gtID# offers faculty and staff uniformity, security

David Terraso
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

If you’re the kind of person who cringes every time you’re forced to use your social security number in public, take heart. As of March 1, Georgia Tech will no longer use employees’ or students’ social security number as their primary identification. Instead, Tech will create the gtID#, a unique number that will be used to identify employees and students in most major campus databases. The new gtID# will help users keep their social security number more secure by reducing the number of places it is stored and accessed.

When the U.S. government first issued social security numbers in 1936, the numbers were meant to keep track of people enrolled in the national retirement program, not as a national identification number. But through the years, as various government agencies, businesses and universities began to use it to identify their members and customers, that’s just what it has become. As the number becomes ubiquitous, identity theft becomes an outgrowth of the nightmare, an outgrowth of the city’s unchecked sprawl.

But a group of leading urban designers from throughout the country told students and faculty in Georgia Tech’s College of Architecture that a close examination of the region’s present and future design practices led by a new generation of landscape architects, engineers, city officials and others might address many of the city’s most extreme problems.

To inaugurate its post-professional Master of Science degree in Urban Design, the Georgia Tech Architecture Program hosted a symposium, “Urban Design Practices: Landscape, Architecture and Urbanism,” earlier this month.

Through a series of presentations and roundtable discussions, some of the nation’s top architects and designers discussed the future of cities and the future of design education at Georgia Tech.

“We’ve invited these speakers because they’re doing exactly the kind of urban design that we aspire to and hope that our students will aspire to,” said Associate Professor Ellen Dunham-Jones, director of the Architecture Program. “These speakers are practitioners who are actively engaged in making a difference. They give us hope that we can change, and we can all make a difference in our own careers.”

The forum allowed attendees to discuss topics such as “Remaking Cities: Architecture and Landscape,” “Urban Neighborhoods: Public and Private,” “Urban Infrastructure: Physical and Political,” and “Projects, Policy and Places: Urban Design in Atlanta.”

During a short presentation of several projects throughout the world, landscape architect and urban designer Mark Johnson discussed some of the disciplines of architecture, landscape architecture, city planning, civil engineering, real-estate development and public policy combine and interact to drive change in communities and help residents shape the environments in which they live.

“Good urban design is about other people, not us [the designers],” Johnson told a rapt audience of students, alumni and faculty. Also in attendance were dozens of regional design professionals, policymakers, developers and educators deeply engaged in shaping the future of Atlanta.

“(Urban designers) are all generalists,” Johnson said. “It takes a generalist view to see what it is about a specialty such as law or engineering that will drive change.”

Several of the speakers urged students and faculty to get excited about Tech’s master’s degree in urban design because it promises to be a key element in producing new designers who can drive change in Atlanta.
New discoveries and technologies are discovered in labs all the time, but most never develop a real-world application. To combat this trend, a new graduate program brings doctoral students in science and engineering together with Georgia Tech M.B.A. students and Emory University law students to participate in a curriculum on the technical, legal, and business issues involved with moving research to the marketplace. Central to the program — Technological Innovation: Generating Economic Results (TI:GER) — are team projects in which students consider potential market applications of the Ph.D. students’ research. "TI:GER is the only program that brings together law, economics, management, and science and engineering graduate students in a research environment to consider social and economic consequences of research," said program creator Marie Thursby, a professor of strategic management and the Hal and John Smith Chair in Entrepreneurship in the DuPree College of Management. Another unique feature of the program is that economic, regulatory, and legal mechanisms are considered before the research is conducted, so that students are able to take the potential impact on society into account in determining the direction of their research. "TI:GER is funded by a prestigious $2.9 million National Science Foundation Integrative Graduate Education in Research Training (NSF-IGERT) grant, designed to provide all of the students with the skills and multidisciplinary perspective needed to succeed in innovation-related careers, as well as promote engineering thesis research with both technical merit and market relevance. TI:GER is one of 21 such awards that NSF is making in 2003. Thursby, who joined the faculty last fall, has designed and directed three major multidisciplinary programs for research and curriculum development while at Purdue University. TI:GER cuts a wide swath, involving faculty from the College of Management, the joint Department of Biomedical Engineering, the Center for Engineering of Living Tissues, Manufacturing Research Center, Microelectronics Research Center, Microelectromechanical Systems, and the Packaging Research Center, as well as the Emory Law School and Economics Department." "In order for patent examiners and patent lawyers to make good decisions, it has become increasingly more important for them to understand the technical and business issues," said George Shepherd, a professor at Emory Law School and the co-principal investigator. "TI:GER exposes the Emory law students to a high-tech lab environment for resolving typical start-up legal issues and an opportunity to see what an R&D environment is like. "TI:GER is an innovative program designed to pair technologically savvy engineers and scientists with bright business and law students so that all three groups will be better equipped to deal with the challenges of commercializing technology," said President Wayne Clough. "The technology transfer process is complex and takes the knowledge and skill sets of technologists, and business and legal experts to be successful." Currently, 24 graduate students working in four teams are enrolled in TI:GER. All the students take a series of core courses together including Innovation Fundamentals, and also complete other complementary courses depending on their degree program. Doctoral students come from mechanical engineering, biomedical engineering, electrical and computer engineering, industrial engineering and chemistry. 

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"One of the things that makes using the social security number as an ID so attractive for institutions is that almost every U.S. citizen has one," said Lori Sundal, director of the Office of Information Technology’s Enterprise Information Systems and head of the gID# project. "But that advantage turns into a weakness when you have an institution like Georgia Tech that hosts so many international students, who may not have social security numbers."

As a result, students and employees often had different identifiers for each campus database in which they were listed, making it hard for the systems to talk to each other. Problems arose when one system was unable to recognize a person — because he or she was identified in multiple ways depending on the database. Parking gates would deny entry to legitimate patrons because they couldn’t recognize that the person trying to get into the lot with the BuzzCard matched a person on the parking roster.

Two years ago, before the Board of Regents took up the issue, we started looking at how we could give each employee and student a single number, and we soon realized that by not using social security numbers, we could solve our database problem and address these serious privacy concerns in one step," added Sundal. Because of its foresight, Tech is scheduled to be the first University System of Georgia school to stop using social security numbers as the primary means of identifying students and employees. But that doesn’t mean Tech will stop collecting social security numbers altogether. Certain services, such as payroll and student financial aid, still require the numbers, but limiting their use will allow these numbers to be more secure and reduce opportunities for identity thieves.

Once the new system is in place, employees and students will be able to look up their new gID# at www.gtid.gatech.edu. Faculty, staff and students who join Tech after March 1 will get a new BuzzCard with the gID# printed and encoded on it. Existing BuzzCard holders do not need to get a new BuzzCard, but they can request a new one at no charge.

The gID# project required the collaboration of OIT, Enrollment Services, the Office of Human Resources, the Georgia Tech Research Institute and Auxiliary Services," Sundal said. This project has been an example of how departments across campus can work together to achieve a common goal. 

Ti:GER students earning stripes in technology transfer

$2 million NSF grant fosters cross-campus collaboration

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**GTRI antenna expert and engineering mentor dies**

Lea McLees
Georgia Tech Research Institute

Richard C. Johnson, a Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI) retiree, world-renowned antenna expert and exceptional mentor to young engineers, died last month after a long battle with Parkinson’s disease. He was 72.

Johnson invented and patented the Compact Antenna Range — used worldwide today — which allows installations of microwave antennas to be measured and tested accurately indoors. He also designed and improved antennas for ship surface search radars, hundreds of which have been installed aboard U.S. Navy vessels, said Jim Cofer, director of GTRI’s Business Development Office.

“Most designers of that era concentrated on the main beam region of an antenna,” Cofer said. “Dick recognized that most interference/susceptibility of a system occurred in the other 99.9 percent of the antenna’s spherical domain. Therefore, he included these considerations in his designs.

“Johnson’s widespread recognition was directly responsible for establishing the threat simulator research and development base at GTRI,” said Cofer. “Cumulative funding for this area is now well over $200 million, making it possibly the largest continuously funded research area at GTRI.”

Colleagues agree. Johnson was ahead of his time. For a fall 1999 issue of “Research Horizons,” Tech faculty were asked to rank the most important scientific innovations produced at Tech. Johnson’s compact range was one of the 14 identified.

He also believed in passing on his knowledge to younger engineers. To that end, Johnson organized Friday afternoon “Antenna Bull Sessions” in his office in the late 1960s for a select group of younger GTRI researchers, including Cofer, Neal Alexander and Don Bodnar, assigning homework projects and teaching them to solve difficult, real-world antenna problems.

“While riding the daily shuttle from our facility in Cobb County to campus in the mornings and evenings, Dick used to quiz and tutor the co-ops also riding the shuttle that were working with us on the programs.” GTRI senior research engineer Rickey Cotton recalled. “He would quiz them on the frequency limits of the radar bands and typical waveguide sizes associated with each.”

A Georgia Tech alum, Johnson taught electrical engineering at Tech and wrote several books, which Cotton continues to use in his work.

In 1988, Johnson also became the first Tech research faculty member to receive Board of Regents’ approved emeritus status.

**Course evaluations extended through exam week**

Dan Treadaway
Institute Communications and Public Affairs

During last week’s joint meeting of the Academic Senate and General Faculty, the Senate passed a resolution advocated by the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning that expands the time frame for student to complete online course evaluations.

Currently, students can complete evaluations between 6 a.m. and midnight through the last of classes. Under the new resolution, students will be able to complete evaluations 24 hours per day through the end of final exams.

Some faculty expressed concern over the change due to the possibility that students would be completing evaluations during the very stressful final exam week and therefore might not be as objective as they would be prior to exams. President Wayne Clough recommended going forward with the resolution as written, with the understanding that modifications can be made later if such problems develop.

The Senate also adopted a number of recommendations from the Undergraduate and Graduate Curriculum Committees, including the addition of a dual degree with Georgia State University and the College of Architecture in law and city planning.

**SAC, cont’d from page 1**
down, but demolition crews found asbestos in the walls as they were tearing down the old Auxiliary Gym to make room for the new Stamps Health Services Building. They soon discovered that the asbestos was also in SAC, requiring the site to be closed down while workers remove it.

“Unfortunately, construction timelines don’t always go according to plan,” said Butch Stanphill, director of Recreational Sports. “But we’re working to make sure that our members experience as little inconvenience as possible.

We’ve arranged for members to have access to some top notch facilities at GUS and we’re providing a shuttle van to get people there.”

GUS’s two-year-old recreation center sports an eight-lane lap pool; spa; dry sauna; weight, exercise, and racquetball courts, a squash court and volleyball. The center also has a game room featuring an arcade along with billiards, air hockey and foosball tables.

In addition to the GUS facilities, the O’Keefe Gym, Tennis Center locker rooms, climbing wall and wilderness outpost will be available all summer, while the Freshman Gym, the Wardlaw Weight Room, intramurals and fitness classes will be available on a more limited basis. Camp Week-ASC and sports clubs will not be offered during the summer session.

**Campus recreation**

Intramurals

The following sports are offered May 5 - August 1: softball, 3-on-3 hoops and volleyball.

Registration is online. Refer to the Web site www.campusrecreation.gatech.edu for the temporary location for registration and payment.

Fitness and Options

Limited classes will be scheduled during the interim period. Starting April 9, information will be available at www.campusrecreation.gatech.edu/options.php, listing a specific schedule of classes, costs and locations. Call 894-3987 with questions.

For all other news related to SAC, refer to www.campusrecreation.gatech.edu

The lot adjacent to Alexander Memorial Coliseum will be open for patrons with valid parking permits to use while they’re working out. The shuttle van will make pick-ups at the Coliseum lot and outside the Student Center.

While SAC is closed, the membership office will relocate to the new health services building.

Construction on the new Campus Recreation Center began in December 2001 and is scheduled to be completed in two phases. When phase I opens in August, the center will boast an enclosed aquatic center, new weight and cardio rooms, three aerobics/martial arts rooms, six multi-use basketball courts with a four-lane jogging track suspended above and a game room. Phase II is scheduled to open in the fall of 2004.

Brochures detailing the changes and new facilities will be available at SAC in the coming weeks.
**AUTOMOBILES**

- 1999 Nissan Quest GXE. 36K miles, a/c, AM/FM/cassette, T1/YCR, excellent condition. Call 894-9521 or e-mail zeguhl@uist.edu.

- 2000 Chevy Blazer LT White. 4-door, with tan leather interior. Excellent condition, sun roof, CD/cassette, climate control a/c, power seats, windows and doors locks. 34K miles, $14,500. Call 404-310-4173.


**FURNITURE**

- 1999 Bryant 214, 22 feet, 305 V8, V-drive, everything you need to hit the water. Call Steve at 770-579-5565.

**REAL ESTATE/ROOMMATES**

- 1993 Cadillac Sedan de Ville. White, new Michelin tires. 180K, buy, miles, perfect condition, runs/rides like a dream. $5,000. E-mail rcmrn537@bellsouth.net or call 894-6701.

- 1999 Mazda B2500, 5-speed manual, new clutch, new fly wheel, tinted windows, good condition. $1,700 OBO. Call 404-610-3688 or jill.mixon@sucsouth.net or call 894-4283.

- 1994 Mazda MPV V6, auto, power windows, a/c, cruise, cassette, 2 new tires, 7 passengers, 157K miles, $2,500. E-mail vh127@miami.ohstate.edu.

- 1995 Mercury Sable LS. White, blue interior, 4-door, 3.8L, 160K miles, power windows. Regular maintenance with all paperwork. Good condition. $3,900 OBO. Call 770-436-4159.

- 1996 Dodge Avenger. Olive, 5-speed, 88K miles, 1 owner. Prem. sound, alloy wheels, new tires, $2,900. E-mail trisha.stink@dev.gatech.edu.

- 1996 Infinity J50. Spotless and extremely reliable. Black, tan leather interior, auto, CD/cassette, power everything, heated seats, cruise, sunroof. New Michelin tires. All records available. 95K miles, $7,900. E-mail robsonart@attbi.com.

**Miscellaneous**

- Editor's Note: Only faculty and staff may submit classified ads via e-mail to michael.hagearty@icpa.gatech.edu.