

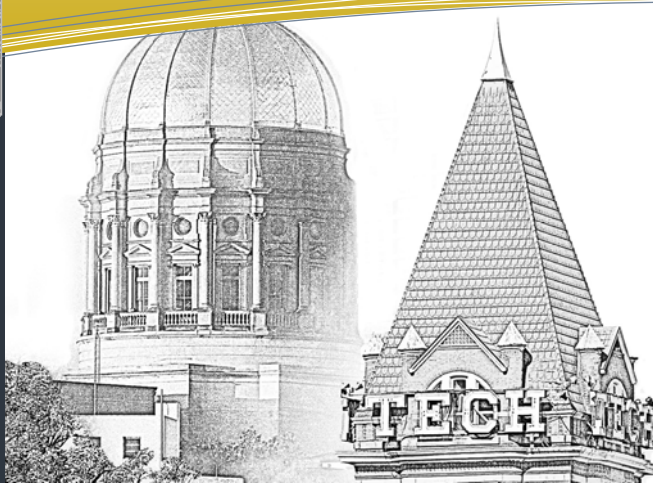


capitol buzz

news from the front line

U.S. Rep. Phil Gingrey (R-Marietta), brought his district staff to a Georgia Tech baseball game on April 8 where he threw out the first pitch. President Bud Peterson, Provost Gary Schuster, and director of federal relations Robert Knotts were present to welcome the representative back to his alma mater. Rep. Gingrey is a 1965 graduate with a degree in Chemistry.

Georgia Tech Legislative Intern **Zack Howard** was selected by his peers as the "Best Overall" intern for the House of Representatives. Bestowed the honor by a vote of all House interns, Howard was recognized in the annual House Intern Yearbook.



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Georgia Tech Fares Well in Difficult Session

Although legislators considered hundreds of bills and resolutions throughout the 2009 General Assembly session, the focus from the opening gavel was the budget. There was never any doubt that tough decisions would need to be made as revenues continued trending downward month by month. Although the University System of Georgia and Georgia Tech were not allocated funds to meet all needs, many priorities were funded.

Georgia Tech officials expressed their gratitude that the In-

stitute's top legislative priority, \$43 million in bonds for the construction of the Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons (CULC), was fully funded. This was the largest bond appropriation made in the University System budget this fiscal year.

Site preparation for the CULC is already underway using funds appropriated during last year's legislative session.

The University System as a whole will receive \$108 million of the \$114 million that was requested for new formula funding.

It will also receive \$60 million in bonds for Major Repair and Rehabilitation (MRR) of its aging facilities on campuses throughout the System. Georgia Tech should receive a portion of these funds to address campus needs.

Other bright spots in the budget where Georgia Tech will benefit include \$1.5 million for Food Technology Research housed within the Georgia Tech Research Institute. Through the Georgia Research Alliance, the University System was allocated \$3 million for science equipment and technol-

see "Georgia Tech Fares Well" on p. 2

President Peterson Visits Capitol on First Day

Georgia Tech's 11th president, G.P. "Bud" Peterson, spent most of the morning on April 1, his first day as president, at the state Capitol introducing himself and thanking lawmakers for their support of Georgia Tech and higher education. Despite the hectic pace of Legislative Day 39, he was invited to speak in both the House and Senate chambers where he told legislators that Georgia has a nationwide reputation as a state that supports public higher education.

In the Senate he was introduced by Majority Leader and Georgia Tech alumnus Chip

Rogers (R-Woodstock). In the House, Higher Education Chairman Bill Hembree (R-Winston) introduced him after Speaker Glenn Richardson (R-Hiram) quieted the chamber with the announcement of a special guest. President Peterson thanked both chambers for their support and hospitality. ■



TOP: President Peterson meets with GT alumnus Senator Johnny Grant.
BOTTOM: President Peterson talks with House Higher Ed Chairman Bill Hembree.
GEORGE RAY/GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

LEGISLATIVE RECAP

The final days of the 2009 Legislative Session were filled with excitement and anticipation as legislators and interested spectators waited to see what bills would reach the floor for a vote prior to the close of business at midnight on Day 40. Since this is the first year of the biennial session, any bill remaining in a committee can be considered next year.

The following is a recap of bills affecting higher education.

- T** House Resolution 165 requests the University System of Georgia help make Georgia the #1 destination for entrepreneurs by expanding education in science, innovation, technology and energy. The resolution was adopted.
- T** House Bill 157 modifies the “triggers” that would limit HOPE payments if the lottery fund dips by 8% or more. The purpose of the bill is to ensure the long term financial viability of HOPE. The bill passed both the House and Senate and awaits consideration by the Governor.
- T** House Bill 391 would remove the state sales tax on the sale of college textbooks. The bill remains in the House Ways and Means Committee and may be reconsidered next year.
- T** House Bill 700 would make the Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission (GSFIC) responsible for “all procurements, design, project management, construction, and commissioning related activities for all board of regents projects designated in a resolution of the commission authorizing the issuance of bonds for such project.” The bill passed the House and was amended in the Senate Finance Committee. It was not brought to the Senate floor for a vote.
- T** Senate Bill 169 would place restrictions on stem cell research. The bill passed the Senate, but was held in the House Science and Technology Committee for further consideration.
- T** Senate Bill 194 would allow state agencies, including Georgia Tech, to enter into multiyear contracts with private energy services companies and allow the projected energy savings to be used to finance the cost of a building’s energy retrofiting. After gaining initial support, the bill was amended and the final version did not pass.
- T** Senate Bill 201 would remove the restrictions currently placed on voluntary tax return contributions for research of ovarian, breast and prostate cancer. The bill would allow the funds to also be used for research of other forms of cancer and Georgia Tech researchers are well positioned to compete for these funds. The bill passed both the House and Senate and awaits consideration by the Governor.
- T** Senate Bill 257 would allow University System faculty and staff who elected to participate in the Optional Retirement System of the Board of Regents the opportunity to switch into the Teachers Retirement System Plan. No action was taken and the bill remains in the Senate Retirement Committee.

Georgia Tech Fares Well, continued from p. 1

ogy. Also, the Traditional Industries Program (which aids Georgia’s pulp and paper, food processing, and carpet and textile industries) will receive \$1.6 million in continuation funding. Georgia Tech works with each of these industries to foster technological improvements.

Governor Perdue has until May 13 to sign or veto legislation. He has line item veto authority in the budget, so each alloca-

tion is pending his final approval.

Georgia Tech programs that will not receive funding or will see a reduction in the FY 2010 budget are the Advanced Technology Development Center Seed Capital fund (\$5 million), the Georgia Tech Regional Engineering Program (\$1 million), and Advanced Communications (\$1.26 million). As a result of declining state revenues, there is also a 12 percent cut to the System’s base

allocations.

In light of the particularly difficult year for the state budget, University System and Institute officials will continue working to determine funding priorities throughout the remainder of the year. Look for more information in the coming months on how you and the Legislative Network can remain engaged in these efforts. **T**

Take Time to Thank Lawmakers

Please take a few minutes to write or call your legislators and House and Senate leaders to thank them for their support during this session. Our alumni and students are our best demonstration of how a Georgia Tech education can positively impact the state and community. Your gratitude for their time and efforts makes a positive impact. Please consider contacting the legislators from the following list.

Governor Sonny Perdue

203 State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
404-656-1776

Lt. Governor Casey Cagle

240 State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
404-656-5030

Speaker Glenn Richardson

332 State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
404-656-5020

Sen. Tommie Williams

President Pro Tempore
321 State Capitol
Atlanta, GA 30334
404-656-0089

Rep. Mark Burkhalter

Speaker Pro Tempore
340 State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
404-656-5072

Sen. Chip Rogers

Senate Majority Leader
236 State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
404-463-1378

Rep. Jerry Keen

House Majority Leader
338 State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
404-656-5052

Sen. Jack Hill

Chair, Appropriations
234 State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
404-656-5038

Rep. Ben Harbin

Chair, Appropriations
245 State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
404-463-2247

Sen. Seth Harp

Chair, Higher Education,
Chair, Higher Ed. Appropriations
121-D State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Rep. Bill Hembree

Chair, Higher Education
417-A State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
404-656-5146

Rep. Bob Smith

Chair, Higher Ed. Appropriations
245 State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
404-463-2247

Sen. Johnny Grant

GT Alumnus
321 CLOB
Atlanta, GA 30334
404-656-0082

Rep. Hardie Davis

GT Alumnus
612 CLOB
Atlanta, GA 30334
404-656-0325

getting buzzy

calls to action

Thank you, GTLN members, for urging House leaders to retain the full \$43 million for the Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons and support USG allocations.

T Write and call House and Senate leaders to thank them for their support of the University System and Georgia Tech. *(see adjacent article)*

PHOTOS: GT at the Capitol, 2009



PHOTOS: GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY;
GEORGE RAY/GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

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