



A Vice Presidential Visit

Moderated Conversation Brings Climate Change to Forefront

STEVEN GAGLIANO
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

With the Ferst Center filled to the brim Wednesday, Georgia Tech hosted Vice President Kamala Harris for a discussion about the climate crisis, which she called a transformational moment in America.

Speaking on the “moment of great opportunity” in the face of the equally daunting challenge of the climate crisis, Harris participated in a moderated discussion at the Ferst Center for the Arts on the Georgia Tech campus Wednesday afternoon.

The vice president spoke to students, faculty, staff, and community members with the message of creating an equitable clean energy economy and how it will take a true team effort to achieve that goal.

“In order for us to truly achieve that, it’s going to require all to be involved — our scientists, our researchers, our academicians,” she said. “But it’s also



Photo by Rob Felt

Vice President Kamala Harris participates in climate change discussions on the Georgia Tech campus moderated by Isiah Bolden and James Marshall Shepherd.

going to be about our students. It’s going to be about our unions. It’s going to be about the private sector. It’s going to be about our teachers. It’s going to be about our youth leaders. It is going to take a whole community.”

Continuing Georgia Tech’s longstanding tradition of hosting elected officials, going back to 1905 with President Theodore Roosevelt,

Harris was joined by Isiah Bolden, assistant professor in the School of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, and James Marshall Shepherd, director of the Atmospheric Sciences Program at the University of Georgia. Each spoke of how their life experiences led them to their respective career paths.

see **VICE PRESIDENT**, page 2

It’s Performance Management Season at Georgia Tech

CHAUNDRA GRANT
HUMAN RESOURCES

We start each year with resolutions to improve — making behavior changes and setting our intentions toward specific goals. In the same spirit, the performance management cycle for

employees at Tech encourages reflection and improvement and becomes a record of professional development.

The annual process presents an opportunity for employees and their supervisors to collaborate on setting expectations, review the previous year’s work and accomplishments, and

discuss paths to improvement, professional development, and/or promotion.

When done well, the process promotes professional growth, career progression, and clarity about objectives.

see **PERFORMANCE**, page 3



2023 Black History Month Lecture

Featuring Zion Clark

Thursday, Feb. 22

5 – 6:30 p.m.

Clary Theatre, Bill Moore

Student Success Center

RSVP to attend at

diversity.gatech.edu/2023-black-history-month-lecture

Zion Clark was born with a rare birth defect called Caudal Regression Syndrome, which caused him to be born without legs. Clark was recruited by several colleges to wrestle and chose to attend Kent State, where he spent two years steadily improving his skills and finding success at the varsity level. With his confidence and national ranking on the rise, he decided to embark on his toughest mission to date — becoming the first American athlete to compete in both the Olympic (wrestling) and Paralympic (wheelchair racing) Games in Tokyo in 2020.

VICE PRESIDENT, from page 1

Bolden's passion for climate science was born out of tragedy as he saw his hometown of Nashville, Tennessee, flooded. Seeing the number of people and entire communities displaced, Bolden shared that his career choice became clear in that moment.

"I had this passion burgeoning right then and there as someone who has this aptitude for science, this aptitude for math, but then seeing that the science is not reaching the public in a way that it should," he said. "What can I then do with my career as an environmental scientist to generate data and get that data into the hands of people who could do something with it?"

Perhaps the most visible sign of movement toward a commitment to climate change efforts is the increased number of electric vehicles on roadways. With Georgia positioning itself as a leader in that sector by attracting manufacturers such as Hyundai, Rivian, and Qcells to the state, Georgia Tech President Ángel Cabrera emphasized that the campus in the heart of Atlanta was the "perfect place" to host Wednesday's discussion.

"As one of the nation's leading research universities, Georgia Tech is committed to making sure that our \$1.3 billion research enterprise, our unmatched faculty expertise, and our top students help in this process by producing new solutions and exceptional talent while driving economic opportunity through job creation," he said.

In addition to community resilience policies that focus on removing lead pipes in cities across the country and other funding created through the Inflation Reduction Act and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Harris spoke passionately about the electrification of school buses.

Currently, 90% of the buses that carry 25 million children to school daily are diesel-fueled. Along with the public health



Photo by Rob Felt

Vice President Kamala Harris shakes hands with Isaiah Bolden, assistant professor in the School of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, who participated in the moderated discussion on Feb. 8.

and environmental impact of electrifying buses, Harris touted the prospect of creating new jobs and new manufacturing opportunities.

As the climate conversation continues, Shepherd emphasized that these are "kitchen table issues" that affect everyone. Harris reiterated that point, noting that the discussion serves as an intersection for environmental justice and equity in public health and education before closing with a message to the next generation of leaders.

"You are coming out and we're talking about all kinds of creative, very exciting ways to do this that are going to be about public health, public education, strengthening our economy, investing in jobs, respecting the dignity of work, being a model for the world, and being a good shepherd of resources, both in terms of the responsibility that America has to Americans and that America has to its neighbors," she said.

This story has been edited for length. Read the rest of the story at c.gatech.edu/vp.

Join a Staff Council Committee

Staff Council committees consist of both elected Staff Council members and non-elected staff. Connect with other staffers across campus and support initiatives that are directly tied to staff interests by volunteering for one of the five Staff Council Committees:

- Campus Physical Environment
- Communication
- Compensation and Benefits
- Employee Engagement
- Employee Health and Well-Being

Committee members can expect to spend three to five hours a month during normal business hours on committee activities over the course of a one-year term.



Committee members are expected to remain engaged and involved throughout the course of their committee membership. Learn more and apply at staffcouncil.gatech.edu/CommitteeApplication.

PERFORMANCE, from page 1

“One large part of the HR Transformation happening at Georgia Tech has created space for employees to be more supported on their career journey,” said Skye Duckett, vice president and chief human resources officer. “We hope staff and their supervisors will fully engage in this process and realize it can be extraordinarily meaningful in shaping their careers.”

What to Expect

From December through April, Institute staff participates in the performance management process by partnering with their supervisor to:

- Complete the self-reflection and annual performance evaluation.
- Begin creating SMART goals.

Self-Assessments

Employee self-assessments were due Jan. 31 to the employee’s direct manager. Although this resource is optional, employees are strongly encouraged to take advantage of it. Self-assessments give managers the opportunity to review and consider employee feedback in time to deliver the employee’s performance review on or by March 31.

Goal Setting

This step allows employees to think about performance tasks they hope to achieve this year and gives a framework to write out an action-oriented SMART goal for each. SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely.

GTHR and OIT are partnering to develop an electronic submission process for goals as part of the overall transition of electronic performance management to a new system. Similar to the Working @ Tech arrangement, digital goal setting will be easier and faster than the current Word forms and DocuSign process. More details to come on the transition to this new platform.

In the meantime, the existing form can be used, if needed, to document goals prior to the launch of the new system. These goals can be loaded in the new system in the spring.

New Leader Competencies

The 2023 performance cycle includes updated leadership competencies specific to supervisors. Supporting the Institute’s goal to develop leaders, the value-aligned competencies are now part of the goal setting process for people leaders.

By merging our leader competencies and the performance management

process, we can create a workplace with increased consistency, clarity, and rigor in the process of identifying and nurturing leadership talent at Georgia Tech.

The Georgia Tech Leader Competency Model provides leaders with explicit behavior in four areas that help them demonstrate Institute values:

- Acts Strategically
- Exhibits Social Intelligence
- Demonstrates Inclusivity
- Develops Self and Others

To learn more about the Georgia Tech Leader Competency Model, visit hr.gatech.edu/leader-competencies.

Resources to Help Prepare

Both employees and managers should consider the following resources to make this conversation as productive and beneficial as possible.

Access the Georgia Tech Performance Management learning path through Georgia Tech LinkedIn Learning at linkedin.gatech.edu, which includes resources to help during self assessment, performance review, and goal setting, as well as ongoing learning around this topic.

View performance FAQs for general questions at hr.gatech.edu/performance/faqs.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: ATLANTA CHANGE-MAKERS

Black History Month is a time to honor the triumphs and contributions of African Americans throughout U.S. history. Atlanta history is rife with achievements from the Black community, and history continues to be made here today.

Great work is being done both on campus and across Atlanta by Georgia Tech students, faculty, staff, and alumni. They are working across different industries to help bring about change to improve the human condition, whether it's on campus, in the city, or beyond.

Atlanta Change-Makers introduces you to a few of the people whose aspirations and actions are making a difference – for today, and for a brighter future. Read their stories at c.gatech.edu/change-makers.



Kemuel Russell



Lauren Hester



Denise Smith



Christopher Burke



Andre Dickens



Sheereen Brown and Asia Barnes