Don Giddens named dean of the College of Engineering

Clough: ‘Everything he does, he does well’

Larry Bowie
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

D on P. Giddens, one of the nation’s leading pioneers in biomedical engineering, has been named as the newest dean of Tech’s College of Engineering. He will assume his new post July 1, pending approval from the Board of Regents.

The announcement concludes a national search to fill the top position at the largest of Tech’s six colleges — the College of Engineering — which consistently ranks among the elite top five engineering schools in national rankings.

Giddens, who has been associated with Tech for more than 30 years, is credited for developing Tech’s bioengineering program, enhancing its research, commercialization, and faculty and student recruitment efforts, as well as catapulting the bioengineering program to national stature.

Last year the program was ranked sixth in the nation by U.S. News and World Report.

Giddens also made strong contributions to Tech’s aerospace engineering program and served as chair of the department from 1988 to 1992.

“I am pleased that Don Giddens has accepted this position, and I am confident that he is the right person to continue the remarkable progress that the College of Engineering has made in the past decade,” said President Wayne Clough. “Everything he does, he does well.”

Giddens, 61, joined Georgia Tech in 1968 and served as a faculty member and administrator for almost 25 years before accepting an appointment as dean of the Whiting School of Engineering at Johns Hopkins University from 1992 to 1997.

He returned in 1997 to explore a joint partnership in bioengineering between Tech and Emory University, which led to the creation of what is now the Wallace H. Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering at Georgia Tech and Emory. This unique partnership between a public university with a top engineering program and a private university with a highly regarded medical school is the first of its kind in the nation.

Giddens was named chair of the joint department in 1997 and holds the Lawrence L. Gellerstedt Jr. Chair in Bioengineering.

“Leading one of the best and largest engineering colleges in the world requires the level of institutional vision, international reputation and leadership that Don is known for,” said Jean-Lou Chameau, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs. “He will be an outstanding dean of engineering.

Giddens succeeds Chameau, who vacated the position last year in order to assume his new role as provost. Karl Davidson, who has worked as an administrator and a faculty member at Georgia Tech for nearly 30 years, is serving as interim dean during the transition.

Two from Tech win prestigious Gates Cambridge Scholarship

David Terruso
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

A current Tech student and a recent graduate will study at the University of Cambridge in England next fall as winners of the highly esteemed Gates Cambridge Scholarship.

Jay Silver and Nick Bronn are Tech’s first recipients of the prestigious award created by Microsoft founder Bill Gates.

Silver, who is on track to get his bachelor’s degree in electrical and computer engineering in May, will use the award to pursue a master’s degree in computer science, text and Internet technology. Tech graduate Nick Bronn will study applied mathematics and theoretical physics. A Marietta native, Bronn said he’s excited by math and physics. “You have to be passionate about it to study them like I do,” he said. While at Tech, Bronn took 20 to 22 hours of course work each semester. And if that wasn’t enough, he played first violin in Tech’s Symphony Orchestra. In addition to playing pieces by classical composers such as Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff, Bronn has played bass guitar with various punk rock bands.

Earning three degrees in three years, Bronn said, “If I wasn’t doing that, I don’t know what I would do.”

General Faculty endorses move toward online library journals

Dan Treadaway
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

T he General Faculty endorsed a Library and Information Center plan to move toward 100% online subscriptions for journals and periodicals. Faculty members voted unanimously to support the plan at their Feb. 26 meeting.

The vote followed a presentation by Richard Meyer, dean and director of Libraries, on the escalating costs of print subscriptions. “Our budget for journal subscriptions has been flat for a long time,” Meyer said. “Inflation in subscriptions costs has had a tremendous impact over the past ten years.”

Meyer said if budget levels remain constant and current inflation trends continue, the Library’s entire acquisitions budget will go toward journals by 2004-05, squeezing out all other types of materials.

By establishing partnerships with other universities, Georgia Tech can participate in cost-saving contractual arrangements that will deliver more journal titles to faculty and researchers than would be possible in a pure print environment, Meyer explained. Doing so, however, also requires canceling print subscriptions and purchasing fewer books.

In response to a concern raised about the ability to archive journals in digital form, Meyer explained that archiving in a digital environment poses some problems not found in a print environment. He also said that as digital content increases, he expects archiving alternatives to expand and increase in quality. He said most of the scholarly societies that produce journals have already addressed the issue of digital journals.

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Annual President’s Concert features original composition

Piece will celebrate city skyline

Sean Selman
Institute for Communications and Public Affairs

Each year, Georgia Tech celebrates spring with the Music Department’s presentation of the President’s Concert. This year, the concert will feature an original composition recently completed by Tom Bahler.

In addition jazz pianist Dan Wall will perform “Jazz Suite for Mary,” a work he composed in 1997 for the Tech Jazz Ensemble. Also on the playlist are the Georgia Tech Chorale, MIDI Ensemble, and the MIDI String Ensemble.

Among the evening’s highlights will be the premiere of Bahler’s “Atlanta Skyline” performed by the Georgia Tech Symphonic Band. Bahler is an award-winning composer, producer, creative director, songwriter and arranger who penned the hits “Julie Do You Love Me?” for Bobby Sherman and “She’s Out of My Life” for Michael Jackson, and composed and produced musical scores for the 1990 World’s Fair in Osaka, Japan.

Bahler has a long-standing working relationship with Quincy Jones and was the associate producer and vocal arranger for “We Are the World” in 1985. He also was the conductor of the finale for the historic 2001 Centennial concert that same year. Bahler’s most recent sojourn in film was to write the anthems entitled “The American Dream” for the film “Wag the Dog.”

The idea for “Atlanta Skyline” originated from a conversation between Tom Bahler and Dean Tom Gallaway on how closely music is related to architecture. Out of that conversation came an agreement for Bahler to compose a piece of music that evokes the rhythms and motifs that represent Atlanta.

To get a feel for Atlanta’s architecture, Bahler interviewed several Atlanta architects — John Portman, Tom Ventresca, Jerry Cooper and Larry Lord. Georgia Tech alumnus, Bill Bellfew Bahler over the city in his private plane so he could experience the skyline from the air.

“Out of these enriching conversations and experiences came the essence of what makes the Atlanta skyline unique among skylines in the United States and the world,” said Bahler. “I looked at how Atlanta interacts with the sky and how it meets the earth — how Atlanta is surrounded by forest — how Atlanta grew like a phoenix out of the fire that decimated the city during the Civil War.” He also noted the “space, light, color, rhythms and synchronizations” of the city.

“The pieces all translated into themes and rhythms,” Bahler said. “For me, it is a journey only possible through music. The piece takes many physically impossible turns for views of beautiful land, buildings, scurrying city dwellers living in the present enriched by the past.”

Bahler completed his piece in fall 2001 and began rehearsing it with the Symphonic Band in January. “I enjoy spending time with young people and making a difference. Something that particularly drew me to Tech was meeting Buck Johnson, director of the Music Program. The music faculty here is really over the top. They’re the best. The Tech Symphonic Band is as good as any I’ve ever heard,” he said. “They play with a fantastic freedom of expression.”

Other President’s Concert highlights will include Dan Wall’s solo during a performance by the Jazz Ensemble. Wall is also a composer and recording artist, and is currently a visiting teacher of jazz piano at Oberlin College.

The Georgia Tech Chorale will perform “Ode to St. Cecelia” to the accompaniment of an 11-member brass ensemble. The Georgia Tech MIDI Ensemble and the MIDI String Ensemble also will offer the audience a segment featuring music technology.

For more information:

This year’s concert is scheduled for March 26 at the Robert Ferst Center for tickets, call 844-9520.

Started with funds from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation two years ago, the Gates Cambridge Trust chooses approximately 150 students from across the globe to study at Cambridge. This year, 50 scholarships are expected to go to students in the United States. The award covers the cost of tuition, airline, plus a small stipend. Students may use the award to pursue a second bachelor’s degree, a one-year postgraduate degree or conduct research leading to a Ph.D.

Both Bronn and Silver say, despite their passion for their work, they never would have gotten the chance to attend Cambridge had it not been for their advisor, Amanda Gable, an academic professional in the Office of Graduate Studies and Research who helped them prepare for the rigorous application process.

Scholars, cont’d from page 1

Tom Bahler rehearsing with the Georgia Tech Symphonic Band

Former Georgia Tech student and alumnus Jay Silver presents a new collection of music technology pieces that will premiere during the President’s Concert. Silver, who now lives and works in Los Angeles, was an experimental composer during a performance by the Jazz Ensemble. Wall is also a composer and recording artist, and currently is a visiting teacher of jazz piano at Oberlin College.

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IN BRIEF:

**Former dean of librarians honored**

When the Special Libraries Association (SLA) holds its annual conference in June, former dean and director of the Library and Information Center, Niranjan Drake, will be among those honored as "Best of the Information Profession."

Drake, who worked at Tech for 17 years before retiring in 2001, will receive the John Cotton Dana Award. Drake, who is credited with being a driving force behind the SLA, is the founder of SLA for exceptional service to special library work. The award is given to a member of SLA for lifelong contributions and lifetime achievement in her distinguished career as an information professional.

SLA is the international association representing thousands of information professionals in 60 countries. Special librarians are information resource experts who collect, analyze, evaluate, package and disseminate information to facilitate accurate decision making in corporate, academic and government settings.

**Car talk**

A defensive driving class will be held on March 22 at the NRC Building in room 102A from 8:30 a.m. until 3 p.m. The course was developed by the National Safety Council and is designed to provide drivers with knowledge and safe driving techniques to prevent collisions and traffic violations. Participants may also be eligible to receive a 10 percent discount on automobile insurance.

There is a $50 registration fee to take the course.

In order to receive your certificate you must have your academic advisor, department, supervisor and their phone number.

**Poll Tech is ‘damn hard’**

One of the more recognized collegiate guides — the Princeton Review — recently published a list of the top 10 schools where the students never stop studying. Georgia Tech, which ranked fourth in the poll, was called a “damn hard” public school that is always “very demanding” and “at times very humbling,” according to the Tech students surveyed. The survey also covers topics such as “Great College Campuses” and the “Colleges with the Most Competitive Admissions." The full story is available at encarta.msn.com/college/collegeFind.asp.

**Save the date**

It may not be spring yet, but the Alumni Association is already looking ahead to fall events that will bring alumni and friends back to campus.

Tech alumni will want to mark their calendars for the weekend of Oct. 24-26, when the Yellow Jackets face the Virginia Cavaliers at Homecoming.

Tech will welcome the families of current students during Family Weekend, set for Oct. 4-5. April 15 will mark the 30th anniversary of the P&H Mile Road Race, held on the Tech campus. To register for the 3.1-mile fun run, go to www.gatalumni.org.