

Dr. Peterson

France-Atlanta Opening Reception

5:30-8 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 16, 2014, Besharat Gallery in Castleberry Hill

Thank you, Heather (Kircher Clavé). It is an honor to join with Deputy Chief of Mission Frédéric Doré, Municipal Councilor Aviv Zonabend, and Consul General Denis Barbet to launch the fifth France-Atlanta. We also appreciate the supportive words of Commissioner Chris Carr and Mayor Kasim Reed. This year's theme is "Together Towards Innovation," and there will be an exciting lineup of events that illustrate that theme.

France-Atlanta has been very exciting and successful during the past four years, and we are expecting even greater things this year as we showcase cultural expressions, humanitarian events, business workshops and scientific symposiums bringing together renowned artists, scholars, and experts from our two countries. Many of our participants are with us this evening. If you are part of this year's France-Atlanta events will you please raise your hand? Let's give them a round of applause. We also applaud so many of you who have worked behind the scenes to make these events possible.

Georgia Tech has a special relationship with France because of our very successful campus in Lorraine. Over the years, Georgia Tech-Lorraine has enabled thousands of U.S. students to study in France and thousands of French students to study in Atlanta. I have traveled around the world, visited many campuses, but I can tell you that our campus in France is a truly unique asset for Georgia Tech. It enables us to bridge together our communities, and seize new opportunities.

At about this time in 2012, we celebrated the groundbreaking of the Lafayette Institute. I'm happy to report that last May, more than 100 of our French friends and associates gathered with our Georgia Tech contingent from Atlanta as we officially opened the Lafayette Institute and inaugurated a new student lounge on our campus in Metz.

We're also partnering with business and industry in France. The Institute is an Open Innovation Technological Resource Center located next to Georgia Tech Lorraine. It will foster Industry R&D and innovations in the field of new materials for the opto-electronics industry. The Lafayette Institute will operate in close partnership with Georgia Tech's Institute for Electronics and Nanotechnology, and with Georgia Tech's Enterprise Innovation Institute. It is a great example of Franco-U.S. partnership in global innovation.

Some of our proudest moments at Georgia Tech stem from our global collaborations. Our 240 Georgia Tech-Lorraine students had a rare opportunity this summer. They participated on June 6 in the 70th-anniversary D-Day celebration, and President Obama attended. It was an unforgettable experience for our students and an important generational moment. They got to see veterans of that monumental campaign, many of whom were about their age when they stormed those beaches. Our young people got to step into history in a personal way. One of the great virtues of France-Atlanta is that it also offers opportunities throughout our city for people to explore the unique relationship between our two countries.

Included among the France-Atlanta 2014 humanitarian events will be an Oct. 21 roundtable discussion on "Mobility in Healthcare and Civic Engagement." Experts from Georgia Tech and elsewhere in communication infrastructure, civic engagement and health will discuss the present and future uses of mobile Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). ICTs have such great potential to support humanitarian goals such as effective healthcare, emergency response, and meaningful civic engagement. It's free and open to the public at our Technology Square Research Building. I hope some of you will plan to attend. You can find out more about it online.

The impact of France-Atlanta is growing. France-Atlanta's success inspired Dr. Jacqueline Royster, Dean of Georgia Tech's Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts, to start a new series to bring together the Atlanta community with the African continent. Under

her leadership, a large group of academics from Georgia Tech, Emory University, Georgia State University, Spelman, Clark Atlanta University, the High Museum, the City of Atlanta, and the Consular Corps created Africa-Atlanta, which made its debut in May 2014.

Through France-Atlanta, we are continuing to bring the world to Atlanta! Again, a special thank you to everyone who has made this very successful annual event possible.