Survey Shows Gains in Student Experience

KIRSTEN BAILEY
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Georgia Tech recently asked all undergraduate students for their feedback by completing the Student Experience Survey, a study designed to evaluate a range of aspects of a student’s time at the Institute. The study was sponsored by the Student Government Association (SGA) and facilitated by Institute Communications.

Tech fared better on nearly every metric in the 2015 survey than in 2009. Overall, 70 percent of students said they are highly likely to recommend Tech to a prospective undergraduate student. Forty-eight percent feel strongly that Tech has a friendly and welcoming atmosphere, up from 41 percent in 2009.

see SURVEY, page 2

Employee Resource Groups Celebrate First Year

NEW GROUP TO BE ADDED IN FALL

VICTOR ROGERS
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Leaders from Georgia Tech’s Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) and the Office of Human Resources’ Culture, Diversity, and Inclusion team gathered recently to celebrate their achievements, review lessons learned, and share what’s next for ERGs.

“You all have done trailblazing work,” said Pearl Alexander, executive director of the Staff Diversity, Inclusion, and Engagement (SDIE) team in Institute Diversity. “It has been no small feat. We’re answering the broader call from the entire Georgia Tech workforce when they said we need something.”

In fall of 2013, the Office of Human Resources launched six ERGs to support the Institute’s efforts to ensure employees have a greater sense of belonging. These voluntary employee associations provide opportunities to network with colleagues, participate in professional development, and interact with others who have common interests.

The ERGs have a combined total of 1,152 members, not including guests who attend programs. Since launching 18 months ago, the ERGs have held 13 leadership and career development seminars, seven panel discussions and mentoring circles, eight TED Talk discussions and book/film/documentary reviews, seven health and wellness and film/documentary reviews, and seven panel discussions and mentoring circles.

“I’m proud of the work you have done collectively,” said

see ERG, page 2

Board of Regents Approves Next Steps for Tech Square, Dining Projects

KIRSTEN BAILEY
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

The High Performance Computing Center, West Campus Dining Commons, and new degree opportunities were among those items approved at the May 19 Board of Regents meeting.

The Board approved Portman Holdings as the design firm for the High Performance Computing Center being built on Spring Street on the south side of the Georgia Tech Bookstore in Tech Square. The 750,000-square-foot project will include space for Georgia Tech research and industry partners and has targeted opening of 2018.

The Board also approved Georgia Tech’s selection of Genoa Construction of Atlanta for the West Campus Dining Commons project. When completed, the commons will offer space for 610 people and be located at the corner of McMillan and Eighth Streets.

see BOR, page 2

Free Passes Offered to New Transit Commuters

For Georgia Tech employees who do not commute to campus by train or bus and would like to try it, the Midtown Alliance is offering free round trip passes during the month of June for MARTA, GRTA Xpress, Cobb County Transit, and Gwinnett County Transit. To learn more and register for a free pass, visit c.gatech.edu/trytransit

see page 2

USG Safety and Security Committee Issues Report

The report from this University System of Georgia (USG) committee, co-chaired by Georgia Tech President G. P. “Bud” Peterson, led to the USG adopting a new campus safety initiative last week based on the committee’s work. Read more and view the full report at c.gatech.edu/usgsafety

see page 2

BOBBY DODD BEACH

Students, faculty, staff, and visitors enjoy a showing of Big Hero 6 on May 16 at Bobby Dodd Stadium. This summer’s Dodd After Dark movie series also features The Imitation Game on June 26 and Furious 7 on July 10. More information is available at www.flicks.studentcenter.gatech.edu

see page 2

www.whistle.gatech.edu
Students in the Scheller College of Business and College of Computing were among the most likely to recommend Tech to prospective students, at 78 and 76 percent, respectively. Those in the College of Computing and College of Engineering showed the highest ratings for Tech having a friendly and welcoming atmosphere.

Out-of-state students rated their experience as better than in 2009 in a number of ways. They are now more likely to recommend Tech to a prospective student (72 percent), feel they have a more quality overall experience (60 percent), and feel Tech has a friendly and welcoming atmosphere (52 percent).

“It’s encouraging to see how much the student-centered metrics improved, and that overall as a campus we are doing the right things and making campus better,” said Dillon Roseen, outgoing undergraduate SGA president. Roseen and his executive cabinet made the survey a priority in their goals for the 2014-15 academic year.

Attributes found to be most important to students include quality of interaction with other students, social opportunities, quality of teaching, and quality of interaction with professors in the classroom. Things that students rated highly include study abroad opportunities, the variety of student clubs, diversity, sports opportunities, the cooperative education program, and campus aesthetics. Things students rated high in importance but lower in execution were opportunities to interact with faculty inside and outside the classroom, access to how student feedback is used, and quality of teaching.

In a section of the survey evaluating stress, 82 percent of students said they have experienced a high level of stress in at least one of 12 areas surveyed. The highest stress area was academics. When asked what resources students use in response to that stress, the Campus Recreation Center (CRC) came out on top.

“The opportunity the CRC presents is exciting — it could be an entry point for other mental health resources,” Roseen said. He also noted recent feedback from the high awareness of the Counseling Center, 72 percent of students reported awareness of it, though only 13 percent reported using it. Of the 13,683 invintations sent to undergraduate students, 3,386 students took the opportunity to provide feedback in the survey; 1,957 fully completed their responses and 42 percent submitted comments.

The response demographics were largely reflective of Tech’s student body, with a slightly higher percentage of women completing the survey (43 percent) than that of the undergraduate population (34 percent).

The survey was first conducted in 2009 and conceived as an annual longitudinal study to track progress over time. SGA has expressed interest in conducting the study once every four years, with the 13,683 invintation sent from every student at least once during his or her time on campus.

A presentation of the survey data will take place at a brown bag session on Tuesday, June 23, at 11 a.m. in the Gordy Room, Warldlaw Center. RSVP to attend at www.gtsfsudentexperience. eventbrite.com. A video of the presentation will be made available at www.comm.gatech.edu following the session.
Getting ‘Smart’ about Energy Usage

RACHEL ISAAC INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Georgia Tech’s campus is home to many research laboratories, but how often is Tech itself the subject? The Smart Energy Campus Program uses Georgia Tech as a living laboratory and collects data from energy utility systems all over campus. Through collaboration among multiple campus departments, insights from this project will directly impact energy planning and consumption on campus in many ways, with the hope of making Tech’s energy utility systems more efficient.

Smart Energy Campus is a joint sustainability research initiative with the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering, the Aerospace System Design Laboratory (ASDL), and Georgia Tech Facilities Management. Beginning in 2013, the idea behind this project was to see if Georgia Tech researchers could help organize data analysis as well as modeling and simulation tools to evaluate and optimize different energy systems on Tech’s campus.

“It is extremely exciting to know that our team is supporting some of the most brilliant complex-system designers in the world,” said Mark Demyanek, assistant vice president of Operations and Maintenance within Facilities Management.

“Using our built environment as a living laboratory is a concept that is growing in higher ed, and I believe we at Georgia Tech are leading that growth in a thoughtful and responsible way.”

Already, the Smart Energy Campus Program has created software for the Facilities Management Energy Conservation team to use when analyzing utility consumption trends and identifying potential energy efficiency projects. This project is designed to save labor hours, resources, and money by quickly identifying buildings that have unusually high energy usage, and then notifying teams to remedy the problem.

“The Smart Energy Campus Program is trying to take advantage of new modeling tools and large amounts of data to gain deeper insight and predict what can happen in terms of energy utilization on campus,” said Scott Duncan, research engineer in the ASDL.

The Facilities Management team consists of five people who meet with the research team several times per month. The research members on the team have included graduate students, research engineers, and postdoctoral fellows, all of whom serve as another set of eyes to interpret the data and help Facilities see problems in different ways.

“This program is revolutionary in getting access to data,” said Duncan. “If we were doing this program for a community outside of campus, it would be difficult to get access to this much data.”

With so much data, the project continues to grow and the mission evolves. Building a predictive model of campus energy is no easy feat.

“We keep finding things to do and smaller side projects to work on,” said Duncan. Through thermal network and electric grid modeling of campus, researchers will have greater agility and insight to see where energy is not being used efficiently, as well as analyze the effects of energy system upgrades.

Through the research effort, areas of improvement will be more visible and enable Facilities to channel resources toward areas of need. The ultimate vision of the research team is a “smart” system that will identify and react to problems and inefficiencies on its own, potentially without human assistance.

“With any luck, one day soon, campuses across the world can use these tools to manage their facilities resources more efficiently,” said Demyanek.

Storied Athletic Director Shares Legacy of Leadership

KRISTEN RAILLY INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Georgia Tech has long been lauded as the breeding ground for the NCAA’s Life Skills, an effort modeled after Tech’s Total Person Program to equip college athletes with skills to help them be successful long after they retire from sports.

She is the former athletic director of the Institute. She once had a 10-year-old daughter named Homer Rice in 1969. The institute had a special relationship with Homer Rice, the director of the National Basketball Association (NBA). Homer Rice is a graduate of the Institute and a former basketball player for the Baltimore Orioles.

Homer Rice at his desk during his tenure as athletic director at Georgia Tech.

Both philosophy and practice. He talked about one of his practices, the “attitude technique,” and how it shapes who you are.

“You become what you think, so you have to replace negative thoughts with positive ones,” he said. “It’s very simple, but you have to work at it.”

One trademark of his leadership style is giving others the space they need to grow.

“I believe in other people, and I always believed in giving my people the freedom to do their jobs,” he said. “I’d ask, ‘What do you need?’ Then get out of the way.”

Rice served as Georgia Tech’s athletic director from 1980 to 1997. He took a $62,000 a year cut to come to Tech from the Cincinnati Bengals, where he was head coach, but made the establishment of the Total Person Program his mission with the move.

Under Rice’s leadership, Georgia Tech won the 1990 national championship in football, had nine consecutive appearances in the NCAA basketball tournament, and won three consecutive ACC basketball championships. Rice is also credited with developing the women’s athletic program, raising $100 million for facilities, and increasing athletics fundraising from $700,000 annually to $5 million.

From one athletic director to another, Rice credits Tech’s current director Mike Bobinski as a model of positive leadership. Rice also acknowledges Bobinski and President G.P. “Bud” Peterson in the “Tracking Positive Leaders” chapter of his book.

Though his tenure as athletic director ended in 1997, Rice has never truly left Tech. In addition to the leadership elective course, which he has taught 12 out of the past 19 years, Rice continues to be involved at Tech as chair of the Lee Candler Fund, which supports the Total Person Program. He chooses not to stray too far from the Institute.

“I’m on call if ever I’m needed.”

The 88-year-old newlywed — he recently chose not to stray too far from the Institute. This is home to many research laboratories, but how often is Tech itself the subject? The Smart Energy Campus Program uses Georgia Tech as a living laboratory and collects data from energy utility systems all over campus. Through collaboration among multiple campus departments, insights from this project will directly impact energy planning and consumption on campus in many ways, with the hope of making Tech’s energy utility systems more efficient.

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The father of the Total Person Program, Homer Rice, spoke May 15 to a room of Tech alumni, athletes, employees, and friends at an event hosted by the Georgia Tech Business Network. The former athletic director brought copies of his book, Leadership Fitness, as he does whenever he speaks to a group.

“My father was a Methodist minister, and I asked him if I had to be a minister too. He said I could be a minister in any field, so I became a Methodist minister,” said Homer Rice at his desk during his tenure as athletic director at Georgia Tech.

Homer Rice at his desk during his tenure as athletic director at Georgia Tech.

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“I’m on call if ever I’m needed.”

For a more comprehensive listing of events, or to add one of your own, visit calendar.gatech.edu.
Ross Serves Students by Making Connections
KRISTEN BAILEY
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Though Dave Ross has been at Georgia Tech for less than two years, these two years have been some of the most formative of his life.

Ross relocated from Valdosta in September 2013 to be the first director of Tech’s new Veterans Resource Center. The following April, he lost his wife, Angel, who was still working in Valdosta at the time. She passed away unexpectedly following complications from cancer.

The experience, while traumatic, spurred a spiritual awakening in Ross. Today, he hopes to live in a way that honors his wife’s legacy. Angel, who worked as a nurse in the NICU at South Georgia Medical Center, was known for volunteering with children with special needs and going above and beyond in her work at the hospital and in the community.

“She did so much I didn’t even know about until after she was gone,” Ross said. “She was always volunteering for people and making a difference. She truly was an angel.”

In his own way, Ross is doing just that with Georgia Tech’s student veteran population. In his former role at Valdosta State University, where he was director of the university’s center at Moody Air Force Base, he made a point to meet students wherever they were to get them the resources they needed — whether that was on base or at a local coffee shop. Now, at Tech, he has a cozy resource center, outfitted with a mini-fridge and coffee, in the Smithgall Student Services Building. He’s just as likely to meet with students in Tech Square, through social engagements or at his office, as he is to meet students where they are to get them.

“It’s a journey getting into Tech for any student today,” says Ross. One of Ross’ favorite things about working with incoming students is getting to connect with them currently Yellow Jackets when they first arrive on campus. He pairs those in the same major for informal mentoring and facilitates opportunities that let them get together socially. Sometimes that means hosting other students who are looking to hire veterans and future Tech alumni; other times, it’s marching in a parade.

“The Atlanta Veterans Day Parade is one of my favorite days of the year,” Ross said. “It’s a great chance to get off campus and connect.”

Though the center operates out of the Division of Student Affairs, Ross hopes faculty and staff veterans on campus will also get involved with its activities. “I want to be able to support them, too, and for them to know there’s somewhere on campus where they can connect,” he said.

Though he’s quickly established himself in the Tech community, Ross maintains a strong presence in Valdosta as well. He frequently visits his two daughters and granddaughter, and has an annual commitment the entire city would miss were he to be absent: For 12 years, he’s played the role of Clara’s father in the Dance Arts Valdosta production of The Nutcracker. His youngest daughter and granddaughter also have roles in the cast.

Ross has also made a point to enjoy Atlanta’s cultural attractions, including the city’s many festivals and its budding craft breweries and distilleries.

To learn more about veteran resources on campus, visit www.veterans.gatech.edu.

Wife’s Legacy Inspires Veterans Center Director

INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Morris B. Cohen, assistant professor in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering, was selected for an Office of Naval Research Young Investigator Award for his work with low frequency radio waves and his proposal to build antennae out of plasma.

Reginald Desroches, Karen and John Hull School Chair and professor in Civil and Environmental Engineering, was awarded the Charles Martin Duke Lifeline Earthquake Engineering Award from the American Society of Civil Engineers.

Mike Edwards, director of the Campus Recreation Center, received the Infinity Award from the Graduate Student Government Association.

Alex Gutierrez, marketing specialist for Parking & Transportation Services, was elected vice president for the board of the Federal Bureau Investigation Atlanta Citizens Academy Alumni Association.

Dewey Hodges, professor in the Guggenheim School of Aerospace Engineering, was selected to receive the 2015 Spirit of St. Louis medal from the American Society of Mechanical Engineers for meritorious service in the advancement of aeronautics and astronautics.

Kristie Macrakis, professor in the School of History, Technology, and Society, received a fellowship from the Woodrow Wilson Center. Macrakis will conduct work on technology and the rise of the U.S. National Security State.

Amelia Pavlik, communications specialist for the Office of the Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Faculty Development, received the Friend of the Graduate Student Award from the Georgia Student Government Association.

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FACULTY AND STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

LGBTQIA students. His namesake award will be given each year at Lavender Graduation.

Anne Pollock, associate professor in the School of Literature, Media, and Communication, earned the inaugural Lavender Faculty/Staff Leadership Award for significant contributions to the LGBTQIA community at Tech.

Jud Ready, principal research engineer at the Georgia Tech Research Institute and adjunct professor in the School of Materials Science and Engineering, received a 2015 Benjamin Medal Award for his contributions in electronics reliability and applied nanotechnology research, and for his service to The Minerals, Metals and Materials Society.

Susan Thomas, assistant professor in the Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering, earned a three-year, $450,000 grant from the Susan G. Komen Foundation to study targeted drug delivery technology for breast cancer patients.

Classifieds

AUTOMOBILES


REAL ESTATE/ ROOMMATES

For rent: 2BR/1BA bungalow, minutes from Tech, quiet intown neighborhood. Contact Pinar Eroglu, realtor, 770-934-1004, central HVAC, gas stove, DW, disposal, alarm system, large deck in fenced back yard. W/D. pets ok. $975/mo. Contact Suzanne beck@gatech.edu.

Home for sale in Avondale Estates. 4BR/3BA with finished basement. Beautiful home in a great subdivision with lots of extras. Surround sound in living room and basement, security cameras, washer/dryer, new paint. Hardwoods recently refinished. $419,000. Call 404-392-4917.

For Rent: Beautiful 4BR/3BA, 2,200 sq ft, easy access Emory/CDC/Georgia Tech. Hardwood floors, open floor plan, many windows, 0.5 acres top of the hill, house view. Sought after Oak Grove Elementary School district. Wonderful neighborhood. Minutes to LER, shops, restaurants. Contact pinar@isya.gatech.edu.

Sabbatical luxury condo rental in Midtown. 2BR/2BA, split roommate plan on Piedmont Park w/ pool, amenities. Available beginning Aug. 15 or Sept. 1 through May 2016. Furnished, 1,300 sq ft. $3,600. Details of building and unit at https://yuoba/1PZDBMG5ZEq.

Contact: pinar@isya.gatech.edu.

For years our place in the North Georgia mountains, only 1.5 hours from town, was our affordable personal adventure camp, a great place to relax, read, write, and enjoy recreational activities for four more years. See www.1770Valleyview.com.

Lakefront vacation home rental on spectacular Lake Chatuge in the mountains of North Georgia. Features 3BR/2BA, dock game room, large deck on spacious 4.2 acres with great mountain and lake views. Details at www.vrbo.com/471371.

MISCELLANEOUS

Very well maintained and good condition butcher block dining set with 4 chairs. $150. Contact urrlaisselle@yahoo.com.

Almost new Mac 21.5 inch LED backlit display, 1.4 GHz dual-core Intel Core i5 with 3MB L3 cache, 8GB memory, 500G hard disk drive, wired keyboard, Magic Mouse, pre-installed software. $900 OBO. Contact Joy, 404-790-9831.

Georgia Tech Memory and Aging Lab recruiting ages 18-80 for a two-session psychology research study. Study pays $40. Lab is located in the Center for Advanced Brain Imaging at 831 Martinelli St. Contact 404-385-3699, lmb@memory.gatech.edu.

Ads run for at least three issues in the order in which they are received. Submit your 35-word or less ad to editor@comm.gatech.edu.

Comprehensive

Community News