



Photo by Allison Carter

A total of 24 banners are affixed to light poles across campus and will be on display through the end of May.

Banners Herald 60th Anniversary of Black Student Matriculation

VICTOR ROGERS
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Georgia Tech's first three Black students — trailblazers Ford C. Greene, Ralph A. Long Jr., and Lawrence Williams — began taking classes in September 1961. Ronald L. Yancey enrolled a year later, in 1962, and became Tech's first Black graduate in 1965. The 60th anniversary of Black student matriculation at Tech is being celebrated by the Georgia Tech Black Alumni Organization (GTBAO) and the Institute with a series of banners across campus. The four-banner series

highlights past, present, and future Georgia Tech trailblazers. The four designs feature the trailblazers statue; Atlanta mayor and Tech alumnus Andre Dickens; Joycelyn Wilson, assistant professor in the School of Literature, Media, and Communication; and Ph.D. student De'aira Bryant. A total of 24 banners are affixed to light poles across campus and will be on display through the end of May.

The banner celebration is a collaborative effort of the Georgia Tech Alumni Association, GTBAO, and Institute Communications.

What to Watch During Black History Month

VICTOR ROGERS
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

February is Black History Month, a time to reflect on the struggles and achievements of Black Americans, and their centrality to U.S. history. We asked several faculty and staff members for viewing recommendations that explore race, identity, history, and memory. The recommendations range from a revisionist Western film with characters loosely based on real cowboys and

outlaws of the 19th-century American West to a documentary on chemist Percy Lavon Julian whose contributions include finding a way to mass produce a drug for glaucoma treatment.

The Amazing Nina Simone

Amazon Prime Video, released in 2015

“This award-winning documentary shows the human complexity and brilliance of Nina Simone, who was a singer, songwriter, storyteller, music producer, and civil rights activist.

Through interviews with those who knew and loved her, it details her journey from her classical musical roots to her unique development of an eclectic blend of jazz, folk, gospel, classical, blues, and African music that could not be



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Tech ‘Trailblazers’ to Receive Ivan Allen Jr. Prize

STACY BRAUKMAN
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Ford Greene, Ralph Long Jr., and Lawrence Williams, Georgia Tech’s first Black students, and Ronald Yancey, Tech’s first Black graduate, will receive the 2022 Ivan Allen Jr. Prize for Social Courage.

The likenesses of the four men are permanently enshrined in campus sculptures, but now, decades after breaking the color barrier at Georgia Tech, they will join the ranks of past awardees that include Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter, John Lewis, Andrew Young, and other pathbreaking leaders.

“The Ivan Allen Jr. Prize recognizes exemplary, courageous leaders — those who, like Mayor Allen, take on personal risks in an effort to improve the lives of others,” said Georgia Tech President Ángel Cabrera. “With great determination, Ford Greene, Ralph Long Jr., Lawrence Williams, and Ronald Yancey withstood hazards and adversity of every kind to prove to the world that Black students had the right to study at Georgia Tech, paving the way for the thousands of Black Yellow Jackets who have earned their degrees here since.”

Greene, Long, and Williams, dubbed the “three pioneers” in the Harrison Square sculpture that depicts them on their first day at



Clockwise from top left: Ford C. Greene, Ralph A. Long Jr., Ronald L. Yancey, and Lawrence M. Williams.

Tech, began classes in the fall of 1961. And, although their arrival didn’t elicit violence as it had at other southern universities, it was not easy. They often felt isolated and unwelcome, and they were acutely aware that many around them assumed they wouldn’t be able to succeed here. As Ronald Yancey, who entered Tech a year later, recalled, “It was a lonely and difficult time. ‘Glares and stares’ is the best way I can put it.”

But they persevered. Greene studied chemical engineering at Georgia Tech. He completed his bachelor’s

degree in mathematics and computer science at Morgan State University and worked in telecommunications and information technology systems. He died in 2020 at the age of 76. After attending Tech, Long completed his bachelor’s degree at Clark College (now Clark Atlanta University) in mathematics and physics, and was the first Black systems engineer for the Large Systems Group in the southeastern U.S. at IBM Atlanta. Williams served honorably in the Air Force during the Vietnam War, earning several distinctions and honors. A week

after graduating, Yancey began a successful career with the U.S. Department of Defense.

“We rarely award the Ivan Allen Jr. Prize to our own students and alumni, but we were long overdue in bestowing it to these four pioneers,” Cabrera said. “We are honored to celebrate the legacies of four brave young men who helped make Georgia Tech — and, by extension, our society — fairer and better for all. Their personal sacrifice, their determination, and their belief that a better reality was possible made a lasting and transformative impact on the Institute that’s still visible more than 60 years after they first set foot on campus.”

The Ivan Allen Jr. Prize for Social Courage was established in 2010 to honor Tech alumnus and former Atlanta Mayor Ivan Allen Jr. Funded in perpetuity by a grant from the Wilbur and Hilda Glenn Family Foundation, the prize includes a \$100,000 stipend for recipients. The inaugural prize was awarded in March 2011.

Additional details about the timing of this year’s award presentation will be announced soon. To learn more about the prize, visit ivanallenprize.gatech.edu. View highlights from the 2019 Trailblazers unveiling event at c.gatech.edu/trailblazersvideo.



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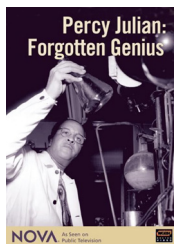
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defined by one single genre. The movie highlights her resilience and the ways that she shared her truth and advocated for others through music.”

—Tiffany Hughes-Troutman, director of the Center for Assessment, Referral, and Education (CARE)

Forgotten Genius: Percy Lavon Julian (1899-1975)

NOVA/PBS documentary, first aired in 2007 and is often shown on PBS affiliate stations in January and February.



“*Forgotten Genius: Percy Lavon Julian (1899-1975)* is a NOVA documentary of his personal life and scientific career as a chemist. The documentary was the recipient of the American Association for the Advancement of Science’s ‘Best Public Science’ film. The documentary chronicles Julian’s struggles with personal and institutional racism, especially in the American academic scientific community, to become the first African American to head a division in industry.

In the mid-1930s, Julian was appointed director of research at Glidden’s Soybean Division. Under his leadership, the division produced several scientific breakthroughs including artificial sex hormones and cortisone. Respectively, these discoveries resulted in the commercialization of birth control pills and affordable treatment for rheumatoid arthritis.

Later, Julian left Glidden to found Julian Laboratories with facilities in the U.S. and Mexico. He became one of the few Black millionaires and was actively involved in the civil rights movement. His contributions to science resulted in his election to the National Academy of Sciences and appearance on a U.S. postage stamp. Despite his significant scientific and civic accomplishments, few Americans are aware of him.”

—Willie Pearson, professor, School of History and Sociology (Note: Pearson served on the film’s advisory board and appears in the film as an interviewee.)

Fruitvale Station

Hulu, released in 2013

“This 2013 film has only gained power and relevance in the years since its release. Driven by Michael B. Jordan’s performance in the role of Oscar Grant, it tells the story of Grant’s 2009 shooting by a police officer in the Fruitvale station of the BART transit system in Oakland, California. Released in the wake of the death of Trayvon Martin and before the shooting of Michael Brown, the film’s events are excruciatingly familiar. The filmmaker Ryan Coogler’s stated aim was to get viewers ‘attached’ to Grant — to connect deeply to the meaning that his life had, especially for those who loved him, and to grapple with the horrific impact of police violence on Black families and communities, and the absence of accountability in the aftermath.”

—Ruthie Yow, service learning and partnerships specialist, Center for Serve-Learn-Sustain



Lovecraft Country

HBO, released in 2020

“*Lovecraft Country* is a must-see for Black History Month. The HBO series is based on Matt Ruff’s novel of the same name. The story follows the life of Atticus Freeman as he returns home to Chicago after serving in the Korean War. Upon arriving, he finds that his father has mysteriously disappeared, and Atticus joins his uncle and childhood friend to search for him. With the Negro Motorist Greenbook to guide them, they embark on their journey only to come face to face with monsters. Who and what are these monsters? Are the monsters portrayed in the 1950s really that different from the monsters Black people face today? The murder of Emmett Till and the burning of ‘Black Wall Street’ in Tulsa, Oklahoma, are just a few historical events embedded in the series — which can be described as Black strength providing a tool for



liberation, with a science fiction twist.”

—Stephanie Ray, associate dean of students and director of Student Diversity Programs, Division of Student Engagement and Well-Being

When They See Us

Netflix, released in 2019

“Ava DuVernay’s Netflix series, *When They See Us*, offers an intimate look at the lives of five Black and Latino teenagers falsely accused of the 1989 assault of a white woman in Central Park. DuVernay’s delicate rendering of this infamous miscarriage of justice merges art and politics, reframing this shameful chapter of our country’s long history of judicial racism by giving voice and vision to the resilience of these young men and their families. At once ambitious and intimate, *When They See Us* ensures, with its elegant and sometimes harrowing lens, that we bear empathetic witness to both the pain and the strength of these innocent men.”

—Nihad M. Farooq, associate professor, School of Literature, Media, and Communication



The Harder They Fall

Netflix, released in 2021

“I have always enjoyed Western genres, and *The Harder They Fall* does not disappoint. Director Jaymes Samuel’s modern Western, set in Redwood City, is an epic fictional battle between historical outlaws and legendary badasses. Samuel imagines the American West through the eyes of Trudy Smith, Bill Pickett, Stagecoach Mary, James Beckworth, Cherokee Bill, Rufus Buck, and Bass Reeves, as he crafts a decadent tale of love, respect, and revenge. The film features Regina King, Idris Elba, Jonathan Majors, and LaKeith Stanfield.”

—John Thornton, senior academic professional and director of Film and Media in the School of Literature, Media, and Communication



FACULTY AND STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

Six Georgia Tech faculty members were named IEEE Fellows, effective Jan. 1. They are **Ghassan AlRegib**, **Bonnie Ferri**, **Arijit Raychowdhury**, and **Maryam Saeedifard**, professors in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering; **Levent Degertekin**, professor in the George W. Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering; and **May Dongmei Wang**, a professor in the Wallace H. Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering. The IEEE Grade of Fellow is conferred by the IEEE board of directors upon a person with an outstanding record of accomplishments in any of the IEEE fields of interest. IEEE Fellow is the highest grade of membership and is recognized by the technical community as a prestigious honor and an important career achievement.

Associate Professor **Chloé Arson** has been selected for a 2021 BRITE Award from the National Science Foundation, providing funding that will allow her to take her research in a new direction. BRITE — which stands for Boosting Research Ideas for Transformative and Equitable Advances in Engineering — aims to create opportunities for experienced faculty to advance scientific discoveries and new research.

The Chinese-American Professors in Environmental Engineering and Science (CAPEES) Society has recognized School of Civil and Environmental Engineering faculty members **Yongsheng Chen** and **Xing Xie** for their dedication and service to environmental engineering and science. Professor Yongsheng Chen was selected for the CAPEES/Nanova Lifetime Achievement Award, given annually to recognize outstanding professors in environmental science and engineering who have achieved recognized research leadership and pioneered an innovative research area. Assistant Professor Xing Xie was chosen for the CAPEES/Nanova Young Investigator Award, given annually to recognize an outstanding junior professor in environmental science

and engineering.

Yuhang Hu, associate professor in the George W. Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering, is the 2022 recipient of the James Dally Young Investigator Award from the Society of Experimental Mechanics. The award was granted in recognition of Hu's "original contributions to interdisciplinary research in chemomechanics of soft active materials with integrated multiscale characterization and multiphysics modeling."

Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts Dean and Ivan Allen Jr. Chair **Kaye Husbands Fealing** was recently honored for her efforts to advance diversity in the workplace for women. She received the 2021 Outstanding Women of Color Faculty Impact Award at the Women of Color City-Wide Awards Celebration in September.

The American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) announced that Regents Professor **Tim Lieuwen** is the recipient of the AIAA Propellants and Combustion Award. The award is given annually for outstanding technical contributions to aerospace combustion engineering and is widely recognized as one of the leading recognitions for those working in the propulsion and energy fields.

The National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine has named **Emanuele Massetti**, an associate professor in the School of Public Policy, to a committee created to study carbon utilization. Carbon utilization refers to the use of captured carbon wastes in economically valuable products or services.

Gabriel Rincón-Mora has been selected as a Distinguished Lecturer for the IEEE Circuits and Systems Society for 2022-23. He is a professor in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering,

where he is a member of the electrical energy and electronic design and applications groups.

Maryam Saeedifard, associate professor in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering, received the 2021 U.S. Clean Energy Education & Empowerment Award in Technology Research and Innovation, awarded by the Department of Energy. Saeedifard conducts research into technologies that can address challenges in large-scale grid integration, storage, and transmission of renewable energy.

The Global Electronics Council (GEC) honored **Beril Toktay**, Brady Family Chair in Management in the Scheller College of Business, with a Sustainability Champion Award for her work through the Ray C. Anderson Center for Sustainable Business, where she is faculty director. The GEC is a mission-driven nonprofit that leverages the power of institutional purchasers to drive demand for sustainable technology. The award was presented during a virtual event in October.

The National Institutes of Health recently announced that Associate Professor **W. Hong Yeo** in the George W. Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering received a Trailblazer Award for New and Early Stage Investigators. The award is for a project titled "Development of Nanomembrane Electronics and Machine-Learning Algorithms for Quantitative Screening of Dysphagia Therapeutics" and comes with \$645,000 in R21 funding over three years.

The **Writing and Communication Program**, a unit in the School of Literature, Media, and Communication, was selected as one of eight recipients of the 2021-22 Writing Program Certificate of Excellence. The award, administered by the Conference on College Composition and Communication, recognizes exemplary college writing programs.