Higher education largely spared following tough General Assembly session

Lynn Durham
Government Relations

At times during this year’s 40-day General Assembly session it seemed like déjà vu. The state’s budget was tight and getting tighter, reapportionment of legislative districts caused a break in the action, and Republicans and Democrats were getting testy with each other as they tried to figure out the new rules of the game with a Republican governor and Republican-controlled Senate.

All of that was true in 2004 but was raised to another level as the House and Senate came down to the final hour of the session to approve an unbalanced budget. Gov. Sonny Perdue has threatened to call a special session to force legislators to balance the budget. If that happens, any part of the budget could change — including funds designated for the University System of Georgia (USG).

As it stands now, the University System and Georgia Tech fared very well in a tough budget year. Legislators responded to the message by USG Chancellor Thomas Meredith that Georgia’s higher education system could suffer irreparable damage to its quality and reputation if large-scale cuts continued.

Despite the mandated cuts, the University System and Georgia Tech had several enhancements and highlights. The Legislature appropriated $116 million in additional resident instruction funding, $55 million Major Repair and Rehabilitation (MRR) funding to maintain the system’s aging infrastructure, and $18.8 million for faculty and staff salary increases that will take effect January 1, 2005.

Georgia Tech also received good news in the last days of the session. Legislators appropriated an additional $1 million for the Georgia Tech Savannah Campus (formerly called GTRE) to help the program keep pace with its growth, and $2 million for pre-planning and design of a nano-technology research center. Legislators also reimbursed $122,789 for GTRI and $75,000 for Tech’s Agricultural Technology Research Program that had previously been cut. In a memo to the Board of Regents and college and university presidents after the budget was passed, Chancellor Meredith said, “We are ... grateful and appreciate the governor and the General Assembly for their strong support of the University System of Georgia.”

While the budget bills are the most crucial to the University System, other issues were also watched closely. Proposed changes to the HOPE Scholarship received a lot of attention as Republicans and Democrats struggled over eliminating payments for books and student fees.

Gov. Perdue had already taken out $125 million in book and fee payments from his budget recommendations, but Democratic leaders balked at students having to pay as much as $1,000 out of their own pockets. The final version of the bill gradually decreases the amount awarded for books and fees each year if lottery revenues decline for three consecutive years. It also changes the grade requirement from a “D” average to a 3.0 average and mandates that grades be checked after the spring semester — as well as at 30, 60 and 90 hours — to ensure eligibility.

Shelley Nickel, executive director of the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC), said, “I am confident that the governor, the legislature, and the new oversight committee will take whatever action is necessary to preserve the fiscal integrity of the program. HOPE will continue to reward academic excellence and make a college education more affordable for future generations of Georgia students.”

One teacher retirement bill was approved and is awaiting the governor’s signature. It allows retired teachers, administrators, librarians and counselors to return to work without affecting their retirement benefits. However, the retirement system will still consider the employee as retired and no additional creditable service can be accrued.

Legislation requiring teachers to use the same textbook for six consecutive semesters, capping textbook prices at 15 percent above the wholesale price, and requiring textbook publishers to provide an electronic format of the textbook did not receive the action required for passage.
ATDC launches center, sharing expertise with entrepreneurs

John Toon
Research News

To share resources and expertise with an audience beyond its own member companies, the Advanced Technology Development Center (ATDC) has launched an Entrepreneurs Resource Center (ERC) that includes both a broad range of resources available online and a new library facility at its Fifth Street headquarters.

The information available online includes carefully selected resources on starting up and building a company, researching the market, developing a technology product, generating sales, financing and raising money, marketing, hiring the right people and handling legal issues. Also included are summary descriptions and links to local educational and networking organizations and to selected industry journals and other publications.

In the ERC library, entrepreneurs can read the latest business publications, use journals and directories, and access computer terminals for doing online research. The ERC facility also includes offices available for meetings on a first-come, first-served basis.

“The Entrepreneurs Resource Center is designed to help entrepreneurs evaluate opportunities, create business plans, launch businesses and get their companies off to a good start,” said Wayne Hodges, vice provost for Economic Development and Technology Ventures at Georgia Tech and director of the ATDC. “It includes the best of what ATDC has learned in more than 20 years of serving technology entrepreneurs.”

Much of the ERC’s content — including a dozen ATDC start-up best practices — was written by the ATDC staff, making available the experience and expertise developed in working with hundreds of start-up companies. Also available is a video library of presentations made by local experts at ATDC’s “Lunch and Learn” lecture series.

By gathering these resources together in one place and making them widely available to entrepreneurs, ATDC expects to serve a broader statewide audience beyond those that are part of its programs in Atlanta, Columbus, Savannah and Warner Robins. Though many of the materials are relevant for the general start-up experience, the ERC is primarily oriented toward entrepreneurs starting and building technology companies.

The Entrepreneurs Resource Center was made possible through support from a group of Atlanta’s top service providers, which include Norris, Manning & Martin; PricewaterhouseCoopers, and Silicon Valley Bank. In addition, e-broadcasters donated services to develop the ERC’s on-demand video library.

Susan O’Dwyer, technology marketing manager for PricewaterhouseCoopers, said the new Web site provides a unique collection of quality resources to Georgia’s technology community.

“For the past 20 years, the technology community has looked to the ATDC for expertise on starting up technology companies,” she said. “This new resource will make that expertise more widely available.”

For more information...

Entrepreneurs Resource Center
www.atdc.org/erc

2005 U.S. News and World Report final graduate rankings*

College of Management
Overall rank: 42nd
Specialties:
Finance: 55th
Information Systems: 29th
International: 45th
Entrepreneurship: 40th
Executive MBA: 51st
Marketing: 44th
Production/Operations: 14th
Supply Chain/Logistics: 42nd
Part-time MBA: 41st

College of Engineering
Overall rank: 5th
Specialties:
Aerospace: 4th
Biomedical/Bioengineering: 2nd
Chemical: 13th
Civil: 5th
Electrical: 7th
Environmental: 8th
Industrial: 1st
Materials: 10th
Mechanical: 7th

Ivan Allen College
Specialties:
Information and Technology Management (School of Public Policy): 8th

*Sciences, architecture and computing were not ranked in this year’s issue.
Coastal Advanced Technology

been named director of the University Medical Center, has Savannah's Memorial Health

point at which the ark would floating. Solis calculated a total

resulted in having the water line ark was 13,000 tons, which

be on the ark. The total

load of both the dead and live weight was estimated to be 9,000 tons.

Solis then calculated the maximum and minimum amounts of water needed on the ark, designing a drainage system that used rainwater to fill up troughs and tanks scat
ttered throughout the ark. His research concluded the total weight of the water, in addition to the containers, was 4,000 tons.

The total displacement of the ark was 13,000 tons, which resulted in having the water line at 12 feet and thus capable of floating. Solis calculated a total displacement of 18,088 tons as the maximum worst case scen-
ario and concluded that the point at which the ark would float would be 15.3 feet, 2.7 feet below his calculated sink or float mark of 18 feet.

After verifying that the ark would indeed float, Solis set out to design and estimate the amount of materials needed to construct the ark. His design placed the ark at 99,150 square feet. Solis went to a local hard

ware store and figured the cost of today's wood and equivalent items needed to build the ark. His estimate for the total cost of the ark in today's dollar was $165 per square foot, or $16,472,040.

Soils then spent thirty-five straight hours constructing a model that represented his find-

ings. Once the model was done, the appearance differed from those drawings seen in books. "I was interested in how he didn't

take into consideration what people thought the ark looked like," said Thomas-Mobley. "He took his background and designed an ark that would work, not something you would see out of a children's book." Solis' rendition of Noah's ark looked more like a barge than the typical vision most people

have of the ark. According to Solis, it could not have been done any other way with the technologies and materials available during that era.

"It was beautiful to see the finished product," Solis said. "I have done what no one else has done. I have done this throughout this process that there is no other way the ark could have been constructed without it sinking." Based on Solis' findings, Noah would probably agree.

Director of the Coastal ATDC named

Katherine DeYoung, formerly director of clinical research at Savannah's Memorial Health University Medical Center, has been named director of the Coastal Advanced Technology Development Center (ATDC). DeYoung, a Savannah native who holds a doctorate in genet-

ics from Georgia Tech, will manage ATDC's business incubator program and support technolo-
gy business development activi-
ties in the coastal area. She will work closely with Georgia Tech, Savannah (GTS), the Georgia Tech Economic Development Institute (EDII), the new Savannah Maritime Logistics Innovation Center, and other local and regional economic development organizations.

"Katherine's background in the life sciences, her business experience and her knowledge of coastal Georgia will allow her to work with area organizations to expand the community of technology companies and support the entrepreneurs who are developing new ventures in the coastal area," said Wayne Hodges, Georgia Tech's vice-

provost for Economic Development and Technology Ventures and director of ATDC.

Before returning to Savannah in 2000, DeYoung was associate program director in Georgia Tech's School of Biology, where she taught courses in molecular biology and DNA technology and was named "Professor of the Year" in 2000. In the School of Biology, she also led education-
al outreach activities that includ-
ed summer research intern-

ships, a research fellowship for teachers and a summer biology course for high school students.

"Katherine's experience as a researcher and faculty member at a leading research university positions her to be able to critically evaluate the potential of prospective ATDC member

companies," said David Frost, director and professor at Georgia Tech Savannah. "I am excited that Katherine will be guiding this strategic component of the economic future of Coastal Georgia since her understanding of Savannah's quality of life allows her to sin-
cerely relay that advantage to companies."

IN BRIEF:

HR information shifts to the Web

The upgrade of the Human Resources Management System to PeopleSoft 8.8 is sched-
uled to be complete by April 30. A significant aspect of the upgrade is that it represents the beginning of the transition to a Web-enabled architecture for Tech's business systems.

Migrating the data to the new software will require an outage of the HR system and other related applications and databases. As a result, processing activities and dates for some cam-

pus administrative functions have been adjust-
ed or suspended, with the majority of changes occurring from April 21 through April 29. Some of the most significant changes are:

• Access to HRPS 7.5 will be restricted to cer-
tain employees and departments beginning April 21 and completely shut down April 23 through 29.

• There will be no updates to the Data Warehouse from April 23 through 29; queries and reports from the Warehouse will be current through April 22; and

• Salary, Planning, and Distribution (SPD) will function normally through April 20. There will be a shortened cycle for processing distribu-
tions; SPD will be unavailable April 23 through May 2.

Complete information about the upgrade, including specific details on these outages and their effect on campus administrative functions, is maintained on the System 2000 Upgrade Information Web site, www.trainsweb.gatech.edu/HR/Upgrade%20Info%20Center.htm. If you have any questions about the upgrade, e-mail kara.tillman@success.gatech.edu.

Drama Camp at Georgia Tech

The Fertl Center for the Arts Drama Camp is a four-week summertime experience that intro-
duces campers to the wonder and detail of theater performance. Campers can participate in workshops on acting, directing, playwriting, technical, musical theater, and comedy improvis-
ation. In addition, campers are treated to spe-
cial workshops such as accent work, clowning, puppetry and fight choreography, as well as field trips and weekly recreational activities. The camp ends with a big show completely pro-
duced by the campers and open to all parents and friends. A special discount is offered to all Tech employees. For more information, visit www.ferstcenter.org.

GT Earth Day this week

This year is the 7th annual Earth Day Celebration at Georgia Tech. The event takes place on Friday, April 23, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. at the Student Center Plaza/Skiles Walkway. The festival will feature live music and poetry, as well as demonstrations of alternative fuel vehicles, information booths featuring local environmental groups as well as on-campus groups.

Now this year will be a booth for the collec-
tion of old cellular phones. There have been a number of newspaper articles about the glut of such devices and how they are leading to a new waste stream of electronic waste. The festival will also have a booth for the collec-
tion of old computers and recyclable electronics.

More information can be found online at www.earthday.gatech.edu.
Appliances
Roper large capacity electric dryer, beige color, new heating element, excellent condition, ask $150. Call 404-379-9750 or e-mail juststrong@excite.com.

Automobiles
1995 Accord LX. Great shape, many new things, 5-speed, 188K miles. $3,900. Email bill.halabi@facilities.gatech.edu.
1997 Geo Prizm. Automatic, beige leather interior, dual front air bags, CD player, 4-cylinder, 83K miles, leather interior, dual front air bags, CD player, 4-cylinder, 83K miles, $2,600. Email marie.mcvay@icpa.gatech.edu.

Furniture
Teen bedroom set, white/yellow, queen-size headboard/footboard, matching chair, vanity with mirror, matching chair and hutch. $300. Call 770-825-0087 or e-mail kemp6753@aol.com.
Steel daybed. Black and sturdy with mattress, like new. $150. Call 770-469-8220.

Real Estate/Roommates
House for Sale/Vinings: approx. 5,500 sq. ft. finished living space. $289,000. See: http://homescessna.com, use ID# 802681.
For rent: 1BR apartment at 1219 Francis St. Downstairs of charming, light-filled home w/deep lot on quiet street. W/D. ample closets. $900. Call 404-816-8570.


3BR/2.5BA home for sale in Conyers. 2-story, LR, DR, den, fenced, great schools. $126,900. Do MLS Home Search for ID # 1455486 at www.rae.sellatlanta.com or call Maria at 678-207-7316.
1BR/1BA Midtown condo shows like a model. Hardwoods, building with the pool and parking. The largest of the one-bedroom units with two storage units. All appliances. PMLS # 901284. E-mail paul.michel@gtri.gatech.edu.
Bedroom for rent on Panola Road, one minute from I20. Private bath, use of kitchen, $400/month. Call 770-555-2527.
3BR/2BA brick ranch in Douglassville on corner lot, one street from S20. Huge back yard. Two-car garage with remote openers, all appliances, fireplace, very spacious. Available mid-April. $1,200/month. Call 404-931-5001 or e-mail jamiegruder@aol.com.
2BR/1BA Buckhead townhome for sale. Huge master w/2 closets, hardwoods, new bathroom, roommate floorplan, loads of upgrades! End unit on wooded lot. Six miles from campus. $155,900. Call 404-0766.

Miscellaneous
1977 Kawasaki KE100 motorcycle. Only 953 miles, trail and street legal bike. It has high fender flaps but also lights, blinkers, etc. $400. Call 404-718-5 or e-mail alisd66@earthlink.net.
Five stone diamond ring. 1 carat total, 14kt. yellow gold. $500. Call 894-0870 or e-mail marie.mcvey@tcpa.gatech.edu.
Free black and gray lab/terrier mix, five years old, spayed, very sweet. E-mail xaanadu@hotmail.com or call 678-612-1198.
Spa bathtub, 5 ft. x 5 ft. corner unit, white, with fixtures. 60x32 interior dimensions. $2000. E-mail allisson@cc.gatech.edu or call 385-0595.