Perdue presents budgets to General Assembly

On Jan. 14, Gov. Sonny Perdue addressed the General Assembly and delivered his “State of the State” address, kicking off the 2009 legislative session. In addition to submitting the proposed fiscal year 2010 budget, Perdue seeks additional cuts to FY09. Originally projected at $21.4 billion, the FY09 budget has been resubmitted at $19.2 billion, a 10 percent cut.

State agencies across the board have already cut 8 percent from their budgets during the fiscal year. Part of the solution presented is to cut other programs and use $50 million from the state’s revenue shortfall fund.

Perdue’s FY10 budget, proposed at $20.2 billion, includes a $1.2 billion bond package for infrastructure investment, creating an estimated 20,000 new jobs. “In the past, we have often funded the design phase of a project one year and construction at some later date,” Perdue said. “This year’s package will feature many projects in which both design and construction are funded in the same year, ensuring their timely completion.”

Many of these projects will encompass new construction at universities, technical schools, local school systems and libraries. The proposed Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons at Tech received a full funding recommendation ($43 million) from the governors. Funding of the USG’s FY10 formula at $109 million was approved, as was $70 million for the systemswide Major Repairs and Renovation fund.

Charitable donations break $300K

Tech faculty and staff donated more than $300,000 to the statewide 2008-2009 Charitable Campaign, said Director of Career Services and Campaign Chair Ralph Mobley. Although short of the $325,000 goal, the $311,607.74 total represents a 4 percent increase over last year’s contributions ($299,859). “I’m quite pleased, given the economy,” Mobley said. “Georgia Tech should be commended.” Roughly the same amount of donors gave this year compared to last.

Researchers Devin Brown and WAGA Channel 5 anchor Amanda Davis welcome “Wednesday’s Child” Ladarius to Tech’s Microelectronics Research Center, where he was able to suit up for the cleanroom and look through an electron scanning microscope. Channel 5 features Wednesday’s Child, an organization that seeks to place children in adoptive or foster homes, on Wednesdays and Sundays. Ladarius’ trip to Tech is scheduled to air Jan. 21 during the 6 p.m. newscast.
Chancellor addresses BOR

On Jan. 15, University System of Georgia Chancellor Erroll B. Davis Jr. delivered his "State of the University System" address to the Board of Regents. While describing the state of the system as "strong," Davis argued against cutting the state's higher education budget too steeply, stating his belief that higher education returned more to the state than its funding.

Citing a record high 285,000 students enrolled in the 35 state institutions this fall, Davis reminded the board that the system answered Gov. Sonny Perdue's call for state agencies to cut their budgets by 8 percent.

Appealing to the board's commitment to preserving the system's quality of educational instruction, Davis stated that if resources are cut further, the system may request an enrollment cap or reduction to maintain quality. "Without sufficient resources, academic quality at our institutions will degrade. We will not allow this to happen—we will recommend to you that we restrict access first before we degrade quality.

Citing surveys by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) placing Georgia eighth out of 16 states in average faculty salaries for four-year institutions, Davis praised faculty and staff at the state's 35 public institutions. According to Davis, the core missions of the USG institutions—teaching, research and public service—continue to excel on the strength of the system's faculty and staff.

When we say that we have two institutions ranked in the top 20 public colleges and universities in the nation, we mean that we have a faculty and staff at two institutions ranked in the top 20," he said. "The president of the United States did not award a medal to a college or university; rather, he awarded the Medal of Science to a Georgia Tech professor—Dr. Mostafa El-Sayed."

Even with continued budget challenges, Davis made it clear he sees the role of higher education in Georgia as a continued investment in the state; a tool for the public good. "It would be very easy to allow the current budget situation to create a sense that the public good cannot be sustained—and that college should be more of a private gain," he said. "This, to my mind, is a classic—and potentially dangerous—example of sacrificing the important for the urgent.

We must solve our budget crisis, but we must not sacrifice the important—the historic legacy in this state of public higher education as a clear public good that adds value to the lives of all residents across Georgia.

For more information...

Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia www.usg.edu

CoC assists in improving blood supply safety

Tech’s College of Computing, working in partnership with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has developed a Web-based tool for tracking blood safety. The tool is expected to help developing countries improve the adequacy and safety of their national blood supplies through better monitoring and evaluation. The tool, accessed through a standard Web browser, tracks about 80 blood safety indicators continuously at the hospital and provincial levels. A pilot test in Zambia showed that the tool could improve the timeliness and accuracy of data collection efforts, allowing blood safety officials to better forecast and predict regional and seasonal blood usage patterns.

"A simple, scalable, Web-based tool like this can make a tremendous difference in public health around the world," said Santosh Vempala, distinguished professor in the College of Computing’s School of Computer Science and faculty leader for the project. "The Zambian health officials immediately saw the benefits of real-time data collection and the ability to compare different regions' needs and see trends over time."

The project started when John Pitman, public health advisor in CDC’s Global AIDS Program, met Vempala and explained the challenges involved in ensuring global blood safety. Their collaboration with the CDC tracking system was taken up in 2008 by students in the College of Computing’s Computing for Good class, co-taught by Vempala. Using information about current conditions and future demand within the target countries, the team—founded by Adhitya Pramod and small-business owner Stephen Thomas—built a Web-based system that resource-limited countries of any size could use to report data to national authorities. The system could also be used by a global organization such as the CDC to monitor multiple projects.

The Tech team developed the new Web-based tool from a Microsoft Excel version created by the CDC. The Tech team tested the Web-based tool in Zambia in July and August 2008 to obtain feedback from blood safety program staff. "I was impressed by the team’s ability to adapt to the computing environment in Zambia, and to make the changes necessary to ensure this would be an appropriate solution for developing countries," Pitman said.

CoC’s contribution was made through the strength of its students and faculty. "The team was up and running 100 percent within a month of the project’s beginning," said Vempala. "Our students have translated difficult concepts into software solutions that have a positive impact on society."

For more information...

Collaborative Computing
www.cc.gatech.edu

"QUOTE-UNQUOTE"

"Today's sign-language recognition is at about the stage where speech recognition was 20 years ago. This takes a lot of processing power, and trying to deal with sign language in different video qualities is very hard. So, if they're successful, it would be very cool. But, very hard. So, if they're successful, it would be very cool."

—College of Computing Associate Professor Thad Sturrer on developing sign language-recognition software for computers. (ABCNews.com)
TechWorks and pledge cards— to facilitate single donations. While running concurrently with Open Enrollment, the campaign stayed “open” through Dec. 5. Just prior to the winter break, Mobley said he was still receiving some donations from retirees. “When they write a check and send it in, it tends to be significant,” he said. “The coordinators are who make this happen,” Mobley said. “Those committed to publicizing the campaign and soliciting donations are really what make this work.” This is the first year that Debbie Rice, director of policies and procedures for Enrollment Services, assisted with the Charitable Campaign. When she worked in the Registrar’s Office, she headed up the Pediatric AIDS toy drive for a couple years. “I think people understand that because of the current economic situation, they need to give,” said the 20-year department veteran. “I felt that if we at least equaled last year’s contributions, we would have done well. Anything over is just fantastic.” In addition to sending reminder e-mails during the campaign, Rice spoke to the 120 department members individually. “I went person to person and handed out the pledge cards and spoke at staff meetings, anything to add a personal touch,” she said. “You get more out of it, seeing the sacrifices people are willing to make in order to give. (And) you hear a lot of interesting stories when you do this. People who have been touched by certain charities will share that with you.” That is a tactic Rice said she knows a little about. When her 8-year-old grandson was born, she suffered from a serious heart problem and was helped by Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta. During her campaign rounds, she carried her picture with her while visiting her co-workers, unafraid to show it when coaxing was needed. While Rice began her first year as a coordinator, Facilities Administrative Manager Oveta Perry just completed her third year as a coordinator. For her department, Perry had more than 600 pledge cards to separate by department and distribute. “I try to make it personal,” she said. “I put them in envelopes for delivery to area managers. At least twice a week (during the campaign), I sent e-mail reminders. I enjoy it—I get out to see everyone.” Estimating that 60 percent of her department participated, Perry says she found that even the lower-paid employees gave. “I think a lot of people realize they need to help others, regardless of the economy.” Mobley, who served as vice-chair of the campaign in 2007, said he would definitely consider remaining as charitable campaign chair, if asked. “I wouldn’t mind doing it another year,” he said. “Once you’ve done it once, it really should be easier and more streamlined.”

Dec. 19 issue of the journal Science, Barry was recognized for research and contributions to understanding energy conversion and oxygen evolution of photosynthesis by innovative integration of molecular spectroscopy, with chemistry, biochemistry and molecular biology. A recipient of the National Science Foundation’s CAREER Award in 1997, Barry’s research interests include biological electron transfer, membrane biophysics, vibrational spectroscopy, EPR spectroscopy and photoinduction; and electron transfer in enzymes and model compounds. Eckert, also the director of the Specialty Separations Center, was recognized for his contributions in collaborative research with a wide variety of chemical companies in developing green and sustainable chemical processes. The AAAS is the largest and most important general scientific society,” Eckert said. “I feel most honored by this recognition, as well as by the affirmation of the superior contributions of Georgia Tech.” Eckert, a member of the National Academy of Engineering, focuses his research on the boundaries of chemistry and engineering. He and School of Chemistry Professor Charles Liotta have collaborated for almost 20 years, sharing lab space and instructing students from both disciplines. “I have been doing research in the general areas of the use of novel solvents and environmental control for multiple decades,” he said. “Perhaps the greatest realization of its impact occurred five years ago when my research partner, Chemistry Professor Charlie Liotta, and I received jointly the Presidential Green Chemistry Challenge Award not only for developing green processes, but also because six different companies were using them.” Eckert also has received the Colburn, Walker and Gerhold Awards from the American Institute of Chemical Engineers and the Ipatiev Prize and Murphree Award from the American Chemical Society. May was recognized for his distinguished contributions to electrical and computer engineering, particularly for innovative approaches to education and workforce diversity. His research interests include: computing-driven manufacturing of integrated circuits and devices: monitoring, modeling, simulation, control and diagnosis of semiconductor fabrication processes; and computer-enhanced education. “This is great recognition of the work we have done in regards to undergraduate research and admissions,” May said. He founded the Summer Undergraduate Research in Engineering/Science (SURE) program in 1992 and the Facilitating Academic Careers in Engineering and Science (FACES) program in 1998. SURE aims to attract minority students into graduate school, and FACES encourages minority engagement in engineering and science careers. The AAAS awarded May the American Association for the Advancement of Science Mentor Award in 2006. He also received the Golden Torch Award: A Lumpkin Educator of the Year from the National Society of Black Engineers in 2006. He received his undergraduate degree in electrical engineering from Tech in 1985, and he joined the faculty in 1991. In 2008, AAAS awarded 486 members this honor in recognition of their scientifically or socially distinguished efforts to advance science or its applications. New Fellows will be presented with an official certificate and a gold and blue (representing science and engineering, respectively) neck ribbon on Feb. 14 at the AAAS Fellows Forum during the 2009 AAAS Annual Meeting in Chicago.

The tradition of AAAS Fellows began in 1874. Currently, members can be considered for the rank of Fellow if nominated by the steering group of the Association’s 24 sections, or by any three Fellows who are current AAAS members (so long as of the three sponsors are not affiliated with the nominee’s institution), or by the AAAS chief executive officer. Robert Noyce in Communications & Marketing contributed to this story.

IN BRIEF:

CERT classes offered

Georgia Tech’s Office of Emergency Preparedness offers Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training, starting Jan. 31. The nationally sponsored program trains individuals in classes such as disaster readiness, promoting fire safety and performing light search and rescue operations. Training classes will be held Jan. 31, Feb. 7 and Feb. 21 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Campus Recreation Center. For more information, e-mail Jennifer Mattling at jennifer.mattingly@police.gatech.edu.

Tech a top Peace Corps provider

Georgia Tech ranked 24th out of 25 medium-sized colleges and universities on the Peace Corps’ “Top Peace Corps Volunteer Producing Colleges and Universities.” Currently, 19 Tech alumni are serving as volunteers for the international organization. For more information, visit www.peacecorps.gov.

Bratcher nominations sought

The Office of Diversity Programs and the Office of Employee Relations are seeking nominations for the Don Bratcher Human Relations Awards. The Faculty/Staff Award includes $3,000. The deadline for nominations is Jan. 23. For more information and nomination forms, visit www.diversity.gatech.edu.
C A M P U S E V E N T S

January 24
Dancers and illusionists Momix will perform at the Fertel Center for the Arts, starting at 8 p.m. For more information, visit www.fcrcenter.gatech.edu.

January 29
“Motherhood Manif esto,” a documentary based on the book by Joan Blades and Fisstlin Rowe-Finkbeiner, will screen from 7 to 8 p.m. in room 300 of the College of Management. The film is part of the Race and Difference Initiative. For more information, visit www.woodruff.gatech.edu.

February 5
Poetry at Tech Presents the Seventh Annual McEver Poetry Reading, featuring Karen Head, alumnus Bruce McEver, Chelsea Rashed and John Skoyles, starting at 7 p.m. in the Clay Theater of the Bill Moore Student Success Center. For more information, visit www.poetry.gatech.edu.

February 13
DramaTech Theater presents the comedy “Keeping Up with the Joneses,” starting at 8 p.m. with varying showtimes through Feb. 21. For more information, visit www.dramatech.org.

Through February 13
The Robert C. Williams Paper Museum displays the works of a renowned paper engineer and book artist with “The Paper Engineer: The Art of Carol Barton.” Museum hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. For more information, visit www.ipst.gatech.edu.

Through February
The College of Architecture and the Library and Information Center present the exhibition “Documenting Design: The Work of Alan Buchsbaum,” in the Neely Lobby. For more information, visit www.library.gatech.edu/archives.

Conferences & Lectures
January 27
School of Civil and Environmental Engineering Assistant Professor Jochen Teizer presents “Nano technology and its Impact on Construction,” as part of the NanoTech Lecture Series, from noon to 1 p.m. in room 1024A of the Microelectronics Research Center. For more information, visit www.mirc.gatech.edu.

Argonne National Laboratory Professor Arild Eidemir presents "Innovative Surface Technologies for Advanced Engineering Applications: From Super-hard and Low-friction Coatings to Super-fast Surface Treatments," starting at 11 a.m., in the Manufacturing Research Center auditorium. The lecture is part of the Woodruff Colloquium Series. For more information, visit www.me.gatech.edu.

January 28
Milton J. Little, Jr., president of the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta, will present an IMPACT Speaker Series Lecture, at 4:30 p.m. in the College of Management’s LeCraw Auditorium. For more information, visit www.ile.gatech.edu.

January 29
College of Architecture Professor Robert Craig presents the COA Research Forum “A Scholar’s Response to the Architecture Centennial,” from 11 a.m. to noon, in the Architecture Library. For more information, visit www.coa.gatech.edu.

February 5
School of Chemistry and Biochemistry Assistant Professor Facundo Fernandez presents “Enabling Mass Spectrometry Technologies for High Throughput Direct Analysis, Molecular Imaging and Metabolomics,” starting at 3 p.m. in room G011 of the Molecular Science and Engineering building. For more information, visit www.chemistry.gatech.edu.

Faculty/Staff Development
January 21
The Alumni Association presents “Taking Charge of Your Health: New Information All Women Should Know,” part of the Association’s “Women on Wednesday” program, from 7:30 to 9 a.m. at the Georgia Tech Alumni Association. The cost to attend is $20 per person. For more information, visit www.gtaumli.org/pages/waw.

January 31
State Business Transaction Disclosure Reports must be disclosed to the Georgia Secretary of State’s office prior to the end of the month. Forms and information is available at www.usg.edu/ legal/documents/bus_transact.pdf.

February 3
The Office of Sponsored Programs hosts its “New Faculty Orientation to Sponsored Programs,” from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the seminar room of the Research Administration Building. For more information, visit www.osp.gatech.edu.

Ongoing
Georgia Tech Training Services offers a Web-based tutorial on using a state purchasing card. For more information, visit www.training.gatech.edu.

Georgia Tech Training Services offers the Emergency Preparedness Certificate, which consists of several smaller courses, including “Fire Safety,” “Facilities Hazard Training” and “Basic First Aid/Adult CPR/AED.” For more information, visit www.training.gatech.edu.

Miscellaneous
January 21

Ongoing
Technomats, Georgia Tech’s division of Toastmasters, meets each Thursday from 7:30 to 9 a.m. in room 102 of the Petit Microelectronics Research Center. For more information, visit www.technomats.gatech.edu.

Georgia Tech Faculty Women’s Club offers scholarships to Tech undergraduates who are children of faculty or staff. Up to five $1,000 scholarships will be offered, based on financial need and academic achievement. Applications are due by March 1. For more information, e-mail Marian Van Iversen at vanitorsum@bellusouth.net.

CLASSIFIEDS

AUTOMOBILES/MOTORCYCLES
1999 Oldsmobile 88, Only 47k miles, perfect cond. AM/ FM/CD, clean emissions, driven by elderly father. $4,200. Call 678-462-6943 or e-mail tom.akins@dopp.gatech.edu.

1994 Toyota Corolla DX wagon, automatic, A/C. 118k miles, good cond., original owner, well-maintained. $2,500. E-mail aussie...liecheskit@gatech.edu.

REAL ESTATE/RENTAL
4BR/2BA east Cobb ranch, bright kitchen, open LR with HW & stone fireplace. Finished basement w/ large den & two rooms. Two-car garage, new deck, fenced level back yard. Exc. schools. $1,250/mo. Call Lisa at 404-277-9556.

2BR/2.5BA townhouse in Avondale/Decatur, 5 min. walk to MARTA. Clean, perfect for roommates. 1st floor, fenced area w/...curb parking. Small pets OK. $950/month. Call 404-245-0707 or e-mail straforfgreen702@...yahoo.com. For more info, visit www.imls.gatech.edu.


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

For rent: 3BR/2.5BA in Avondale Estates on cul-de-sac. Near 1-285, Hwy. 78 & MARTA. Close to Decatur, Emory, CDC. Washer/dryer included, private deck, fireplace. Pets welcome. $1,550/mo. Call Clare at 404-277-9550.

SPORTS/FITNESS/RECREATION
Line green 2003 EZ-GO golf cart, loaded with features, including underbody lights, brush guard, tinted windshields, rear flip seat, turn signals, and Carlisle Tuff Saver tires. $4,000. E-mail kimbirtley.linda@baltimore...gatech.edu.

MISCELLANEOUS
Two cats need a good home; can be separated. Tuxedo, 15 yo; solid gray, 10 yo. Female, spayed. Moving and cannot take. Don’t want to take to Humane Society. Call Wanda at 404-894-1695 or 770-983-4348 or e-mail wanda.smith@osp.gatech.edu.

More ads are available at www.whistle.gatech.edu. Ads appear and run for three weeks in the order in which they are received. E-mail submissions to editor@comm.gatech.edu.