Continuing Education reorganizes, with focus on global partnerships

Michael Hagerty
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

Before anyone had heard of Technology Square, a committee formed and chaired by Joe DiGregorio, the vice provost for Distance Learning, Continuing Education and Outreach, issued a report outlining its recommendations for a state-of-the-art conference center dedicated to the enhancement of Georgia Tech's reputation as a leader in distance learning and professional education.

This vision was eventually incorporated into the plans for the $175 million development currently under way at the intersection of Fifth and Spring Streets. Expected to be complete by summer 2003, the Global Learning Center (GLC) will be a key element of Technology Square and a highly visible sign of Tech's growing leadership role in education, government and business.

"Since my arrival at Tech six years ago, I've had a vision for Tech to be the focal point for a group of international partnerships in the areas of continuing education and professional development," he said. "So with less than one year until the opening of the GLC, DiGregorio is assuming a new job with a new title — director of Professional Education, International Partnerships — that will allow him to build on his success in growing the Institute's Department of Distance Learning, Continuing Education and Outreach, and to transition into his retirement from Tech, which he announced would be effective June 1, 2003.

In this new role, DiGregorio will be working to build what he calls "a network of learning centers" with peer academic institutions around the globe. Working from a select list of universities in 14 countries, his primary responsibility during the next nine months is an extremely impressive achievement. And it's nice to see our Co-Op Program finally receive the national recognition it deserves."}

Magazine rankings keep Tech in the top 10

#9 public university in the nation; three engineering programs in top five

Bob Hart
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

For the sixth time in the last eight years, Georgia Tech was ranked by U.S. News & World Report as one of the top 10 public universities in the nation. Tech was ranked ninth among the nation's top public universities, moving up one slot from last year. Overall, Georgia Tech was ranked 38th among the nation's top universities, up three spots from last year.

Georgia Tech's nationally prominent College of Engineering was again ranked sixth in the country, and three programs within the College were ranked in the top five. Most prominent among those programs was the School of Industrial and Systems Engineering, again ranked number one; the School of Aerospace Engineering, again ranked second; the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering, moved up one to third, and the School of Mechanical Engineering, again ranked fourth nationally. (Editorial note: At press time, only the top five rankings for each program area were available.

More complete data will be reported in next week's issue.)

The Department of Management continued in the competitive business school rankings. Tech's Co-Op Program, the largest optional co-op program in the country, was ranked third nationally.

"As I say every year, you shouldn't place too much emphasis on these or any other rankings," said President Wayne Clough. "But I do think that trend lines mean something, and I'm very pleased with our trend lines. We're consistently ranked among the nation's elite public universities. Our College of Engineering and its programs continue their national prominence, and our College of Management continues to make incremental progress in the highly competitive business school rankings. I'm particularly pleased that our School of Industrial and Systems Engineering maintained its top ranking nationally. To consistently do that at both the undergraduate and graduate levels is an extremely impressive achievement. And it's nice to see our Co-Op Program finally receive the national recognition it deserves."

Georgia Tech scored particularly well in SAT scores of incoming students (1250-1420), peer review (4.0 out of 5.0), percentage of full-time faculty on staff (90 percent), and faculty salaries.

Rankings continued, page 2
Student sculptures to be part of architect retrospective

Sean Schman
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

The prestigious Whitney Museum of American Art this fall will exhibit two large-scale architectural sculptures originally constructed and displayed by students from Georgia Tech. The sculptures, "House of the Suicide" and "House of the Mother of the Suicide," were the result of student collaboration with acclaimed architect and designer John Hejduk in the late 1980s. They will be reconstructed in the Whitney's outdoor Sculpture Court as part of a retrospective exhibition, "Sanctuaries: The Last Works of John Hejduk," beginning Sept. 15 and running through Jan. 5, 2003.

The curator for the exhibition is K. Michael Hays, a graduate of Tech's College of Architecture and current professor of architecture at the Harvard University. Hays recently became the first adjunct curator of architecture at the Whitney Museum, and the Hejduk retrospective will be his first show.

During the last 20 years of his life, John Hejduk made successive attempts to sell his architecture away from the more mathematical concerns of his earlier work—which earned much to Men van der Rohe and Piet Mondrian—toward an "elusive, 'carnivalesque' mode that he called architectural mannequins," Hays said. "They present a reduction of form and an intensity of emotion beyond which architecture cannot go."

During the last 15 years of his life, some of Hejduk's architectural works moved from paper and models to built reality. "Many of these projects came about when students, teachers and others fascinated by Hejduk's work came together to build," the exhibition's curator said.

Beginning in 1986, a group of Tech students began collaborating with Hejduk on the construction of "House of the Suicide" and "House of the Mother of the Suicide." The process took four years and resulted in the two pieces that measure 20 feet high.

The first construction, "House of the Suicide," was inspired by the story of Jan Palač, a college student who died in Prague after setting himself on fire in January 1969 to protest the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia. Later, a friend of Hejduk wrote a poem about the event and its aftermath, which provided a new context for Hejduk to design "House of the Mother of the Suicide." Once completed, the two structures occupied the main lobby of the College of Architecture. They later were disassembled and put into storage in Atlanta. However, in July, the Institute communications officials completed a loan agreement with the Whitney Museum to include the pieces in its upcoming Hejduk retrospective. The Whitney exhibition includes selections from the John Hejduk Center of Architecture in Montreal and The Manil Collection in Houston. Among them are around 110 small works on paper and four architectural models, in addition to the two large-scale architectural sculptures from Georgia Tech. A book, with an essay by Hays and a foreword by architect Toshiko Mori, will accompany the exhibition.

Tech chosen by EPA to improve local environmental management

Nancy Fulbright
Economic Development Institute

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has named Georgia Tech's Center for International Standards & Quality (CISQ) one of eight Local Resource Centers for Environmental Management Systems (EMS). CISQ, which is part of the Economic Development Institute (EDI), will help local agencies adopt environmental management systems to improve their overall environmental performance and meet environmental goals.

The Georgia Tech center was chosen from among approximately 50 applicants for eight available slots. "We are very pleased to select Georgia Tech as one of the eight EMS Local Resource Centers," says Jim Horne, a project manager with EPA's Office of Wastewater Management. "Their experience was evident from their application, and we're confident they will be able to meet the growing EMS needs of public agencies, especially local governments." Environmental management systems help public entities—particularly local governments—improve environmental performance beyond compliance, prevent pollution, promote greater environmental stewardship across the workforce and improve overall efficiency. These public institutions often face the same environmental challenges of private sector organizations; however, they tend to lack a systematic approach to managing their environmental aspects.

Environmental management systems provide organizations with a structure for managing their environmental programs. An EMS often is the foundation for organizations to build viable, effective environmental policies, and to address environmental issues. The Local Resource Centers will provide the training and coaching to the public entities so they can emulate the best environmental practices of the private sector, according to the EPA.

Rich Duke, director of Georgia Tech's Economic Development Institute, says EPA's designation will help EDI better serve its clients—and represents a great honor. "With 12 years of hands-on experience in helping organizations implement management systems, EDI is prepared to help public entities improve their environmental performance," he says.

Rankings, cont'd from page 1

alumni giving rate (56 percent), areas of improvement include faculty resources (96%), graduation and retention rates (92%), and acceptance rate (54 percent).

I'm particularly proud of what Nancy Fullbright
Economic Development Institute

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AWPL research project focuses on universal design

Michael Happraty
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

Earlier this year, Georgia Tech’s Advanced Wood Products Laboratory (AWPL) completed its first research project, the Autumn Chair, utilizing the technology available at the lab and developed through research performed at Tech’s Center for Assistive Technology and Environmental Access (CATEA) with the cooperation of Director Joseph Roncille. The two labs are housed in the College of Architecture.

"The motivation for this project came from a need to demonstrate the capability of advanced wood processing machinery and also to create a product that exemplified the mission of the Center," said Roncille. "The Autumn Chair is a clear demonstration of product development drawn from the relationship between aging and disability."

Originally designed in 1997 for the ambulatory elderly, the chair incorporates many features to accommodate this population, but is also a success in universal design. "Universal design is defined as the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design," says Alan Harp, an industrial designer for AWPL. "By designing for comfort and ease of ingress and egress for the elderly, the chair has been found to be extremely comfortable to the average population."

Last fall, Harp completed a prototype of the chair, which was the subject of his master’s thesis in the Industrial Design program. In the early stages of the test run, visitors touring AWPL requested a rocking chair, an idea quickly adapted through computer-aided design (CAD). "The creation of the rocking chair is a good example of the advantage of designing in CAD," he said, having adapted his drawings for the new design and prototype in a single day.

In anticipation of future marketing and manufacturing possibilities, the Autumn Chair design was filed with Office of Technology Licensing and given a record of invention, allowing AWPL to investigate the potential for mass production of the chair and recliner.

For more information, Advanced Wood Products Lab
www.ww whistle.gatech.edu/AWPL