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## capitol buzz

news from the front line

**T** Georgia Tech Associate Professor Kirk Bowman was named a "Shining Star" and recognized on the floor of the House of Representatives last week. Dr. Bowman was named Georgia's "Professor of the Year" by the Carnegie Foundation. He is a faculty member in the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs. Rep. Bob Smith established the "Shining Star" awards to recognize deserving citizens.

**T** Dr. Bill Koros, GRA Eminent Scholar and professor in the School of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, spoke to members of the House Science and Technology Committee about his energy and sustainability research. Rep. Amos Amerson (R-Dahlonga) chairs the committee.

**T** The Georgia Tech Band was recognized in the House and Senate for its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary and appearance in the 2008 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City. Chris Moore, director of Athletic Bands, thanked House members from the podium for the honor.

## Budget Uncertainties Change Session Schedule

With much uncertainty surrounding the national and state economy, the General Assembly approved a schedule that will split the 40-day legislative session with an expected adjournment date in late June.

Legislators will meet most weeks between now and March 25 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, leaving Mondays and Fridays open for committee work. They will then break on March 25

with plans to reconvene on June 22 for up to five days.

The break will allow the Appropriations Committee additional time to understand the ramifications of the national stimulus package and consider actual FY 2009 state revenues.

Record low revenue figures for January may prompt Governor Sonny Perdue to lower the revenue estimate for the remainder of FY 2009 and require state agencies

to cut more from their budgets. House Appropriations subcommittees continue to hold hearings about both the FY 2009 and FY 2010 budgets as they await the necessary information to move forward with the budget bills.

This Wednesday will mark Day 20, or the halfway point, of the 2009 session. **T**

## GT President Finalist Named by Regents



G.P. "Bud" Peterson

Last week the Board of Regents and Chancellor Erroll B. Davis, Jr. named Dr. G.P. "Bud" Peterson as the finalist for Georgia Tech's vacant president position.

Dr. Peterson currently serves as the Chancellor of the University of Colorado at Boulder and was previously the Provost at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

He holds degrees in Mechanical Engineering from Kansas State University and Texas A&M University.

Georgia law dictates that the Regents must wait a minimum of 14 days after announcing the finalist(s) to name the President. The earliest an announcement will be made is February 25. **T**

## Interim President Schuster Speaks at Capitol

Last week, Georgia Tech Interim President Gary Schuster was invited to speak before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Higher Education by Chairman Bob Smith (R-Watkinsville).

Schuster was joined by University of Georgia President Michael Adams and Medical College of Georgia President Daniel Rahn as they each spoke about their institutions and the impact of the

current and future budget reductions.

Dr. Schuster took the opportunity to focus on a few items of great importance to Georgia Tech including the capital outlay for

# GTRI Celebrates 75th Anniversary

The Georgia Tech Research Institute held a breakfast at the Georgia Railroad Freight Depot across from the Capitol last week to celebrate its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary and to thank state leaders for their support.

GTRI was created by an act of the General Assembly in 1934 as

the State Engineering Experiment Station with three employees and a budget of \$12,000. It currently has a budget of more than \$185 million and 1,300 employees.

The breakfast brought together legislators and Georgia Tech officials, including Interim President Gary Schuster and Vice President


and GTRI Director Steve Cross.

Later that morning, Dr. Cross and GTRI were recognized by both the Senate and House where SR 51 and HR 219 were read, respectively. These resolutions commended GTRI for its contributions to the state of Georgia and its citizens. **T**

## GT Intern Program Going Strong

Year after year, Georgia Tech has exceptional students who work at the Capitol either through a college-credit internship or on individual assignments. They are typically in high-demand because of their reputation for hard work and reliability.

On February 3, these students were treated to lunch with House Higher Education Chairman Bill Hembree (R-Winston), Rep. Hardie Davis, EE '92 (D-Gracewood), former Rep. Richard Royal, IE '62, and Georgia Chief Operating Officer Jim Lientz, IM '65, where they were given terrific advice on how to get the most out of their internships. The lunch was generously sponsored by Georgia Tech alumni Rusty Sewell, TEXT '70, Scott Draper, IM '77, and Stephanie Carter, AB '05, who lobby for their respective clients during the legislative session.

See the sidebar for a complete listing of Georgia Tech's student interns. 

## HOPE Legislation on the Move

House Appropriations Chairman Ben Harbin (R-Evans) is sponsoring legislation that will revise the book allowance in the HOPE Scholarship under certain financial conditions.

HB 157 modifies the previous "triggers" that would stop book payments if the lottery fund dips to a certain level.

The legislation states that "if during a fiscal year, the lottery fund receives less than 92% of the "highest" year-end balance, school book purchases for a single student will not exceed \$150.00. If the amount is less than 84%, all school

book purchase allotments will be eliminated. Finally, if the lottery fund receives less than 75%, all mandatory fees allotted by [the] benefit program will be eliminated."

This legislation was approved in the House on February 5 and has been favorably reported to the full Senate by the Senate Higher Education Committee. A vote is expected this week.

The purpose of this bill is to ensure the long-term financial viability of the HOPE program.

Also approved in the House since our last issue was HR 165,

Rep. Bob Smith's resolution urging "four-year colleges and universities of the University System of Georgia to help make Georgia the #1 destination for entrepreneurs in the United States of America by developing, and expanding education for the support of science, innovation, technology, energy, and new Georgia entrepreneurs." Georgia Tech is working with Rep. Smith on ways to promote the importance of entrepreneurship. **T**

## Interim President, continued from p. 1

construction of the G. Wayne Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons (CULC), incremental funding of the formula for basic campus operations, and Major Repair and Rehabilitation (MRR) funding to maintain the Institute's aging buildings.

Schuster also spoke of the

state's return on investment generated by Georgia Tech research, saying that the Institute receives about \$250 million in state funding but generates twice that figure in annual revenues from its research enterprise.

In the audience at the capitol to support Dr. Schuster were Stu-

dent Government President Nick Wellkamp and Legislative Network Chairman Jason Byars who were able to meet and speak with many legislators and thank them for their support of Georgia Tech and the University System. **T**

## getting buzzy

calls to action

**T** Write, call, and visit your legislators to remind them of the importance of the \$43 million in construction funds for the Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons.

Thanks to the many of you who have informed us of your contact with state leaders. We love to hear how our GTLN members are making an impact around the state.

## capitol jackets

GT's student interns

Katie Beall – Secretary of State

Eric Griswold – Georgia Chamber of Commerce Government Relations

Leah Hall – House Minority Leader DuBose Porter

Zack Howard – Reps. Tom McCall and Roger Lane

Cody Kamin – House Higher Ed Committee

Heather Macfie – Senator Ronnie Chance

Chelsea McEnroe – House Health & Human Services/Children & Youth Committees

Ben Porter – House Transportation Committee

Robin Quattlebaum – Secretary of State

Lindsey Sharp – Rep. Matt Ramsey

Adrienne Smith – Georgia Department of Transportation

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