

Trending at Tech: More Employees Opting to ‘Stand and Deliver’

MARGARET TATE
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Every year, one of the most popular New Year’s resolutions is to get healthier. If you’ve set this goal for 2016, you may be able to work toward it without leaving your desk. How? By standing instead of sitting.

The standing desk is not new — notables like Thomas Jefferson, Charles Dickens, and Winston Churchill all stood up to work — but by the mid-20th century, the practice was viewed as eccentric. Now it’s trending again in workplaces all over the country, including Georgia Tech.

The main reason is growing evidence that sitting hour after hour, day after day, is bad for us. A study cited in Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise found that people who sit for most of the day were 54 percent more likely to die of a heart attack. Prolonged sitting is also linked to obesity, Type 2 diabetes, back problems, and other conditions. Studies on top of studies, cited in article after article, have been spreading the word. The human body was not meant to sit for long stretches of time.

One person who read some of those articles was Stephen DeWeerth, professor and associate dean for Research and Innovation in the College of Engineering.

He thought a standing desk might help his back problems. So, with the blessings of his doctor, he ordered one in 2013. (At first, he even combined it with a modified treadmill to make a walking desk, but that proved incompatible with wearing a suit every day.)

“It has helped the back problems,” he said. “I definitely feel better that way.”

DeWeerth characterizes himself as a “complete convert” but not a “complete user,” estimating that he stands at his desk about two hours a day. He spends a lot of time in meetings, but that’s all the more reason to have a standing desk, he said. “Standing is a relief from the drudgery of sitting in meetings all day,” he said. “My back, my alertness, the kinds of things you might expect exercise would help with, this

Campagne Wraps Up in Historic Fashion

STACY BRAUKMAN
OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT

The most successful fundraising campaign in Georgia Tech’s history concluded on December 31, 2015. When the books were closed, more than $1.8 billion had been raised.

“We are humbled by the knowledge of the impact of Campaign Georgia Tech and what it will do for the Institute, and most importantly for the students and faculty,” said Campaign Co-Chair John F. Brock III, ChE’70, MS ChE’71. “It is an extraordinary success by any measure.”

And there are many ways to measure it. Not only did the Campaign exceed its $1.5 billion goal by $300 million, but it also succeeded in meeting — and surpassing — every major goal across the board. These included but are not limited to:

• Every college, and every school within the College of Engineering, met their respective funding goals.
• 103 new endowed chairs and professorships were established.

A ROBOTIC PLAYGROUND

Georgia Tech is building a new lab that will allow roboticists from around the country to conduct experiments remotely. Researchers from other universities, as well as middle and high school students, will be able to schedule experiments, upload their own programming code, watch the robots in real-time via streamed video feeds, and receive scientific data demonstrating the results. The “Robotarium” is expected to house up to 100 ground and aerial swarm robots. Here, students use a mini-version of the Robotarium in a test session. Learn more at www.c.gatech.edu/robotarium.

Activist to be Awarded Social Courage Prize in April

LAURA DIAMOND
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

A humanitarian activist who advocates for a military culture free of sexual assault and violence has been named the recipient of the 2016 Ivan Allen Jr. Prize for Social Courage.

Nancy Parrish helped launch a national movement to reform how the U.S. military prosecutes sexual violence. Protect Our Defenders works to transform the culture of harassment and rape within the military through legal reform, advocacy, education, and free legal and case assistance for victims.

Parrish also co-founded the Human Rights Watch’s Northern California Chapter, which as part of its mission

Deadline Approaching for GTFWC Scholarship

Georgia Tech students who are children of Tech employees are eligible for scholarships of up to $1,500 from the Georgia Tech Faculty Women’s Club. The deadline for 2016–17 scholarships is Jan. 21. www.gtfwc.gatech.edu/scholarship

Tech Gets High Honors for Green Cleaning Program

Georgia Tech is the 2015 Grand Award winner in the higher education category for the Annual Green Cleaning Awards for Schools & Universities. Building Services has worked for nine years to continually reduce its use of chemicals in keeping campus clean. www.c.gatech.edu/green-clean

IN THIS ISSUE

Employees Give Generously to Charitable Campaign 2
Faculty and Staff Achievements 3
Why Ashok Goel Loves Teaching at Tech 4
**Employee Give More Than $350,000 to State Campaign**

**KRISTEN BAILEY, INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS**

During the 2015 Charitable Campaign, the Tech community once again showed its community-minded nature with generous contributions to nonprofits that will help people around the state of Georgia.

This year, 1,135 individuals contributed or pledged a total of $351,604. This is the second-highest total fundraising amount for the annual campaign. Tech employees gave to 390 charitable organizations.

**BOR Approves New Degree, Professorships**

**KRISTEN BAILEY, INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS**

The Board of Regents (BOR) convened for its first meeting of 2016 on Jan. 6 in Atlanta. For Tech, the meeting held votes on a new degree and professorships.

The BOR approved the establishment of Tech’s new Bachelor of Science in Music Technology degree. The degree program is the first of its kind at a University System of Georgia school and will be housed in the School of Music within the College of Architecture. In contrast to a performance or fine art degree, the program’s objective is to educate and train the next generation of designers, developers, leaders, and entrepreneurs in music technology. The curriculum combines professional training in music with interdisciplinary studies in mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, computer science, or industrial design.

The addition of this degree also makes Tech one of only a few institutions in the nation offering a music technology degree at the bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral level. The meeting also brought the approval of a new professorship. The Dunn Family Early Career Professorship was established in the School of Physics for a tenure-track faculty member in the early stage of his or her academic career. The Board approved the appointment of John Wise, assistant professor, to this professorship, which is supported by the Dunn Family Foundation.

The Board also approved the establishment of the Elizabeth D. and Thomas M. Holdner Faculty Fund, which will be housed in the Scheller College of Business. Support for the fund is provided by Thomas M. Holdner, a 1979 Tech graduate, and his wife Elizabeth.

In addition, Vinod Singhal, who held the Dunn Family Professorship in Operations Management in the Scheller College of Business, was appointed to the Charles W. Brady Chair. Beyond Tech, the Board also approved the creation of the new Georgia State University, resulting from the consolidation of Georgia State University and Georgia Perimeter College. Mark Becker, president of Georgia State University, will continue in this capacity.

Keep up with all University System of Georgia news at www.usg.edu.

**Student Life Restructures for New Year**

SARA WARNER, STUDENT LIFE

As of Jan. 1, the newly named Division of Student Life officially assumed its new organizational structure and started the search for a new assistant vice president.

The recent renaming of the division and reorganization reflect feedback received from a study completed by Tech’s Office of Strategic Consulting.

“The visioning project report offered the Division a blueprint for the future,” said Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students John Stein. “We used this report to reorganize our structure and to help us collectively set priorities for our work with students.”

The report pointed to the need for a reorganization that focused on the needs of students, with greater operational coordination and collaboration across the Division’s units. The new organizational structure reorganizes the departments of the division into seven functional subgroups, streamlining the leadership team and setting up the division departments for additional collaboration in supporting the student body. The reorganization also welcomes a new assistant vice president for Student Life who will manage the division’s business functions.

“Fundamentally, the mission of the Division has not changed” said Stein. “We will continue to put students first in all that we do and students and faculty will still be able to access all of the resources and support programs offered by the Dean of Students Office and the Division, now reorganized for greater effectiveness and impact.”

President G.P. “Bud” Peterson weighed in, saying, “Managing the day-to-day operations of the 18 entities within Georgia Tech’s Division of Student Life can be both complicated and challenging. Grouping like departments and responsibilities within Student Life will encourage collaboration, enhance organizational effectiveness, and improve our ability to support our students, which is what the Division of Student Life is really all about.”

Formerly known as Student Affairs, the Division of Student Life serves Tech’s population of more than 21,000 students with professional staff in numerous areas: the Office of the Dean of Students, Office of the Arts, Counseling Center, Office of Leadership Education and Development, Parents Program, Development for Student Affairs, an internal Office of Research and Assessment, Disability Services, Greek Affairs, Leadership and Civic Engagement, New Student and Sophomore Programs, Student Diversity Programs, Student Integrity, Student Media, Women’s Resource Center, Veterans Resource Center, and LGBTQ+ Resource Center. The Dean of Students also advises the Student Government Association.
STANDING, from page 1

seems to help as well.”

Of course, DeWeerth is not the only Georgia Tech employee to unchain from the chair. Georgia Tech’s newest building, the Engineered Biosystems Building (Ebbe), has been furnished with adjustable desks throughout, a design decision based on the growing demand among faculty and staff for a standing option. “The desk raises and lowers with the push of a button,” said Carla Zachery, the EBB’s director of Business Operations. “We have it as part of the original plan and not at an additional cost down the road.”

In established offices with stationary desks, people are finding ways to create their own sit/stand options. Christian Duncan, senior IT professional for Institute Communications, said he has become an “unofficial expert” on standing desks, having configured more than a dozen setups for his coworkers since 2011.

“The decision was made in the department that if people wanted to stand, we would cover the cost as long as it could be done fairly cheaply,” he said. “We’ve found ways to get it done in the neighborhood of $150 to $200, sometimes less, depending on the situation.”

He typically uses three components to create a standing desk: a platform for the monitor, a lower platform for the keyboard (using stacks of paper to make finer height adjustments) and, last but not least, an anti-fatigue mat.

Duncan strives to ensure that users’ eyes hit about 25 to 33 percent down from the top of the monitor screen, and that their arms form a 90 degree angle when using the keyboard. He also tells people: Prepare to hurt. “It normally takes about two to three weeks to break your body into this new setup,” he said.

Not every standing desk adopter adapts. Duncan estimates that about half the people in the department who started standing have kept at it. But he agrees with experts that it’s much easier for standing to be continuous as it is moving regularly. He stands for some tasks and sits for others. “Doing anything for eight hours, whether it’s standing or sitting, is going to grate on you after a while.”

Tips to Get Moving in the Workplace

• Get a sit/stand desk if possible.
• Stand up and stretch several times an hour.
• Get up instead of rolling your chair.
• Stand when talking on the phone.
• Go talk to a coworker instead of emailing.
• Use the restroom on a different floor.
• Take the stairs instead of the elevator, especially when you are going only one floor up or two floors down.
• Take a short walk around campus during your lunch break.

PRIZE, from page 1

to protect human rights around the world sought to prevent the use of child soldiers. In addition, she worked with President Jimmy Carter and Rosalynn Carter in support of their international humanitarian work at the Carter Center. She also served as an officer of the Children’s Guardian Fund Board of Sarasota, which helps foster children.

Parrish will be honored during a symposium on Feb. 18.

“Ms. Nancy Parrish has long been at the forefront in addressing the many difficult social issues facing our country today,” Peterson said. “Here at Georgia Tech, we are familiar with her international humanitarian work and the many initiatives she has undertaken to help alleviate human suffering. Through her exemplary efforts as founder and CEO of Protect Our Defenders, she has given a voice to victims of sexual assault in the military. Our world and our country have been greatly enriched by her selfless service.”

The Ivan Allen Jr. Prize for Social Courage 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 and livelihoods.

Parrish has been harassed and threatened because of her work on behalf of active duty service women and men, veterans, and civilians who are victims of military sexual assault. She created Protect Our Defenders in 2011 after noticing a lack of attention to the issue. Parrish is a beacon of light in a dark time, and we strive to be that beacon of light today for our young service women and men and veterans.

The prize comes with a $100,000 stipend. The Wilbur and Hilda Glenn Family Foundation endows the award in perpetuity. Parrish plans to donate the money to Protect Our Defenders.

Learn more about the prize at www.ivananallenprize.gatech.edu.
Exchange of Ideas Creates Classroom ‘Rhythm’

with Ashok Goel

VICTOR ROGERS
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Professor Ashok Goel never had any doubt that he would enter the family business: education.

“I always wanted to teach,” said Goel. “Growing up in (Kurukshetra) India, my grandfather was a primary school teacher, and my father was a professor of physics. Teaching runs in my blood, I suppose. In my family, teaching and research were considered the things to do.”

He came to the U.S. to attend The Ohio State University and pursue a Ph.D. in physics, but he instead earned a degree in computer science after working for a few years.

“Some people are like arrows. They know exactly what they want to do in life and they shoot like this,” Goel said, demonstrating a straight shot. “I’m afraid I would more like a spiral,” he joked, referring to the fact that he went from physics to computing.

Now a professor of computer science and cognitive science in the College of Computing’s School of Interactive Computing, Goel also is the director of the School’s Ph.D. program in Human-Centered Computing. In addition, he serves as director of Interactive Computing’s Design & Intelligence Laboratory, co-director of Tech’s Center for Biologically Inspired Design, and is a fellow of the Brook Byers Institute for Sustainable Systems.

He has been at Georgia Tech for 26 years. “Sometimes people ask me, ‘Why haven’t you moved?’ My answer is Georgia Tech changes into a new place every five years,” he said. “The changes here are so rapid.”

Online education is one area where Goel has seen many changes in the past five years. Another is interdisciplinary research.

“Interdisciplinary research has always been a major focus of Georgia Tech. It’s challenging,” he said. “The big difficulty is that we all speak different languages. I do a lot of work with biologists, engineers, and designers, and we all talk different languages. Sometimes, it takes a special effort to understand and appreciate each other. Going in you respect them, but that’s different from being able to understand them.”

Classroom Strategies
One of Goel’s classes is Knowledge-Based Artificial Intelligence course.

Intelligence in their own work, whether a company hires them or if they start their own company.

The third learning outcome is we want students to be able to appreciate the majesty of their own intelligence,” Goel said. “Artificial intelligence is very closely connected to human cognition. By building these AI machines, they will begin to appreciate how awesome human intelligence is.”

Throughout the semester, Goel administers three anonymous surveys to the class to find out what is working, what improvements could be made, and how the course compares to other courses they are taking. He also asks for feedback regarding the pace of the class.

“I want frequent feedback, so I’ll have an idea of what the students are thinking,” Goel said. “We take the feedback very seriously.”

Really Reaching the Students
“I like ideas,” Goel said. “When I was a student, my teachers were so good at sharing the exhilaration of new ideas, where the mind sort of expands. You’re ginning ear to ear, and the professor is ginning ear to ear. I don’t know how to put it. It was pure joy. It’s the other way around now,” he said. “When I share the exhilaration of new ideas with my students, and I see them grin from ear to ear — that’s what keeps me going: the joy on their faces and the smile in their eyes. I can go into a classroom and feel the pulse of the class. I can see from their eyes, smiles, and facial expressions when we are connecting, and they are enjoying the ideas. When that happens, it’s a beautiful moment.”

But Goel is careful to add that this is not simply a transfer of ideas. It’s a two-way process.

“They are very smart students,” he says. “Once their minds start moving in a particular direction, then they come up with new ideas that I had never thought about. There is rhythm established.”

Over the years, Goel has been recognized for excellent teaching. He was a Lilly Teaching Fellow, and he has received both the Georgia Tech Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award and the College of Computing’s William A. “gus” Baird Faculty Teaching Award. In 2015, the College of Computing awarded him the James C. Edelenfield Faculty Fellowship Award.

His teaching excellence has grown out of a strategy that includes active learning, collaboration, and reflection. He said that because students take in a lot of information, they need time to reflect on what they learned, how it applies, and even why they learned the lesson in that particular order.

“We take time to pause and connect it all. We encourage a lot of reflective time.”

“I can see from their eyes, smiles, and facial expressions when we are connecting, and they are enjoying the ideas. When that happens, it’s a beautiful moment.” — Ashok Goel

Goel takes research from his lab, changes it into classroom projects, and gives the projects to his students.

“They are thrilled with it because they are doing cutting-edge research. It’s not the same project that people were doing 10 or 20 years ago. It’s also very challenging.”

Sometimes his students report spending 30 or 40 hours on a project.

“I don’t want them to spend that much time on it, but they are doing it on their own,” he said. “When that happens, I know it’s working — because they want to do the work.”

Advice for New Faculty
Goel has found that students react to how the teacher acts.

“If you feel the passion, the students will feel the passion,” Goel said. “If you’re engaging it, the students will enjoy it. But if they sense that you’re just going through the motions, they will go through the motions, too.”

Goel suggests that new faculty make use of teaching resources that are available on campus.

“There are very smart people in the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning and in the Office of Assessment who know a lot about teaching and learning,” he said. “Use those resources. Please don’t feel like you are alone. You’re not. There are people who are willing to help.”

CLASSIFIEDS

REAL ESTATE/ROOMMATES

For rent: Hilton Head Island, 2BR/2BA, April 2-9 at Marriott Grand Island Ocean Resort, beach front, $1350/ wk. For more information and pictures visit www.vrbo.com/641900. Contact Carla Strother, carla.strother@oit.gatech.edu, (803) 507-8185.

For rent: 3BR/2BA home on 0.7 acres inside perimeter near 1-285, Hwy. 79, Decatur, and Emory. Renovated w/ hardwood floors, new appliances, washer/dryer. Druid Hills High School district. Available Nov. 30, $1,400/mo. Call 706-369-3484.

For rent: 2BR/1BA bungalow, minute to Tech, quiet intown neighborhood (NW ATL), HW floors, renovated, central HVAC, DW, disposal, screened back porch, fenced back yard, W/O, carport, pets OK. $850/mo. Contact: suzanne.bock@gatech.edu.

Seeking a responsible, clean, dog-loving, non-smoking roommate in lovely 2BR/1BA (1,050 sq. ft.) Ansley Park garden apartment with parking. 2 mi. from Tech near bus/train lines. Near Piedmont Park and Atlanta Botanical Garden. Contact olithepaul@gmail.com

MISCELLANEOUS

Looking for a carpeted partner for daily commute from East Cobb to Tech campus. Email bdespy@hotmail.com.

River Hawk II-60 boat and Torpedo motor for sale. River Hawk 15’3” B-60 2013 Camo. Torpedo Germany Cruise Motor 2.0 R/T. Includes following accessories: Lowrance DSI Fish Finder, Dual Duralac batteries, guest on-board battery charger, Traler 9-2012, two installed folding fishing seats. Used only twice — the brand new $5,500. Call Joe, 404-849-1193.

Wanted: Family downriver ski equipment, to purchase or borrow. Preferred sizes: 95cm (kids) 165cm (woman)’s 185cm (men)’s. Boots: 11.5 (kids); 9.5 (woman’s); 10-11 (men)’s. Contact rustin.meyer@psych.gatech.edu.

Sofa and love seat matching set. Sofa is 8’W and love seat is 60”W. Both pieces reside at each end. Very good condition. No rips, tears, or stains. Pictures available upon request. Selling set for $350. Contact Rita Brown, 770-928-7344 (home) or 678-736-1138 (cell).


Looking for carpet: Commuting from Athens every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Leave around 9 a.m. in Athens and 7 p.m. from Georgia Tech to avoid heavy traffic. Contact frandweiler@gmail.com.

Free yellow jacket nest removal, Nests to be used for research in the School of Biology. Call 404-386-6311 or e-mail michael.goodisman@biology.gatech.edu.

Add run for all three listings in the order in which they are received. Submit your 35-word-or-less ad to editor@comv.gatech.edu.