Ask Away
 How is the money Tech received for allowing “The Internship” to film on campus being used?

According to Deborah Greene of Capital Planning and Space Management, the Institute received about $330,000 from the production. Of that, $310,000 is being used for scholarships, while the rest will be used to reimburse campus departments for movie-related expenses and to cover a student-centered campus screening of the movie when it is released in June.

Have a Tech-related question that you’d like answered? Email it to editor@comm.gatech.edu.

News Briefs

Cycling Improvements Coming to Nearby Neighborhoods
The Atlanta City Council recently approved $2.5 million for bicycle projects — many of which could impact the Georgia Tech community.
 http://c.gatech.edu/Y6fsDsp

New Blog Launches for Global Employees
International faculty and staff member at Tech? Check out this new blog at http://c.gatech.edu/15Fil4A1

Architecture Dean Candidates to Visit
Finalists for the College of Architecture dean position will be visiting campus soon. Find out when at http://c.gatech.edu/14UXj90

Lewis to Receive Social Courage Award

IVAN ALLEN COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Congressman John Lewis — an icon of American civil rights — has been named a recipient of the Ivan Allen Jr. Prize for Social Courage.

Lewis will be honored during events at the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts on April 4.

“John Lewis put his life on the line for many years during the 1960s to bring about equality under the law for all Americans,” said President G. P. “Bud” Peterson. “It is our privilege to honor the life and work of Congressman Lewis through the Ivan Allen Jr. Prize for Social Courage.”

The award recognizes individuals who, by standing up for clear moral principles in the social arena, have positively affected public discourse at the risk of their own careers, livelihoods and even their lives.

At age 23, Lewis called on President Lyndon Johnson for federal intervention following a brutal attack on peaceful protesters by law enforcement near Selma, Ala.

Lewis’ appeal on that “Bloody Sunday,” March 7, 1965, turned public opinion against those trying to maintain the old social order of the South and moved President Johnson two days later to present to Congress what would become the Voting Rights Act.

Lewis was one of the “Big Six” leaders of the Civil Rights Movement. He is the last surviving keynote speaker from the 1963 March on Washington, of which he was a core architect. His impact on civil rights for African-Americans included advocating for desegregation laws and voters’ rights. Lewis was elected a U.S. Congressman from Georgia in 1986 and represents the state’s Fifth Congressional District including Atlanta and parts of four surrounding counties.

He has remained an outspoken advocate for domestic and international social and human rights issues. As recently as 2009, he was arrested at the embassy of Sudan, where he was protesting the obstruction of aid to refugees in Darfur.

“Congressman Lewis is one among us who has had the discipline and tenacity to stand tall, even in the face of physical danger, and he continues the struggle to change the world and make it a better place,” said Jacqueline J. Royrier, dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

www.iac.gatech.edu

MOOC Suspended Due to Technical, Quality Issues

INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Recently, Georgia Tech acted to suspend one of its free massive open online courses (MOOCs), citing technical and quality issues.

The course, “Fundamentals of Online Education: Planning and Application,” was offered through Coursera, one of the emerging distance education organizations that partners with universities to deliver free, noncredit academic courses on a global scale. More than 40,000 individuals registered for the course, which opened Jan. 28. A few days later, Tech requested that Coursera suspend the class pending further review.

“We apologize to those students who have been inconvenienced by this decision, but we are resolute in providing an academic standard of quality that is consistent with Georgia Tech’s reputation,” Professional Education Dean Nelson Baker said.

The suspension was in response to requests from Tech evaluators to suspend the course, according to a statement from Coursera, which suspends courses when they are requested to do so.

Learn Best Practices for Teaching MOOCs

In a recent Augmented Trader blog post, Tucker Balch, the first Georgia Tech professor to teach a Coursera course, shared lessons learned. Read it at http://c.gatech.edu/15g1K10

Campus Community Invited to Participate in Climate Assessment

INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

One component of Georgia Tech’s strategic plan is to create a culture of excellence by providing the highest quality of service to the campus community and the public.

That’s why the offices of Assessment and Institute Diversity are conducting a climate survey to gauge the Institute’s progress with regard to building and supporting a culture of collegiality, close collaboration and professional development opportunities for everyone.

The survey was developed with input from faculty, students and staff across the Georgia Tech community.

Responses to the survey will be used to inform leadership about the Institute’s strengths, as well as opportunities to improve the progress toward achieving the Institute’s goals.

ASSESSMENT, continued on page 2

www.whistle.gatech.edu
Admin Professionals Invited to Join New Group

If your job involves providing administrative support to a unit at Georgia Tech, there's a new campus organization you may want to join.

In January, the Tech chapter of the International Association of Administrative Professionals (IAAP) launched with the goal of providing a professional network and educational resources for office professionals.

“Part of the Institute’s strategic plan is to ‘relentlessly pursue institutional effectiveness,’” said the plan’s lead author, Dr. Deboleena Roy of Emory University.

“We invite anyone who is motivated and has the role of administrative support staff, regardless of your title, to join us.” said Chapter President LaLeota Sweeper Pitts, a senior administrative professional in Legal Affairs and Risk Management. “Installing a chapter of IAAP at Tech is one way to accomplish this, and we’re thankful for the support we’ve received from leadership and Dr. Peterson.”

The new Tech chapter of the International Association of Administrative Professionals has attracted 60 members so far.

Panelists suggested that researchers should rehearse sound bites before being interviewed by the media.

• Notify Government and Community Relations when you’re contacted by a policymaker.

The panelists providing tips for communicating with policymakers included GTRI’s Doug Britton, senior research engineer, Danielle Ayan, senior research scientist and Jud Ready, principal research engineer; Warren Matthews, a research scientist in the Office of Technology; and Danny Boston, a School of Economics professor.

Britton, who regularly appears before the Georgia Legislature to talk about his state-funded food processing and technology program, recommended rehearsing sound bites ahead of time, as if you were being interviewed by the media.

“Figure out the three to five words you want to communicate, even if your presentation is much longer,” Britton said. “Repeat them often.”

Fatimot Ladipo, assistant director of federal relations in the Office of Government and Community Relations, offered the following tips when dealing with policymakers:

• Speak in “common folks’ language.”

• Do your research on the group or individual you are speaking with.

Researchers Learn Communication Best Practices

MOOCs continued from page 1

said. “This is true regardless of whether the student is paying tuition to receive classroom instruction in Atlanta or freely participating in one of our MOOCs anywhere one can access the Internet.”

“These are today’s grand experiments in higher education,” he continued. “With any experiment, sometimes one has to press pause and reset, which is what we are doing. Leaders take risks to try new things, and we are leading.”

In signing an agreement with Coursera last July, Georgia Tech was one of the first universities in the nation to offer web-based courses online and create new opportunities for hands-on learning.

To date, Tech has successfully launched four courses through Coursera, and another seven — on topics such as music, mathematics and engineering — are open for enrollment. Other courses are in early stages of development.

MOOCs, continued from page 1

ASSESSMENT, continued from page 1

All members of the campus community have received an email that includes a link to the online survey.

Participation is completely voluntary, and responses will be kept private to the extent allowed by law. The survey will be open until late February.

For more information, contact Katie Makepeace, kmakepeace@geetech.edu.

For personalized media training, contact Matt Nagel, director of media relations, at nagel@gatech.edu.

The Georgia Tech Institute Communications Wardlaw Center 177 North Avenue Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0181

The idea to start a Tech chapter came to Pitts when she became involved with the Georgia Power chapter of IAAP in 2007. After a few years of serving on the organization’s committee, Pitts started to speak with her colleagues at Tech about starting a chapter here.

“Last March, a group of administrative professionals started the strategic planning process to bring this chapter to fruition,” she said. “We circulated a survey to admins, hosted a brown bag and held several meetings with our executive sponsors and the Georgia Division Board of IAAP. After completing several documents as required by IAAP’s headquarters, here we are less than a year later.”

The group, which currently has 60 members, is open to Institute employees and meets on the third Thursday of each month from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Gordy Room of the Wardlaw Center. The next meeting will be held on Feb. 21, and the topic of discussion will be the chapter’s goals for the future.

“We invite anyone who is motivated and has the role of administrative support staff, regardless of your title, to join us,” Pitts added.

The cost to join is $138, which includes a processing fee, and division and chapter dues.

For more information, contact Pitts at laleota.pitts@gatech.edu.

www.iaap-hq.org
Imagine Northside Drive and you probably see a street that you’d rather steer clear of lined with dilapidated buildings and overgrown weeds — or at least that’s what the students in Mike Dobbins’ studio envisioned when he mentioned the street to them.

“At first, they couldn’t understand why I wanted us to examine Northside Drive; they said ‘there’s nothing on it,’” said Dobbins, a professor of practice in the School of City and Regional Planning. “Until they realized that there is.”

Northside is actually a diamond in the rough when it comes to the role it could play in improving transportation and providing development opportunities in Atlanta. The street serves as the west frame of Atlanta’s downtown and midtown core, connecting Cobb County to Atlanta Station, Georgia Tech, the Georgia World Congress Center, the Georgia Dome, the Atlanta University Center, West End and points south.

“Northside should be a grand transit boulevard, a seam between east and west, not the divide that it is,” Dobbins said. “Our goal is to help change that.”

Dobbins became familiar with Northside’s potential while working as commissioner of planning for the City of Atlanta from 1996 to 2002. For the studio, he partnered with Emory McClinton, a board member of the Atlanta Tech, city planning and civil engineering school. Dobbins said that Northside Drive needs to be formally communicated, and getting the city to recognize the divide that it is,” Dobbins said. “Our goal is to help change that.”

“People didn’t think the project would be as useful as it has been in terms of providing information about what can be done.”

Although the studio is finished and the students have moved on, the project is not. Dobbins will now share the plan with the 150 people on his stakeholder list to get feedback.

Regardless of what happens next, the project has already accomplished two of Dobbins’ goals: getting people who are normally suspicious of others’ motives to come together in the same room and communicate, and getting the city to recognize that Northside Drive needs to be formally designated as a transit corridor.

“The ultimate goal would be to have a transportation system serving emerging development patterns based on what the students are proposing,” Dobbins said. “The city and GDOT would use the information in the plan to update their plans and funding priorities accordingly. We’ll just have to see what happens next.”

For more information, contact Dobbins at michael.dobbins@coa.gatech.edu or visit the project website at http://c.gatech.edu/15cn15s.
Tech Conductor Is No Stranger to Grammys

AMELIA PAVLIK
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Laura Inman at this year’s Grammy Awards.

A few Sundays ago, you may have snuggled up on your sofa and watched the Grammy Awards to see if your favorite artists would win. But not if you were Laura Inman — she was actually there.

“It is an unbelievable experience, being surrounded by some of your favorite artists in the world. A huge bonus is getting dressed up and walking the red carpet before the ceremony,” said Inman, an assistant professor and assistant director of choirs, who just attended her third Grammy Awards ceremony. “It’s surreal to look up and see icons such as Sting and B.B. King standing within arms length.”

For years, Inman has sung with professional choirs, including the Phoenix Chorale, where she has been a part of multiple recordings that have been nominated for and have won Grammys.

Most recently, the group won for “Spotless Rose,” which took home the award for Best Small Ensemble Performance in 2008.

This year’s invitation came after Inman participated in a recording by the Kansas City Chorale, “Life and Breath,” which was nominated for and won Grammys in the Best Engineered Album, Classical and Best Choral Performance categories. (Although Inman isn’t a member of the choral, the conductor, Charles Bruffy, is also the conductor of the Phoenix Chorale. He invited Inman and three other Phoenix singers to join the recording.)

“Unfortunately, every member of the group doesn’t get to take home a gold trophy, but it really doesn’t matter. Just being there is surreal, and sharing it with some of your best friends is priceless,” she said. “We all look forward to the after-party at the Staples Center. The party spans several ballrooms, with each featuring different live music, and is fully catered. It’s the kind of night you never forget.

Recently, The Whistle had an opportunity to learn more about Inman and her time at Georgia Tech.

Did you always know you wanted to be a conductor?

Not a conductor, but I was always interested in music. As a child, I was very artistic. I took dance lessons, painted, and played the piano and the clarinet in band. Monday night girls’ chorus rehearsals were my favorite part of the week. When I walked into the School of Music at the University of Louisville for the first time as an undergrad, I knew that music was going to be a part of my life forever.

My love for conducting was inspired by one of my college professors who encouraged me to continue on after earning my bachelor’s. I went on to Arizona State University (ASU) and pursued both a master’s and doctorate in conducting.

How did you arrive at Tech?

After I earned my degrees from ASU, I spent five years working with students at a charter school in Arizona and continued singing in the Phoenix Chorale. But a year ago, I decided to use my training and seek a university position, which had been a goal of mine. I liked that the music program at Tech wasn’t traditional — kind of like me. I accepted the position because I felt like I’d be able to grow here, and I have.

Describe an average day in your job.

I work with both the GT Chorale and the Women’s Chorus, so that is where the majority of my time goes. I also teach voice lessons to some of our music majors, and I’m designing a course that will eventually be required for music technology majors. Since I also have an active singing career, I have to find time to learn the songs — many of which are in various foreign languages — for my upcoming performances.

What are a few misconceptions people might have about your job?

Some people might think that we just play music all of the time, when in reality, I still have to meet all of the requirements that any other tenure-track professor does. Also, I’ve learned that you don’t have to be a degree in music to be a beautiful singer. I’m forever impressed by how talented some of my students are here at Tech, given that they don’t always have much musical experience.

Where is your favorite place to have lunch?

Zaya in the Student Center Food Court, and I always order theshawarma, which is a kind of wrap filled with chicken.

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

My father. He passed away a few years ago, and I’d love to be able to have a conversation with him again.

Tell us something unique about yourself.

I have always loved Irish dance, so I recently began Irish dance lessons. It’s much harder than I expected!

Looking for handicap-accessible apartment or small house in Atlanta to rent. Couch was in an accident and in wheelchair but doesn’t want to move back home. Email kewhitekit@gatech.edu.

3BR/2BA newly renovated home in Perimeter. Easy access to I-75 and I-285. Easy access to Tech. $8 to $25. Email akpavlik@gmail.com for more info and photos.

GE Profile 3.5-cubic ft. digital washer and matching electric dryer. Washer is in perfect working condition. Dryer makes a slight clicking sound when working, but is $300 (sell or OBO). Email jason@gatech.edu or call 404-996-3737.

Looking for handicap-accessible apartment or small house in Atlanta to rent. Couch was in an accident and in wheelchair but doesn’t want to move back home. Email kewhitekit@gatech.edu.