Know?

Diversity Council to sponsor human relations award

This past spring, President Clough re-established the **Don Bratcher Human Relations Award**. The award will recognize individuals in the Georgia Tech community who are engaging in outstanding human relations work.

The award was initiated in 1992 in memory of Don Bratcher, Georgia Tech's first director of Human Relations. Bratcher was instrumental in developing the Georgia Tech Human Relations Statement and providing a solid foundation for diversity awareness on campus.

The Don Bratcher Human Relations Award is administered by the Campus Diversity Council, recently sanctioned by President Clough to plan, implement and monitor campus diversity efforts. The award will grant one faculty/staff member \$3,000 and one undergraduate/graduate student \$1,500.

To nominate a faculty member, staff member or student, visit www.eodp.gatech.edu to download award guidelines and a nomination form. All nominations must be submitted by Dec. 8. Call 894-9410 with additional questions.

Last chance for healthcare plan info...

The Benefits Department recently conducted a series of Town Hall meetings to inform employees about their healthcare plan options during this year's open enrollment period — Oct. 16 to Nov. 17.

While everyone on campus was not able to attend one of the scheduled meetings, there is now another option. In conjunction with the Georgia Tech Cable Network, Benefits has made the presentation available for viewing on the Internet via streaming video at the following address:

<http://vespa.gatech.edu:8080/ramgen/ohr/healthbenefits.rm>

Please note that you will need RealPlayer to view this video. If you do not have RealPlayer, it can be downloaded for free at:

http://proforma.real.com/real/player/player.html?src=001101realhome_1,001101

The video will be available for viewing through November 17. Please contact michael.coleman@ohr.gatech.edu for more information.

Holiday Library Hours

Wednesday, Nov. 22

8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, Nov. 23

closed for Thanksgiving

Friday, Nov. 24

closed for Thanksgiving

Saturday, Nov. 25

closed for Thanksgiving

Sunday, Nov. 26

noon to midnight

Impact of Georgia state flag the subject of Diversity Forum

Members of the faculty and staff are invited to attend and participate in the first town hall meeting of the Diversity Forum, which will bring two state senators to campus for a frank and open discussion on the Georgia state flag. Robert McMath, vice provost for Undergraduate Studies, will open the forum with a brief history of

the flag, followed by an introduction of the two senators — David Scott of Atlanta and Joey Brush of Appling — who will then engage each other on their opposing positions. The floor will then be opened up to the audience for questions and comments that the principals will address. The town hall is scheduled for Wednesday, Nov. 15

at 7:00 p.m. in the Clary Theater, Student Success Center. While Tech is providing the forum for this dialogue, it is important to note that the Institute is not taking a position either way. For more information, contact Chris Young by e-mail at chris.young.vpss@gatech.edu or by calling 385-2289.