New Event Will Welcome Graduate Students This Fall

Kristen Bailey
Institute Communications

Georgia Tech has long made it a tradition to welcome incoming students at New Student Convocation each fall. Now, the Institute is ushering in a new tradition of welcoming graduate students with their own event.

The inaugural Graduate Student Welcome will include a Graduate Convocation and the Graduate Student Picnic, sponsored by the Graduate Student Government Association. Both events will take place Wednesday, Aug. 20. Graduate Student Welcome was conceived in part thanks to feedback from students through the campus culture action team of A Path Forward. The group wanted to provide more information to graduate students.

See Graduate, page 3

Support Fellow Employees with Backpack Drive

Bethany Schuster
Human Resources

It may be hard to believe, but it’s already time to start thinking about back-to-school shopping.

Georgia Tech Human Resources has kicked off its seventh annual Buzzin’ Back to School Drive. The school supply drive benefits Georgia Tech employees who may lack the financial resources to purchase school supplies for their children in grades K-12.

Applications are now open for employees to receive a backpack, and donations are now being accepted. The deadline for donations and backpack applications is Friday, July 13.

Human Resources has already received enough donated backpacks, but needs supplies to fill them. Donations can be taken to the Human Resources building at 500 Tech Parkway. Backpack recipients will be drawn at random, and backpacks will be distributed beginning July 24.

For more information on applying for a backpack or donating, visit ohr.gatech.edu/buzzin-back-school.

A Season for Sprucing

Jasmine Walton, equipment operator in Facilities Management, makes repairs to a brick walkway in front of the Student Center on Tuesday, June 26.

Transformation of Campus Financial Systems Underway

Rachael Pocklington
Institute Communications

A new day is on the horizon for the more than 8,000 Georgia Tech employees who work with financial transactions. The transformation of Georgia Tech’s financial systems is underway, and the program is actively engaging key constituents to map out how best to leverage the powerful capabilities of the Workday solution for the benefit of the Institute.

“Georgia Tech financial users, across all units, are very excited about transforming Georgia Tech’s financial systems,” said Alan Katz, assistant dean for Finance and Administration at the College of Computing. “The Workday Financials solution offers next-generation cloud computing that will evolve with the Institute — all with a user-friendly interface. It has the potential to replace or augment all of our disparate accounting, budgeting, purchasing, travel and expense, and grants systems.”

See Financial, page 3

New EVPRI Assumes Role in August

Chaouki T. Abdallah, provost and executive vice president for Academic Affairs at the University of New Mexico, and a Georgia Tech graduate, will take the helm of Tech’s $824 million research enterprise.

See EVPRI, page 3

Data is the Answer to Fighting the Flu

The H. Milton Stewart School of Industrial and Systems Engineering’s Eva Lee writes in Scientific American about the search for a universal flu vaccine, which recently earned $12 million in support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

See Dataflu, page 3

IN THIS ISSUE

Prevent Heat Illness during Summer Workouts

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Get to Know Stamps Lab Manager Helen Ukoh
Tips to Avoid Heat Illness during Outdoor Workouts

With the sun shining and days getting longer, some choose to move their workout routine outside. Spending time in the great outdoors has many benefits, such as boosting your mood and improving your quality of sleep. Incorrectly exercising in the sweltering Georgia heat can be dangerous, though, and even life-threatening. Take a few pieces of advice from Health and Well-Being staff members to have a safe summer workout.

Have patience
If you’ve perfected your indoor routine and are ready to take it outside, think again. It’s important to take it easy at first if you’re not used to exercising in hot weather. It can take at least a week or two for your body to acclimate to the heat, and jumping right in at 100 percent puts you at a higher risk for heat-related illness. You can gradually increase the intensity of your workout as your body begins to adapt to the Atlanta weather.

Watch the clock
Choosing the right time to exercise can make your workout safer. Avoiding the midday sun and heat is key, and there are even added benefits to an early or late workout. Getting active early in the morning can energize you for the rest of the day and improve your sleep cycle, while an evening workout is good because muscles are at their most flexible. Becky James, a personal trainer at the Campus Recreation Center, recommends a morning workout when the heat and humidity are lower, air quality is better, and sun exposure is at a minimum.

Protect yourself
Most people know that UV rays are damaging to the skin, but did you know that sunburns can drastically impair your body’s ability to lower its temperature? To best protect yourself from the sun, apply at least SPF 30 sunscreen, even on cloudy days. Give your sunscreen 30 minutes to soak in before you head out, and don’t forget to reapply every two hours, or right after swimming, toweling off, or significant sweating. It’s also a good idea to wear light colors to prevent your body from absorbing excess heat.

Hydrate early and often
Staying hydrated allows your body to sweat and cool itself off and is a key factor in preventing heat-related illnesses. Start drinking fluids a couple hours before heading out and continue hydrating throughout your workout. James advises, “Take more water than you think you need, and never pass up an opportunity to refill.”

Pay attention
Even if you take all the necessary precautions, heat-related illness is still a possibility, and it’s important to know the signs and listen to your body. Stamps Health Services Senior Director Ben Holton describes heat illness as a spectrum from mild to life-threatening — ranging from dehydration, to heat edema, to heat cramps, to heat exhaustion, to heat stroke. “The hallmark of heat stroke is altered mental status, in addition to elevated body temperature, elevated heart rate, low blood pressure, and nausea or vomiting,” said Holton. “It can progress to organ failure. Pushing through these symptoms can be detrimental to your health.” Holton advises taking time to cool down and rehydrate. If you have symptoms that persist for more than 15 minutes, see a doctor.

When to seek medical attention
Heat edema, heat cramps, and mild heat exhaustion can typically be treated without going to a medical facility. More significant heat exhaustion, though, with elevated heart rate, low blood pressure, and fainting, should be treated at a medical facility. Any change in mental status should prompt evaluation in an emergency department.

EVENTS

HEALTH AND WELLNESS
July 12
Human Resources hosts a Be Well session on Life, Estate, and Inheritance Planning from noon to 1 p.m. in Room 202, Scheller College of Business.

Through Aug. 8
Health Initiatives hosts a book club series to discuss Mindfulness: An Eight-Week Plan for Finding Peace in a Frantic World by Mark Williams and Danny Penman. Discussions take place on Wednesdays during lunchtime. Event details are available at: healthinitiatives.gatech.edu

WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING
July 16
The Library hosts a training session on R, a free, open-source statistical analysis software package used in research environments for data analysis and visualization. The training will take place from noon to 1 p.m. in the Homer Pule Center, Library.

July 16
The Supply Chain and Logistics Institute hosts a free webinar on Three Key Principles of Influence: Driving Business Deals and Effective Negotiations from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Register at: bit.ly/regulating-webinar

July 16
Institute Diversity hosts two Storytelling for inclusive Excellence workshops as part of its Transformative Narratives program, from 9 to 11:30 a.m. and from 2 to 4:30 p.m., in the Crescent Room, Student Center. Register at: institute.gatech.edu/storytelling

EVENTS continued on page 3

EAT US AND CULTURE
July 13
A showing of Ready Player One will take place at 9 p.m. at Tech Green. c.gatech.edu/flicks

July 20
A showing of Black Panther will take place at 8 p.m. at Bobby Dodd Stadium.
c.gatech.edu/flicks

REMAKED International Poet Named to Bourne Poetry Chair

REBECCA KEANE  IVAN ALLEN COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Beginning Aug. 1, Georgia Tech’s poetry program will have a new director.

The dean of the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts, Jacqueline J. Royster, announced the appointment on July 1 of Professor Ilya Kaminsky as the Margaret T. and Henry C. Bourne Jr. Chair in Poetry. Professor Kaminsky will join the faculty of the School of Literature, Media, and Communication, as well as become the new director of the Poetry@Tech Program. He succeeds the inaugural Bourne Chair, Thomas Lux.

Kaminsky was born in Odessa, Ukraine, and arrived in the U.S. in 1993 when his family was granted asylum. He is the author of Dancing in Odessa, Decal Republic, and several other books, including Dark Elderberry Branch: Poems of Marina Tsvetaeva. He has edited many collections of poems and essays, including Ecco Anthology of International Poetry, which has been called “a modern classic.”

In 2018, Kaminsky was awarded the prestigious John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship in Poetry. His poems have been translated into numerous languages around the globe and his books have been published in Turkey, the Netherlands, Russia, France, Mexico, Macedonia, Romania, Spain, and China, where his poetry was awarded the Yinchuan International Poetry Prize.

His other awards include the American Academy of Arts and Letters’ Metcalf Award, The Whiting Writers Award, Ruth Lilly Fellowship, Pushcart Prize, and Poetry magazine’s Levinson Prize. Recently, he was on the shortlist for the Neustadt International Literature Prize. His essays have appeared in publications such as The New York Times, The Guardian, and Boston Review.

He previously served as the director of the Harriet Monroe Poetry Institute at Poetry Foundation, and as a professor of English and comparative literature at San Diego State University. He is an award-winning teacher who is committed to building STEAM—integrating the arts into the STEM fields.

“Dr. Kaminsky’s international focus puts him squarely within our strategic plans for expanding Georgia Tech’s global footprint,” said Royster. “His international profile in the world of poetry and his multi-dimensional experience working and teaching poetry within a technological context hold the promise not only of sustaining the momentum of Poetry@Tech, but of creating the next vanguard for poetry within the 21st-century technological university.”

Kaminsky’s appointment begins Aug. 1.

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Archives are posted at whistle.gatech.edu.

Georgia Tech is a unit of the University System of Georgia.
Advancing Organizational Effectiveness Across Campus

In the truest sense, “organizational effectiveness” is defined by how effective an organization is in achieving its established goals. While the idea appears fairly simple at the surface, given the myriad of variables in today’s workplace — including people, management styles, and an organization’s culture and values — the idea is actually quite complex.

“...the most basic level, an organization's culture and values really set the pace for how it achieves organizational effectiveness,” said Sonia Alvarez-Robinson, executive director of Georgia Tech Strategic Consulting. “Like the air we breathe, culture and values are fundamental to an organization’s health and well-being. All is well when you have it, but it can be rather unpleasant — and unproductive — when you don’t.”

To this end, Georgia Tech Strategic Consulting recently conducted the first annual Georgia Tech Organizational Effectiveness Conference to enable participants to learn to work more efficiently and effectively. The conference welcomed more than 200 attendees who came from local higher education institutions, such as Georgia Tech, Berry College, and Emory University, as well as corporations including NCR, Coca-Cola, and AT&T.

Throughout the day, keynote speakers and panelists provided opportunities for attendees to gain insight, tools, and resources. Leading practices from various Georgia Tech organizations, as well as locally based Fortune 500 companies were also shared.

One of the main takeaways included recognizing the importance of “human systems” in driving an effective organization and understanding how values and cultures, both employee and organizational, affect performance — especially in times of change.

During the leadership panel, several speakers noted that embracing change is inherently difficult but that it is paramount that leaders listen and empathize with their staff members.

Practice What You Teach

In addition, the conference offered four workshops to help attendees hone the fundamentals of organizational effectiveness:

- Process Optimization
- Project and Portfolio Management
- Organizational Readiness and Managing Change
- Strategy Development and Implementation

The conference really demonstrated Georgia Tech’s commitment to empowering employees with the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in advancing their organization,” said Diana Tiernan, program administrator in the Office of Campus Sustainability. “We all recognize that change is inevitable, and it is up to us to develop the skill set needed to successfully navigate through the transformation.”

View a recording of highlights from the Organizational Effectiveness Conference at cgatech.edu/orgeffect.

To learn more about advancing your department’s organizational effectiveness, visit the Georgia Tech Strategic Consulting website at consulting.gatech.edu.

Above, Jennifer Evaulnair Baird and Lorie Paulez join the discussion during Strategic Consulting’s Organizational Effectiveness Conference. Below, Byron Fitch speaks at the event.

FINANCIAL, from page 1

management systems.”

Katz added that the significant process and policy improvements are already being identified. One initial win is automating non-employee payments for more timely and accurate tracking of project balances.

During the Architect Phase this spring, the Financials Transformation Program conducted several Customer Review Sessions to share the newly defined business processes with an expanded Georgia Tech population. Customer Confirmation Sessions will be held this summer, targeting an even larger audience in an effort to ensure the campus community has an opportunity to provide feedback and is engaged throughout the design process.

GRADUATE, from page 1

students and make them feel welcome upon their arrival on campus.

“Graduate students have expressed that they want to feel more connected to the Tech community, and we’re listening,” said Bonnie Ferri, vice provost for Graduate Education and Faculty Development. “The wonderful thing about this event is that it provides a much-needed opportunity to celebrate new students and spread the word about resources and support at the beginning of their studies at Tech.”

Graduate Convocation will take place from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. at McCamish Pavilion, followed by the picnic from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Tech Green. Families of graduate students are invited to attend.

Like New Student Convocation, Graduate Convocation will also feature a student speaker to address new Yellow Jackets.

For more information about the event, visit specialevents.gatech.edu/graduate-student-welcome.
Ukoh Enjoys Life behind the Microscope

CHRISTINE LEMASTER
HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

When Helen Ukoh was growing up in Nigeria, her parents told her she had three career paths: law, engineering, or medicine.

“I hated law, and engineering seemed too abstract at the time. Therefore, medicine became my default option,” she said.

Now, she serves as the clinical lab manager at Stamps Health Services, where she’s been for four years. She recently spoke more about herself and her job on campus.

How did you end up on your career path?
I came to the U.S. to go to medical school only to face a shocking reality that I couldn’t afford it, so I settled for the medical technology program instead.

What do you love most about your job?
For more than 15 years I had the opportunity to work for big hospitals and diagnostic institutions with high-tech equipment and high complexity testing. I loved it, but labs in big hospitals tend to be very compartmentalized with little interdisciplinary interaction. I have grown to love and enjoy my regular interactions with the nurses, medical assistants, providers, pharmacy, business professionals, and patients. This cross-functional interaction, in my opinion, has a positive effect on patient care.

What have you learned from the people you work with at Stamps?
Transcending from an in-patient to out-patient environment with completely different demographics took some mental adjustment on my part, and my co-workers really helped me in that process. By observing them, I learned how to interact and communi- cate better with the students.

What does your typical day look like?
In addition to processing patients and performing lab testing, my daily routine is primarily focused on quality assurance management, reviewing patients’ results, quality controls, and processes. In lab language, we call it the 3 “Rs” — making sure we provide the right result, to the right person, at the right time. This means removing any obstacles that would prevent personnel from doing their job efficiently and effectively.

Where did you attend school?
I got my bachelor’s degree in medical technology from Georgia State University and my master’s in business administration from the University of Phoenix.

What do you like to do when you are not at Stamps?
I love mentoring young kids, so I’m involved in outreach programs from time to time. I don’t know how to dance but I love dancing in my living room just to avoid going out to exercise.

What have you seen Stamps Health Services evolve throughout your time here?
The laboratory test volume has significantly increased over the years. In addition, we routinely expand our test menu options to include specialty testing in an effort to meet the needs of our increasing and diverse student population.

Adekunle-Ejiki-Kennedy, professor and associate chair of global engineering leadership and research development in the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering, has been named a fellow of the American Society of Civil Engineers.

Edward J. Coyle, John B. Peatman Distinguished Professor in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering and Georgia Research Alliance Eminent Scholar, received the Advancing Civic Engagement and Socially Beneficial Science and Engineering Award at the SUNY-Industry Conference and Showcase: Science and Engineering for Social Good. The conference was held in June in Stony Brook, New York.

Jennifer Hirsch, director of the Center for Serve-Learn-Sustain, was recently elected to the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) board of directors.

Ryan Lively, assistant professor in the School of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, was awarded the Department of Energy’s (DOE’s) Office of Science financial award for Early Career Research Program. This is the third DOE Early Career Award given to Georgia Tech and the first for the School.

Graduate student Heng Yang and his Ph.D. advisor Maryam Saedifard, associate professor in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering, have been selected for the IEEE Industrial Electronics Society Best Transactions Paper Award. The award will be presented during the banquet of the 2018 IEEE Industrial Electronics Society Conference, which will take place in Washington, D.C., in October.

What do you love most about your job?
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