The whirlwind pace of learning and feeling and moving and changing makes college intensely exhausting. But rather than aging me, the four years have made me feel younger. I hope my fellow soon-to-be Tech graduates will agree.

Primarily, Tech has restored my sense of wonder. I am glad to find myself less cynical and world-weary than when I started here. I have seen this change in my peers as they have discovered new and unexpected passions and regained a wide-eyed eagerness. The world is big and exciting and surprising again, and so are our dreams and goals. We have all realized just how much more is out there for us to explore and learn. We want to pick up sparkling things, turn them about in our hands, rub them on our faces and cry out. Like small children, we are hugely and irrationally reluctant to go to bed, lest we miss some unforseen excitement. In addition, our heightened appreciation for the unmatchable value of experience has rekindled a childlike admiration for our parents and teachers.

Tech both broadens your world and becomes your world. Not since preschool have I loved so fiercely, fondly, and fast. You must love as hard as you work, and Tech works us hard (which we do tend to whine about like little kids). That is how Tech prepares its graduates to be confident, not arrogant. The distinction is fine but important. Arrogance means admitting no limits. Tech has taught everyone a tough lesson or two about limits, and we still believe we can achieve great things, but only if we collaborate. The only way to thrive at Tech is through unjealous and unconditional friendships. We root for each other and lean on each other. We play more. We laugh more. Idealism may sound naive and youthful, but what’s wrong with that? Let’s go rock the world!

*Carola was one of the founding staff members of the HyPe and the winner of the “Name the Newsletter” contest 4 years ago.*
The Georgia Tech Honors Program would like to congratulate our first cohort of Graduates!

Ashley Ahrens
Lindsay Anglin
Christopher Becker
James Birch
Andrew C. Blackburn
Timothy Cahill
Duane L. Carver Jr.
Emily Chambers
Carola M. Conces
Samuel Coogan
Andrew Donnan
Geoffrey Emmer
Nirouz Elhammali
Santiago Hässig
Erica G. Hocking
Kevin Humphries
Alecia Jefferson
James Jones
Jeremy Jones
Nikhil Kadle
Ruchir Karmali
Diana Kerckhof
Tiffany M. Lowe
Stephanie Lu
William Marshall
Nicholas Marquez
Kento Masuyama
Kaley A. McCluskey
Andrew J. McDowell
Shalini Nemani
Emily Pechar
Brian Plattenburg
Jason Power
Elisabeth Robertson
Sydney Shaffer
Christopher Sladky
Michael W. Smith
Alina Staskevicius
Kenneth R. Taylor
Rex Tzen
Joseph R. Vizurraga
Jonathan Walker
Emily G. Weigel
Elisabeth West
Ian Yancey
Janet Yeh
Nishant Zachariah

A Letter from Fellow Graduates
BY SANTIAGO HÄSSIG AND CHRIS GIARDINA

Establishment of the Honors Program Alumni Organization

Wouldn’t it be great for an Honors Program student to seek out HP alumni when searching for an internship or job opportunity? Wouldn’t pre-med students love a way to contact HP alumni now working in the health field for shadowing opportunities? Current and departing students alike should take advantage of the latest HP project—the Honors Program Alumni Organization. This association seeks to provide the necessary infrastructure to network current students and alumni through a website that is soon to launch. The website will have a personalized profile page on which users can list academic interests and professional experience. In addition, users will be encouraged to upload a profile picture and résumé to a personalized page with privacy settings and a customized link. With the search feature, current students and alumni will be able to contact one another based on professional connections, interests, and even activities listed.

The website will also offer resources for the academic success of current students, including pages where faculty can post job listings, networking opportunities, HP events, and even links related to professionalism and résumé design. The faculty will also be able to use the site as a resource to gather statistics about where students end up in the long term, as this is a critical metric of the program’s strength. The more people get involved with this resource, the faster and stronger it will grow. We anticipate a great potential for the association and look forward to your participation.
Lindsay Anglin  
Bellon Prize, School of History, Technology, and Society  

Trey Birch  
Outstanding Economics and International Affairs Student Award  
Legacy Award, Ivan Allen College  

Andrew Blackburn  
ECE Faculty Award and Outstanding EE Senior Award  

Zane Blanton  
Molly Davenport Outstanding Psychology Undergraduate Student Award  

Hannah Hogan  
The Alpha Kappa Psi Distinction, College of Management  
Judith Pritty Award, College Panhellenic Council  

Martha Lesniewski  
Georgia Tech Faculty Women's Club Scholarship  

Victor Lesniewski  
Georgia Tech Faculty Women's Club Scholarship  

Tiffany Lowe  
Faculty Award, School of Biology  

Nivedh Manohar  
Outstanding Scholastic Achievement Award, NRE Program, School of Mechanical Engineering  

Kaley McCluskey  
H. Fukuyo Memorial Scholarship Award in Physics  

Audrey Plummer  
Stanley, Love-Stanley, P.C. Award, College of Architecture  

Jonathan Saethang  
Omicron Delta Kappa Senior Salute Award  
"Dr. Lee Wilcox" Servant Leadership Award, SGA  

John Semmens  
George Wingfield Semmes Scholarship Honoree, ANAK Society  

Alina Staskevicius  
Judith Pritty Award, College Panhellenic Council  
Tau Beta Pi Senior Engineering Cup  

Shadeah Suleiman  
Williams-Walls Life Science Award, School of Biology  

Kenneth Taylor  
Lubrizol Scholarship in Chemistry, School of Chemistry  

Elisabeth West  
George Wingfield Semmes Scholarship Grand Prize Winner, ANAK Society  

By senior year, the Honors Program is a family affair: (right to left) Richard Davies, Emily Weigel, Tiffany Lowe, Brian Plattenburg, and Jason Powers (taking the picture) show his sister (far left) some Tech pride!
By Dr. Greg Nobles

Ave atque vale—hail and farewell. It’s a pretty standard graduation salutation, almost a commencement cliché these days, and if anyone were to lay this bit of Latin on the hundreds of gowned graduates at Alexander Memorial Coliseum this weekend, it’d probably sound generic to the point of embarrassment. But when I think of those of you who have hung in with the Honors Program since coming to Tech as the first class in the fall of 2006, the cliché goes away and the phrase has much more personal meaning for me. The “hail” part is easy; “farewell” is hard.

I’ve had quite an education during your time at Tech, and to the extent that the Honors Program has been my major, I know I’ve never had a 4.0 average. Back in the spring of 2006, for instance, I approached the initial student admission process pretty much the way some of you must have entered your first semester, befuddled enough to have to fake it. I didn’t have any coherent theory about admissions standards, didn’t rely on any predetermined guidelines or metrics for selection, just went with a sense of what looked interesting on the application files. That’s how I made my admittedly idiosyncratic picks for Honors Program invitations, and that’s how the first group of you got here. I’ve never done as good a job of guessing my way to success in my life.

The students who showed up in Howell Hall that fall turned out to be a remarkable collection of intellects and personalities, first-years full of energy and imagination who did three things better than anyone had planned or maybe even hoped for. First, you immediately embraced the Honors Program approach to education, showing interest, asking questions, pushing your professors, and carrying on the conversation well beyond the classroom. Second, you created a collaborative spirit in the HP community, helping each other with the tough stuff—let’s face it, mostly Calc II—rather than competing against each other and grubbing grades for yourselves. Third, you spread out into all parts of campus life, marching in the band, creating new organizations, getting into student government, taking top spots on the Technique, and winning all sorts of awards along the way. You did a lot more than that, of course, much more than I even know, but I’ll always be grateful for the ways you helped teach me what this program is all about.

So now you move on, some this weekend, some a little later. While you’ve been getting ready to graduate, we’ve been hard at work selecting a new group of students for next fall’s class. I’ve already decided, though, simply to say that they’ll succeed you, not replace you, because that can’t really be done. And for that I do indeed say “hail.” I’ll deal with the “farewell” later.

Newsletter Staff

Editor-in-Chief: Dr. Monica Halka, Associate Director
Georgia Tech Honors Program

Writers: Carola Conces, Chris Giardina, and Santiago Hässig

Layout: Lindsay Anglin

Photos: Carola Conces and Emily Weigel