



The Whistle

WORK AND LIFE AT GEORGIA TECH • February 15, 2021

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Covid-19 Vaccinations Continue

Georgia Tech is continuing to vaccinate individuals eligible under the 1A+ as designated by the Georgia Department of Public Health. Second doses in the campus community began last week. If you were notified of eligibility and have not made an appointment for a first dose, visit health.gatech.edu/coronavirus/vaccine to make an appointment today.

Faculty, Students Invited to Listening Sessions on Classroom Experiences

PATTI FUTRELL
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Beginning Feb. 22, Georgia Tech faculty, graduate teaching assistants (GTA), and students will have the opportunity to participate in a series of listening sessions

see **CLASSROOM**, page 2



L.O.V.E. GT

Living Our Values Every Day

Bringing Georgia Tech's Values to Everyday Life

VICTOR ROGERS
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Last fall, Georgia Tech introduced a 10-year strategic plan, grounded in a new mission statement and nine strategic values. In his annual Institute Address, President Ángel Cabrera said, "The mission and the values are not just words on paper. They describe who we are and who we aspire to be every day."

For the new year, Georgia Tech will seek to advance our values with a new campaign called Living Our Values Every Day (L.O.V.E. GT). The goal is to help the entire community bring our values to life in tangible ways that allow us to fulfill the objectives we set forth in the strategic plan. Regardless of a person's role — student, faculty,

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DAVIS DELIVERS



More than 1,700 people joined the Black History Month lecture delivered by Angela Davis on Wednesday, Feb. 10. The archived presentation is available at c.gatech.edu/davis-feb10.



Staff Council to Host PPE Distribution Event

The Georgia Tech Staff Council is partnering with Environmental Health and Safety for a personal protective equipment (PPE) distribution event. All staff members are invited to Tech Green Wednesday, Feb. 17, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. to receive free various PPE items and to meet Staff Council members. Wear your mask!

The Staff Council hosted a Staff Appreciation Day on Tech Green in October 2020 (pictured below). Learn more about the Council's work at staffcouncil.gatech.edu.



Photo by Allison Carter

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focusing on their classroom experiences this semester.

The one-hour sessions, hosted by the Academic Restart Task Force, will help inform continuous improvement efforts for spring and will be shared with campus administrators and the Institute Restart Task Forces.

The goal of the series is to provide insight into perceptions of instructional effectiveness, student engagement, the usefulness of technology, and consistency/clarity of communication and expectations. Sessions for faculty will focus on a specific course mode (i.e., hybrid, remote, residential). In all other sessions, participants will discuss topics more broadly, with the format tailored to address questions across all mode types.

Listening sessions will be limited to 15 participants per session to allow everyone's voice to be heard. The schedule of the listening sessions is listed below:

Faculty sessions:

- Monday, Feb. 22, 1 p.m. (Hybrid)
- Tuesday, Feb. 23, 10 a.m. (Remote)
- Wednesday, Feb. 24, 9 a.m. (Hybrid)
- Tuesday, March 2, 11 a.m. (Hybrid)
- Monday, March 8, 3 p.m. (Remote)
- Wednesday, March 10, 9 a.m. (Residential)

GTA sessions:

- Monday, March 1, 11 a.m. EST
- Friday, March 5, 12 p.m. EST

Graduate and undergraduate sessions are also taking place. All session times are listed in the signup survey at c.gatech.edu/classroomsessions.

Once you have signed up for a time, session details will be sent to you as a calendar invitation in Microsoft Teams. "Thank you in advance for your consideration and support as we work together to gather feedback to inform our planning and continuous improvement efforts," said Kyla Ross, assistant vice provost for Advocacy and Conflict Resolution.



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staff, alumni, or affiliate — all of us can contribute by serving as examples of our values in our interactions with one another and with the communities we serve.

“When we were creating the strategic plan we held appreciative inquiry sessions and found there is so much pride in being connected with Georgia Tech across all the job spectrums, from the administrative support staff to the landscaping staff to faculty,” said Sonia Alvarez-Robinson, executive director of Georgia Tech Strategic Consulting. “Our love for Georgia Tech is what will bring us together. Even where we have ideological differences, we have to find common agreement on how we live our values as an organization every day.”

To accomplish the ambitious goals of the strategic plan, having a campus culture that supports Institute values will be critical.

“We pay attention to the things that are rewarded,” Alvarez-Robinson said. “So, it’s important to establish and accept the standards for behaviors and practices in our community. And in

order for the values to really be part of the fabric of the Institute, we have to hardwire them into our jobs.”

Values-Based Goal Setting

As employees prepare to set their goals for this year, Georgia Tech Human Resources (GTHR) and its strategic partners will support employees with incorporating the shared commitment to Georgia Tech’s mission. One example: GTHR has developed a values-based goal setting template that includes Tech’s nine strategic values.

This is a change from how employees previously set their goals. The new template includes details on the difference between expectations and goals, examples of creating values-based S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-based) goals, and the responsibilities of both employee and supervisor in the process.

A values-based goal states two things: 1) what we will focus on during the coming year and 2) how we will get the work done. Here is an example of this new goal setting: Organize and manage the portfolio of Institute

initiatives to advance the strategic plan by using a collaborative [We celebrate collaboration], inclusive [We thrive on diversity], and student-centered approach [Students are our top priority] that leverages the use of Smartsheets technology [We champion innovation] to track progress of reliable data points from January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021 [We strive for excellence].

For the 2020 review period, employees will use the same performance appraisal template. However, as we continue to work in a pandemic environment, GTHR wants to ensure easy access to our performance management forms for those who may be working remotely. As such, the performance appraisal form is currently available online and is in a new Docusign format. The new values-based goal setting template form will also be placed in a Docusign format.

To account for this new standard, GTHR has updated the performance appraisal process for 2020 with new deadlines. For detailed information, visit hr.gatech.edu/performance-management.

FACULTY AND STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

Birgit Burton, executive director of foundation relations for the Office of Development, has been named chair-elect for the Association of Fundraising Professionals. Burton is the first Black woman to serve in the role.

Ed Coyle, professor and director, Arbutus Center for the Integration of Research and Education and John B. Peatman Distinguished Professor, and **Julie Sonnenberg-Klein**, assistant director for VIP Programs, won the Campus Sustainability Research Award from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. The award was given in recognition of their paper *Using Vertically Integrated Projects to Embed Research-Based Education for Sustainable Development in Undergraduate Curricula*.

Srinivas Aluru, professor in the School of Computational Science and Engineering, and **Haesun Park**, Regents Professor in the School of Computational Science and Engineering, have been named fellows of the Association for Computing Machinery. ACM Fellows recognize the top 1% of ACM members for outstanding accomplishments in computing and information technology.

The College of Engineering recently recognized its 2020 CoE Culture Champion Awards. Awards are given to individuals who are striving to build a better culture in their School and College. The nominees are advocates for a positive and productive culture and help inspire others to promote a culture of inclusivity and acceptance. Congratulations to **Vickie Brian**, assistant director for Admin

Operations in the Daniel Guggenheim School of Aerospace Engineering; **Brenda Morris**, corporate relations manager in the Wallace H. Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering; **Danielle Ramirez**, academic program coordinator in the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering; **Ellen Murkison**, academic advising manager in the School of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering; **Teresa Askew**, assistant to the chair in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering; **Amanda Ford**, graduate programs manager in the H. Milton Stewart School of Industrial and Systems Engineering; **Scott Elliott**, Machine Shop supervisor in the George W. Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering; and **Kerry Wallaert**, educational outreach manager in the School of Materials Science and Engineering.

Tech Campus Surpasses 200,000 Covid-19 Tests

VICTOR ROGERS
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

This month Georgia Tech surpassed 200,000 Covid-19 tests collected and processed on campus since surveillance testing began last fall. The Institute's regular testing of students, faculty, and staff has kept the number of positive cases relatively low on campus.

In January Georgia Tech, in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH), began administering Covid-19 vaccines. Health experts recommend that, even though the vaccine is being administered, weekly surveillance testing should continue.

"Studies show that the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines are effective at preventing severe illness from Covid-19. What we don't know yet is how effective they are at preventing asymptomatic infection and whether they prevent people from carrying the virus and spreading it to other people," said Dr. Ben Holton, senior director of Stamps Health Services. "That's why the current recommendations from the CDC are, even if you've had two doses of the Covid-19 vaccine, you still need to wear a mask and practice social distancing, because we don't know yet if you can spread the virus after being vaccinated. We are encouraging people to continue getting tested after they have had the vaccine."

Testing is done on a walk-up basis, is free of charge, and takes just a few minutes. Participants should login to mytest.gatech.edu with their Georgia Tech account, complete the survey, and generate a tracking barcode for the test before visiting one of the testing sites on campus.

How Testing Works

The samples are transferred to the test lab three times a day for evaluation. To reduce the number of polymerase chain reaction, or PCR, tests that must be run each day, the saliva samples are pooled so that a single test can



Photo by Brice Zimmerman

The Tiff's Treats cookie cruiser was on campus Monday, Feb. 1, to give free cookies to anyone who showed a testing sticker.

examine samples from five individuals. An innovative dual pooling strategy can identify one individual in a set of samples who is presumed positive.

What is dual pooling? Let's follow your sample:

- Your sample is split into **two pools**. Each pool contains a total of **five samples**. With six pools from 15 participants, everyone is uniquely in two of the pools.
- The samples are mixed together and each **pooled sample** is tested with a single test.
- Everyone who participates in surveillance testing **will receive a notification** that they are either recommended or not recommended for a follow-up diagnostic test.
- If **neither of your pools** comes back positive, then **you are informed that you are not recommended for a follow-up test** and no further action is required at this time.
- If **both of your pooled samples are positive**, your original sample is then **tested individually** in the CLIA lab to confirm the sample has SARS-CoV-2.
- If **one of your pools** comes back

positive but your **other pool does not**, then usually **your sample was not the positive one**. However, sometimes there is ambiguity and the lab retests it, which is why some people are notified that they are recommended for a diagnostic test but subsequently test negative. This double positive requirement minimizes false positives.

The surveillance and diagnostic testing is normally completed within 36 to 48 hours, allowing contact tracers to identify other community members who may have been exposed.

Surveillance testing participants may notice they are asked to reconsent before their next test when they visit mytest.gatech.edu. The lab will now perform additional tests to identify the strain of virus, for the purpose of informing policy to help keep campus safe. The reconsent acknowledges this fact. Individuals will not be provided the strain information, since it does not change any follow-up procedures for a positive result.

Continued surveillance testing is important in identifying asymptomatic Covid-19 members of the Tech community and keeping the daily case counts low.