New Controls in Place for Protecting Institute Data

As part of the Institute’s commitment to keeping campus informed, the following represents an overview of the latest developments and progress in the aftermath of Georgia Tech’s recent data disclosure.

Professor Raheem Beyah’s cross-functional team has worked to establish more effective controls for managing Institute data for the long term. We are rolling these controls out now to also prevent the risk of data leakages in the event that teleworking and online instruction are required. As part of efforts to protect data, the following actions have been outlined for the coming weeks:

**Mandatory Training Starting Monday, March 16**
All employees are asked to complete data governance, data security, and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) compliance training, which will be available from Monday, March 16, to Monday, April 13. The Office of Information Technology (OIT) will communicate training details. Moving forward, this compliance training will be required on an annual basis for all employees.

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**Monitoring Coronavirus**

On March 12, President Cabrera notified the campus community that Tech will be moving all instruction to a distance format after Spring Break. The week of March 23 will be used for faculty and students to experiment and test systems. Classes will formally restart March 30.

Please take care of yourselves while you are away from campus and be mindful of the various safety measures you should take to avoid and prevent illness. We will keep in touch with you via email, social channels, and on the resource page at [health.gatech.edu/coronavirus](http://health.gatech.edu/coronavirus) as the situation changes and additional decisions are made.

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**UNFORGETTABLE**

This year’s Guthman Musical Instrument Competition paired each finalist with a skilled musician from the Atlanta area in brief yet unforgettable performances. Second-place finisher Krzysztof Cybulski (above right), whose MEMO/MOVE instrument uses motorized sliders to create unusual musical textures, performed with MILK + SIZZ, a Grammy-winning husband and wife production team.

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**Provost Search Underway**

**SUSIE IVY**
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

President Ángel Cabrera has named a search advisory committee in an international search for Georgia Tech’s next provost and executive vice president for Academic Affairs. The search follows the announcement that Provost Rafael L. Bras intends to step down on Sept. 1 and return to the faculty.

The 18-member advisory search committee comprises faculty and staff, as well as students from the undergrad and graduate student government associations. The committee will be co-chaired by Charles Isbell, dean of the College of Computing and John P. Imlay Jr. Chair, and Susan Lozier, dean of the College of Sciences and Betsy Middleton and John Clark Sutherland Chair.

Town hall meetings were held on March 9 and 10 for students, faculty, and
**ARTS AND CULTURE**

**March 24**
Three School of Music bands perform at Under the Couch, located in the Student Center, from 7:30 to 9 p.m.
music.gatech.edu

**Through June 1**
The theme for Spring 2020’s Clough Art Crawl is identity, Community, and Belonging. The juried exhibition in Clough Commons is free and open during normal business hours.

**HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

**March 24**
From 1 to 2 p.m. in the Student Center Theater, join the Women of Georgia Tech Employee Resource Group for a discussion with Beth Cabrera as she shares insights from her book Beyond Happy: Women, Work, and Well-being. Faculty, staff, and students are welcome to attend. To RSVP by Friday, March 20, go to edie.gatech.edu

**WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING**

**March 24**
Patent Tuesdays, from noon to 2 p.m. in Classroom 2130, Croiland Tower, provide an opportunity for discussion among entrepreneurs and researchers who are preparing to apply for a patent, or anyone who is curious about patents.
library.gatech.edu

**March 25**
The LGBTQ+ Resource Center’s introductory education program gives participants the knowledge and skills necessary to support transgender, gender non-conforming, and gender-questioning individuals at Georgia Tech. Trans 101 takes place from 2 to 4:30 p.m. and is open to students, faculty, and staff. Register to receive location.
lgbtqia.gatech.edu/trans-101

**EVENTS** continued on page 3

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**When Coeds Came to Georgia Tech**

Historian Amy Bix explores the hurdles women have overcome — and still face — in engineering and STEM education

**STACY BRAUENIN INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS**

By the time the first women enrolled at Georgia Tech in 1952, male students, professors, and administrators at other universities had been decrying the “invasion” of women into engineering departments for decades.

“When Coeds Came to Georgia Tech,” a lively lecture by historian Amy Bix, was part of the School of History and Sociology’s Spring 2020 Speakers Series. Social Justice: Power, Inequality, and Change. It was co-sponsored by Tech’s chapter of the Society of Women Engineers.

**Outsiders and Oddities**

Since the late 1800s, Bix noted, a significant part of the way men defined their identity as engineering students was to ridicule the whole idea of women engineers. So you get entire sets of technical traditions set in place over years that link engineering to masculinity.

Bix walked her audience through a brief chronology of the demarcation of professional engineering as a male sphere — from specialized education at universities that barred women; to exclusion from construction, railroad, and military jobs that provided engineering training; to advertisements for toys like Erector Sets and Lionel Trains aimed specifically at boys.

But, beginning in the early 20th century, a small number of women pursued engineering degrees, notably at the University of Minnesota, Iowa State University, and Purdue — even though they were commonly viewed as outsiders and oddities.

**A Telling Turning Point**

Then, the manpower shortage brought on by U.S. participation in World War II created new opportunities for women in engineering, as it did in so many other sectors of the homefront economy. This historical juncture, Bix explained, represented a larger cultural reexamination of assumptions about gender and about women’s capacity for understanding engineering, machines, and other “masculine” realms.

Within this context, allowing women to train in engineering on college campuses was treated as a necessary part of the larger war effort. Some of them even wore pants! And hundreds of them earned engineering degrees.

It was an unusual step, but both government and industry supported it as a patriotic plan. It also proved short-lived. After the war, the GI Bill sent millions of returning (male) veterans flooding into American colleges and universities, while the number of enrolled women declined across the board. A backlash took the shape of the conviction that emphasized women’s inherent suitability for domestic — not professional, and certainly not technological or mechanical — pursuits.

**Debutantes Looking for Husbands**

In the postwar period, Georgia Tech was part of what Bix called “a culture of masculine engineering.” In 1948, Atlanta women’s organizations were raising money to support a test case to compel the Board of Regents to admit women to Georgia Tech — though many feared that Tech’s reputation and, indeed, its quality of instruction would become inferior if women were admitted. The year before, a poll of Tech students showed 64% opposed it. In addition, 34% said they would find women in class “distracting.” Administrators claimed it would cost too much to renovate facilities to make room for women. Many Regents were “hostile,” as Bix put it, chalking it up to “debutantes looking for husbands.”

But by the early 1950s, Blake Van Leer, Georgia Tech’s president, was sympathetic to the argument for coeducation, noting that the legal trend was heading in that direction. According to Bix, he also reasoned that Tech could admit women without too much disruption because so few of them were interested or qualified.

In 1952, the Regents voted 7-5 in favor of coeducation. Four women applied, and two of them, Barbara Diane Michel and Elizabeth Herndon, began as full-time Georgia Tech students. While Herndon later left school to marry, Michel became the first woman to go through Tech from start to finish, earning a B.S. in industrial engineering in 1956. She was joined that year by a transfer student, Shirley Clements, who graduated with a degree in electrical engineering.

“I’ve seen it all,” Bix asked. “You know it’s not. But we can’t ignore the historical shift that has taken place.”

**About Bix**

Bix is a professor of history at Iowa State University whose research connects the history of technology, science, and medicine with studies of women and gender, the history of education, and 20th-century social, cultural, and intellectual history. In 2013, she published Girls Coming to Tech! A History of American Engineering Education for Women (MIT Press).

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**School of History and Sociology Spring Speakers Series**

Topics in the series thus far have included healthcare, voter suppression, and stop and frisk, and were planned to coincide with Black History Month and Women’s History Month. The final two events this spring will address sex selection in a transnational context and debates over immigration.

“Since many of our faculty in the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts focus on research with important social justice implications, we wanted to make this our lens,” said Jennifer Singh, associate professor in the School of History and Sociology, and one of the series’ organizers. “These broader topics also allow us to reach students and faculty beyond the liberal arts.”

Singh sees the value of the interdisciplinary scope of the series for all Tech students. Even more important, she said, is “the opportunity to learn beyond the classroom. These layers of exposure are essential to learning.”

See the schedule of events at hsoc.gatech.edu/speakers-series-spring and learn more about the speakers by visiting the School of History and Sociology’s webpage at hsoc.gatech.edu. For more details about the first women to enroll and the early years of the coeducational transition at the Institute, see the Fall 1982 issue of the Alumni Magazine devoted to “Women: 30 Years at Tech.”
Man of Research, Man of the People

Remembering Robert M. Nerem, Georgia Tech’s Founding Father of Bioengineering and Bioscience

Jerry Grill
Petit Institute for Bioengineering and Bioscience

Bob Nerem often liked to say, “Research, like life, is a people business,” and he spent most of his 56-year academic career proving the point. An internationally renowned pioneer in bioengineering and biomedical research and education, Nerem’s most memorable trait was his sincere affability.

“Bob always had time to talk to anyone, always had a kind word, a funny story or witty remark — he positively influenced thousands in our community by showing that he genuinely cared about everyone,” said Andres Garcia, executive director of the Petit Institute for Bioengineering and Bioscience at Georgia Tech, remembering Nerem, the founding director of the Petit Institute, who died Friday, March 6, at 82.

He seemed to know everyone and everything about the world he inhabited, noted Ross Ethier, professor of biomedical engineering at Georgia Tech.

“There wasn’t a promising postdoc, a potential junior recruit, or a senior hire who was not known to Bob,” Ethier said. “He was at the center of a vast network of leaders who shaped the field of biomedical engineering by identifying and promoting the very best talent.”

It usually didn’t matter if a new hire was part of the research enterprise or a supporting player — for years, fresh employees at the Petit Institute would receive a copy of Nerem’s “Rules of Life: The Planet Earth School” (often from Nerem himself). These were 15 maxims he’d gathered, some familiar, some conjured by Nerem himself. These were 15 maxims he’d gathered, some familiar, some conjured by

Nerem from piecemeal sources or his own imagination. He wrote them all down after his students banded together and told him to preserve “those various rules you keep spouting off,” Nerem told his audience upon receiving the prestigious National Academy of Engineering (NAE) Founder’s Award in 2008.

Nerem spent 33 years at Georgia Tech, including 15 years (1995–2009) as the founding director of the Petit Institute. He began his career at Ohio State University (where he earned his Ph.D. in mechanical engineering in 1964) in the Department of Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering. But before long, he was focusing on the effects of launch vibrations on astronaut physiology, “which opened the window on a whole new world, that of biology and medicine,” Nerem told his NAE audience.

“Bob was, in many ways, one of the fathers of tissue engineering,” said Barbara Boyan, dean of the College of Engineering at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Boyan met Nerem when he was at the University of Houston, where he chartered the Department of Mechanical Engineering following his stint at Ohio State, and Boyan was at Rice University. After moving to Georgia Tech in 1987, Nerem recruited Boyan, who became his deputy director in GTEC (the Georgia Tech/Emory Center for the Engineering of Living Tissues), where she saw, “firsthand, his incredible generosity. He freely gave of his ideas and support to people will remember not what you said, but only how you made them feel; strive to make a difference in the lives of others.”

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Meet Greg Oliver, Building Manager

VICTOR ROGERS
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Greg Oliver doesn’t have a fitness tracker, but he estimates that he walks 2-3 miles a day just doing his job. His trek begins each morning after he leaves his car at has Parking Deck and climbs Freshman Hill to Crosland Tower, where he is the building manager for the Library.

“I go by inspecting every floor and making sure all of the equipment and systems (HVAC, lighting, AV, etc.) are in working condition,” Oliver said. “If something is not functioning, I try to talk to the person who is in charge of the areas resolved before students and staff arrive.”

He also inspects the furniture, flooring, wall coverings, meeting spaces and collaboration rooms, and restrooms.

Oliver is part of a team that consists of another building manager who oversees Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons, a project manager, a senior facility manager, an event coordinator, and a director who manages the whole team. He has worked in Price Gilbert Memorial Library as well as the museums managed by the whole team. He has worked in Price Gilbert Memorial Library as well as the museums managed by the whole team. He has worked in Price Gilbert Memorial Library as well as the museums managed by the whole team.

“Everybody on our team has been cross-trained to work throughout the three buildings,” said Oliver. He moved from Orlando. “I love Barney and Andy. It’s just that hometown feeling of Mayberry, with Floyd in the barbershop. There’s a camaraderie. It’s a good thing,” he said.

Oliver has a B.S. in political science with a minor in history from Florida A&M University. His favorite show is The Andy Griffith Show. “I like students, and I enjoy working with them,” Oliver said. “Every day is different, but every day is a good day.”

Away From the Office

Oliver and his wife, Shelia, have been married 35 years, and they have two adult daughters. The couple met in Atlanta after he moved from Orlando. Oliver, who is 6 feet 4 inches tall, grew up playing basketball in Jacksonville, Florida. “When I was about 10 years old my mom bought a basketball goal for me. I installed it, and I’ve been playing ever since,” he said.

In addition to basketball, he enjoys renting a boat at Callaway Gardens to fish on the lake. He also likes old movies and TV shows from the 1960s and ’70s.

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For Greg Oliver, the most rewarding part of his job as building manager of the Library is ensuring a positive experience for visitors. And the views from the top floor terraces aren’t bad, either.