

Dr. Peterson

Welcome and Introduction of Ralph de la Vega: Opening event, People and Technology Forum

4-6 p.m. Monday, Nov. 12, 2012, Global Learning Center, Room 236

On behalf of Georgia Tech, welcome to the People and Technology Forum. This is a tremendous group that is gathering together for these two jam-packed days. Forum attendees include more than 100 companies -- ranging from well-established international companies to early stage startups. Many of you are already working with us at Georgia Tech and we're excited about the opportunities to enhance these partnerships, as well as to initiate new research partnerships.

The Institute for People and Technology is one of our new Interdisciplinary Research Institutes at Georgia Tech. Its mission is to catalyze and support a research ecosystem that anticipates and meet society's needs in areas such as health, education, entertainment, and civic participation. We believe that these interdisciplinary research activities are crucial to making a real difference in the world. We face extraordinary times when technology is opening new possibilities and changing the core assumptions of how we teach and learn, of how we receive medical care, how we stay healthy, and even the ways we interact as citizens.

I'll briefly share about some of the projects underway at Georgia Tech, several of which you will hear about during the next two days.

- We have a research program called Direct to Discovery that connects schools throughout Georgia with Georgia Tech laboratories and scientists through high-speed broadband networks. These connections change the experience. These high school students can interact and explore the boundaries of science and engineering from the convenience of their classrooms.
- (Barrow County example)
- C21U is another education example.

- Georgia Tech has an enhanced partnership with Children's Healthcare -- the largest pediatric healthcare system in the U.S. Included in this partnership is work to transform healthcare delivery for millions of children. One innovation we're working on is a way for parents to use various mobile devices to help diagnose ear infections from home. You'll hear about our home laboratory where we design and evaluate the future of home technologies. We are working on robotic healthcare assistants to help older adults living alone. We're working to develop new technologies for early diagnosis of children with autism, which is crucial for effective treatments.
- You'll hear about our research in mobile devices, wearable computing and augmented reality. It has the potential to literally change how we see the world. However, getting that design right is no easy task. Our research teams include experts in experience design and gaming. Some of our best designs have come from new student projects creating augmented reality games.

Speaking of students, tomorrow afternoon you'll meet the winners for our Fall Convergence Innovation Competition. These students have been designing new mobile applications and web services for a project called GT Journey. GT Journey connects back to those ideas of students and how their avatars go with them throughout their Georgia Tech experiences. Now we're able to open this challenge to the students and have them design what they need and want -- from applications to help with catching the Georgia Tech trolley and riding Marta to networking with our alumni and preparing for their careers. The contest winners will work with us to deploy their applications for use by the entire campus community.

I mentioned that IPaT mission is to catalyze a research ecosystem that spans our campus and beyond. This vision is how we see our campus literally -- working with companies throughout Atlanta and the state of Georgia. It is how we think of our network of partners globally. AT&T is a valuable partner, here on campus, in Georgia and globally.

We are fortunate this afternoon to have as our keynote Ralph de la Vega, President and CEO of AT&T Mobility, a position he has held since 2007. He is responsible for the company's largest growth engine. Today, AT&T is the industry's mobile broadband leader and number-one smartphone provider.

From October 2008 to January 2012, Mr. de la Vega served as President and CEO of AT&T Mobility and Consumer Markets. In addition to the company's wireless business, he led the company's local consumer wireline operations, including U-verse TV® which has received numerous industry awards.

During his long and distinguished telecommunications career, he has held numerous senior executive positions, including group president— Regional Telecommunications and Entertainment—AT&T, Chief Operating Officer of Cingular Wireless, President of BellSouth Latin America, and President of BellSouth Broadband and Internet Services. He serves on the board of directors of New York Life, the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, and the Georgia Aquarium.

Mr. de la Vega, who was born in Cuba, is a key sponsor of diversity and inclusion both inside and outside AT&T. He is the driving force behind AT&T's Hispanic Marketing initiative and the conversion of close to 800 bilingual retail stores nationwide to better serve the growing Hispanic consumer market. His involvement with the community is extensive. He serves as Chairman of Junior Achievement Worldwide, and as Chairman of All-Markets Initiatives for the Boy Scouts of America.

He has a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Florida Atlantic University and a master's degree in business administration from Northern Illinois University. He completed the Executive Program at the University of Virginia and received an honorary doctorate from his alma mater, (FAU).

He is the author of the best-selling book *Obstacles Welcome: Turn Adversity into Advantage in Business and Life*.

Please join me in welcoming Ralph de la Vega.