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THE WHISTLE

FACULTY/STAFF NEWSPAPER

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THE GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Campus portal site begins development phase

Goal to 'enhance faculty-student communication'

Amelia Gambino
 Institute Communications and Public Affairs

Personalizing the classroom experience is at the heart of Tech's new portal system. Picture this: Jennifer, a chemistry sophomore, wakes up on Monday and logs into her computer via her individualized campus account. She immediately gets the morning's headlines from CNN and her hometown newspaper, the weather forecast from the Weather Channel, a campus announcement that the Library will be closed all day due to a power outage, an e-mail from her calculus professor saying that the Tuesday exam has been pushed back to Friday, a message from her study group announcing an extra study session because of the delayed exam schedule, an answer from her organic chemistry professor about a question she had in class on Friday, and a reminder from her sorority that the homecoming committee will meet that night at 8 o'clock. Good morning, Jennifer!

Planned for campus use during the summer 2003, the portal includes course management tools, targeted messaging, course chat groups, calendaring and e-mail functions. Opportunities for communications between faculty and students

will be easier and more abundant. According to Provost Jean-Lou Chameau, "The campus portal project signals an institutional commitment to a digital communication strategy. I am very pleased that the initial implementation will be predominately focused on faculty-student communication. Ultimately, the project will benefit all campus constituencies."

Organizing digital content

A portal system is a Web presence that organizes the digital content and applications that are available to Web users in a unified manner. Using fully customizable channels, users have the ability to import information relative to them in a single Web page, whether it be Web sites, chat groups or messages. It also provides a unified approach for access and delivery of content using secure technologies. For instance, when a student signs up for a course, the information is logged into the Banner database. With the portal, that information could be used to notify the professor, create a Web site for the course, and connect that student with other students taking the course through a dedicated chat group. It could also allow the student to coordinate social and academic calendars into one central calendar for improved time management. Other features include automated alerts, such as campus-wide notifications, and

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Alumnus donates \$3.3 million for engineering complex

Bioengineering and Bioscience Building named for Pete Petit

Kay Kinard
 Institute for Bioengineering and Biosciences

Georgia Tech alumnus and prominent Atlantan Parker H. Petit, the chief executive officer of Matria Healthcare, has made a \$3.3 million gift toward the development of a complex of buildings on the Tech campus devoted to biomedical, environmental and molecular engineering research. As a result of his commitment, Tech will name the building that currently houses its bioengineering and bioscience programs the Parker H. Petit Building.

Opened in 1999, the newly named Petit Building will be among a four-building complex under construction at the corner of Ferst Drive and Atlantic Drive that will house a mini-campus for research and education blending Tech's engineering, science and information technology programs.

Petit's gift will assist in the completion of the complex. In addition to the Petit Building, this complex will include the U.A. Whitaker Building for Biomedical Engineering, the Ford Motor Company Environmental Science and Technology Building, and the Molecular and Materials Science and Engineering Building.

President Wayne Clough said, "It is wonderfully appropriate that we name in his honor the remarkable landmark

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The Institute for Bioengineering and Bioscience Building has been renamed the Parker H. Petit Building.



Moments of Silence

8:46 a.m. and 10:29 a.m.

In conjunction with the time of the first collision and the second tower collapse, the Whistle will blow three times, followed by a moment of silence.

Remembrance Ceremony

noon - 12:30 p.m.

Campanile Plaza

Speakers will reflect on the past year. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to attend.

Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Workshop

1 - 2:30 p.m.

Student Services Building, Room 117

Reflecting Room

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Ferst Center Gallery

A quiet place to reflect, read and remember those lost.

Tapestry Project

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Skiles Walkway

Students, faculty and staff can express their emotions by painting canvas squares that will be combined and displayed.

Counseling Center

1 - 4 p.m.

No appointment necessary

Tech remembers 9/11/01: A schedule of events

“QUOTE—
UNQUOTE”

“Whether or not luck exists depends on who you ask. People playing the slot machines in Las Vegas are betting on luck, but I think the casino owners are betting on the laws of probability.”
—Michael Lacey, a professor of mathematics, on the probability of luck’s existence. (Edmonton Journal)

“All we are doing is contributing to urban sprawl, traffic congestion and poorer air quality. There is a public interest question here. The role of government, in my opinion, is to make sure our developments are in the public interest. We should be concerned about home affordability and meeting our obligation on affordability throughout the metro Atlanta area, but that doesn’t preclude sound development.”
—Thomas Galloway, dean of the College of Architecture, on the increase of single-use building permits in metro Atlanta’s outlying counties. (Atlanta Business Chronicle)

Professor: despite growth, city’s inequality lingers

Sean Selman
Institute Communications
and Public Affairs

Despite obvious gains from a quarter century of boom economies, Atlanta’s exceptional growth has exacerbated inequalities for women and especially among blacks, according to a professor in the College of Architecture.

Speaking to a brown-bag luncheon this past week sponsored by the Office of Organizational Development, Professor Larry Keating discussed his recent book, “Atlanta: Race, Class and Urban Expansion,” examining how Atlanta remains one of the most segregated cities in the United States, despite record economic growth and efforts to improve the quality of life in the city and region.

“I’ve had the good fortune to write a book about the town where I live,” Keating said, explaining that the genesis for his book was the Community Design Center of Atlanta (CDCA), which he co-founded in 1977 to do “useful stuff” in Atlanta’s low-income communities.

A city and regional planner by training, Keating said he noticed how, through the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, Atlanta’s economy was booming, but some of the decades-old problems with poverty remained relatively unchanged. His goal in writing “Atlanta: Race, Class and Urban Expansion” was to objectively examine the daily realities that allow such poverty and inequalities to continue.

In one instance, the book examines parity among jobs — and who holds them — within the region. Comparing data from the 1980 census and the 1990 census, Keating’s work focused on whether African-American women held the same

percentage of jobs in certain fields as they did in proportion to the number of black women in the total workforce.

The numbers show that many things remained the same. For instance: Black women did make modest gains in job parity, but in 1980, white men held 64.3 percent of executive jobs within the Atlanta region. By 1990 that number had dropped to 50.2 percent — still a sizable portion of the workforce.

About the series:

Keating’s presentation this past week was suggested as a topic for the Office of Organizational Development’s popular series of lunchtime lectures and seminars. These are held regularly on a variety of topics of interest to the Tech community.

The next lecture will be an interactive session on Sept. 26, “Creating Effective Intercultural Interactions,” in which attendees can learn how to better communicate with international visitors to Georgia Tech. The course is free, but registration is required. For more information or to register, go to www.trainsweb.gatech.edu/brownbag.asp.

To suggest an interesting or timely topic for the series, call 894-7284 or e-mail shannon.scott@success.gatech.edu.

“There are changes, and there are some important changes,” Keating said. “But race and gender still largely determine what kinds of jobs people have here.”

It appears that a range of issues hold some people back from economic advancement — including the geographic dispersal of jobs, difficulties with transportation and the timidity of some in the work force to cross gender and racial lines, he said.

Keating also noted the need for more income equality among races and genders. Economic development policies for Atlanta and the state, he said, should emphasize such issues.

The CDCA is an example of how outreach efforts could improve inequalities within the region. The Center — external of Georgia Tech — has an 11-person board, with six seats held by representatives of low-income community groups. The remaining five seats are allocated to representatives of Georgia Tech, the city of Atlanta, the local chapters of planning and architecture professional organizations and the regional director of the Community Services Administration.

The CDCA recognizes that community-controlled institutions have greater potential for building acceptance and trust in low-income neighborhoods, Keating said. Its goal is to provide technical assistance to low-income neighborhoods and non-profit community development corporations. To date, the Center has helped improve community organization and development, neighborhood planning and architectural design in neighborhoods throughout the city. It also provides residents assistance with cost estimation, grant writing, real-estate finance and development approvals.

“(Dr. Keating’s) presentation was more of a lecture and intellectual discussion, which I really found interesting,” said Project Support Analyst Shannon Scott, the primary organizer of the events. “The audience interaction was great.” She said the brown-bag luncheons increase communication among faculty and staff from various departments and serve as a way for the Tech community to discover new programs and initiatives at the Institute.



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individualized, secure access to academic and financial information such as grades or scholarship funds.

For the faculty, the portal will provide the ability to manage e-mail, class calendars, targeted messaging, chat groups and course management tools external to WebCT.

Evaluation and implementation

Georgia Tech first began evaluating the portal approach to internal communications in 1999. By 2001 the technology had significantly improved and other campuses around the country were using it, serving as benchmark sites. This summer, the Institute signed a contract with Campus Pipeline.

Led by Bob McMath, vice provost for Undergraduate Studies; Barbara

Hall, associate vice president for Enrollment Services; and John Mullin, associate vice president, Office of Information Technologies (OIT), the portal implementation project kicked off in July, with user training planned for next year.

“Initial implementation of the campus portal will enhance faculty-student communication,” says Hall. “However, as the implementation team and the campus community become more aware of the emerging benefits of a portal, a plan will be created, with input from campus constituents, that will allow the ‘phase-in’ of expanded portal functionality.”

The Portal Implementation Team is led by co-directors Greg Huseth, manager, Information Technology, and Marie Mons, director, Student Financial Planning and Services. Huseth says, “The team has been

created with as much involvement from all parts of the Institute as possible. To realize the full potential of this technology, the team includes faculty, students, administrators, training, customer support, communications, quality assurance, project support, and a variety of technical personnel to build and operate the portal systems.”

“The implementation team will be very busy for the next eight months testing, communicating with the campus and training. Stringent testing will be conducted to make sure that our portal is functional and secure,” said Mons.

Provost Jean-Lou Chameau will appoint a steering committee to oversee the implementation process. Committee members will advise on policy issues as well as functional concerns. The committee will be named later this month.

Web design course ensures equal access for all

Tomika Jones
Continuing Education

With last week's reintroduction of Georgia Tech's Web presence, the coming months expect to be filled with new standards of design, as campus communicators retool their sites to similar specifications. Some changes will be an issue of aesthetics; others will be to comply with the law.

To help navigate some of the legal and technological issues, the Wesley Center for New Media created their latest course offering, "Creating Accessible Web Sites," as a hands-on, experiential certificate program, tailored to the needs of Web designers and managers. This program is scheduled for September 18-20, on Tech's campus.

Robert Todd, a research scientist at the Center for Assistive Technology and Environmental Access and the course's instructor, said, "This certificate program has been designed to meet a critical need for accurate, timely and usable instruction in accessible Web design." Citing the Chartbook on Disability in the United States, he estimates that between 15 percent and 30 percent of the population — approximately 50 million people — have functional limitations that can affect

their ability to use the Web. This certificate program, he said, provides attendees with the knowledge to make informed plans regarding their own Web development and with the tools to make those plans reality.

Equal access under the law

When it was determined that the ADA also applied to the Web, the term "public accommodations" expanded into cyberspace. State and federal regulatory standards — among them Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act — mandate that business managers, human resource directors and Web masters understand the legal implications and liability of non-compliance. Building Web sites accessible to all is not just considerate and socially conscious, it is the law.

"Oftentimes we only think in terms of the architectural barriers that individuals with disabilities encounter," said Denise Johnson, assistant dean of students and coordinator for disability services at Tech. "Now, as technology has come to the forefront in our everyday lives, the accessibility of information plays a major role."

Under Section 508, all vendors — public and private — must comply with designated Web accessibility standards to participate in the federal gov-

ernment market. This law applies to all federal departments and entities, and to all contracts and grants that they sponsor. States are following suit, passing similar legislation in increasing numbers. Major corporations such as Microsoft and IBM are leading the way in the business sector, promoting Web accessibility standards and education.

Certificate course

Upon completion of this three-part course, students will receive certification of course completion. Though there are no prerequisites for day one, it is recommended that students have a basic understanding of Web design with HTML for the second and third sessions, as well as a working knowledge of Macromedia Dreamweaver.

Located within the School of Literature, Communication and Culture, the Wesley Center for New Media offers continuing education courses in electronic media theory and production, covering a range of visual and technical issues designed to improve its participants' design capabilities.

For more information...

Wesley Center for New Media
www.newmedia.gatech.edu

IN BRIEF:

Purdue hires Smith to head its ECE program

Mark Smith, a professor of electrical and computer engineering and former executive assistant to the president at Georgia Tech, has been named head of the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Purdue University, effective Jan. 1.

"I was struck by the enterprising vision and commitment of the new administration and by the strategic focus on cross-disciplinary collaboration," he said. "This, in concert with Purdue's renowned faculty and outstanding student body, makes joining the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering extremely exciting for me."

Smith earned doctoral and master of science degrees in electrical engineering from Tech in 1984 and 1979, respectively.

Smith led the formation of a university coalition called EMERGE, or Empowering Minority Engineers and Scientists to Reach for Graduate Education. The program uses technology and outreach to encourage minority students to pursue graduate degrees in engineering and science.

A former Olympic athlete, Smith was a two-time national fencing champion, in 1981 and 1983, and a member of the U.S. Olympic Team in 1980 and 1984.

Ethics specialist joins Tech

The Dean of Students office has a new face. Ericka Smith joined Tech last week as the Institute's first Ethics Education Specialist. Smith comes to Tech from Emory's Oxford College where she handled everything from judicial matters, to housing and facilities to teaching a class. Being a new position, many of her duties are being designed by the Dean's office and Smith as she goes along. But part of her duties will include working with the Honor Advisory Council and training members of the various student judicial boards on campus. She'll also be making presentations to students about ethics, "I'm the marketing person for ethical education on campus," Smith explained.

A native of Riverdale, Ga., Smith moved to Clearwater, Fla., when she was 13. She received both her bachelor's in organizational communication and her master's in student personnel administration from the University of Central Florida.

Long distance tees

When Georgia Tech graduate student Suruj Dutta received an e-mail asking him to come pick up a t-shirt he had won from Auxiliary Services, there were logistical problems that needed to be ironed out first.

"It will be a bit difficult for me to pick it up since I am a distance-learning student and live in England," came the return e-mail. Thus, what started as a way to introduce students to Auxiliary Services' revamped Web site has turned into a way of welcoming distance-learning students to the Georgia Tech community.

"Our students are the same whether on campus or in another country, and we try to promote that sameness throughout our programs," said Rosalind Meyers, associate vice president of Auxiliary Services. "While distance-learning students are not concerned with all our issues like on-campus housing and dining, they are interested in what's going on in our Tech community."

A web-based contest, students win t-shirts when they visit the Auxiliary Services web page. Another distance-learning student who lives in Texas will be receiving a t-shirt by mail.

Petit, cont'd from page 1

building. It is a symbol of new growth, and stands as an eloquent testimony to the vital role that Pete Petit has played in promoting Tech's research in these emerging fields. His concern, his generosity, and his vision have made a sustained and dramatic contribution to bioengineering and bioscience research at Tech, and we thank him for his continuous and generous support of this institution."

The Petit Building is a \$30 million, 150,000 square-foot facility configured to facilitate interdisciplinary research programs of faculty and their research groups, including both graduate and undergraduate students. Combined, more than 500 students, staff and faculty are housed in the interdisciplinary building, engaged in bio-related research.



Petit's gift follows an earlier donation he made of \$5 million in 1996 to endow the Institute for Bioengineering and Bioscience, and a gift of \$1 million made in 1985 to fund the Distinguished Chair in Engineering in Medicine, currently held by Professor Robert Nerem.

"The vision and leadership

exhibited by Pete Petit's generous gifts have taken the dreams of Georgia Tech's faculty in bioengineering and bioscience to a new level," Nerem said. "He has been a driving force behind the development of bio-related research at Tech and the naming of the building is a worthy tribute to his contributions."

In March of 2002, U.S. News and World Report ranked Tech's bioengineering program among the best graduate programs in the country.

"I believe that the research conducted by the faculty in the bioengineering and bioscience complex will improve our quality of life and act as a catalyst for economic development in our state and region in the years ahead," Petit said. "I am very fortunate to be able to assist with and play a role in the development of this complex for the bioengineering and bioscience activities at Georgia Tech."