

Dr. Peterson
President's Scholarship Fall Luncheon
Tuesday, October 4, 2011
10:30 a.m., Student Center Ballroom

It is great to be back with this group again. How many of you were at President's Scholarship Signing Day in July over at the College of Management? When doing a little research for that event, I was so impressed with the summary of your accomplishments, even before coming to Tech. You had barely stepped foot on campus and you were already innovators. Some of you have already done research in areas including cancer, H1N1, and eyesight restoration. You have helped communities choose sustainable fuels and coordinated programs to clean up rivers. Many of you have been a leader in, or even founded organizations to do things like raising money to send water filters to a tribe in Kenya, and building and shipping wheelchairs to third world countries.

Your volunteer work is equally as impressive. You have already left your mark on your hometowns doing things like coaching children's sports teams and tutoring children, volunteering to help with Alzheimer's patients, and serving in leadership positions in scouting organizations.

We are very proud to now include you as part of the largest, best qualified and most diverse freshman class in Tech's history. While what you've already accomplished is impressive, there is no limit to your potential, here at Georgia Tech and when you enter the work world or graduate school in a few short years.

You are the best of the best. How many of you have already become involved in student leadership or volunteer organizations while on campus? And to you returning scholars, we are equally impressed with your leadership in academics and extracurricular activities. I challenge you as well to continue to live up to your potential, making a difference while you're on the Georgia Tech campus, and preparing for leadership and innovation upon graduation.

There's an air of excitement on campus, and I think it's due to a number of factors. This week we're celebrating the Yellow Jackets moving to #13 on both the AP and

USA Today Coaches' polls with a 5-0 record. We haven't had a 5-0 record since 1990 when Tech had a share of the national championship with Colorado, where I came from. That accounts for at least some of the excitement. A couple of weeks ago, we dedicated the Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons. It will be a resource for every undergraduate student, and is a symbol of Tech's vision to enhance undergraduate education.

It is an open environment that provides flexibility and opportunities for collaborative learning and more interaction with faculty. It is a resource to enhance undergraduate education and links to the library for boundless resources in a common enterprise, with centralized access to academic support services. It offers students a truly exceptional environment—the resources to succeed. (Mention X-College)

Our commitment to you is to provide you an academic learning environment where you will be challenged to achieve your personal best. We are very grateful for philanthropy, which has made the President's Scholars Program possible. Georgia Tech is a national leader in giving back, and it helps us to attract and retain people like you. We are committed to you and to your success. We're partnering with you in investing in your future. When you walk across that stage and I shake your hand in a few short years, you'll be prepared as an innovator and a leader to address some of society's greatest challenges. Many of you have already started doing those things while you're still students. I'm looking forward to hearing what Jonathan Olinger has to share with us as a new alumnus. We're proud of all of you, and are looking for great things from you as well.