



## Covid-19 Vaccines Arrive on Campus

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Georgia Tech, in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH), began distributing the Covid-19 vaccine last week. The rollout plan for the campus community consists of consecutive phases with

corresponding groups.

In its initial allocation, Georgia Tech received both the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine and the Moderna Covid-19 vaccine.

The first phase of distribution, called Phase 1A+, includes Stamps Health Services staff, CARE staff and

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Photo by Christopher Moore

Georgia Tech Police Department Captain Marcus Walton was one of several first responders to receive their first vaccine dose last week.

## Meet Seth Osekre, Custodian and Safety Advocate



Photo by Christopher Moore

Seth Osekre is pictured in the lobby of the Wardlaw Center. Osekre has worked at Georgia Tech since 2007, in buildings all over campus.

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Seth Nii Ablorh Osekre is a custodian in Facilities Management. He was born and grew up in Accra, Ghana, where he studied electrical construction at Royal Technical College. He worked in the printing industry for 16 years, making notebooks and ledgers, before coming to Georgia Tech in 2007.

“My cousin introduced me to Georgia Tech when I came from Ghana, looking for a new life in America,” Osekre said. He joined his mother, three brothers, and

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# INTA Professor Named Homeland Security Advisor

JESSICA PALACIOS  
SAM NUNN SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall, distinguished professor of the practice in the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs, has been selected to serve as the White House homeland security advisor by President-elect Joe Biden.

Sherwood-Randall previously held senior positions in the Clinton and Obama administrations. In addition to her role in the Nunn School, she also is a senior energy-national security fellow at the Strategic Energy Institute.

The Biden transition team noted Sherwood-Randall is among a group of national security experts with impeccable credentials who will be counted on to “prepare for and respond to the full spectrum of threats we face — from cyber intrusions to grid attacks, from possible future pandemics to deliberate acts of terror.”

As the White House homeland security advisor, Sherwood-Randall will manage internal issues such as

natural disasters, pandemics, and extremism, including the potential for future incidents such as the deadly incursion at the Capitol on Jan. 6.

“We at the Nunn School are absolutely thrilled about Sherwood-Randall’s return to the senior ranks of government service — her professional calling,” said Adam Stulberg, Nunn School chair. “She not only helped to ground our teaching and outreach with rigorous strategic and policy analytical orientations, but she also provided a role model to our faculty and students about how to make practical contributions to national and international security policy. Although we will miss her as a colleague, we look forward to her return and the infusion of new insights into our future programming.”

Read more at [inta.gatech.edu](https://inta.gatech.edu).



Sherwood-Randall

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three sisters who had already relocated to Atlanta.

In 2020, the coronavirus brought the implementation of new safety precautions for Osekre’s work as a custodian on campus.

“My job, specifically, includes cleaning carpets, shining floors, deep cleaning the restrooms, and cleaning and misting public areas to keep people safe. I always want to keep people safe. We always put on masks and gloves,” he said.

During his years at Tech, Osekre has worked in a number of buildings and made friends all over campus. He met Susanna Printz, director of Research and Prospect Management in the Office of Development, when he worked in the



Photo by Christopher Moore

Osekre in the Wardlaw Center, one of the many buildings where he has worked on campus.

Wardlaw Center.

“Seth has a wonderful smile, a hearty laugh, and a great personality,” said Printz. “I looked forward to saying hello when he made his afternoon rounds. He

and I are soccer fans, so we would compare notes on the teams and players. He’s such an interesting person.”

Osekre’s favorite part of working at Georgia Tech is the people.

“I like the atmosphere,” he said. “There are good people here at Georgia Tech. If you need something, people will help you and direct you to resources.”

Osekre is Muslim, a table tennis enthusiast, and he played amateur soccer with the Accra Hearts of Oak. He watches American soccer, but he has not attended an Atlanta United game. He also likes watching the news to stay on top of current events, and he’s a big fan of action films and Bollywood movies.

“Arnold Schwarzenegger is my favorite. And I like Samuel L. Jackson and Morgan Freeman,” he said.

He likes the dancing in Bollywood. When asked if he can dance like they do in the movies, Osekre laughed and said, “I can dance, but it’s different from that.”



# Tech Earns 2 USG Teaching Excellence Awards

GRACE WYNER  
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Each year, the University System of Georgia (USG) honors outstanding teachers and departments from its 26 member institutions with Regents Awards. Of the nine awards presented for Fiscal Year 2021, Georgia Tech took home two. The Writing and Communication Program (WCP) won the Teaching Excellence Award for Department or Program, and School of Physics Professor Michael Schatz was the unanimous choice for the Award for Excellence in Online Teaching.

The WCP, directed by Class of 1958 Professor Melissa Ianetta, was recognized for its dual dedication to faculty and student development.

“The preparation of postdoc-



Ianetta



Schatz

toral fellows and lecturers for the workplace could alone be the defining quality of an exceptional program, and WCP accomplishes this through an innovative curriculum of courses and resources,” wrote Tristan Denley, executive vice chancellor and chief development officer of the USG. “At the same time, WCP invites Tech students to develop skills in composition,

technical communication, and learning support.”

Schatz, meanwhile, was honored for his innovation in an online classroom environment, specifically group problem-solving sessions, interactive strategies, and animated lectures.

The selection committee was “deeply impressed” by his “reach beyond the Georgia Tech classroom through service to local and statewide communities at so many levels, from teacher training in Atlanta and Fulton County schools, to [his] development of a physics MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) that reached thousands and utilized lab activities that students could do with their smartphones,” Denley wrote.

Learn more about the WCP’s awards at [iac.gatech.edu](http://iac.gatech.edu), and about Schatz’s award at [sciences.gatech.edu](http://sciences.gatech.edu).

## VACCINE, from page 1

Counseling Center staff, Health Initiatives victim advocates and nutritionists, Georgia Tech Police Department (GTPD) staff, Covid-19 surveillance testing personnel, Athletic Association medical staff and trainers, and Georgia Tech employees ages 65 and older.

Captain Marcus Walton with GTPD was among the first to get vaccinated.

“I was excited because to me it is the sense of knowing that we are one more step closer to getting back to some type of normalcy in the world,” he said.

“Personally, I have family members that I have not visited since the pandemic started, and I would love to go visit and hug them,” Walton said. “Professionally, I am what you call a critical or essential employee, and when I took this job 16 years ago I took an oath that I would do this job to the best of my ability. Taking the vaccine, along with practicing other safety measures, allows me to continue to go out and do my job daily knowing that I am helping and not hurting. I want to be a part of the solution, not the problem.”



Photo by Christopher Moore

**A staff member at Stamps Health Services unpacks vaccines on Jan. 13.**

Janet Foley, a pharmacist with Stamps Health Services, is working at the vaccine distribution clinic in the Exhibition Hall. As a healthcare worker, she was glad to get it.

“I believe in vaccination, and I believe in the benefit vaccines give to building herd immunity. So I think it’s important for everybody to get vaccinated,” Foley said. “I have trust in the system that the vaccine is safe, so I wanted to get it right away to show my family, neighbors, and everybody that it’s good to get this vaccination.”

Foley, who has been in her job for seven years, said she likes the large turnout for vaccines.

“Demand seems to be pretty high on campus, and that’s encouraging,” she said. “I hope the students come out and get vaccinated when it’s open to them.”

The next phase, Phase 1B, is expected to be open to all faculty and staff, including affiliate, auxiliary, and foundation employees. Phase 1C is expected to include people ages 16 to 64 with medical conditions that increase the risk for severe illness with Covid-19. This includes Georgia Tech students. Phase 2 is expected to include all Georgia Tech students. The DPH is responsible for setting all phases of the vaccine rollout, including the timing.

“We’re ironing out the process to make it faster to get people in and out,” Foley said. “The more of these clinics we do, the faster the process is going to get.”

*NOTE: As a reminder, community members in the initial phase of the vaccine distribution — Phase 1A+ — are eligible to schedule an appointment to receive their vaccine. For more information on the Covid-19 vaccine, including the rollout plan for the Georgia Tech community, visit [health.gatech.edu/coronavirus/vaccine](http://health.gatech.edu/coronavirus/vaccine).*



## Keep On Testing

Even with vaccinations underway, asymptomatic surveillance testing remains as important as ever in keeping the campus community safe. If you're on campus, continue to test weekly. View current site locations and hours at [c.gatech.edu/testing](https://c.gatech.edu/testing).

# An Olympic Sized Legacy in Campus Recreation

## Michael Edwards Retires After 28-year Career

DAVID KNOBBE  
CAMPUS RECREATION

In December, the Campus Recreation Center (CRC) and its team bid farewell to the man who built Georgia Tech's campus recreation space, literally and figuratively, into the nationally recognized facility and programs we enjoy today. After 28 years of work to shape well-being at Georgia Tech, Michael Edwards, senior director of the CRC, retired.

Edwards' time at Georgia Tech included 12 years with Capital Planning and Space Management helping to change the physical landscape of campus, followed by 16 years in Campus Recreation. Edwards was first hired in 1992 to help prepare campus for the 1996 Olympics.

### Putting Georgia Tech Campus Recreation on the Map

As the CRC became part of Georgia Tech's portfolio, Edwards' ideas and passion were critical to the Center's establishment as more than a building, but a place for all dimensions of wellness to be activated. His efforts also ensured that the new recreation center was a world-class facility, including solar paneling and the first ceiling of its kind built above the Olympic swimming pool used in the games.

Knowing there was a connection between health, well-being, and student success, he collected data that demonstrated a link between higher



Photo by Fitrah Hamid

Edwards stands in the McAuley Aquatic Center, which has hosted both Olympic trials and NCAA events since its inception as a venue for the 1996 Olympic Games.

GPA's and students' regular fitness at the CRC. With complete confidence and little room for anyone to challenge years' worth of data, he built the case for further investment in the CRC and eventually built a \$12 million endowment that allowed significant improvements in services without corresponding increases in student fees. He has been a strong proponent for adding experiences and updating facilities based on user experience data, not merely the latest industry trend.

"Opportunities for students that complemented [student] education were front and center in his mind. The magnitude of his impact is enormous," said Larry Jacobs, interim dean and professor in the College of Engineering. Jacobs lauds Edwards for having the vision to partner with a diverse range of

people and departments across campus.

What will Michael Edwards miss most? According to him, he'll miss walking through the CRC in the early evenings and, before the pandemic, seeing the building humming with activity — classrooms 100% full, every racquetball court and exercise machine in use, every lane in the pool supporting swimming and diving and kayaking roll schools, intramural fields packed, and facilities like the indoor running track and the fitness floor filled to capacity.

He takes pleasure in knowing he has influenced health and well-being on campus in what he calls a "relatively small way." The team at the CRC, and indeed all of Georgia Tech, will be forever grateful for it.