



# The Whistle

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Georgia  
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## SPACETIME



Photo by Rob Felt

Connecting via Skype, Georgia Tech talked with astronaut and Georgia Tech graduate Shane Kimbrough and his Japanese colleague Aki Hoshide at the International Space Station. Listen to the conversation at [youtube.com/georgiatech](https://youtube.com/georgiatech).



## Covid-19 Testing and Vaccination

Georgia Tech will continue to provide free surveillance testing to the campus community this summer. Sites will operate five days a week at Price Gilbert Library and 760 Spring Street, with mobile sites covering other areas of campus on select days. View the summer testing schedule at [health.gatech.edu/coronavirus/testing](https://health.gatech.edu/coronavirus/testing).

Free Covid-19 vaccines continue to be available to the campus community as well. The campus vaccine clinic operates five days a week at the Exhibition Hall. Make your appointment today at [mytest.gatech.edu](https://mytest.gatech.edu).

## Teaching Martial Arts and Mindfulness With a Mission

RENAY SAN MIGUEL  
COLLEGE OF SCIENCES

When she was growing up in France, Pamela Pollet once passed out during her middle school's physical education class. Doctors diagnosed that her heart rhythms and breathing were not in sync. "My general practitioner recommended that I try an activity that taught you how to control your breathing, like karate," Pollet recalls.

It didn't take long for martial arts "to become an integral part of my life," says Pollet, who serves as a senior academic professional for the School of Chemistry and Biochemistry. Then, she not only found the right balance between heart rhythm and the breath, but also discovered that the traditional form of karate known as Shotokan — where self-control is valued as much as strength and speed — came as naturally to her as, well, breathing.

Pollet earned a black belt in

see **POLLET**, page 4

## AROUND CAMPUS



Some familiar aspects of campus life are beginning to return. Last week, Georgia Tech celebrated Commencement and held the semesterly President's Graduation Celebration for graduates (above). In April, an adult barred owl (*Strix varia*) was spotted near Price Gilbert Memorial Library. On another April day, Eddie DiLoretto and Manali Banerjee, both graduate students in materials science and engineering, took a study break in the EcoCommons and flew a kite.



Photos by Allison Carter



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## FACULTY AND STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

**Clio Andris**, assistant professor in the School of City and Regional Planning and School of Interactive Computing, received the National Science Foundation Faculty Early Career Development Program (CAREER) award.

**Jason Borenstein**, academic professional in the School of Public Policy, was recently elected to the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics board of directors (APPE). APPE's mission is to "support and train the next generation of ethics faculty and professionals, work to improve ethical conduct in our communities and workplaces, and advance public dialogue in ethics and values."

The American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering (AIMBE) announced in February that **Lakshmi "Prasad" Dasi**, professor and associate chair for undergraduate studies in the Wallace H. Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering, is joining its College of Fellows as part of the 2021 class. This is an honor reserved for just 2% of the top medical and biological engineering leaders in the nation.

School of Interactive Computing Associate Professor **Munmun De Choudhury** was named a winner of the 2021 ACM-W Rising Star Award. The award, bestowed by the Association for Computing Machinery, recognizes a woman whose early-career research has had a significant impact on the computing discipline, as measured by factors like societal impact, frequent citation of work, or creation of a new research area.

**C. Ross Ethier** recently became the fourth researcher from Georgia Tech to win the prestigious H.R. Lissner Medal from the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. All four have been part of the Wallace H. Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering.

**Yakut Gazi**, associate dean of Learning Systems at Georgia Tech Professional Education, received the 2021 Certificate of Merit from the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE), the only engineering education society dedicated

to the professional needs of engineering educators across all disciplines.

School of Interactive Computing Professor **Ashok Goel** was named a 2021 Fellow by the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AAAI). The AAAI Fellows program recognizes individuals who have made significant, sustained contributions – usually over at least a 10-year period – to the field of artificial intelligence.

**Yuhang Hu**, assistant professor in the George W. Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering, has received the 2021 *Journal of Applied Mechanics* Award for her paper, "Kinetics of polyelectrolyte gels," *Journal of Applied Mechanics* 87, published in June 2020.

**Pinar Keskinocak**, ADVANCE Professor and the William W. George Chair and professor in the H. Milton Stewart School of Industrial and Systems Engineering, has been called on to lend her expertise to the Committee on Addressing Issues of Vaccine Distribution and Supply Chains to Advance Pandemic and Seasonal Influenza Preparedness and Response. This ad hoc committee formed by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine will examine "supply chain and distribution challenges related to vaccines and vaccinations during the Covid-19 response and explore their implications for pandemic and seasonal influenza."

**Asif Khan**, assistant professor in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering, has been named as a recipient of the NSF CAREER Award. Khan also holds a courtesy appointment in the School of Materials Science and Engineering.

**Kent Linthicum**, a Marion L. Brittain Postdoctoral Fellow in the School of Literature, Media, and Communication, has earned a significant fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies. Linthicum is one of 60 recipients of this year's ACLS Fellowship, which seeks to support "outstanding scholarship in the humanities and

humanistic social sciences with the potential to make significant contributions to knowledge within and across fields."

Georgia Bio, the state's life sciences trade association, celebrated its annual Golden Helix Awards April 1. Among the honorees were BME Capstone Director **James Rains**, who won a Community Award for his work fostering more than 500 Capstone projects. **Georgia Tech** also was recognized with a Deal of the Year Award in the public financing category, along with Children's Healthcare of Atlanta and Emory University, for receiving \$18.2 million from the National Institutes of Health to continue their verification of Covid-19 diagnostic tests. BME Associate Professor Wilbur Lam is one of three principal investigators on the project. Additionally, the lab of **Chris Saldana**, professor in the George W. Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering, received an Innovation Award with the Global Center for Medical Innovation for their quick development and production of personal protection equipment face shields in the early months of the coronavirus pandemic.

Associate Chair for Research **Devesh Ranjan**, who holds the Ring Family Chair in the George W. Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering, has been elected a Fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) for "important contributions to experimental techniques and understanding of shock-and-buoyancy driven mixing and turbulence, and championing for the first generation in college students and mentoring of young scientists." The ASME Committee of Past Presidents confers the Fellow grade of membership upon approximately 3% of ASME's 100,000+ members.

**Leslie Ross**, academic program manager and undergraduate advisor in the School of Public Policy, has been elected as liberal arts advisors chair for the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), an international organization dedicated to advancing the field through research and professional development.

**POLLET**, from page 1

Shotokan, competed nationally, and had the opportunity to train with France's national kumite martial arts team. Once in graduate school, however, she began to focus on a new calling — academics — so the karate competitions ended.

The life lessons of her martial arts training, however, remained close as she climbed the academic ladder to her current role at Georgia Tech. Now, Pollet wants to help Tech students find that same level of balance between their studies and lives outside of school.

She points out that the pressure to perform is high, and that higher ed's rhythm is fast and demanding, especially at a campus like Georgia Tech. It requires dedication, and there can be setbacks that can erode self-esteem.

Pollet believes martial arts can be a meaningful answer to help students who may be questioning their ability to keep up with peers.

"Many first-year students were at the top of their high schools," she notes. "It can be a shock to get to Georgia Tech, where everyone is talented and brilliant. It is not unusual for students to say, 'I am a failure,' or 'I am not good enough,' because they are not in the top 5%, or did not earn an 'A' on a given course. I do not agree. This is about reassessing, trying new strategies, adapting, evolving, refining, and reworking. It may not work during the first try — but try anyway and give it your best. This is martial arts teaching! And, it is resilience."

### From chemistry solutions to karate sparring

Pollet practices what she preaches. She stays busy at Georgia Tech between teaching duties — core courses, undergraduate research, a vertically integrated projects (VIP) course on flow chemistry — and her research on smart solvents for chemical synthesis and separation, and flow chemistry for sustainable processes.

Yet at 5:30 p.m. every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, Pollet dons a Karategi, the familiar "gi" uniform for



Photo courtesy of Evolution X Martial Arts

Pamela Pollet greets her class at Evolution X Martial Arts.

karate practice and competition, and co-instructs martial arts and mindfulness techniques to students ages 5 to 17 at Evolution X Martial Arts (EVX) in northeast Atlanta. She likes the dojo's emphasis on balancing the mental side of martial arts with its physical demands.

"We utilize cognitive behavioral and coaching psychology to assist in making skills stick for students," chief instructor Shihan Moree says of EVX, where Pollet has practiced and co-instructed for the last two years. "For example, EVX children's class has an additional focus on developing mental health and emotional intelligence through monthly cognitive behavioral therapy concepts like mindfulness, self-talk, and gratitude."

Pollet has been a longtime advocate of the connection between safety and mindfulness in the teaching of martial arts. "It develops the skills of coping, and training to respond rather than react — that we know is so important on our campus."

As a faculty member, Pollet sees her investment in martial arts teaching as a form of outreach in Georgia Tech's Serve-Learn-Sustain mission.

For her, the "serve" part involves teaching healthy coping strategies for

student life. Being a college student can be stressful enough without adding a pandemic to the mix, and Pollet notes that the isolation and stress caused by Covid-19 bears watching among those attending the Institute, which offers a number of mental health and well-being resources, along with a new student referral system for faculty and staff to help connect students to campus resources.

"Martial arts have equipped me with resources to help manage and respond to hard, painful situations, from both the physical and psychological point of views," Pollet points out.

She also wants to use the Serve-Learn-Sustain mission to help empower those students, faculty, and staff throughout the Georgia Tech community — and to connect and empower individuals of all ages to join in meaningful practices of self care and service to others.

On Saturday, May 15, Pollet will lead an EVX self-defense workshop from 2 to 3:30 p.m. at the school on Faulkner Road. A \$10 donation is requested for the workshop, with all proceeds donated to the Asian American Advancing Justice organization. To learn more and get involved, visit [evolutionxma.com](https://evolutionxma.com).