May Is New College of Engineering Dean

Following a national search, Gary S. May, alumnus, professor and current chair of Electrical and Computer Engineering, has been appointed as the next dean of Georgia Tech’s College of Engineering, effective July 1.

“Gary exemplifies the type of leadership qualities we hope to instill in each of our students,” Provost Rafael L. Bras said. “As a faculty member, administrator and representative of Georgia Tech, his impact on his profession and on this institution has been profound.”

As dean, May will assume responsibility for directing the nation’s largest engineering program, one that enrolls nearly 60 percent of Georgia Tech’s student body and is home to about half of its tenured and tenure-track faculty.

“I am grateful for the opportunity to lead a premier institution like the College of Engineering,” May said. “It is truly an honor and a privilege to be entrusted with one of the world’s most respected brands, and I am looking forward to working with faculty across the college to advance the quality of our education and research programs.

A native of St. Louis, Mo., May earned his bachelor’s in electrical engineering at Georgia Tech before earning both his master’s and doctoral degrees from the University of California, Berkeley. He returned to Tech as an assistant professor in 1991, achieving full professor status in 2000. Two years later, he was tapped by then-President Wayne Clough to serve as his faculty executive assistant, a role that introduced him to administrative responsibilities at an institutional level.

May, who has chaired the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering since 2005, shared his aspirations for the future of the college during a public presentation last month.

“My vision is to create an environment where anyone with the aptitude and inclination to study engineering will want to come to Georgia Tech,” he said. “In partnership with colleagues in the other colleges, he added, “we will build a community of scholars to address the issues and challenges of the world through technology.”

“Gary’s record of scholarship, his collaborative nature and his tireless mentorship of students are admirable,” President G. P. “Bud” Peterson said. “We are very excited about the future of engineering education and research at Georgia Tech under Gary’s leadership.”

Bras thanked the members of the search committee for their service, as well as the members of the larger campus community who participated in the evaluation process. “We conducted an international search to identify the best possible candidates to lead our largest academic unit,” Bras said.

“That the final choice for this most important and desirable position is one of our own, as a graduate, professor and academic leader, speaks to the excellence of Georgia Tech.”

Tech Announces New Programs to Foster Innovation

As part of an ongoing effort to foster innovation and entrepreneurship within its campus community, Georgia Tech has announced the creation of three new programs that will complement several well-established initiatives.

The new programs stem from the findings of an innovation task force, co-chaired by Associate Vice President for Research Ravi Bellamkonda and College of Computing Professor Merrick Furst, that was created to support the strategic plan.

The task force recommended a number of transformational changes in the Institute’s approach to innovation, including new or expanded programs designed to provide both education and resources to campus innovators.

“Innovation is one of the Institute’s primary strategic goals, so it’s essential that we provide members of the Tech community with the support they need to develop and ultimately commercialize their research and ideas,” said Stephen E. Cross, executive vice president for research.

The new initiatives include:

• Georgia Tech Integrated Program for Startups (GT:IPS): GT:IPS combines a streamlined licensing program with organized support for faculty and student inventor-entrepreneurs. The program consists of two components. GT:IPS Facilitation and the GT:IPS License. GT:IPS Facilitation is a graduated program of support, information and education for new company founders, while the GT:IPS License provides the startups with transparency into the Georgia Tech

Employee Health Fair Offers Something for Everyone

AMELIA PAVLIK
COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

Whether you’re looking to try out a Zumba class or find out your blood pressure, this year’s Employee Health Fair offers something for every Tech faculty and staff member. The fair is part of the third annual National Employee Health and Fitness Day, which is sponsored by the Go T.E.C.H. (Teams Encouraging Campus Health) coalition.

“Coming to the health fair is a great way to spend lunch and learn about campus and

CAMPUS NEWS

Campus Dining Shifts to Summer Hours

With the slower pace of summer comes altered hours at favorite campus dining spots ranging from Chick-fil-A to Einstein’s. Check out the following site for the latest information:

http://tinyurl.com/3omusrk

RESOURCE

Find Summer Camp Information Online

An online resource is available that features information about on-campus programs for elementary through high school students, in addition to a comprehensive database of nearly 1,000 summer camps in the Atlanta area (which can only be accessed by Georgia Tech employees). The database will be available until June 15.

http://tinyurl.com/3w9qm3

ASK AWAY

Where are the campus operators who answer when you call the main campus number (894-2000) located?

According to Maria Hunter, acting associate director of information technology in the Office of Information Technology, the operators are located in the Library’s Technical Support Center (TSC).

“The operators are part of the TSC group that is responsible for the technical support line (894-7173) and supports walk-in customers with computer-related issues.” The TSC will be moving to the new G. Wayne Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons in August.

If you have a Tech-related question that you’d like answered, e-mail it to editor@comm.gatech.edu.

INNOVATION, continued on page 3

INNOVATION, continued on page 3

HEALTH FAIR, continued on page 3

HEALTH FAIR, continued on page 3

www.whistle.gatech.edu
Institute

Teamwork Enables Ants to Survive Floods

LIZ KLIPF
COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

It’s a naturally occurring phenomenon that has puzzled biologists for decades: Place a single fire ant in water and it will struggle. But a group of fire ants will bind together and float effortlessly for days.

Georgia Tech researchers — Nathan Mlot, mechanical engineering graduate student; Craig Tovey, professor of industrial and systems engineering; and David Hu, professor of mechanical engineering — have solved the mystery of how fire ants self-assemble into a water-proof raft.

“It’s a real thrill unraveling what at first looks like chaos,” Tovey said. “To understand what the individual behaviors are and how they combine in order to achieve the function of the group is the central puzzle one encounters when studying social insects.”

Using time-lapse photography and mathematical modeling, the team found that fire ants act collaboratively rather than individually to form a water-repellent, buoyant raft.

The research was published in a paper, “Fire Ants Self-Assemble into Waterproof Rafts to Survive Floods,” in the early edition of the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. An individual ant’s exoskeleton is moderately hydrophobic. But fire ants enhance their water repellency by linking their bodies together, a process similar to the weaving of a waterproof fabric, researchers said.

By freezing the ants, the team observed that fire ants construct rafts when placed in water by gripping each other with mandibles, claw and adhesive pads at a force 400 times their body weight. The result is a viscous and elastic material that is almost like a fluid composed of ant “molecules,” researchers said. The ants spread out from a sphere into a pancake-shaped raft that resists perturbations and submergence techniques.

To determine how this is possible, Tovey and the team tracked the ants’ travel and measured the raft’s dimensions. They found the ants move using a stereotyped sequence of behavior. The ants walk in straight lines, ricocheting off the edges of the raft and walking again until finally adhering to an edge. Tovey said the raft is self-assembled in less than 100 seconds, and if one ant is removed from the raft, others move in to fill the void.

The research could have application to logistics and operations research and material sciences, specifically the construction of man-made flotation devices, and could impact the field of robotics, the team said.

http://antiab.gatech.edu

Club Helps Members Master Speaking Skills

AMELIA PAVLIK
COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

If giving a speech in front of a group fills you with as much fear as the thought of walking across I-85 during rush hour, there is a campus resource that you should check out.

Since 1987, Tech has been home to a Toastmasters chapter, known as “Techmasters,” that aims to provide the skills and confidence members need to effectively communicate in any situation.

“Techmasters isn’t about perfection; it is about practicing public speaking in a no-fail atmosphere,” said Kinsley Pollard, the club’s most senior member and sergeant-at-arms who works in the Microelectronics Research Center. “There aren’t any experts — it’s just members helping members.”

The club (pictured above) meets every Thursday morning from 7:30 to 9 a.m. in room 102 of the Microelectronics Research Center Building. Currently, there are 54 members, with about 20 to 30 percent of the membership being students and the rest being faculty and staff members, as well as members of the general public.

“Being a member has helped me to become more confident and has enhanced my leadership skills,” said Edgar Jones, a 10-year member who works in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering.

“This is a good place to work on your presentation skills, and you get a chance to network with like-minded people from all over campus.”

Gary Hulsey, a technical writer for the Georgia Tech Research Institute, has belonged to the club for five years and would recommend it to anyone interested in enhancing communication and leadership skills.

“Techmasters has helped me build some comfort as a speaker through impromptu speaking practice, which has given me the confidence to do things like call a talk radio program,” he added.

Meetings start with Table Topics, where members of the club are invited to give a brief speech on impromptu topics such as “Convince Hitler to Join Techmasters.” Next, there is a brief break with light refreshments, followed by prepared speeches and then evaluations of the speeches.

So if you visit a meeting, what can you expect?

“Visitors will be encouraged to stand and introduce themselves at the beginning of the meeting and provide their impression of the meeting at the end,” said Joe Blount, the group’s vice president of public relations who works in the Office of Information Technology.

“Visitors rarely opt to participate beyond this at their first meeting.”

To learn more about the club and membership fee information, visit http://techmasters.gatech.edu
Institute

Faculty, Staff Share Summer Vacation Spots

As the campus community eases into the summer, we’ve asked faculty and staff members to share their favorite vacation destinations. Read on to see where your colleagues will be going this summer.

My favorite summer vacation spot is Norway. I’ve rented a rorbu (a refurbished fishing hut) on the Lofoten islands as a base for hiking, cycling and kayaking. Lysefjord and Kjerag near Stavanger are great for access to 3,000-foot fjord cliffs. Don’t recommend going for the cheap beer, though — there isn’t any.

—Margaret Kosal, School of International Affairs

My favorite vacation destination is the moutains of western North Carolina. I especially like the town of Highlands and two great campgrounds on the Nantahala River: Standing Indian and Appletree. The area is beautiful, there’s lots to do and it’s significantly cooler than Atlanta.

—Ray Vito, Graduate and Undergraduate Studies

One of my favorite destinations is Anna Maria Island near Bradenton, Fla. It has beautiful beaches without much glamour and nightlife — just offers a relaxing stay in the sun.

—Linda Greer, School of Biology

My family goes to Pawleys Island, S.C., every year on vacation. We’ve been going for about 35 years. The island has changed very little over that period of time. Mostly houses, only a couple of hotels. It’s a great place to relax and enjoy family.

—Margaret Loper, Information & Communications Lab, Georgia Tech Research Institute

A favorite summer vacation destination is the Plantation on Amelia Island in Florida. We’ve been going there for the last 15 years. There’s something for every member of the family: ocean swimming, board walk trails into the swamp and Intracoastal Waterway area, biking, fishing, tennis, great food and several first-class golf courses.

—Thomas Debo, School of City and Regional Planning

My favorite destination is Edisto Beach, S.C. My family has a long-standing tradition of combining a week or two of great beach time each summer at Edisto with a casual family reunion, in one or more of the island’s plentiful rental homes. The island has little commercial development. With a state park and the recent addition of the Botany Bay preserve and wildlife area, there’s plenty to explore. There are great opportunities for walking, biking, hunting for seashells and fossils, or just watching the waves and dolphins.

—Joe Blount, Office of Information Technology

Michigan summers are truly the most scenic, relaxing and weather-wise divine. Make a point to visit Lake Michigan or head up to the Upper Peninsula for a trip. You won’t be disappointed.

—Colleen Riggle, Women’s Resource Center

My favorite vacation is to go on a cruise. In 1997, I went on my first four-day cruise to the Bahamas with some friends. In 2007, I convinced my husband to join me on a cruise and we have been going on one every year since then. In September, we will continue this tradition, this time visiting the southern Caribbean. Make sure that you reserve a balcony suite, since nothing is better than sitting on your balcony watching the sunset.

—Sherry Hill, Industrial and Systems Engineering

Visit Antwerp, a sophisticated city in Belgium. You’ll find richness in architecture, design, taste and style in every corner of the city. You breathe elegance in the air.

—Claudia Rebola, School of Industrial Design

When I was growing up our family vacationed north in Myrtle Beach almost every summer. It’s still one of my favorite summer vacation places, although just about any beach will do.

—Shannon Scott, Office of Human Resources

My favorite summer location is Ocean City, N.J. My family and I have been going there since 1978. Each summer I go to OC for one or two weeks and stay at my sister’s house. My children, who live in California and Oregon, sometimes come as well. It’s a family vacation spot, with no bars or liquor stores. It has a beautiful beach and a boardwalk with shops, restaurants and small rules for children. I can’t think of a better place to read a book, take a five-mile run or walk, or go for a late evening stroll in the moonlight with the sound of the ocean in the background.

—Roadind Myers, Campus Services

The North Georgia mountains are my place. Whether I stay in a hotel, cabin or camp myself. I went to high school in the mountains, and they still feel like home. Not to mention, there are lots and lots of waterfalls to cool off in.

—Neil Fry, Dining Services

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—Neil Fry, Dining Services
Community

Director’s Unusual Career Path Led to Higher Ed

AMELIA PAVLIK COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

After majoring in English in college, Monique Tavares tried on several careers before she found the one that fit just right.

“Earlier in my career, I did sales work in advertising,” Tavares said. “I worked for People magazine, taught English at an all-girls school, worked for an online newspaper in Jamaica, and done marketing and sales for an Internet startup,” said the director of research administration. “Then 10 years ago, I came to Tech, and I’ve been here ever since.”

Tavares started her tenure at Tech working in the College of Engineering writing grant proposals and eventually became the director of human resources for the college. About two years ago, she arrived in theOffice of the Executive Vice President for Research, in a position that Tavares describes as a “catch-all.”

Recently, The Whistle sat down with Tavares to learn more about her and her time at Tech. Here’s what we learned:

What does your job entail, and what’s an average day like?

“This is a difficult question because a lot of what we’re doing is changing day by day,” said Tavares. “There are a lot of administrative tasks. There are also a lot of opportunities to work on research programs. As a result, I’ve had to adapt to the constantly changing nature of the work. The best way I’ve found to keep up with the changes is to be proactive in my work and to be willing to take on new challenges.”

What do you enjoy most about your job, and how do you make this bearable?

“Tavares enjoys working with people and being part of a team. She also enjoys the opportunity to work on new projects and to learn new things. Her favorite part of the job is being able to work with the students. “It’s the best part of the job,” she said. “I love seeing the students succeed.”

What is the one piece of technology you couldn’t live without?

“My laptop,” Tavares said with a smile. “I use it for everything. It’s my computer, my calculator, my notepad, my alarm clock. It’s my everything.”

What are three things that everyone should do while working at Tech?

“Tavares said that everyone should try to be proactive, to be willing to take on new challenges, and to be open to learning new things.”

Tell us something unusual about yourself.

“I was born in Guyana and have also lived in Canada, Jamaica, and the United States,” Tavares said. “I have a son and a daughter, and I love spending time with them.”

Buzzworthy Achievements: Spring Honors Roundup

With this article, The Whistle marks the start of a regular feature to recognize faculty and staff members who have a buzzworthy achievement to share.

The following employees were honored this spring:

- Samuel Graham, an associate professor in the School of Mechanical Engineering, received the Council for Chemical Research’s 2011 Malcolm E. Pruitt Award.
- Ronald Rousseau, Cecil J. "Pet" Silas Chair and chair of the School of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, received the American Chemical Society Polymer Matierials Science and Engineering Division’s 2011 Distinguished Service Award.

Submissions will be accepted on an ongoing basis. Provide name, title, unit and award or honor (please spell out all acronyms) to editor@comm.gatech.edu.

Know of Anyone We Should Profile?

Do you know of someone who would be good to profile for our faculty and staff Q&A feature (above)? If you do, please email suggestions to editor@comm.gatech.edu.

CLASSIFIEDS

Room for rent in new house. Located Downtown/Midtown area. 5 minutes from campus. $500/mo. Available immediately. Utilities included. 3 bedrooms. Garage and deck. Month-to-month lease available. Great opportunity for students. Contact Elaine for more details at 404-777-2587.

Riverfront condo, gated community, 15 minutes from Tech, inside perimeter. 2BR+extra room/2.5BA, fireplace, lower and upper deck facing river. $1,195/mo. Dogs and cats OK. Email Michael at mdurham@gmail.com.

9.7 acres in Chattahoochee County, Summerville, corner lot, double-paved road frontage, level lot, mostly wooded, some openings. W/D divides, owner finance available. $4,000/acre. 770-396-3181.

For rent: 38B/2BA home in North Druid Hills and I-85 area. New renovation, all hardwood, large deep lot. $1,200/mo. Call 770-860-3868.

Newly renovated 4BR/2.5BA home, located in Snellville’s sought-after Brookwood Cluster. Close to schools, shopping and highway. Appliances included: large backyard and hardwood floors. Only $1,350/mo. Call 718-791-6799.

3BR/2BA house in North Decatur (close to Medlock Park/Pool, Emory, CDC) priced to sell. Bonus room, dining room, living room, new appliances (W/D, refrigerator, gas stove), landscaped backyard with patio. $175,000. Contact Jayson at 404-551-2607 or jasonchucksmithgroup.com.

3BR/2BA 10 minutes from Tech, near Inman Park, Woodrows, Oakland, off-street parking, W/D. Available July 1. $1,400/mo. Contact brittani.kalin@modrange.gatech.edu or call 404-374-0407.

1BR condo for rent near Carter Center (near Midtown, Highlands, LSP, DAV, Inman Park, Freedom Parkway). W/D, 2BR, granite countertops, W/D in unit, controlled access building, covered parking. Water, trash, recycling included in rent. $865/mo. Available June 1. Contact stacey.scott@gatech.edu.

MISCELLANEOUS

Members of the Georgia Tech Bridge Club invite students, faculty and staff to join them to play bridge, both socially and competitively. Everyone is welcome, from complete novices to seasoned players. Contact georgios.casimiro@ece.gatech.edu for more information.

FREE for pickup — no delivery. Toshiba 56-inch projection TV. May need new power supply. Owner’s manual included. Price: $500. Contact rita.brown@nrc.gatech.edu or call 404-444-3934.

Fitness Gear weight bench set with the following weight sizes included: 25 lbs., 40 lb. bar, 5 lb., 25 lb. Pictures upon request. $50. Contact Pita Brown at rita.brown@ece.gatech.edu or call 404-256-2800.

Tech Whistle • May 16, 2011 • PAGE 4

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Ad copy and run for three issues in the order in which they are received.

Email submissions to editor@comm.gatech.edu.