

It's Time to "Amp Up" America's Manufacturing Competitiveness

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It's time to "amp up" America's manufacturing competitiveness, and at Georgia Tech we've already started. On June 24th [President Obama announced the Advanced Manufacturing Partnership \(AMP\)](#), a national effort to bring together industry, universities and the federal government to develop ways to create jobs and to help spark a manufacturing renaissance in the United States. The focus will be on identifying and investing in key emerging technologies, such as information technology, biotechnology and nanotechnology—areas that many times represent a cost prohibitive investment for most individual companies. By working together we can help U.S. manufacturers improve cost, quality and speed of production in order to be globally competitive.

[Georgia Tech was selected as one of six universities nationwide to participate on the steering committee](#), and numerous others are expected to join in the effort. America's research universities make significant contributions to the economic strength and vitality of both their communities and our nation. In addition to their direct impact, research universities serve as incubators for scientific and technological innovation. Breakthrough research continues, with many solutions now being developed at the intersection of traditional disciplines. And, many of the most powerful outcomes are the result of partnerships between business and industry, universities and government.

Universities have a very special role in the innovation agenda—to perform the nation's and the world's leading edge research, but also to help commercialize the results of that research.

At Georgia Tech, we believe that innovation and technology are going to be two of the most important drivers of a diverse and thriving 21st century economy. Commercialization is deeply ingrained in our mission and is a vital component of our new [25-year Strategic Plan, *Designing the Future*](#). We have a comprehensive program that spans research, education and outreach, including a presence in 25 locations around the state. We are part of a statewide innovative ecosystem that is attracting companies and new opportunities to Georgia.

Tech's interdisciplinary [Manufacturing Research Center \(MARC\)](#) targets specific near-and long-term manufacturing related research. In 2010 Tech's [Enterprise Innovation Institute \(EI₂\)](#) helped Georgia manufacturing companies reduce operating costs by \$35 million, increase sales by \$243 million and create or save 1,350 jobs. Tech's [Advanced Technology Development Center \(ATDC\)](#) has incubated more than 120 start-up companies, and has been named to Forbes Magazine's recent list of the "10 technology incubators that are changing the world." We are actively and aggressively working to develop and to commercialize the technologies developed here at Tech, moving the discoveries made in our laboratories to the marketplace and building the companies that will create the jobs that will drive our economy and stimulate economic growth.

President Obama also announced a new [National Robotics Initiative](#) as part of the advanced manufacturing and technology focus. Georgia Tech is home to one of the nation's top robotics programs. Applications span assembly, logistics and inventory management, handling of hazardous materials, and complex tasks such as automated food processing. For example, Georgia Tech is doing robotics research on logistics to enable greener transportation and more efficient delivery of items to machine shops, grocery stores, and warehouses. We estimate that our robotics for logistics could reduce prices for groceries as much as five percent.

Many of the greatest challenges in our nation, our state and in the Atlanta area can be solved through innovation and by fostering an entrepreneurial environment, as well as through collaboration between industry, education and government to create a healthy economy and an educated workforce. The AMP initiative will facilitate job creation and global competitiveness. We applaud this initiative, and are honored to collaborate and identify ways to strengthen the manufacturing sector to help create jobs in Georgia and across the United States.