Candidate field for dean of engineering narrows to three

Larry Bowic
Institute Communications
and Public Affairs

A search committee charged with finding a new dean for the College of Engineering has identified three candidates and is now conducting interviews with each on campus. The three candidates are: David H. Auston of Case Western Reserve University; W. Kent Fuchs of Purdue University; and Don P. Giddens of Georgia Tech.

"The search committee is very pleased with the caliber of the candidates who have emerged from our search so far," said Professor Ronald Schaffer, who co-chairs the search committee with Professor David McDowell. "We feel very confident that any of the individuals that have been invited for interviews would provide outstanding leadership for the College of Engineering."

Each candidate is scheduled to visit the campus for two days. Fuchs was interviewed on Jan. 24 and 25, and Auston on Jan. 28 and 29, while Giddens will interview on Feb. 4 and 5. Each candidate will meet with administrators, alumni, faculty, staff and students.

The candidates: David H. Auston served as president of Case Western Reserve University from 1999-2001. He received a B.A.Sc. and M.A.Sc. from the University of Toronto and a Ph.D. in electrical engineering and computer science from the University of California at Berkeley. From 1994-1999 Auston served as provost and a professor of engineering at Rice University. From 1990-1994 he was dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Science, and professor of engineering at Columbia University. Prior to this, he had an 11-year career as a department head and member of technical staff in the physics research division of AT&T Bell Laboratories. While there he pioneered the development of the field of ultrafast optoelectronics, which is based on the use of high-speed lasers to measure the properties of electronic materials and devices with a time resolution less than 1 picosecond (one-trillionth of a second). He is the author of more than 100 papers, one book, and eight patents.

Auston is a member of both the National Academy of Science and the National Academy of Engineering and he is a fellow of the American

Tech undergrad wins National Co-op Student of the Year award

David Terrano
Institute Communications
and Public Affairs

When Brian Rugg signed up to work for ChoicePoint as part of Georgia Tech’s Cooperative Education program, he had no idea he’d be helping to find lost and kidnapped children. But in his last semester working for the company, Rugg and computer science undergraduate John Watson — another co-op student — designed a system that allows photographs to be broadcast over two-way pagers. Under Rugg’s direction, the company gave out the system to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. They used it to send photographs and biographies of missing kids to agents in the field. In its first year using the system, the center found 18 kids who were lost, kidnapped or had run away.

It’s achievements like this that helped Rugg win the National Cooperative Education Student of the Year award.

The award is given out by the Cooperative Education Division of the American Society for Engineering Education and the Cooperative

Professor April Brown announces departure from Tech

Michael Hagarty
Institute Communications
and Public Affairs

April Brown, the Joseph M. Pettit Professor in Microelectronics and the executive assistant to the president, announced last week that she will be accepting a position at Duke University as chair of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE). As executive assistant, Brown was President Clough’s chief advisor serving as a link to and providing feedback from the numerous constituencies on and off campus. She thanked the faculty and administration for their support.

I am extremely appreciative of the collaboration and leadership I have had at Tech," she said. "The environment has given me the opportunity to grow in many ways, and my recent experience in the President’s Office has significantly broadened my perspective. The new opportunity at Duke builds on my experience here at Tech and presents new and exciting challenges."

President Wayne Clough said, "It has been a pleasure to work with April even if for a short time. She is a talented professional who has made substantial contributions to Georgia Tech and will continue to do so until she departs campus for her new job.

"She has a wonderful professional opportunity ahead of her at Duke," he added. "We wish her the best for the future."

Prior to her work for the president, Brown acted as associate dean for the College of Engineering, focusing on faculty development programs and implementing strategic initiatives for the College while pursuing her teaching and research activities in ECE concurrently.

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Advising Bush on terrorism, federal investment

President Clough has learned on which of the four panels he will serve as he prepares to participate in the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST). As one of 24 members of the prestigious board — and the first Tech representative to serve on the Council — Clough will be offering policy advice on issues related to terrorism as well as chairing a committee on federal investment in science and technology.

"This committee affords me a unique opportunity to help represent our views in addressing the policies that set the national agenda," he said. "I have been asked to address have never been more important than at this time in our nation's history." In recent years, the country has been subjected to numerous forms of terrorism: hijacking, anthrax and the bombing of federal and commercial properties around the globe. The goal of the panel on "The Science and Technology of Countering Terrorism" will be to catalog the potential weapons of terrorists and identify technologies or fields of research that could yield technologies to address these threats.

Clough’s other assignment involves how federal research dollars are managed. Flowing through a broad area of numbers — defense, medicine and biotechnology, and basic research — these monies directly benefit student development and support research at universities, national laboratories, private industry and small businesses. For its planning purposes, President Bush is seeking a view of the federal research.

As chairperson of the panel on "Federal Investment in Science and Technology and Its Economic Benefits," Clough and the seven other members are responsible for reviewing the federal government’s research portfolio. Technology transfer mechanisms that encourage commercial development will be reviewed and policy recommendations ultimately must benefit from research spending.

"Our ability to focus on the issue of terrorism will be catalyzed through technology transfer — through examples like the Georgia Research Alliance, Yamacraw and the Cancer Initiative — will help underscore the importance of research funding for economic development. There may be no greater economic stimulus than federal investment in research and knowledge," Clough said.

The remaining two panels will be concerned with improving energy efficiency and infrastructure for the 21st century.

For more information, visit the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology web page, or directly at www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/PCAST/pcast.html.

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Email: Whistle submissions to Michael.hagarty@gatech.edu
For more information, call 404-894-5024.

Cost/N075 Copley, S. 200
Institute: Communications and Public Affairs
282/287 North Avenue
Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0141
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paid trip to Saratoga, Florida, where the "vital enemy" will take place.

"I’m very proud to represent ChoicePoint and Georgia Tech in this fashion," said Rugg, who majored in industrial and systems engineering. "It’s a great honor and lot of credit goes to Lisa Jones at Tech and Rob Phillips at ChoicePoint.

Rugg graduated from IGE last December with Highest Honors and a 3.75 grade point average. While at Tech he served as president of Alpha Kappa Phi business fraternity and received numerous honors and scholarships.

Jones, one of Tech’s co-op coordinators, said, "He has an ethic of achievement in the classroom, in his student leadership activities and on the job. I can think of no one more deserving of the ‘National Co-op Student of the Year Honor.’

During his five semesters at the information technology company, Rugg saved the company $400,000 by heading an initiative to make some of the company’s procedures more efficient. Rob Phillips, a project director at ChoicePoint, said, ‘Brian immediately stepped into the role of project leader. He directed the efforts of a group of 18 individu als, many of whom were seasoned professionals.’

Tech’s Cooperative Division is a five-year academic program in which students alternate semesters of full-time study with full-time work. Co-op is different from traditional internship programs because students are paid full-time employees of the companies they work for. When Tech established its co-op program in 1912, it was only the fourth school to do so. Today co-op programs can be found in more than 600 U.S. colleges and universities. Tech’s program currently has about 3,000 participating students.

Rugg said he joined co-op because he thought it would advance his career. ‘I felt like I’d have a leg up on other students when I graduate. Through co-op, I got about 18 months of great work experience while still in school.’

Since graduating, Rugg has received many job offers and plans to work for several years before pursuing a master’s degree in business administration.

For more information, visit Georgia Tech Cooperative Division web page at www.coop.gatech.edu/.

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Phasor one renovations to Bobby Dodd Stadiums are under way, with construction crews already having completed the demolition of the north stands (above) and top: leaving a clear view of the Edge Intercollegiate Athletic Center. At right, the lower level of the east stands, which have been in place since 1933. Originally built by members of the Georgia Tech student body, Bobby Dodd Stadium/Grant Field, the oldest on-campus stadium in NCAA Division I-A. By the time the season begins in late August, the lower east structure will have a new concourse as well as 2,200 club seats between the 25-yard lines with private lounges for those patrons field level improvements include shifting the playing field approximately 30 feet to the north and 15 feet to the West. This will allow for the addition of a new seating area in front of the Wardlaw Building in the south end zone that will accommodate nearly 3,000 spectators. The next phase, following the 2002 season, calls for a new north and zone structure, which will seat more than 42,000 spectators. The structure will also contain new locker rooms, a sports medicine facility, equipment room and football coaches’ offices.

New grant focused on improving digital communications

College students in Atlanta, Boston and Houston are developing the digital future using digital signal processing (DSP) technology — from advances in face recognition technology to wireless video transmission, with support from Texas Instruments (TI).

Last week, TI announced a three-year, $5 million donation to the Leadership University program, comprised of Georgia Tech, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Rice University.

“At Georgia Tech, the DSP Leadership University program supports the research of six faculty and six Ph.D. students in electrical engineering,” said Ron Schafer, Regents’ professor and John and Marilu McCarty Chair of Electrical Engineering.

“Students and faculty work on research projects ranging from wireless video transmission, interpolation for color digital cameras, face recognition, speech recognition, chaotic systems for digital communication to low bit-rate speech coding. “In addition to the collaborative research efforts, the three universities benefit from close contact with TI through cooperative internships and project review sessions — opportunities that give students a competitive advantage,” he said.

The three universities were selected in 1999 as inaugural members of the DSP program for university and industry collaboration in research. Torrence Robinson, TI’s DSP University program manager, said, “Not only do we see unique inter-university collaboration, but we have access to leading research from the three schools and accelerated progress in DSP development.”

For more information, contact Torrence Robinson at 770-638-3246 or tr Robinson@ti.com.