

[CAMPUS MAP](#)[DIRECTORIES](#)[Georgia Tech Home](#) [Office of the President](#) [Letters & Bulletins](#) [With Thanks to our Unsung Heroes](#)

LETTERS & BULLETINS

[Introduction](#)

[President's Welcome](#)

[About Dr. Peterson](#)

[President's Cabinet](#)

[Publications](#)

[Speeches & Presentations](#)

[Letters & Bulletins](#)

[Editorials](#)

[Notes from the President](#)

[Staff Responsibilities](#)

[Organizational Chart \(pdf\)](#)

[Institute Ethics](#)

[Contact the President](#)

With Thanks to our Unsung Heroes

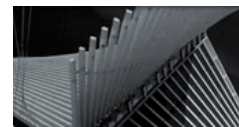
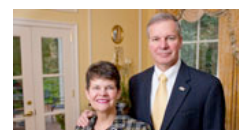
January 13, 2011

Three days later than planned, welcome back to campus. I hope you stayed safe and warm, and are ready to start another semester at Georgia Tech. The combined effects of several inches of snow and ice, along with freezing temperatures, resulted in continued hazardous driving conditions as well as numerous challenges on campus. The decision to reopen late today was a difficult one. While many were home waiting out the storm, we owe a debt of gratitude to numerous volunteers — employees, members of the Interfraternity Council (IFC) and other students — who went above and beyond to provide services on campus and help ensure everyone's safety in a very challenging situation.

Our public safety professionals, including the Georgia Tech Police Office of Emergency Preparedness, worked around the clock to do everything possible to ensure safety. Facility crews worked on campus beginning Sunday night to help clear streets and sidewalks. On Tuesday, working to battle ice on our more than 400-acre campus became especially challenging as temperatures plummeted. It quickly became apparent that the 5th Street Bridge connecting the main campus to classes and restaurants at Technology Square was a concern due to ice. I received a note from the president of Waffle House, who by the way was out shoveling snow and stayed at work until 1 a.m. Monday serving customers, including hundreds of Tech students. We can all be grateful for student volunteers, and in particular the IFC, for lending many hands to clear the sidewalk over the 5th Street Bridge on Tuesday, and working again on Wednesday to clear sidewalks and building entrances.

The several thousand students who were already on campus, along with the staff members working, were able to use the Student Center 24/7, enjoy hot meals, and work out at the CRC. Students even participated in special activities and programs coordinated by Residence Life staff. Health Services was open, and the trolleys even managed to run once the streets were passable.

The spirit of camaraderie was everywhere. On Wednesday morning I stopped by both Brittain and Woodruff Dining Halls and talked to a number of the students and several of our public safety officers who were getting something to eat. The food looked good, and I was impressed with the resourcefulness of staff, using food that was already on hand in the dining halls as well as stock from the food court. Managers worked 14-hour days and lived in the Hampton Inn on North Avenue. Students were very grateful, and some even volunteered to help serve because of staff shortages. I also stopped by the CRC, which was packed. It was a nice system: eat hearty, and then work it all off in the gym!

[2010 Annual Report \(9.2M PDF\)](#)[\(/president/sites/president/files/GeorgiaTech2010InteractiveAnnualReport.pdf\)](#)[Georgia Tech Fact Book](#)<http://www.irp.gatech.edu/factbooks/factbook.html>[Recent Trends and Milestones: Summer 2010 \(2.0M .pdf\)](#)[\(/president/sites/president/files/trends-milestones-summer-2010.pdf\)](#)[Ethics](#)[\(/president/ethics\)](#)[About Dr. Peterson](#)[\(/president/about\)](#)

The students I talked to were happy, but ready to get going with classes. In true Georgia Tech efficiency, a number of the faculty had made assignments, posting homework via T-Square. Some even held classes via Skype!

I hope that the communications on Tech's website kept everyone updated with the latest information. While classes were cancelled and most employees were not required to report to work, we can all be very thankful for those employees who were designated as "emergency essential" by their departments, as well as the many volunteers who worked alongside them to take care of the Georgia Tech community.

Welcome back, and thanks from all of us.