

Dr. Peterson
Legislative Briefing

1-2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 12, 2013

Thank you for your commitment to Georgia Tech, and for being ambassadors for our Institute last year. Your efforts to communicate our needs to legislators and community leaders is invaluable.

We are especially grateful to the Governor and General Assembly for supporting Georgia Tech and the University System, even in the face of tough economic times. While state revenue has been drastically reduced, the portion of the pie going to higher education has remained the same. That is tremendous when you consider all of the competing needs in the state. It is a testament to the value that our state officials place on higher education, and in particular, what we do at Georgia Tech.

As you know, last year the Georgia General Assembly approved \$59 million in the state's FY 2013 budget for the Engineered Biosystems Building, just down the street. As Stephanie just shared, this year we're requesting another \$5 million in bonds to finish and equip the facility. If you haven't had a chance to do so, I hope you'll stop by the construction site to see the progress. They also have a web site where you can see real-time progress. For the geeks among us (and I include myself in that group interested in this type of thing), you can pick up a copy of the web address on your way out today.

The Engineered Biosystems Building is a win for Georgia Tech, a win for the State of Georgia, and is a perfect example of the power of partnerships. Through institutional and private funds, we will be able to leverage the State of Georgia's bond investment, creating a premier resource that otherwise wouldn't be possible. It will foster economic development opportunities and enhance Georgia's competitiveness, while at the same time taking Georgia Tech's science and technology sector to the next level.

It will provide a highly interdisciplinary space that enables collaborative research in three areas: biochemical technology, cellular therapies, and complex systems biology. Research neighborhoods in the facility will bring together top-tier researchers for a common purpose, providing the infrastructure that fuels great ideas.

We have much to be proud of at Georgia Tech.

- Largest, best-qualified and most diverse freshman class in Tech's history
- Georgia Tech graduates are in high demand. In fact for two years in a row *SmartMoney* magazine has ranked Georgia Tech No. 1 in the nation in "return on investment" in higher education.
- Our partnerships with business and industry: innovation ecosystem, Panasonic's new Innovation Center, GM announcement this week.
- Technology-Enhanced Learning (our leadership in MOOCS), more than 160,000 participants.

Now it is my pleasure to introduce our speaker today, Erin Hames, who serves as Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy at the Office of the Governor. Erin teamed up with Gordon Kingsley, associate professor in Tech's School of Public Policy, to teach a special topics class entitled "STEM Education Policy." They examined trends and policy issues associated with science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education in K-12 public schools in the U.S. Erin lectured and facilitated discussions on such topics as the legislative process in education at the state level. Gordon said "She was exemplary in the classroom and a delight to work with throughout the term. Students had deep respect for her insights and experience. It was wonderful to have her in the classroom as she added an understanding of the urgency and political realities that readings and research cannot convey." As I've gotten to know Erin, I can say it has been a joy to work with her and she has been a true friend to Georgia Tech. I

look forward to continuing our partnership for progress in Georgia. Please join me in welcoming our guest speaker, Erin Hames.