Institute Diversity Celebrates Year of Success

AMELIA FAVLIK
COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

The most pleasant surprise Archie Ervin has had during his first year at Georgia Tech is a simple one — people are eager to improve diversity at Tech.

“I have been blown away by people’s willingness to roll up their sleeves and work on diversity,” Ervin said. “So many students, faculty and staff members have approached me about various projects. It’s encouraging to know that people are as passionate about this subject as I am.”

As Tech’s first vice president for Institute Diversity, Ervin felt it was important for Georgia Tech to develop an official Institute Statement on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to demonstrate the importance of diversity to Tech’s vision for academic excellence and an inclusive community (see page 2 for more information).

“I think the most pleasant surprise is that we are,” Ervin said. “So, it was important to develop a statement that conveys to the campus community and beyond that these issues are priorities.”

It was also necessary to take an inventory of existing diversity initiatives at Tech. The Diversity Programs Committee was formed to take on this task, and subsequently came up with the idea to develop a Diversity Portal. This website will feature organized resources and information related to diversity at Tech in one location.

“At the moment, Tech does not have a centralized repository where people can go to locate information about all of the Institute’s diversity initiatives,” Ervin said. “Our hope is that the site will be up and running by fall.”

Ervin also worked with the FOCUS program, which supports underrepresented students including racial/ethnic minorities and women, to improve and enhance outreach and recruiting programs (FOCUS aims to increase the number of advanced degrees awarded to minority students). In one year, student participation in FOCUS went from inside the College of Architecture and was arrested.

Student Tip Leads to Repeat Offender Arrests

KRISTEN SHAW
COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

Since the start of the semester, Georgia Tech police have trumpeted four words to the campus community in a request for its assistance: See Something? Say Something. And recently, a student obliged.

“I was on central campus detail on foot and a student approached me and advised that he had seen someone acting suspicious,” said Georgia Tech Police Officer John Clifford.

The officer located the male and was able to identify him as repeat offender Tony Jackson, who had been released from prison just four days prior after serving a five-year sentence for thefts committed at Georgia Tech. When located, Jackson had a laptop he had just stolen from inside the College of Architecture and was arrested.

Women’s Awareness Month Kicks Off March 1

AMELIA FAVLIK
COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

In 1997, Jennifer Orr, who was president of the Women’s Student Union, decided to create Women’s Awareness Week at Georgia Tech. Sixteen years later, the celebration doesn’t end after a week — it has grown to fill a month.

“I can’t imagine that there is a single person on campus who doesn’t care about heart health, gender-based violence or giving back to the community,” said Melanie De Maeyer, coordinator of the Women’s Resource Center. “And these issues are priorities.”

The month’s events kick off on March 1 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Tech Walk, where members of the campus community can visit informational tables and participate in Zumba and cardio kickboxing demonstrations during the afternoon.

NEWS BRIEFS

Distance Learning and Professional Education Gets Name Change

The unit will now be known as Georgia Tech Professional Education, and the head of the organization, Dr. Nelson Baker, will be titled as dean of professional education. Get the full story at http://tinyurl.com/6ws8xod

Nominate a Student to Be a TechSTAR

Each month, the Office of International Education will spotlight an outstanding international student. To nominate a student for the TechSTAR award, go to http://tinyurl.com/7k4qe08

Join GT Research Partnership Network

Georgia Tech’s HBCU/MI Outreach Initiative Program seeks researchers to join the Georgia Tech Research Partnership Network. Learn more at http://tinyurl.com/6phog6u

ARKESTS, continued on page 3

Men’s Awareness Month Kicks Off March 1

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Repeat Offenders


A recent Technique ad urges people to be wary of these repeat offenders.

Tony Jackson — fifth incident in 2012, received 5-year sentence. Kicked out of dorm, robbed new roommate, left note, then went to campus.

Nikhil Mittal — Stole laptop from student. Busted Blair before arrest.

Joshua Lam — Stole wallet from student. Busted after theft.

John Clifford — 15 repeat offender arrested on Wednesday.

Mickeen Swanage — Chilean student arrested on multiple bashes from campus.

Women’s Awareness Month Kicks Off March 1

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WOMEN, continued on page 3

ARRESTS, continued on page 3
Engineering Dean Speaks at White House

College of Engineering Dean Gary S. May spoke at a White House ceremony on Feb. 8, stressing the need to attract more young minds to the field of engineering and retain them until graduation to improve the nation’s prosperity and competitiveness.

“Engineering is a profession of great wonder and rich reward,” May said at the event hosted by the White House Council on Jobs and Competitiveness to celebrate engineering deans for their excellence and commitment to educating and graduating more engineers. “In communicating the appeal of our profession, we must tap into what young people value most in their life’s work — flexibility, connectivity, visibility and above all else, the chance to use technology to make a real impact on our nation and world and to change our society for the better,” he added. May touted the strategies used by Georgia Tech to retain 94 percent of freshmen after their first year and graduate right out of every 10 students within six years. “Even more so, we are attracting women and minorities to engineering in large numbers,” and I am proud to say, graduating them, making Georgia Tech the nation’s largest and most diverse college of engineering,” said May, who chairs the Dean’s Advisory Committee for the High Technology Education Working Group, which is part of the White House Council on Jobs and Competitiveness.

Tech was one of 50 engineering colleges recognized at the event. During the ceremony, the council also announced a partnership with the American Society for Engineering Education to develop and disseminate the concepts and tools to recognize engineering schools that meet particular graduation and retention levels.

President Barack Obama has a goal of graduating 10,000 additional new engineers each year through private-sector initiatives and efforts in engineering schools to attract and retain top talent. The council is comprised of leaders from companies that rely on a quality science, technology, engineering and math workforce and who have a particular interest in the production of more engineers.

www.coe.gatech.edu

Institute Statement on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Diversity is one of Georgia Tech’s greatest strengths and one of the major priorities identified in our 23-year strategic plan. At Tech, we embrace and leverage diversity in all its manifestations. We are proud that we are one of the most diverse universities in the world with students who represent every state in the nation and more than 100 countries. In the years ahead, our goal is to continue to build a campus culture of collegiality, close collaboration, global perspective, intercultural sensitivity, respect and thoughtful interaction among a diverse community of students, employees and alumni.

We realize that, in order to achieve our vision for Georgia Tech as a leader in influencing the major technological, social and policy decisions in the 21st century, we must recruit and retain faculty, staff and students from a wide array of backgrounds, perspectives, interests and talents. In doing so, we will create a community that exemplifies the best in all of us — our intellectual pursuits, our diversity of thought and personal integrity. Our mission to achieve inclusive excellence means unleashing the full potential of Tech’s human capacity to create a better, sustainable future for us all.

You are invited to join us on the journey of creating and sustaining a future that builds upon the talents of all members of our community in addressing the major challenges of this and future generations.

www.diversity.gatech.edu
Class Q&A Tool Gains Popularity with Faculty

AMELIA PAVLIK
COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

There’s nothing worse than responding to email after email from students who are all asking the same question.

That’s why Piazza, a free online class question-and-answer tool that is geared toward classes with large enrollments, is gaining popularity among faculty members at Georgia Tech. According to the Piazza website, 92 classes at Tech currently use the tool.

“Because the site encourages students to respond to one another’s questions, you can often endorse and answer without ever having to type a response in,” said Kristin Marsicano, a lecturer in the College of Computing who has used Piazza in her 300-plus person classes for the past year.

The software offers a Facebook-like gathering place where students can ask and answer questions regarding a course — under the watchful eye of their instructors. In turn, instructors can easily answer questions or endorse student answers that are correct.

Ed Greco, an instructor who coordinates half of the introductory courses in the School of Physics, started using Piazza this semester after receiving an email from the tool alerting him to the fact that several students had requested that he join.

Although T-Square offers chat room and forum features that serve a similar purpose, Greco prefers Piazza.

“For some reason, students just weren’t using the forums,” he said. “And I think the chat room lacks a lot of the functionality that you have in Piazza.”

For example, posts are tagged, which organizes them based on the most popular topics and themes. There’s a notification area, which provides real-time updates to the questions that students or instructors are following. Chrissy Spencer, a faculty member in the School of Biology, appreciates that it’s easy to set up new discussion threads on Piazza and that the class screen is both aesthetically appealing and easy to navigate.

The other benefit is that Piazza has its own mobile phone app for both iPhones and Droids, said Spencer, who has used the tool since fall 2011 and teaches large-enrollment lecture courses.

Of course, Piazza isn’t perfect, and Marsicano, Greco and Spencer all point out that instructors have to take the time to ensure that questions are getting answered. They each suggest assigning teaching assistants to the task of regularly sifting through responses to make sure no one is left hanging. However, the instructor should also be regularly checking the class page.

“At the beginning of the semester, I usually check on the site daily, which taps off to about two to three times a week,” Marsicano said. “I will read through to see what students are saying and will add information here and there. Doing this really helps me to understand what the students are thinking.”

Also, be wary of choosing the setting that makes all posters anonymous.

“I did this initially so students wouldn’t worry about being judged,” Greco said. “But after a few days, some students started to post things that were disrespectful to students and the instructors.”

To remedy the situation, he altered the settings so that postings are anonymous to students, but not to instructors.

To use Piazza effectively, Spencer recommends introducing students to the tool during the first class. Have them use it in class so they become familiar with it, she added.

The Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning is supporting the creation of a community of faculty members who use Piazza.

For more information, contact Chaohua Ou at chaohua@cecl.gatech.edu.

www.piazza.com

WOMEN, continued from page 1

The community is also invited to participate in Women’s Day of Service on March 3, where participants typically volunteer their time at area soup kitchens or animal shelters.

One highlight of this year’s celebration will take place on March 5 when Margaret Edson, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of “Wit,” will speak at 4:30 p.m. in room 144 of Clough Commons. (Anyone interested in attending is also invited to attend a screening of “Wit” on Feb. 27 at 5 p.m. in room 371 of the Skiles Building.) “Wit” focuses on a renowned professor who is dying of ovarian cancer.

This year, the Take Back the Night event on March 15 at 7 p.m., which usually draws a crowd of about 800, will return to the Campanile. During the event, a candlelight vigil and program will be held to honor survivors of sexual assault.

Other events include:

• The Clothesline Project: March 12-16, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily, the Student Center. This year, the Take Back the Night event on March 15 at 7 p.m., which usually draws a crowd of about 800, will return to the Campanile. During the event, a candlelight vigil and program will be held to honor survivors of sexual assault.

Other events include:

• The Clothesline Project: March 12-16, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily, Tech Walk. A display of shirts made by and for women who are survivors or victims of gender-based violence.

• Red Dress Fashion Show: March 17, 7:30 p.m., Student Center Ballroom. A fashion show to raise awareness about women’s cardiac health.

Contact De Macyer at melanie.demacyer@vsps.gatech.edu.

www.police.gatech.edu

REAL ESTATE/ ROOMMATES

For rent: lovely home ‘on golden pond’ in beautiful Mountain Park, Roswell community. Excellent Mt. Park elementary school, village green and community pool. Architecturally unique features include three bedrooms, two bath/marble floors, easy maintenance and outdoor room for year-round comfort. Lake view throughout. Email georgiaspaci46@gmail.com or call 404-275-5640.

For rent: 2BR/2BA condos for rent. Piedmont Park is your front yard. Private entrance, two reserved parking spaces just steps from your front door. Five minutes to campus. $1,450/month. Call 770-351-7497 or email mzlwilliams@aol.com.

For rent: 2BR/2BA loft with garage in historic Marietta Square. 2BR/2BA loft with garage in historic Marietta Square. 2BR/2BA loft with garage in historic Marietta Square.

EVENTS

MISCELLANEOUS

February 25
The men’s basketball team will take on the Maryland Terrapins at 2:30 p.m. at Philips Arena.
http://www.ramblinwreck.com

March 1
“This I Believe” will feature Penny and Roe Stamps, namesakes of both the Stamps Health Center and Penny and Roe Stamps Student Center Commons. All students, faculty and staff are invited to join this topical, intellectual discussion, which begins at 11 a.m. in room 205, Clough Commons.
http://gotenforum.gatech.edu

Deadline to apply for one of five $1,000 Georgia Tech Faculty Women’s Club scholarships. An applicant must have a GPA of at least 2.75 and be a parent or guardian currently employed at Georgia Tech. In addition, the Communication Center is holding a workshop for students applying for the scholarship on Feb. 23 at 4 p.m. To register, email commlab@gatech.edu. For more information about the scholarship, visit www.gtwc.gatech.edu.

Come see spectacular views of the moon, Jupiter and Mars from atop the observatory on the Howey Physics Building from 10 a.m. to 1p.m.
http://astronomy.gatech.edu

www.gatech.edu/calendar

CLASSIFIEDS

AUTOMOBILE

1998 Black BMWW 750IL. Full options, 1 owner, 95k, $4,000. Ultra-smooth and strong ride. All service records. New A/C, tires, spark plugs, belts, battery, control arms. Just passed emissions test. Still needs knock sensor. Email sra.khorsand@icea.gatech.edu.

RECLASSIFIED CLASSIFIEDS

For rent: lovely home “on golden pond” in beautiful Mountain Park, Roswell community. Excellent Mt. Park elementary school, village green and community pool. Architecturally unique features include three bedrooms, two bath/marble floors, easy maintenance and outdoor room for year-round comfort. Lake view throughout. Email georgiaspaci46@gmail.com or call 404-275-5640.

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Sustainable Engineering Group to Build Solar Beverage Cart

Thanks to a grant sponsored by solar energy firm SunEdison and distributed by the national organization Engineers for a Sustainable World (ESW), members of the campus community will soon be able to purchase beverages from a solar-powered cart on campus.

What did you want to be when you were a child?

I sang Doo-wop in talent shows as a child, so I really wanted to be a singer. I still enjoy singing in church choirs.

How did you arrive at Georgia Tech?

I worked as a librarian in Brooklyn for about 10 years before I moved overseas with my husband, who was in the Army. While we were stationed in Europe for five years, I found a job as an official storyteller for the Army, which meant that I got to read and make up stories for the children whose parents worked on the bases in Germany. When I returned to the States, a friend urged me to move to Atlanta with my two children. I found my job at Tech and have been happy here ever since.

What piece of technology could you not live without?

I love the Kindle Fire that I just won at a collections conference. I use it all of the time for reading my books and magazines.

Which do you prefer: Facebook, Twitter or a world without all of this social media stuff?

I love Facebook. In five generations of family, I’m the only one to have left Brooklyn, so it’s a good way to keep in touch with my family, I’m the only one to have left Brooklyn, so it’s a good way to keep in touch with my relatives.

What is your favorite spot on campus?

I’m a walker, so I really enjoy the indoor track at the Campus Recreation Center. What have you enjoyed most about Georgia Tech?

Working here has allowed me to take care of my children and ensure that they could go to college. My daughter has a doctorate in microbiology from Georgia State University, and my son is a year away from graduating from Atlanta Metropolitan College with a bachelor’s in physical education.

What is the best piece of advice you’ve ever received?

My parents would tell me to keep my head up, which I’ve always done. And then my father would always say, “Always think on your feet — not on your back.”

If you could have dinner with one person, dead or alive, who would it be?

My mother, who passed away 17 years ago. I’d want to let her know everything that the kids and I have accomplished.

Where is your favorite place to have lunch, and what do you order?

Siam in downtown Decatur, and I always order the seafood salad, which is made with coconut milk, mussels, shrimp and scallops.

Tell us something about yourself that people might not know.

I travel a lot and really enjoy cruises. I’m eager to take one to Alaska.

So, what is your favorite beverage to order?

I’d want to let her know everything that the kids and I have accomplished.

If you know of a faculty or staff member who should be profiled in The Whistle, please send an email to editor@comm.gatech.edu.

**Community News**

**People Make Collections Job Worthwhile**

tributes helped to work like new. $550 OBO. Email for more details.

1997 Cannondale road bike, 54-cm. frame, Shimano REX integrated drop bar shifters, 3 x 7 drive train, clipless pedals, Sramo wheel set. Like-new condition. All new cables, housing and bar tape. Shifters recently rebuilt and guaranteed to work like new. $550 OBO. Email for questions or pictures: david.kuster@cc.gatech.edu.

Intova ICI2 waterproof camera, 12MP, 720p video, waterproof to 180 feet, used once, asking $105 OBO. Call 404-894-2980 or 404-894-6614 for sale. Ages 6 months to 3 years. Email angie@eas.gatech.edu.


For 2011, the total amount raised toward the Sharing Shows Caring — Give from the Heart-themed campaign was $292,364. The top four charities that members of the Tech community donated to were the American Cancer Society, the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta, the Atlanta Community Food Bank and Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta. This year’s campaign team extends their appreciation to everyone who contributed to the 2011 campaign.

**www.charitable.gatech.edu**

**2011 Charitable Campaign Raises More Than $292K**

This year, more than 1,059 contributors helped to make Georgia Tech’s Charitable Campaign a success.

For 2011, the total amount raised toward the Sharing Shows Caring — Give from the Heart-themed campaign was $292,364.

**This well-maintained, charming 2BR/1BA plus bonus room with hardwood floors throughout and large, landscaped, fenced backyard with shed. Off-I-285, six miles to Tech and short walk to East Atlanta Village. Must see! $1,750/month. Call Chris at 770-882-7735.**

1BR/1BA condos in Virginia Highlands. Gorgeous hardwoods, large picture windows, 12-F ceilings, designer colors and finishes, and three huge closets. Includes W/D, dishwasher, water and trash. Walk to restaurants and shops. Only minutes from Tech. Call 770-601-1691.

For sale: queen size bed, includes box spring, mattress and frame. $40. JVC 32” television. $50. Call 404-385-0380.

For sale: apartment for rent in private home. Private entrance. 1BR/1BA. Utilities included, cable, separate alarm, use of yard, WiFi. 15 minute to Tech. $550 per month. Good neighborhood. Call 404-252-2486.

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