Open enrollment begins for 2009

Robert Nesmith
Communications & Marketing

Tech faculty and staff members have access to a comprehensive package of benefits designed to meet various personal needs and goals.

Beginning Oct. 6, Open Enrollment allows employees to review their current benefit elections, assess current needs and make decisions regarding benefits, accordingly. Due to the number of changes—many positive—Tech employees will want to pay close attention during the Open Enrollment period this year.

During annual Open Enrollment, Institute employees can access their benefit plans via TechWorks to learn more about the options, and either confirm the benefits package they currently have or make changes to their health, dental and life insurance plans, as well as Flexible Spending Accounts. A brochure regarding benefit offerings and changes has been mailed to each faculty and staff member’s home address. Some changes for 2009 include:

- A significant increase in the employee premium for the Board of Regents (BOR) Indemnity Plan. Effective January 2009, premiums will increase by 99 percent due to a change in the pricing philosophy by the Board. However, changes to the PPO and the HSA PPO (formerly the High-Deductible Health Plan, or HDHP) will make these two plans a more attractive option to consider for those currently in the Indemnity Plan.

- The BOR PPO network plan will change to the BlueCross BlueShield National PPO network and will have a 7.5 percent premium increase for 2009. Unlike previous years’ plans, international coverage will now be provided at

Benefits continued, page 3

Buzzin’ around

The 25 multi-hued Buzzes around campus commemorate the Alumni Association’s centennial celebration. With “Buzz Around Town,” individuals and organizations purchased and decorated Fiberglas statues of Buzz, which will be auctioned after the end of the semester. For more information, visit www.gtaumni.org.

Butera named Jefferson Science Fellow for 2008

Robert Nesmith
Communications & Marketing

The U.S. Department of State has selected Electrical and Computer Engineering Professor Robert Butera as one of seven Jefferson Science Fellows for 2008-2009. Butera will work full-time on a project with the State Department or the U.S Agency for International Development (USAID) for the next year in Washington, D.C. Since the program’s inception in 2005, Butera is Georgia Tech’s first professor chosen as a Fellow.

Built on the premise that science, technology and engineering programs (STE) are integral to the foundations of modern society, the fellowship was established to foster partnerships between tenured scientists and engineers from U.S. academic institutions and offices within the State Department and USAID.

During his initial two-week visit to Washington, Butera said he and other Fellows were provided 21 two-to-three-page project descriptions. After visiting the various offices sponsoring the projects, the Fellows decided amongst themselves their project selections.

“The projects were diverse, ranging from bureaus who wanted a technical person to be involved in science outreach, partnerships and/or serve as a ‘science officer’ for an entire region, to functional bureaus that serve specific tasks, such as international ocean agreements and climate change treaties.” Butera elected to work within the Office of Chemical and Biological Weapons Threat Reduction in the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation, “which is the lead policy office within the U.S. government for foreign policy issues related to chemical and biological agents.”

A week of American Association for the Advancement of Science

Tech’s annual Charitable Campaign kicks off

Robert Nesmith
Communications & Marketing

For many faculty and staff members, Tech’s participation in the 2009 State Charitable Contributions Program will be an opportunity to reaffirm their commitment to donating. For the rest, it is a chance to give, especially when charitable organizations need it most.

Themed “A Better Tomorrow Begins Today,” the statewide campaign officially begins Oct. 6. Through TechWorks and online access, Institute faculty and staff will be able to donate seamlessly through payroll deduction.

Campaign coordinators in each department will provide assistance and information.

This year, 45 independent charitable organizations and more than 1,200 local and international organizations—managed through 42 charitable federations—will benefit from the campaign. Services provided by these groups are local, national or international in scope.

“Truly is something for everyone.” said Director of Career Services Ralph Mobley, chair of this year’s campaign. “The mix of organizations is truly diverse, from county and state-specific to those national and international in scope.”

Participants can give to established and well-known organizations such as United Way, Goodwill, Habitat for Humanity and the American Red Cross. Other organizations on the list range from assistance groups (Canine Assistants, National Multiple Sclerosis Society and Operation Smile), environmental organizations (Keep Georgia Beautiful, the Conservation Fund and Trees Atlanta) and community groups (Community Improvement Alliance, Boys and Girls Clubs and Fund for Southern Communities). Participants can decide where their money goes, choosing specific charities they

Charitable continued, page 2
Center boosts tornado defenses

Rich Robinson
Research News

The tornado that ripped through downtown Atlanta on March 8, 2008, has elicited a debate, psychological shock and some $150 million in damage. Yet it was hardly an isolated event.

Georgia ranks high among tornado-plagued areas of the United States. It is one of the most affected states between 1955 and 2004. And in 2007, Georgia experienced 42 twisters; only seven states suffered more hits.

Helping to protect Georgia residents against such violent weather is the job of the researchers of the Severe Storms Research Center (SSRC) at the Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI). One of their tasks: to explore and develop new technologies that are able to improve both the accuracy and the timeliness of tornado warnings.

Currently, NEXRAD Doppler radar technology is state-of-the-art in the United States, which is ravaged by more tornadoes than anywhere else on Earth. NEXRAD offers about a 15-minute average advance warning that a tornado may hit.

“That’s a big improvement over the old days, when a funnel cloud on the horizon was often the first warning,” said John Tostroel, deputy director of the SSRC. “Before NEXRAD was established in the 1990s, we would have been lucky to have gotten a 30-second warning.”

The GTRI center was founded after a tornado struck Gainesville with no warning in March 1998, leaving 11 people dead in Hall County. In 1999, the SSRC, directed by Gene Greneker, launched Tornado, a task force formed by then-Georgia Gov. Zell Miller recommended a severe-storms center with several missions, including conducting cutting-edge research, collecting and archiving storm data and improving detection and warning. The center was initially funded through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and ongoing support came through the state of Georgia with the continuing involvement of the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA).

Butera, cont’d from page 1

workshops helped to accentuate the Fellows to the interaction of various governmental offices from a science and policy perspective. “Another topic of emphasis was contrasting the thinking and decision-making priorities between [scientists] and engineers and policymakers, and how to bridge that gap,” he said.

Butera’s work will not just provide him with more experience working on treaties and negotiations regarding the destruction and non-proliferation of weapons. His two “dual-use” projects will aid both his research and the Institute. “I chose the office and the projects because they directly relate to ongoing programs that exist at Georgia Tech,” he said.

“One (project) involves collaborating with foreign counterparts to develop educational tools and professional awareness strategies related to defining, recognizing and solving dual-use issues that may arise in the course of biological research,” Butera said. “A second project involves working with other federal agencies to develop strategies for dealing with the dual-use issues that may arise from the de novo synthesis of gene sequences.”

With his past experience as graduate program director, Butera had to deal with export control rules impacting student visas. “My experience this year is directly relevant to all of these areas,” Butera said. “While I am officially representing the Institute, in my position for the next year, I hope that my time can both provide input to these processes from an academic perspective, as well as serve as a resource to the relevant offices when I return to Tech.”

Also referring to his role as the Institute’s Office of Research Compliance as a bioengineering researcher, “I hope that my participation and my specific activities regarding dual-use and biological research can help improve our campus-wide research ethics training, as well as contribute to the ongoing activities of the Sam Nunn Security Program and the Center for International Strategy, Technology and Policy.”

Butera’s research is primarily in the fields of neuroengineering, physiological modeling and real-time instrumentation. He received his bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering from Tech in 1991, and received his master’s (1994) and doctorate (1996) from Rice University in Houston. He has been a member of the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering faculty since 1999 after conducting postdoctoral research at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Md. He also is a fellow of the American Institute of Medical and Biological Engineering and the associate editor of the Journal of Theoretical Biology. Originally funded by the Carnegie Corp. of New York and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Jefferson Science Fellows has been funded by the State Department since 2007. The program is administered by the Fellowships Office of the National Academies. Jefferson Science fellowships are awarded by panels selected from the National Academies. Nominations are limited to scientists, technologists and engineers with tenured faculty appointments at U.S. colleges or universities. Nominees and applicants were chosen based upon the abilities to articulate science and technology issues to the general public; to quickly understand and discuss work and advancements outside their discipline areas; to maintain an open mind regarding public policy discussions at the State Department or USAID; and their “stature, recognition and experience” in the scientific or engineering community both in the United States and abroad.

The nomination process for 2009 Jefferson Science Fellows is under way. Entries are due prior to Jan. 15, 2009.

Butera
Associate Professor
School of Electrical and Computer Engineering

Jefferson Science Fellows is under way. Entries are due prior to Jan. 15, 2009.
Benefits checklist

- MetLife will be the new provider for the BOR Dental Plan. Employee premiums will not increase in 2009. Participants can use any dentist, but visiting an in-network dentist will result in lower office and procedure fees. Those currently enrolled in the BOR plan will continue in the plan unless a change is made. Those who are not currently enrolled in the plan will be able to sign up for 2009 during Open Enrollment.
- Premiums on long-term and short-term disability plans will both decrease substantially in 2009.
- The new Georgia Tech 403(b) plan will begin Jan. 1, 2009, using two top-tier service providers, Fidelity and TIAA-CREF. New services as well as a strong line-up of investment options will be available. Contributions to providers other than the two chosen will stop effective Dec. 31. To enroll in either Fidelity or TIAA-CREF, contact their representatives directly.
- Benefits elections to determine what changes—if any—should be made.
- After changing or verifying benefits elections, print a confirmation statement.
- Benefits of eligible charges.
- Indemnity and PPO plans. The provider for the BOR plan will be Medco. The new pharmacy benefit provider for the HSA PPO plan (formerly the HDHP plan) for services recommended by the American Medical Association relative to age and gender. Premiums will increase by 5 percent. U.S. Bank will administer the plan’s health savings account, to which employees can contribute via pre-tax payroll deductions.
- Medco will be the new pharmacy benefit provider for the Indemnity and PPO plans. The plan’s formulary will change. Plan holders can use access code BORXFL114383 on Medco’s Web (www.medco.com/) or TIAA-CREF, contact their representatives directly.
- Flexibil

IN BRIEF:

Nerem, Clough honored by NAE

The National Academy of Engineering has recognized Institute Professor and Parker H. Petit Distinguished Chair for Engineering in Medicine Robert M. Nerem and former Georgia Tech President G. Wayne Clough for extraordinary impacts on the engineering profession. Nerem won the NAE’s Founders Award for his contributions to the field of bioengineering, and Clough won the Arthur M. Bueche Award for leadership in science, technology and engineering policy. The two were scheduled to receive their awards Sunday, Oct. 5. For more information, visit www.nationalacademies.org.

Flu shot season

Interim President Gary S. Schuster receives a flu shot from Stamps Health Services nursing supervisor Pepe Bowman. Shots will be available to faculty and staff members during the Benefits Fair in the Student Center Ballroom, Oct. 10, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and throughout Open Enrollment. Visit TechWorks for specific dates and times. For other questions and information, e-mail benefits@ohr.gatech.edu.
Campus Events

Arts & Culture

October 10
The Fert Center for the Arts presents an evening with the East Village Opera Company, starting at 8 p.m. The 1-person group performs unique arrangements of opera classics. For more information, visit www.fertcenter.gatech.edu.

October 16–18
DramaTech Theater presents an evening of improvisation with “Let's Try This!” starting at 8 p.m. each day. For more information, visit www.dramatech.org.

October 17
The Fert Center for the Arts presents Abdul Washburn and the Sparrow Quartet, featuring Bela Fleck with Casey DeSieno and Ben Sollee, starting at 8 p.m. For more information, visit www.fertcenter.gatech.edu.

October 18
The Joe Sample Trio, featuring Randy Crawford, plays the Fert Center for the Arts, starting at 8 p.m. Pianist Sample and vocalist Crawford are renowned in the jazz arena. For more information, visit www.fertcenter.gatech.edu.

Through November 14
The Robert L. Williams Paper Museum at Georgia Tech presents “Cutting Fine, Cutting Deep: Cut Paper Works from Switzerland and Atlanta,” from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, visit www.ipst.gatech.edu.

Conferences & Lectures

October 7
President and CEO of Quattré Inc. Michael Shawson presents “An Overview of Quattré, a Georgia Tech Start-up Commercializing MEMS Inertial Sensors,” from noon to 1 p.m. in room 102A of the Microelectronics Research Center. For more information, visit www.mirc.gatech.edu.

Literature, Communication and Culture Associate Professor Hugh Crawford and Assistant Professor Ron Broglio present “Dwelling Studies,” from 2 to 3:50 p.m. in the Nicely Lobby of the Library as part of the Tuesday Talks Faculty Speaker Series. For more information, visit www.library.gatech.edu.

October 8
Paul Hofmann, vice president for research at the SAF Research Center in Palo Alto, will be this week’s IMPACT speaker, from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. in the LeCraw Auditorium in the College of Management building. For more information, visit www.ile.gatech.edu/impact.html.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology architect and researcher Neri Oxman presents “Making Difference,” from 6 to 7 p.m. in the Architecture Auditorium, part of the Nature in Design lecture series. For more information, visit www.coa.gatech.edu.

Sylvia Mendez, whose family’s lawsuit to desegregate schools became part of the historic Brown v. Board of Education ruling, presents “Legacy of Justice: Mendez v. Westminster,” starting at 6:30 p.m. in the Student Center Ballroom.

October 9
University of Texas Southwestern Medical School Professor A. Dean Sherry presents “MR Imaging of Biological Function Using PARACEST Reporters,” from 2 to 3 p.m. in room 1128 of the Institute for Biomedical Engineering and Bioscience. For more information, visit www.ibb.gatech.edu.

October 10
Lt. Gen. Robert J. Elder Jr., commander of the Eighth Air Force, will be the keynote speaker at the Georgia Tech Information Security Center’s 2008 GTISC Security Summit, “Emerging Cyber Security Threats,” from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Fert Center for the Arts. For more information and to register, visit www.gtiscsecuritysummit.com.

October 17
University of Chicago Professor John Romalis presents “Inequality and Prices: Does China Benefit the Poor in America?” from 11:15 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. in room G-17 of the Habersham building. For more information, visit www.econ.gatech.edu.

Faculty/Staff Development

October 8
Georgia Tech Training Services presents the Brown Bag “Demystifying the 2009 Digital Conversion,” from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in room 508 of the Savant building. For more information, visit www.training.gatech.edu.

October 15
The Office of Sponsored Programs offers the two-part class “Effort Reporting & Cost Sharing: Special Considerations.” For more information, visit the Research Administration Building seminar room. For more information, visit www.osp.gatech.edu.

Ongoing

GeorgiTech Training Services offers the free Emergency Preparedness certificate, consisting of several courses. For more information on scheduling or for other classes offered, visit www.training.gatech.edu.

Miscellaneous

October 9
Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts Assistant Professor Dan Brennitz will sign copies of his book, “Innovation and the State: Political Choice and Strategies for Growth in Israel, Taiwan, and Ireland,” at 7 p.m. in the Georgia Tech Bookstore. For more information, visit www.iac.gatech.edu.

October 23–24
In preparation for Homecoming weekend, several Georgia Tech Affinity Groups will hold events and meet, including the Military Affinity Group and the Georgia Tech Bar Association. For more information on these and other Affinity Groups, visit www.gtalumni.org/pages/affinitygroups.

Ongoing

Tours are available Tuesdays through Fridays, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., for Tech’s Solar Decathlon House, located on the West Architecture lawn at the College of Architecture. To register, visit www.solar.gatech.edu.

Techmasters, Georgia Tech’s division of Toastmasters, meets each Thursday from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. in room 102 of the Petit Microsystems Research Center. For more information, visit www.techmasters.gatech.edu.

Classifieds

Automobiles/Motorcycles

2007 Ford Explorer Sport Trac. Black. 40,000 miles. $15,900. E-mail ltlardcastle@gmail.com.

2005 Ford Mustang V6 coupe premium, silver/gray. Auto, 19/27 mpg, 6-Cylinder changer w/Nach stereo, cloth seats. Mach 1 alloys w/ Michelin Pilot Sport A/S, chin spoiler, 113K highway miles. Clear title w/ all paperwork. V. good cond. Call 678-252-5475 or e-mail david.gifford@me.gatech.edu.

2002 Acura 3.2 TL/S. Pearl white/tan leather, Bose sound system, navigation system. Ext. cond. 100K miles, $9,500. Call 770-491-0512.

Real Estate/Roof/Pool

For rent: 2BR/1BA renovated duplex in Grant Park. Central heat/air, washer/dryer, dishwasher & microwave, fenced yard, less than 4 miles from campus, convenient to MARTA. Pets OK. $975/mo. incl. water, yard maint. Call 404-806-6096.

For sale: 3BR/1.5BA house, Doraville, off Buford Highway. 1,220 sq. ft., hardwoods throughout with tiled kitchen, quick access to 1-85/285, international community. 15-min to Tech. $209,000. Call 404-385-0271 or e-mail MSolomon24@gmail.com.

Academic couple looking for short-term (fall and possibly spring semester) rental or house/sitting-situation arrangement in a nice area (Decatur, V. Highlands), relatively close to a MARTA stop. E-mail alex.mannert@mcc.gatech.edu.

For rent: Condo in Inman Park. Loft w/ balcony overlooking pond and private park. W/D, DW, secure parking. gym. $1,300/mo. Call Anissa at 415-290-5818 or Courtney at 404-550-3793.

For sale: 1BR/1.5BA condo in historic downtown Healey Building. Convenient to campus. Walk to MARTA, court houses, Centennial Park, library, restaurants and more. Call 404-313-5640.

For rent: 1BR/1BA, fully furnished garden condo, utilities incl. $825 per month. Call 770-993-1876.

For sale: 2BR/1BA condo for rent. Gated, Tuscany Condominiums at 955 Juniper St. In Midtown. 1,200 sq. ft.; 2 parking spots. HW floors, granite counters, stainless steel appliances, tracked lighting. Pool, fitness center, tanning beds, PJs. Info at http://atlanta.craigslist.org/apa/761876706.html. E-mail richdan@bellsouth.net.

2BR/2BA condo for rent. Gated, Tuscan Condominiums at 955 Juniper St. In Midtown. 1,200 sq. ft.; 2 parking spots. HW floors, granite counters, stainless steel appliances, tracked lighting. Pool, fitness center, tanning beds, PJs. Info at http://atlanta.craigslist.org/apa/761876706.html. E-mail richdan@bellsouth.net.

Very sweet. Call Katie at 706-835-6071 or e-mail katie.tuck@yahoo.com.

Magenti airless ProX7 paint sprayer w/ operational DVD and extra 50′ hose. Paid $505 in Jan. ‘08. Used once; sell for $275. Also, Alum. 32-ft. extension ladder. Paid $319 in Jan. ‘09, sell for $145. Call 770-891-2485 or e-mail jean.gunter@pt.gatech.edu.

Free yellow jacket and wasp nest removal. Needs to be used for research at Georgia Tech. Call MS 6511 or e-mail michael.goodisman@biology.gatech.edu.

Miscellaneous

More ads are available at www.commuon.gatech.edu.

Ad spots appear and run for three weeks in the order in which they are received. E-mail submissions to editor@commun.gatech.edu.