Tech tapped to lead new aerospace institute

Larry Bowie
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

Georgia Tech is one of six major universities that will team with NASA’s Langley Research Center to create a new institute devoted to aerospace and atmospheric research, according to a recent announcement from NASA.

The National Institute of Aerospace (NIA), as it is called, will work with NASA Langley to develop new technologies for the nation and inspire the next generation of scientists and engineers. The institute will be located near the Langley Research Center in Hampton, Va.

The Institute also will offer master’s and doctoral degrees in science and engineering locally at the partner universities and via distance learning connections. The administration predicted the partnership could potentially generate combined research grants and contracts that total $379 million over 20 years.

“Establishment of the NIA is the exciting culmination of a three-year effort by NASA’s Langley Research Center,” said Robert Loewy, chair of the School of Aerospace Engineering. “It is a strategic partnership with NASA Langley, and incorporating the proven technology transfer capabilities of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.”

Last year, NASA officials started a national search for university and nonprofit partners to run the Institute. The contract was awarded to a consortium of universities and a nonprofit corporation that founded the National Institute of Aerospace Associates (NIAA), formed specifically to create a science and research organization called the NIA.

In addition to Tech, the NIAA is comprised of the Virginia Institute of Technology, the University of Virginia, the University of Maryland, North Carolina State University, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, and the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics Foundation in Reston, Va.

The Institute is a long-term commitment on the part of NASA to expand collaboration with universities and agencies and the broader scientific community to fully leverage expertise inside and outside of government.

Once fully operational, the Institute will become a strategic partner with NASA’s Langley, and incorporating the proven technology transfer capabilities of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.”

Portal Steering Committee announced

Amelia Gambino
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

Implementation of the campus portal environment moved a step closer last week with the selection of the Steering Committee. The committee will serve in an advisory role throughout the upcoming year as plans for the portal continue to develop.

According to Barbara Hall, associate vice president for Enrollment Services and committee chair, “The role of the Steering Committee is to advise on the direction and scope of the initial implementation. We also hope to identify things like success criteria for key constituent groups, assist in developing and executing effective communications strategies, and discuss new policies that may be mandated by the portal.”

The committee is comprised of at least one representative from each college, representatives from the major offices on campus and an undergraduate and a graduate student. Civil engineering Professor Nelson Baker said, “In my 14 years at Tech, this is one of the finest planning committees I’ve served on. The representation from academic and administrative"
“QUOTE-LINGUO”

“The sources of our work force are under pressure. It’s something of a serious concern.”
—President Wayne Clough, describing how the U.S. high-technology industry was being hurt by a double-whammy effect of fewer international students coming to the U.S. to study science, and fewer of those coming to stay after receiving advanced degrees, in a report issued by the President’s Council of Science & Technology (PCAST), which he chairs.
(Washington Internet Daily)

“As we’ve learned more about the amount of black carbon emitted by countries like China and India, it appears that soot could have important climate effects, and that these effects may be almost as much as those of carbon dioxide.”
—Michael Bergin, an assistant professor in the School of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, on a new study that used sources like diesel engines and cooking fires may have a more immediate effect on the weather than global effects to consumer electronics of direct lightning strikes.

By physically disconnecting the equipment, Storm Shelters can protect it from jolts of at least 20,000 volts — several times more than the 6,000 volts that can be carried by home electrical systems and an order of magnitude more than traditional surge suppressors can absorb.

The company has proven its equipment in Savannah area testing and expects to have the product available for sale in high-lightning areas of the Southeast next spring.

Growth in the use of costly entertainment systems, networked computer systems and microprocessor-based equipment has made consumer electronics and small office environments “vulnerable than ever to lightning damage,” noted Storm Shelters President and Founder Dennis Page.

“The expansion in the use of technology over the last few decades has made things more sensitive to lightning because everything is now based on microprocessors that can be wiped out by relatively small voltages,” he explained. “Medical offices, research facilities and home offices simply cannot afford to lose their computer-based records. We can protect their mission-critical information as well as the expensive entertainment systems now being installed in homes.”

The company came to ATDC because of the networking opportunities it offers and ATDC’s track record in helping companies raise money.

“I have come to realize that you need other people to help you along,” Page explained. “The people of the ATDC have been down this road before, and they can help us with networking and resources we wouldn’t otherwise have.”

Savannah’s ATDC program adds first member company

The time-honored technique for protecting computers and other electronic devices from lightning damage has been to simply unplug them until the threatening weather passes. Now, a Savannah company known as Storm Shelters Electronics Corporation has developed a better way.

Using a nationwide lightning detection system, satellite-based messaging network and a small device that plugs into a wall outlet, Storm Shelters automatically disconnects sensitive electronic equipment from AC current, phone lines and cable connections whenever a thunderstorm approaches. After the threat passes, the same system reconnects the equipment.

An add-on uninterruptible power supply can be a-C equipment to keep going while disconnected from AC current. And the system includes standard surge suppression technology for handling less serious electrical threats.

Storm Shelters is the first member company of the Advanced Technology Development Center’s (ATDC) new Savannah program, which was established earlier this year as a collaborative effort of coastal area organizations; the Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism’s CyberGeorgia initiative; and the ATDC.

“Storm Shelters has identified a serious problem in lightning protection and has developed an elegantly simple solution that can be easily afforded and readily adopted for consumer electronics and small office environments,” said Bruce Jacobs, the company’s CEO. “For the first time, we can provide real protection against the devastating effects to consumer electronics of direct lightning strikes.”

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A partner working with NIA to enhance its world-class aerospace and atmospheric research capability.

Langley’s research creativity and expanded research and technology development opportunities.

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universities across the country because of Tech’s considerable expertise in aerospace engineering. Led by the School of Aerospace Engineering, the primary focus of the NASA institute, called a “University Research, Engineering and Technology Institute” (U hieh) is development of new propulsion and power technologies to enable NASA and industry to produce engines that meet highly restrictive environmental regulations, burn less fuel, reduce global warming, improve safety and offer lower acquisition and operating costs.

The URETI also provides support for undergraduate and graduate students, curriculum development, personnel exchange, learning opportunities and training in advanced scientific and engineering concepts for the aerospace workforce in government and industry.

For more information

NASA’s Langley Research Center
www.larc.nasa.gov

www.whistle.gatech.edu

www.larc.nasa.gov
Road Casey
Ferst Center for the Arts

Under the leadership of new director Jay Constantz, the Ferst Center for the Arts kicks off its 11th season this month with an eclectic mix of talent: a vocal group sensation, a sharp-witted comedian and dazzling fiddlers. The season opens October 18 with the North American premiere of Yefim Bronfman, Gil Shaham and Truls Mork, playing works by Schubert and Tchaikovsky. These world-renowned classical soloists will play together for the first time ever as they tour their Carnegie Hall debut.

Shifting gear, the Center moves from classical to the more contemporary sounds of Manhattan Transfer on Oct. 19. This 10-time Grammy-winning group sensation, a sharp-witted brand of comedy. In addition to dancing, the Ferst Center presents stand-up comedy as Bill Maher makes an appearance October 25. Creator and host of television’s “Politically Incorrect,” he returns to stand-up to deliver his particular brand of comedy. In addition to the 8 p.m. performance, Maher will be signing his new book at 5 p.m. in the Georgia Tech Bookstore.

The month ends with the Atlanta premiere of: Barrage: A Violin Sings. A Fiddle Dances.” This show has been touring the world and will be coming to town for two performances only (3 and 7:30 p.m. on October 27). Full of energy, dancing, singing and, of course, fiddles, this show is billed as “100 minutes of musical adventures.” Tickets for the entire season of shows, including the opera “La Bohème,” the show with the highest-earning fiddler, are on sale now. Faculty and staff save 10 percent on the cost of tickets available in person only through the box office in the Student Center.

IN BRIEF:

ICPA, Enrollment Services win Web award
The Web Marketing Association awarded Georgia Tech’s virtual tour web site — www.gatech.edu/vtour — with an Outstanding Web Site in the 2002 competition. Web sites compete head-to-head with competitors within their industry and against an overall standard of excellence. Institute Communications & Public Affairs created the virtual tour for Enrollment Services. The video was designed to give prospective students an opportunity to experience the campus without having to travel. The virtual tour can be accessed from the Georgia Tech home page.

Campus cats seek caretakers
Some Georgia Tech employees and students have been working to ensure the health and safety of many of the feral cats that have populated the northwest quadrant of the campus. Most are former pets of students who for one reason or another decided to abandon the cats on campus. Tech is following the lead of other universities in adopting a program that encourages students and staff to care for feral cats.

The competition is international, with Webboard entries submitted by interactive agencies or marketing and e-commerce departments worldwide. Advertising agency Campbell-Roberts won best of show for its Navy Web site. Other top winners included British Airways and FedEx.

Gating defensive
On Oct. 18, the Office of Environmental Health and Safety will offer a daylong Defensive Driving Course presented by the National Safety Council of Georgia. For those driving a campus vehicle, this course is required by the state of Georgia. For those not driving, the course is required by the off-campus insurance provider.

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Offered to faculty, staff and immediate family members, this training will focus on the skills of using a motor vehicle safely and responsibly. Participants will receive a Defensive Driving Course Guide and Certificate of Completion. As an additional benefit, some automobile insurers offer a discount on the premiums of those whose policies are insured through the state.