Thanksgiving and enjoy meeting come together in the spirit of families and international students meal. at their home for a Thanksgiving to host an international student given the opportunity to volunteer living in the state of Georgia are the Holidays, where Tech families created a program called Home for Government Association has campus community, the Student home country.

Every year, hundreds of host guests have been some of the most community. gravel to share with loved ones past guests post photos on social appreciative.” Kohn has noticed this year, because of the destruction other fellow Yellow Jackets. And this year, because of the destruction by Hurricanes Irma, Jose, and Maria, some students may not even have a home to return to for Thanksgiving. Paul Kohn, vice provost for Enrollment Services, and his wife, Wendy, first hosted students as a way to get to know people from other backgrounds and to help students from far away adjust to a new environment.

“There is a peculiar charm explaining to our international guests why we eat certain foods as part of the Thanksgiving tradition, and even how we plate the holiday meal,” Kohn said. The Kohns are still left without answers to some cultural questions: Why do we stuff versus dressing? Kohn and his wife have found the experience both fun and gratifying, and even keep in touch with some of their guests years later.

“With just a little effort, we have helped students from China, India, the U.K., and Germany enjoy a festive, convivial group experience,” he said. “The students are enormously grateful and appreciative.” Kohn has noticed past guests post photos on social media to share with loved ones and show that they are being taken care of in the Tech community.

The dinners with international students from far away adjust to a new environment.

INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS
KRISTEN BAILEY

Yellow Jackets Wanted as Holiday Hosts

During school breaks, many international students are unable to travel to their home country.

In an effort to build a stronger campus community, the Student Government Association has created a program called Home for the Holidays, where Tech families living in the state of Georgia are given the opportunity to volunteer to host an international student at their home for a Thanksgiving meal.

Every year, hundreds of host families and international students come together in the spirit of Thanksgiving and enjoy meeting other fellow Yellow Jackets. And this year, because of the destruction by Hurricanes Irma, Jose, and Maria, some students may not even have a home to return to for Thanksgiving.

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The onset of fall quickly gives way to the holiday season, known as a time for giving. Tech employees, though, notoriously give all year long to those in need across the state of Georgia.

The State Charitable Contributions Program gives state employees the opportunity to make a difference by partnering with hundreds of nonprofits and charitable organizations. All state entities, including University System of Georgia (USG) schools, participate in the annual fundraiser.

Last year, 1,279 Georgia Tech employees pledged $393,461, breaking a goal of $375,000. This year’s goal is to raise $390,000 and have 1,500 employees participate.

So far, more than 400 employees have pledged more...
SICK, from page 1
stock of sick time. Employees can also tap into the pool to cover an absence necessitated by illness or injury of an immediate family member (such as a spouse, parent, or child). This includes those who will be welcoming a child through birth or adoption.

If you’re interested in enrolling in the program, there are a few things to know:

• You must donate to gain membership. Any employee who wishes to benefit from the donated sick leave pool must donate at least eight hours of their own time. Employees must also have a balance of at least 40 hours of sick leave after their donation (meaning, in order to opt-in, you must have at least 48 hours of sick leave at the time of your donation).

• Once you are a member of the pool, all requests must be submitted via an application process. Employees must go through a confidential application process to request sick leave hours when a situation occurs.

• The maximum withdrawal amount is 480 hours (12 weeks) per year. When an employee withdraws the maximum number of hours, membership in the pool will be terminated for the rest of the calendar year.

The employee must donate again during benefits open enrollment in order to become a member again.

• Donated sick leave can’t be used in conjunction with disability, or any other short- or long-term income protection benefits.

• You must exhaust all sick and annual leave first, or provide credible evidence that you will exhaust all sick and annual leave before the medical condition is resolved.

Read the full policy at c.gatech.edu/ usp/plans.

CHARITABLE, from page 1

than $160,000.

“...you get to decide where you give, and you can know your donation will be used wisely as all the groups have been vetted,” said Bill Toll, professor of the practice in the Scheller College of Business and vice chair of this year’s campaign. Todd emphasized the range of nonprofits on the list — causes include animals, children, environment, and more.

“Somewhere on that list is something you care about,” Todd said. For the past nine years, Georgia Tech has been the recipient of the Governor’s Cup, which is awarded annually to the state institution with the highest average contribution per employee. Tech has won the Cup a total of 14 times.

“Small donations make a big difference,” said Karen Head, associate professor in the School of Literature, Media, and Communication and chair of ambassadors for this year’s campaign. “Together with others, smaller donations add up and can go a long way in the hands of these organizations.”

Donations are accepted via payroll deduction on an ongoing basis or as a one-time donation. For those who choose to give through payroll deduction, contributions will begin in January 2018. Employees can give to a general fund or choose specific organizations to which they would like to direct their donations. The list of charities is managed by the state of Georgia and changes annually, so new options may be available this year.

Employees can give via TechWorks (techworks.gatech.edu) or a paper pledge form through Friday, Nov. 17. To learn more or to set up a donation, visit charitable.gatech.edu.

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memorable and enjoyable for his family.

“We have found the dinners to be most festive, never fraught with family-related drama, and overall just a delightful, rewarding way to spend the holiday. We appreciate the broad range of experiences as well as the courage of international students to traverse the globe in pursuit of their education and to experience American culture.”

All faculty, staff, and current students are invited to host. Hosts can make preferences for how many students they can host, whether or not they can cater to various dietary restrictions. In a situation where a host has numerous guests from varying places, Kohl suggests making a little effort to stimulate interaction.

SGA usually gets more students wanting a host home than host volunteers, so every host submission helps to give students a memorable Thanksgiving experience.

Volunteer by filling out the form at c.gatech.edu/ holidayhost.

For students who would like to be hosted, complete the form at c.gatech.edu/ holidaystudent.

The deadline to apply as a host or student is Monday, Nov. 6. For more information, contact ghahomeforcetholidays@gmail.com.
A mix of large public and private research universities comprise Georgia Tech’s newest set of peer institutions, approved by the University System of Georgia (USG)’s chancellor in May.

The review was initiated in fall 2016 by the USG, which uses peer sets for academic benchmarking initiatives such as tracking retention and graduation rates as well as for comparisons regarding tuition and fees, faculty salaries, or funding support for higher education. This represents the first update since 2009.

To identify its own set of comparators, Georgia Tech began with its fellow members of the Association of American Universities, which offered additional access to institutional data for more comprehensive analyses.

By combining guidance from the USG with its own criteria and input from academic leadership, Georgia Tech proposed a list of 15 universities, drawn from across the country, that most closely resembled its own mission of teaching, research, and service.

Tech is bound to these institutions at a personal level, too, as more than 400 of the Institute’s tenured or tenure-track faculty earned their terminal degree from this peer set.

FACULTY GOVERNANCE

The Faculty, Faculty Senate, and Academic Faculty Senate convened Tuesday, Oct. 17, for their first full meeting of the semester.

Standing committees issued annual reports from the past year of work, and a few new items were presented for approval.

President G.P. “Bud” Peterson presided over the meeting. He mentioned the recent Krone Engineered Biosystems Building dedication, the Smart Cities initiative with the City of Atlanta, the OMS Analytics program welcoming its first cohort this semester, and an upcoming China trip where Tech leaders and Georgia Tech’s men’s basketball team will travel for athletic and academic endeavors. The trip will include a tour of the Georgia Tech - Shenzhen campus.

Other items discussed included:

- The Institute Undergraduate Curriculum Committee presented a new minor in Naval Sciences. The minor will familiarize students with basic and advanced concepts of Naval Science with emphasis on naval history, technology, and leadership. The program is intended to attract students in the Naval ROTC program, who are required to complete 24 hours of Naval Sciences courses to earn a commission in the Navy, as well as civilian students, with the hope that the added diversity of thought and student backgrounds in class discussions will add an immeasurable dynamic to the efficacy of courses.

- The Institute Graduate Curriculum Committee presented a new degree program from the School of Modern Languages. The Master of Science in Applied Languages and Intercultural Studies (MS ALIS) will be open to faculty-approved applicants holding a B.S./B.A. degree in any discipline. The degree program will depart from traditional models of graduate foreign language study in its focus on the development of professional-level language skills and critical intercultural knowledge for application to students’ diverse career orientations, nonprofit, government, and business sectors. It is the intent to eventually offer an MS ALIS track in each of the major languages offered by the School of Modern Languages, beginning with Spanish. The program would also lend itself to a Bachelor’s/master’s degree (BS/MS) option, making it easy for students to proceed through both degrees at Georgia Tech. In a 2017 survey of senior capstone students, 90 percent of Spanish ALIS majors indicated they would have been interested in a graduate degree in the language had one been available. In Fall 2018, it is planned to initiate the offering of the standalone MS ALIS degree and the BS/MS ALIS degree in the Spanish track only, with French and German expected to follow in Fall 2019.

For complete meeting agendas and minutes, visit facultygovernance.gatech.edu.
Scholarship Fund Aids Hurricane-Affected Students

MARGARET TATE
INSTITUTE COMMUNICATIONS

Devastation wrought by Hurricanes Irma and Maria is creating financial hardship for Georgia Tech students from the Caribbean. Donations are being sought for a temporary scholarship fund to help.

Georgia Tech’s international student community dates back to 1895, when the very first non-U.S. students enrolled from Puerto Rico, then part of the Spanish Empire. Since then, Yellow Jackets from the Caribbean and Latin America have become an integral part of the Institute’s legacy. Currently, there are 62 students from Puerto Rico and two from the U.S. Virgin Islands at Georgia Tech. Now, with these areas confronting dire circumstances such as little to no electricity, disrupted communications, damaged infrastructure, and massive fuel shortages, businesses in the region are expected to remain closed for months, and many of our students’ families may face severe, unforeseen financial hardships.

To ensure that these students will be able to stay enrolled at Georgia Tech while the region stabilizes and rebuilds, the Office of Development has created an emergency scholarship fund. Eligibility criteria will be determined by the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid, and priority will be given to students who are farthest along in pursuit of their degrees.

The fund will be used to provide temporary assistance to students who have been impacted by the hurricanes. Awards will be made as grants to help with the immediate financial needs of students who have been displaced or whose homes have been destroyed.

To help the students through this crisis, Development is seeking an expendable fund of a minimum of $1 million. Alumna Humberto Ortega, a 1964 industrial engineering graduate, originally from Cuba, has made a lead gift of five figures to the fund. No stranger to financial uncertainties himself, he was a junior in high school when Fidel Castro came to power and appropriated the wealth of the people—leaving his family barely able to scrape up the money to send him to the U.S. for an education as they had always planned.

Once he got to Georgia Tech, he and many other refugees from Cuba were helped with jobs, room and board, and funds for tuition, allowing them to earn their degrees and go on to pursue their careers, mostly in the U.S. When Ortega learned about the plan to support Georgia Tech’s Puerto Rican and U.S. Virgin Island students as they face their own financial uncertainties, he discussed it with his wife, who encouraged him to help.

“I have lived a good life and built resources I can share with others who face acute, unexpected need,” said Ortega, who has already included Tech in his estate plans and makes annual contributions to the “Rebuilding the Bridge” scholarship endowment for Tech students of Cuban descent. “It’s tough being in school and not knowing if you can stay.”

Ortega encourages other members of the Georgia Tech community — friends, alumni, faculty, staff, and students — to contribute to the fund, as well.

“I hope others will join me in making it possible for anyone who needs help to get it — and get out,” he said.

All contributions to the “Emergency Scholarship for Students from Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands” are welcome. To make a donation, go to development.gatech.edu/ways-give.

Following Hurricane Maria, the Georgia Tech community donated, packed, and shipped nearly 20 pallets of food and water to San Juan, Puerto Rico. Students have also coordinated fundraising efforts, and the Digital Integrative Liberal Arts Center Lab led an effort to update online maps used by aid workers.

The Center for Minorities and People with Disabilities in IT presented the College of Computing with the organization’s first University Award for Retention of Minorities and Students with Disabilities in Computer Science. The award was presented at the 2017 ACM Richard Taipa Celebration of Diversity in Computing on Sept. 21.

Colette Fournier, International Plan advisor in the Office of International Education, has been selected for the NAFSA Association of International Educations’ Region VII 2017 New Professional Award.

Rosario A. Gerhardt, Goizueta Foundation Faculty Chair and professor in the School of Materials Science and Engineering, received the American Ceramic Society’s Arthur L. Friedberg Memorial Lecture Award at the October MS&T 2017 conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Santiago Geijalva, Georgia Power Distinguished Professor in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering, has been named to the Federal Smart Grid Advisory Committee of the National Institute of Standards and Technology for a three-year term.

Ayanna M. Howard, Linda J. and Mark C. Smith Chair Professor in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering, was a recipient of the Waller’s Legacy Power25 Atlanta Awards. The awards honored 25 women from the metro Atlanta area on Oct. 12 for achievements in technology, media, business, education, and industry.

Brittain Fellow Halsey Lawrence in the School of Literature, Media, and Communication earned the Best Presentation award for her presentation Potty Mouths: Examining Toxic Language in Online Gaming Environments at the 4th Annual Georgia Tech Postdoctoral Research Symposium held Sept. 21.

Annabelle Singer, assistant professor in the Wallace H. Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering, was named by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation one of 18 recipients of the prestigious 2017 Packard Fellowships for Science and Engineering.

Arijit Raychowdhury, associate professor and ON Semiconductor Professor in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering, received the Best Paper Award from the IEEE Transactions on Multi-Scale Computing Systems for an article entitled Enabling New Computation Paradigms with HyperFET.

The Society of Research Administrators International honored Trinidad M. Riley, executive director of the Georgia Tech Office of Sponsored Programs, with the distinguished faculty designation at its 2017 Annual Meeting in Vancouver, Canada. This designation recognizes “thought leaders” that enhance the professional development of research administrators around the world.

Iris Tien, assistant professor in the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering, earned a first-place paper award at the 2017 conference for a case study on Atlanta’s water and power systems that analyzed the vulnerabilities of interdependent infrastructure.

Shuman Xia, associate professor in the George W. Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering, was awarded the 2017 James W. Dally Young Investigator Award for outstanding contributions to engineering education and excellence in research in experimental nano- and micro-mechanics.