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Georgia Tech inspires a curious love-hate emotion in its students. Tech demands the best from those that enroll. All-nighters before exams, hours spent in labs on bright spring days and Saturday nights in the library when most are out exploring Atlanta add up to a big sacrifice at the Institute’s altar. What does the student get in return? — an excellent educational experience. In each of its facets Georgia Tech demands much, but returns so much more.
Academic Quality Is Top Priority At Georgia Tech

Georgia Tech's commitment to excellence is most evident in the classroom. The four colleges offer a wide variety of expertise both in the lecture hall and with hands-on experience. Emphasis is placed on learning how to learn. A Tech graduate is well-equipped with a solid base of knowledge as well as the ability to keep up with the latest in technical advances. Tech alumni include leaders from every walk of life, from business leaders to scientists to astronauts; even an ex-President of the United States. Research is an important part of academic life at Georgia Tech. Contributions in such fields as artificial intelligence or electronics coupled with an annual research budget of $110 million have made the Georgia Tech Institute of Technology the largest industrial and engineering research agency in the South.
Jackets: the Best Fans in the World

We are the first (and the loudest) to complain about a lost football game, but let anyone else cut down the Yellow Jackets and then our fierce loyalty shows through. Georgia Tech's goal is an athletic program that offers its participants a good education and its fans exciting contests. This goal is realized in an Athletic Association that supports sixteen first-rate intercollegiate teams and still manages to make academics a top priority. That they succeed is evident in the loyal support of both the student body and the alumni.

*Once a Yellow Jacket... always a Yellow Jacket.*
A Diverse Student Body Has One Common Bond — A Love for Tech

How does a student survive at Georgia Tech? They must have interests outside the classroom, and the school offers a wide range of activities and organizations to satisfy an extremely diverse student body. In spite of, or perhaps because of, the hard work which Tech demands of its students they quickly develop a respect for the school. Later this becomes a love for Ma Tech and an immense pride in their alma mater.

"You went to Tech, too?"
"Yes, wasn't it awful?"
"Yes — but wasn't it worth it!"
Joseph Pettit: An Inspiration For Our Second Century

"We must find our own way forward. We will."

The 1987 Blueprint is dedicated to the man who brought Georgia Tech into its second century as an institution devoted to quality education. Dr. Joseph Mayo Pettit served as president of Georgia Tech from March 1, 1972 until his death on September 15, 1986.

Dr. Pettit came to Tech from his position as Dean of Engineering at Stanford University in California. Under his administration the Georgia Institute of Technology emerged as a leader in several areas.

Born on July 15, 1916, Joseph Pettit spent the first twelve years of his life in Minnesota before moving to Long Beach, California. He graduated from the University of California at Berkeley in 1938 with a degree in engineering. He attended graduate school at Stanford where he received his master's degree in 1940 and his PhD in 1942.

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During World War II Dr. Pettit was involved in extensive radar counteroffensive research in both the United States and Britain which contributed to the Allied victory. He was awarded the Presidential Certificate of Merit for this work.

After the war, Dr. Pettit worked with the Airborne Instruments Laboratory, Inc. before joining the Stanford faculty in 1947 as an instructor in electrical engineering. He became a professor in 1954 and was named dean in 1958.

Dr. Pettit was a well-known scientific professional and educator. He was a member of the Institute of Radio Engineers, the National Academy of Engineering, the National Science Board and served as President of the American Society for Engineering Education.

In his fourteen years as president of Georgia Tech enrollment rose from nearly 8,000 to over 11,000 students. He strove to increase minority enrollment at the school and in 1983-84 Georgia Tech led the nation in the number of minority engineers graduating. Research made great strides at Georgia Tech due to President Pettit's background and interest. The research budget was increased by over 800% during his tenure, and he is credited with making Georgia Tech one of the leading research institutions in the United States. By hiring Dr. Homer Rice and late Bill Curry and Bobby Cremins, Dr. Pettit was also largely responsible for the rejuvenation of Tech's athletic program.

Just as important as all of his administrative accomplishments is the affection which Dr. Pettit inspired in the students, faculty and staff at Georgia Tech. He and his wife, Mr. Florence West Pettit, were fixtures on the Tech Campus for more than fourteen years. Dr. Pettit's calm, reassuring presence will be sorely missed by the entire Tech community.

It is with great pride, respect and affection that we dedicate the 1987 Blueprint to the memory of Papa Joe — Dr. Joseph Pettit. The first time a letter from President Pettit appeared in the Blueprint was in 1974. In this message he said, "We need to learn how to articulate first class academics with first class athletics. None of these are truly new in universities — but they are new to Tech. We must find our own way forward. We will." Under his guidance, we have.

TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: Joining President Jimmy Carter, a Tech alumnus, at a news conference. Welcoming Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, the first guest speaker of the Centennial Speaker Series. His most enjoyable job — handing out diplomas to new Tech graduates.

BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT: He was the spokesperson for Georgia Tech for more than a decade. Blowing out the candles for Georgia Tech's 100th birthday. Caught in a rare humorous moment. Speaking with underwater explorer Jacques Cousteau, another Centennial Speaker.