



# 17 Rooms at Georgia Tech: Summary Report

October 1, 2020

**1** NO  
POVERTY



**2** ZERO  
HUNGER



**3** GOOD HEALTH  
AND WELL-BEING



**4** QUALITY  
EDUCATION



**5** GENDER  
EQUALITY



**6** CLEAN WATER  
AND SANITATION



**7** AFFORDABLE AND  
CLEAN ENERGY



**8** DECENT WORK AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH



**9** INDUSTRY, INNOVATION  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE



**10** REDUCED  
INEQUALITIES



**11** SUSTAINABLE CITIES  
AND COMMUNITIES



**12** RESPONSIBLE  
CONSUMPTION  
AND PRODUCTION



**13** CLIMATE  
ACTION



**14** LIFE  
BELOW WATER



**15** LIFE  
ON LAND



**16** PEACE, JUSTICE  
AND STRONG  
INSTITUTIONS



**17** PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR THE GOALS





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## Overview of 17 Rooms at Georgia Tech

### Purpose of 17 Rooms

[17 Rooms](#) is an event concept developed by The Rockefeller Foundation and the Brookings Institution to help organizations identify partnerships and practical steps to accelerate progress on the 17 United Nations' [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs). Focusing on the most pressing global challenges, the SDGs are a “blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.”

17 Rooms is a proven catalyst for engaging, inspiring, and shaping an organization’s mission around the SDGs. Participants with diverse expertise and perspectives are invited to convene in 17 small groups - one group per SDG - and work together to identify actions their organization can take within 18 months to make progress toward their goal.

For more information, visit [SDGs at Tech](#) and read about the Institute’s [long-term commitment to sustainability](#).

### About Georgia Tech’s 17 Rooms

Georgia Tech’s first 17 Rooms event was held virtually on October 1, 2020 from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. EDT. Participants gathered in one virtual room for an introduction and overview and then split off into their Rooms for a discussion of their SDG. Each room’s goal was to identify a few (1-3 suggested) key actions that Georgia Tech can take in the next 12-18 months to advance their SDG. After room discussions, participants gathered back in the main virtual room for room report-outs, where each room shared their ideas.

### In this report

This report contains a summary of the key actions and takeaways from each room, followed by the synthesis reports from each of the 17 Rooms. Each room’s synthesis contains at least one “big idea,” as well some suggestions for future improvements/continuation of this work and thoughts on what worked well.

## Key Takeaways from Each Room

Key Takeaways/Big Ideas from Each Room (Refer to individual Room reports for more detail on these ideas)

### Room 1: No Poverty

- YIMBY (SIMBY)--Yes (Sure) In my Backyard Strategy to work on the SDGs
- Utilize Technology (GT's strength) to help reduce poverty
- Establish a Center at GT focusing on specific SDGs: e.g. Poverty, Hunger and Inequality
- Launch interdisciplinary courses around SDGs and/or online courses/graduate certificates (e.g. the newly launched interdisciplinary certificate in Global Development)
- Inventure Prize Competition can be driven by the 17 Rooms

### Room 2: Zero Hunger

- Reducing waste through: campus actions, work with local agents / agencies, developing models that can be scalable
- Sustainable production through: more efficient food production (engineering, chemistry, economics, policy) and more efficient distribution (logistics, operations management, business, economics)

### Room 3: Good Health and Well-Being

- Institutional investment on health and well-being across the GT Community
- Continue to build partnerships with community organizations that have been established through the Center for Serve, Learn, Sustain. These opportunities help to enable good health and well-being for both students and communities
- Develop strategies that leverage the SDGs together

### Room 4: Quality Education

- Engaging with educational stakeholders (e.g. K-12 schools, technical colleges, families, prospective students) to identify common goals and plans for improving STEM educational opportunities and access
- Emphasis on building cultural awareness and competency in teaching, curriculum, research, and outreach
- A holistic learning model that includes well-being, cultural competence, and mental health
- Institutional commitment to teaching excellence

### Room 5: Gender Equality

- Addressing gender equality through the lenses of reimagining learning opportunities; leveraging social media and online communication

- channels; and building new partnerships and strengthening existing ones
- Ensuring a campus-wide appreciation of gender equality through an intersectional lens and an awareness of and space for all gendered identities
- Create a culture of listening to and acting on “complaints” of diverse campus voices and community/global partners and creating channels for allyship to grow
- Recognize people as more than data

#### **Room 6: Clean Water and Sanitation**

- Water Awareness through an annual “Water Day” or Water Week” at Georgia Tech (would not compete with Earth Day events)
- Providing access to clean water for all by reshaping the water and wastewater paradigm
- Whether we are looking at failures or future solutions, we must consider equity into the core solutions of these approaches
- We need to identify approaches to translate the research and education being conducted inside Georgia Tech to impact outside the Institute

#### **Room 7: Affordable and Clean Energy**

- There is a need and opportunity to integrate SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) into the curriculum, across all disciplines at the Institute
- Georgia Tech has significant opportunities to serve as a living lab, demonstrating critical clean energy concepts and technologies through our own cyberphysical infrastructure
- Global Relevance - GT innovation needs to reflect the local contexts of global environmental challenges

#### **Room 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth**

- Connect Georgia Tech students with experiential learning and career opportunities within ‘non-traditional’ organizations, which may include non-profits, start-ups, NGOs, etc.
- Establish funding support to provide stipends for student participation (internships, coops, etc.) where ‘non-traditional’ organizations may lack financial resources to do so
- Review current efforts within academic and professional education divisions as well as career services to identify opportunities to incentivize participation and fully integrate and highlight SDGs

#### **Room 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure**

- Integrate SDGs into capstone courses by ensuring that all Capstone projects advance at least one SDG
- Help establish a Public Innovation Center in Tech Square in 2021

### **Room 10: Reduced Inequalities**

- Reducing inequality through better integration of GT into the community and the community with GT
- Addressing reduction in equality through measures in three key areas: Education, Community Support, Upward Mobility
- More diverse representation of GT as a whole on key decision-making committees (this would include front-line hourly employees as well as management)

### **Room 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities**

- Key ideas combine the GT Strategic Plan themes of “Connect Globally” with “Expand Access”. Many global issues occur in our backyard and we are doing our home base of Atlanta a disservice if we do not work to apply our own research and teaching locally
- GT needs to break down our walls, physically, but also mentally and culturally, to make meaningful connections to the local community
- 6 key ideas to connect locally: Break Down Walls, Teach and Reach Locally, Create Joint Research-Action Projects, Engage in Sustainable Tech Transfer, Build Systems, Enhance the Curriculum

### **Room 12: Responsible Consumption and Production**

- 9 key ideas to promote responsible consumption and production throughout the Georgia Tech campus
- (1) Transition to an emissions free transportation system (e.g., buses) on campus, (2) Expand access to composting facilities across campus, (3) Implement procurement policies which support zero waste or responsible sourcing goals, (4) Eliminate single use plastics from campus, (5) Work to promote Surplus on campus to increase its use, (6) Develop a GT Repair Café (7) Expand the current move out event and transition to a yard sale program, (8) Utilize a collective impact approach, (9) Expand programs focused on hard to recycle materials

### **Room 13: Climate Action**

- Identify and update a holistic climate action plan: A short-term goal to develop a data-driven, evidence-based study to achieve carbon neutrality to pave the way for the longer-term development of a climate action roadmap
- Inclusive Process to define how a plan is developed and implemented well
- This climate action plan needs to address every strategic theme in the Institute Strategic Plan

### **Room 14: Life Below Water**

- Translating research into ocean-based solutions to climate change
- Raising awareness of coastal ocean and climate solutions in Georgia
- Leading by example in advocating for ocean health

- Recommendation that Georgia Tech amplify its impact, champion innovation, and connect globally by developing a task force that brings together a sub-group of faculty, researchers, and students to lead and advance ocean solutions in Georgia and around the world

#### **Room 15: Life on Land**

- Increased internal GT communications on this SDG
- Sustainable tech Create-X like program
- Project based or VIP on the ecology of the GT campus

#### **Room 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions**

- The Institute must be grounded in peace & justice. We can't give what we do not have - so we need to cultivate peace & justice at Georgia Tech first.
- Build peace & justice in partnership with the community in Atlanta as well as regionally, nationally, globally, globally
- Staff/faculty/students working on peace-building projects together can be a powerful mechanism. An Interdisciplinary Peace Education Institute that provides curriculum/(imperative) training across all that Georgia Tech does
- A new School for Peace and Justice in partnership with other higher education institutions

#### **Room 17: Partnership for the Goals**

- Students of all mayors need business, humanities, social sciences, and liberal arts requirements to enhance their ability to provide broader impact in the world
- Serve Learn Sustain (SLS) is a really impactful development at Georgia Tech - needs to be continued as an important part of how we work with external partners
- Public, community engagement to serve external stakeholders
- There are already "indices" for many of the goals, but Georgia Tech could create an SDG dashboard that Academic Institutions, Governments, Companies, Foundations, and even individuals etc. could use to measure their own progress toward the goals

## Room Reports

### SDG 1

#### UN SDG 1: No Poverty: [End Poverty in All its Forms Everywhere](#)

Key Ideas for advancing this SDG through GT Strategic Planning

1. YIMBY (SIMBY)--Yes (Sure) In my Backyard Strategy to work on the SDGs. Even though these goals are global, the first step should be local--in our backyard.
2. Utilize Technology (GT's strength) to help reduce poverty--start at a local level and then scale up by working with national and international partners
3. Establish a Center at GT focusing on specific SDGs: e.g. Poverty, Hunger and Inequality. We already have centers focusing on Climate change, Energy and Health. So a center with a different focus on poverty/inequality will be a great addition. Bring the GT and GTRI community together in the interdisciplinary center.
4. Launch interdisciplinary courses around SDGs and/or online courses/graduate certificates (e.g. the newly launched interdisciplinary certificate in Global Development).
5. Inventure Prize Competition can be driven by the 17 Rooms. Living and learning communities can focus one of these goal

#### What went well/can be improved?

Thank you to all the organizers, there were no technical glitches! The Zoom discussion went very well. As you will see in the notes below, all participants were excited to share their ideas. We had a great mix of faculty, staff, students and community partners. A time limit of 30 seconds to share some key takeaways was too short. Each room could have used a 2 minute slot instead. What will happen next was a question many participants had. Will we see each other next year, or will be able to communicate with each other about this goal throughout the year? In other words, how to keep this conversation going will be important.

## SDG 2

### SDG 2 REPORT

When considering food security, the three main issues our team identified are production, distribution, and waste. In addressing these issues, we must be mindful of how we educate the public on these issues, and mindful of how to address them specifically through an equity lens.

We have decided that the best ways to address these issues by:

- **Reducing waste**
  - campus actions
  - work with local agents / agencies
  - develop models that can be scalable
- **Sustainable production**
  - more efficient food production
    - engineering
    - chemistry
    - economics
    - policy
  - more efficient distribution
    - logistics
    - operations management
    - business
    - economics
  - reducing waste will naturally follow more efficient and sustainable production and distribution strategies

### **Recommendations for future events**

Overall, the morning went very well. Participants responded to the questions thoughtfully, and the discussion was rich. Given the virtual format, our group was just about perfect in size. The only issue we had was time. One of our sessions went long, so we ended up having to reduce the time we spent in the final session before we returned to the main group. However, I don't think we lost anything by doing that. We were happy with the work we produced during the meeting.

### **Strategic goals and as they apply to SDG 2**

1. **Amplify Impact:** Embrace our power as agents of change for the public good and concentrate our research and learning efforts on identifying and solving the most critical and complex problems of our time, locally and globally

- Research groups at Tech focused on food security?
  - Dr. Chen Wastewater Hydroponics
  - L3EAP lab [www.l3eap.wordpress.com](http://www.l3eap.wordpress.com) (Emanuele Massetti)

- Need more!
- Classes at Tech around Food security?
  - PUBP3600 - part of sustainable food systems
  - CEE 4160 - smart sustainable cities
  - Need more!
- Integrating and centralizing social and climate justice efforts such as zero hunger into the standard curriculum, especially as it relates to engineering disciplines so that our engineers and graduates will be able to identify and solve real, impactful problems.

**2. Champion Innovation:** Champion our leadership position as an engine of innovation and entrepreneurship and collaborate with other public and private actors to create economic opportunity and position Atlanta and Georgia as examples of inclusive innovation

- Are innovating for the sake of innovation or are we goal driven?
  - Concept of “creating the next” - is it necessary? How can we meet the needs of society with current technologies/ more traditional/cultural approaches (agriculture)
  - “Listen, Learn, Lament, Leverage, Love” - [Odetta MacLeish-White](#)
    - How can we innovate our approach to “solving problems”
- New research center on sustainable food production (engineering - chemistry - economics - policy)
- Be proactive in industry outreach and connections to fix hunger-related problems and create connections between our students/faculty/research and all levels of food production/distribution/access processes and companies.

**3. Connect Globally:** Strengthen our role as a convener of worldwide collaboration and build a global learning platform to expand our reach and amplify our impact

- After boosting research in this area GTech can connect to other research institutions that are leading the effort in the area of sustainable food production
- Utilize class projects/capstone courses to address food insecurity issues (locally/globally)
- Are we promoting best practices readily available in a world that might not have our advantages !!!

**4. Expand Access:** Empower people of all backgrounds and stages of life to learn and contribute to technological and human progress

- Outreach to direct Atlanta communities that are historically underprivileged/food insecure - *educate, engage, and empower the youth to strengthen healthier future generations*

**5. Cultivate Well-Being:** Strengthen our culture of well-being and create an environment of holistic learning where all members of our community can grow and learn to lead healthy, purposeful, impactful lives

- Develop our understanding of food / eating beyond simply functional (feeding our bodies); we can come to see the experience of eating as an “art form” (feeding our spirits). Good for us individually, and socially
  - Opportunity for SLS? Opportunity for Health Services/Nutrition?

**6. Lead by Example:** Lead and inspire by example by creating a culture of deliberate innovation in our own practices and being an example of efficiency, sustainability, ethics, and inclusion

- Viewing Georgia Tech as a “micro-economy,” we can continue to develop the way Klemis Kitchen reduces waste and provides food for students, and offer Klemis Kitchen as a model for how to do this in other settings and circumstances - perhaps we can develop a scalable model to address communities / regions, or even state-wide / nation-wide situations..
- Give priority to food security! Tech spends a lot of money in projects of dubious importance. Students should be able to go through the semester without being concerned about getting healthy meals.



## SDG 3

### SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being - 17 Zooms Report

Facilitator: Jennifer Singh and Co-Facilitators: Hannah Foster (note taker), and Amber Johnson (time and chat moderator)

30 second pitch:

In order for Georgia Tech (GT) to effectively contribute towards achieving SDG Goal 3 (Good Health & Well-being) as well as deliver on the Strategic Plan, a 2-step approach is needed. Internally, GT must reflect and prioritize “walking the talk” on mental health & well-being on campus, particularly by expanding mental health services, making space to personalize health, empowering faculty to support students' well-being, and breaking down barriers that impede access to care and prevent people from prioritizing their own health and well-being. Externally, GT would benefit from establishing a Center for Global Public Health & Technology, which consolidates curriculum, research, and employment opportunities in global health systems and innovation.

Three Ideas:

#### 1. Institutional investment on health and well-being across the GT Community

A. Develop a public health academic program across different schools on campus. Part of this initiative could identify how many academic integrations we have that give students skills to deal with many of the SDG 3. It could involve creating classes that give students resources built into the coursework, rather than health and well-being being a separate component outside of class. For example, We could encourage faculty and provide incentives (awards, etc.) to develop modules in their courses to integrate SDG 3 (and others). This could be connected to idea 2 below - connecting with communities outside of Georgia Tech. A public health academic program can also start as a minor and be developed into something more (cross disciplinary major). Or it could involve combining different coursework together - e.g., link courses in health economics, psychology or sociology of medicine with courses in biomedical engineering, architecture or computer science. The idea is to integrate good health and well-being sensibilities into coursework that may not take this into consideration otherwise.

B. Develop a structure of health services that is made available to all students. One idea was to have a central place that provides all the health and well-being resources available on campus and off campus - GT CARE is a new model that has just started and could be possibly expanded. One idea to start this initiative would be to conduct a stakeholder analysis (students, faculty, staff) to identify what is happening on campus. There is a lot of research at GT on public health topics even though we don't have a PH program. We need a better idea of the extent of public health work happening on campus (programs, research, etc.) so we can better map this in the long run.

C. Leverage resources that GT has to make healthcare more accessible to the GT Community (and beyond) like telehealth, digital health, or other technologies that connect people with clinical services and other healthcare. This can also include creating networks on campus between students using technology that can create communities of connection. There might be tech innovations that students are already doing but they don't have a platform to share their ideas.

D. Develop a Campus Culture of Good Health and Well-Being. This could involve many components, such as a student challenge that is designed to kick start a serious focus of Good Health and Well-Being on campus, especially mental health. We can have a competition with prizes - Students can create something technical, visual, audio, etc. that either raises awareness of SDG 3 on campus or innovations that can help solve some of the gaps we have in our current institutional structure. We could create a GT public health campaign that focuses on normalizing help-seeking behavior and validate how this looks different for everyone. Part of the campaign could focus on balancing our work and life and devaluing the "grind culture" or measures of success that rely on unhealthy behaviors - e.g., no sleep, forgetting to eat, etc. As such, the campaign can focus on taking care of yourself first (as a component of success) or focusing on prevention. Another idea is to institutionalize language in class syllabi/training that increases awareness of mental health resources on campus.

E. Externally, GT would benefit from establishing a Center for Global Public Health & Technology, which consolidates curriculum, research, and employment opportunities in global health systems and innovation. We should also look at student orgs on campus (MedShare) that are connected. We don't necessarily have to create courses to make a public health program, the courses already exist but they are silo-ed. We need to pull together curriculum, resources, employment opportunities in one place.

2. Continue to build partnerships with community organizations that have been established through the Center for Serve, Learn, Sustain. These opportunities help to enable good health and well-being for both students and communities.

A. Improve communications so students are more aware of partnerships and volunteer opportunities. Most impactful experiences in public health have come from embracing the community around and those were mostly sought out independently (not through GT). Too much self-seeking is currently required. Atlanta has a lot of resources for volunteering and service, but there is currently not one place for students to seek these resources. The social and professional connections of faculty and staff should be better leveraged. One idea is to create an extended network of the GT community whose work, research, and/or teaching involves some element of the SDG 3.

3. Develop strategies that leverage the SDGs together.

A. The SDGs can and should work in conjunction, using outputs of other SDG metrics as inputs for others. For example, providing more accessible plant-based food options on campus, which could decrease hunger, have a positive impact on climate, and improve health for people on campus. Develop a bike to work day or take public transportation to work day or other incentives that reduces the carbon footprint and raises awareness of the health benefits of not driving to work.

What went well and what are areas for improvement?

Several things went well:

1. Everyone was able to join using the technology and the organizers did a good job with the instructions. The structure of the meeting was good.
2. It was important to view and reflect on both the SDG of concern and the GT Strategic Plan. Having links to these documents in the chat was essential.
3. The co-facilitators were also essential. A person to take notes and monitor chat and time helped the lead facilitator/moderator.

Areas for improvement:

1. We had trouble with the collaborative document because some people had different emails tied to their Google Drive. Even though an email was sent in advance to make sure everyone had access, the collaborative tool was not that useful for our discussion. In the future, making sure people are set-up with their appropriate emails ahead of time would be beneficial.
2. Since the SDG 3 is so broad, it was hard to focus on specific ideas. More direction was needed on whether the goal was to focus on the local GT community or how GT can work towards a more global strategy. Our consensus was that we had to lead by example, so we focused more on the local.
3. Given the time, combining some of the discussion questions makes more sense. With 10 people, there wasn't nearly enough time to go through five discussions plus introductions. We ended up combining discussion topic 1 and 2 naturally.
4. For our group it would have been useful to give time limits on each person's speaking time since some participants talked more than others. One idea is to have a third party moderator to keep track of time so that the lead moderator doesn't have to stop the participant and interrupt.
5. We needed a more balanced proportion of students, faculty, staff, community partners - we had a lot of students (and previous students) on the panel, which centered the discussion on student's well-being. As such, our community partner was less inclined to join the conversation.



## SDG 4

**Georgia Tech 17 Rooms Event**  
**October 1, 2020**  
**Group 4: Quality Education**  
**Facilitator: Lizanne DeStefano**

### **Ideas to be Advanced Through Strategic Planning Work**

1. **Community-based Engagement** that is systemic, long-term, effective, assets-based, and authentic. Georgia Tech should engage with educational stakeholders (e.g. K-12 schools, technical colleges, families, prospective students) to identify common goals and plans for improving STEM educational opportunities and access
2. **Emphasis on Building Cultural Awareness and Competency** in teaching, curriculum, research, and outreach. Faculty, staff, students, researchers and all members of the Georgia Tech community should have access to high quality opportunities to learn to work effectively in diverse environments.
3. **Cultivating Interdisciplinary and Cross-Institutional Partnerships** that leverage each partner's strengths toward a common goal of ensuring a Quality Education for Georgia citizens of all ages and backgrounds.
4. **Holistic Learning Model** that includes well-being, cultural competence, and mental health as part of our definition of success among students, faculty, staff and alumni.
5. **Institutional Commitment** to teaching excellence through funding, programs, community outreach and meaningful recognition.

### **What Went Well and Suggestions for the Future**

The session went very well. All participants were engaged in discussion and entered information in the Google Doc. Student participation was particularly valued. Two participants did not attend the session (LaJuana Ellis and Braxton Madison). Colin Potts and Gundolf Graml attended the first part of the session and then had to leave for other commitments. We made use of the Google doc, chat, and discussion throughout.

It may have been useful to familiarize participants with the GT Strategic Plan prior to the session. Several members of our group had participated in GT strategic planning, but others had not—or were not from GT, so the discussion may not have been as informed by the plan as it might have been.

## SDG 5

**Moderator:** Neha Kumar | **Notes:** Priyanka Mohindra, Azra Ismail | **Participants:** Kaye Husbands Fealing, Mary Frank Fox, Margaret Kosal, Emma Brandt, Maren Herby, Mary Motolenich, Melanie DeMaeyer, Susan Kidd, Tegra Myanna

### Reimagine Learning Opportunities

- Ensure a **campus-wide appreciation of gender equality through an intersectional lens**, and an awareness of and space for *all gendered identities*. Create a culture where disregarding, ignoring, or minimizing based on gender is *not acceptable*. Distribute resources to make this well understood, and to challenge deep-seated stereotypes. Attend to SDG#5 in every undertaking, e.g., surveillance testing surveys, stressing the importance of a holistic, long-term approach.
- Create a **culture of listening to and acting on “complaints”** of diverse campus voices and community/global partners. This needs accessible, safe, and validating channels for registering complaints, as well as repositories of evidence that our campus can rely on/draw from to support complaints, e.g., research by GT faculty such as on gender pay gaps.
- Honor **diverse curricula and variable models of success**. Work with schools and their faculty to consider syllabi that honor the diverse make-up of our entire campus body, ensuring that SDG#5 finds its way into the texts we read, guest lecturers we invite, panels we host. Social justice incubators, as an example, can balance a focus on solutionistic engineering efforts.
- Focus on nurturing **participation beyond representation**. Recognize people as *more than data*.

### Leverage Social Media and Online Communication Channels

- **Recognize the efforts** of diverse individuals and groups that strive for gender equality. The quote “well-behaved women seldom make history” by Laurel Ulrich was in dedication to telling the stories of quiet, ordinary people *in addition to* those of women who challenge deeply embedded assumptions regarding gender roles and stereotypes. A campus-wide social media campaign, for example, could invite GT members to recognize (and be recognized in) such stories.
- Leverage **blogs and other online platforms** within GT to accessibly present information, recognize efforts/initiatives, and engage counter-narratives.

### Build New Partnerships and Strengthen Existing Ones

- Actively support the creation of **near-peer mentorship networks** for students, staff, and faculty on campus to address gender challenges.
- Create **channels for allyship to grow**, celebrating and rewarding the models of allyship that exist among us, at all levels, to set examples for more.
- **Support, extend, reward, and leverage assets within GT** such as VOICE, the LGBTQIA Resource Center, the Women’s Resource Center, the ADVANCE Program, Institute Diversity’s implicit bias workshops, to name a few.

- **Foster engagement with community/global partners**, identifying platforms for building solidarity on SDG#5, being responsive to their needs and how Tech expertise might support them. Events such as the Ideas2Serve competition could serve as a platform.
- Promote **partnerships that span multiple SDGs** on *and off* campus, such as with the UN-RCE, Agnes Scott College, as well as other local and global educational institutions.

**What went well:** Many different perspectives were represented, from different ages, career stages, life experiences, programs, etc. Conversation was structured and there were synergistic interests across the room. There was lots to talk about! Two students (Priyanka and Azra) took copious notes that helped greatly, because we had chosen to avoid recording to allow for a safe space for sharing.

**What could be better:** We could have prepared by learning about what is possible at GT—examples of meaningful change attained in the past, and means of sustained engagement that may be possible. SDG#5 is quite broad and widely relevant, so scoping ahead of time could be helpful. Conversing additionally with other rooms would have been great as well.

## **PARTICIPANTS**

We began with introductions, quickly discovering what a diverse group we were, as we contributed a unique set of perspectives on gender equality. Our expertise and interests ranged from maternal health to sustainability to chemistry, computing, international affairs, economics, business, public policy, and more, converging upon gender equality as a core commitment. Participants included:

- **Neha Kumar (moderator)** — Assistant Professor, Sam Nunn School of International Affairs & School of Interactive Computing.
- **Azra Ismail** — PhD student, Human-Centered Computing.
- **Emma Brandt** — Undergraduate student, Sam Nunn School of International Affairs.
- **Kaye Husbands Fealing** — Dean, Ivan Allen College.
- **Maren Herby** — MBA student, Scheller College of Business.
- **Margaret E. Kosal** — Associate Professor, Sam Nunn School of International Affairs.
- **Mary Frank Fox** — ADVANCE Professor, School of Public Policy & Co-Director, Center for Study of Women, Science & Technology.
- **Mary Motolenich** — PhD student, Economics.
- **Melanie DeMaeyer** — Assistant Dean of Students & Director, Women's Resource Center.
- **Priyanka Mohindra** — MS student, Human-Computer Interaction.
- **Susan Kidd** — Director of Sustainability, Agnes Scott College.
- **Tegra Myanna** — Director, LGBTQIA Resource Center.

**30-SECOND PITCH**

- We must recognize that gender is complex and gender issues are pervasive.
- We must think about gender actively and everywhere, at all levels and across all parts of campus.
- We must continue to take steps to recognize and reduce implicit bias.
- We must take an assets-based approach, leveraging the parts that are already working to expand their reach.
- We must think about people as \*more than data\*.
- And finally, we must communicate this importance to every corner across campus.



## SDG 6

SGD Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

Room Participants: Yongchen Chen, David Frost, Tamara Hebel, Erin Kowalsky, Zion Martell, Jessica Rose, Camila Sanchez, Joe Volpe, Nazia Zakir,

Moderator: David Frost

Scribe: Camila Sanchez

30 Second Speaker: Zion Martell

### Top Ideas That Emerged from Room 6

Water Awareness through perhaps an annual “Water Day” or Water Week” at Georgia Tech – this would not compete with “Earth Day” but amplify the topic of water as a major issue.

Translational Research and Technology Transfer, and its influence on Policy and Regulations

Lead by Example- Challenging Existing Assumptions like could there be better Infrastructure than we currently have?

#### **1. Objective**

Yongsheng Chen - In order to make water safer and more sustainable, we must rethink and shape current practices to in turn be more sustainable, including redefining drinking water and wastewater treatment. We should reduce the amount of chemicals used to clean and sanitize drinking water.

Joe Volpe - What can we do within the next 18 months to amplify our impact within this space? Locally, regionally, nationally, globally, etc. How can we bring down the broad topic to a manageable level that we can act upon?

Tamara Hebel - How can we address these topics in their respective locations/sizes?

Erin Kowalsky - Researching emerging contaminants in ecosystems, ex) microplastics, biohazards, bacteria. Renovating old infrastructure. How do you maintain very old systems, or how should they be reimagined?

David Frost - Why are there only two options of water potable or nonpotable? Should we be thinking about various types of water, or should we be asking the question if all wastewater must be made ‘potable’? Instead of only two options, there should be more. Should we be questioning the basic infrastructure we have in place?

Camila Sanchez - What can we do on a more political scale, based on the concept of human rights, to provide widespread water resources most efficiently, while staying

sustainable? How can we make clean water more accessible to those in areas locally, regionally, nationally, and globally? Unfortunately, water is used as a political tool, while people should not have to worry about if they will have access to water.

Nazia Zakir - Regulatory aspects are obstacles we must overcome while coming up with a plan to provide various water resources.

**Synthesis: Providing access to clean water for all by reshaping the water and wastewater paradigm.**

## 2. Reflective

How is this goal related to your work/life?

Zion Martell - Even in 2020, as a student, I can see that people who are very close to us that do not have access to proper clean water and sanitation, and that is something we need to work on.

Erin Kowalsky - Being around Atlanta, and thinking about the effects of the pandemic, there has been a significant increase in homelessness. I think about the potential contaminants as a result of homelessness, and the fact of living in an urban area. Locally, a lot of people do not have access to clean water and sanitation. We don't have the correct value for the resource of water. How do we put that value into water?

Camila Sanchez - There should not be inequity when it comes to having clean water and sanitation standards depending on location.

Nazia Zakir - In different countries, it is a struggle to get basic needs to survive, and there is something to be said for the lack of equity, and it is something that we should take into consideration when focusing on the distribution of resources.

Joe Volpe/Tamara Hebler - As the infrastructure crumbles, we need to address them. We experience issues regarding the costs of water here in the states, such as in local cities. We can take this fact and reflect it onto a global scale, and it may give us a grasp of the magnitude of the situation all over the world. Can we take new and upcoming technology across borders?

**Synthesis: Whether we are looking at failures or future solutions, we must consider equity into the core solutions of these approaches. How can we better distribute these resources from an equitable stance?**

## 3. Interpretive

How does the goal relate to the GT strategic plan?



Nazia Zakir - Our goal and our plan definitely helps the human condition in regards to supplying clean water. Also, at the Kendeda building, we are making advancements and hitting milestones in relation to the sustainability of the building and its rainwater operations.

Tamara Hebler - Our initiatives are becoming sustainable and must continue to do so. We also need to collaborate with industries on becoming more sustainable with the innovations being created at Georgia Tech.

Zion Martell - We should have a more comprehensive guide of programs, research, and projects that would be accessible to any student who wants or needs it.

Joe Volpe - There are a lot of opportunities and items that can be addressed using GT solutions in regards to a global standpoint.

Erin Kowalsky - When thinking about our goals, I do find that Tech is very innovative and has amazing research, while it can be improved by making the research more accessible openly to students who want the information and want to get involved. Our classes put emphasis on standard processes, while the newer, more sustainable processes are not easily accessible.

David Frost - We need to make sure we are equally emphasizing every idea and part of the tech strategic plan; no one task or idea is more or less important than the other.

**Synthesis: We need to identify approaches to translate the research and education being conducted inside Georgia Tech to impact outside the Institute.**

#### **4. Decisive**

Joe Volpe - Amplifying impact and increasing awareness; some sort of awareness program with an educational process and pledge, ex) teaching students and staff about how much water they use

Nazia Zakir - Lead by example by using the innovations used at Tech, for example at the Kendeda building with the 50,000 gallon cistern. Can these ideas be applied to other areas?

Tamara Hebler - Technology transfer/translational research, must get the cutting edge innovative research out beyond the borders of Tech and into industries

Erin Kowalsky - Idea of awareness can make a huge impact on the Georgia Tech community. Having a SDG Goal Day 6 for people to be made more aware of the effects of water consumption and sanitation standards.



David Frost - Provide more information to people in a fairly simple way. Ex) having metering on campus, and having the information available online.

**Synthesis: Identify 2 or 3 ideas towards advancing this goal to GT's strategic plan; just the top ideas.**

- Water Awareness through perhaps an annual "Water Day" or Water Week" at Georgia Tech – this would not compete with "Earth Day" but amplify the topic of water as a major issue.
- Translational Research and Technology Transfer, and its influence on Policy and Regulations
- Lead by Example- Challenging Existing Assumptions like could there be better Infrastructure than we currently have?

## SDG 7

### Outbrief of Discussion Group – SDG 7 – “Affordable and Clean Energy”

Summary Prepared by Rebecca Watts-Hull, Tim Lieuwen, and Valerie Thomas

The SDG 7 group had lively and productive discussions, and participants identified a number of shared goals for Georgia Tech with respect to advancing Affordable and Clean Energy. This document provides key recommendations, as well as process suggestions.

#### Key Recommendations

1. *Curriculum – There is a need and opportunity to integrate SDG 7 into the curriculum, across all disciplines at the Institute.*

In particular, the students who participated expressed concern that many courses at Tech do not connect core concepts and skills to “real world” challenges, and they feel that their peers are eager for such connections. Our group discussed the reality that challenges such as Affordable and Clean Energy require multidisciplinary perspectives and transdisciplinary solutions. This recommendation seemed to be well-aligned with several objectives in the Amplify Impact section of the Strategic Plan. As such, the group recommended that Tech leadership explore incentives and/or requirements that would help Serve-Learn-Sustain (SLS) significantly expand the number of faculty and courses integrating SDG 7 (and other SDGs) into course content, as well as course partnerships with organizations working to address this SDG.

2. *Living Labs – Georgia Tech has significant opportunities to serve as a living lab, demonstrating critical clean energy concepts and technologies through our own cyberphysical infrastructure*

Examples include both physical and cyber- infrastructure. Physical plant examples include expanding upon the success of buildings like Kendeda to other new builds, as well as fully taking advantages of the GT-GP Microgrid. In addition, the campus should also pay attention to its significant digital resources, and initiatives such as making campus energy data easily available to students’ projects and faculty research.

3. *Global Relevance - GT innovation needs to be reflect the local contexts of global environmental challenges.*

It was noted that there is significant mismatch between perceived needs by rich countries, and real needs from the developing worlds. Funding in rich countries is often driven by the perceived needs. For example, it was noted that items like cook stoves are significant contributors to respiratory challenges for women and children in developing countries. We need to understand the full range of energy needs of developing world, which certainly includes electricity, but also includes cooking, heating/cooling, mobility, and water. We discussed the possibility of



creating a new center on campus tasked with coordinating partnerships for the SDGs in research across the globe.

#### Process feedback

For the most part, the discussion was easy to facilitate and everyone participated fully in notetaking using the shared document. One suggestion might be to have a moderator give a brief presentation on the SDG itself and the goal targets to kick off the room discussion, as it seemed the folks in the room had varying familiarity with the details of the SDG itself.



## SDG 8

### 17 Rooms SDG Goal 8 Discussion Deliverable

*Moderator:* Greg King

*Co-Moderators:* Arianna Robinson & Merry Hunter Caudle

*Attendees:* David Brown, Grayson Eady, Steve Harmon, Mark Leggiero, Rob Rogers, Carl Rust, Ravi Subramanian, Qiuping Yu

#### Key Ideas Applicable to GT Strategic Planning Efforts:

Our working group had a rich discussion pertaining to Georgia Tech's current and future impact on attaining SDG Goal 8, decent work and economic growth. Georgia Tech not only has a role in generating economic growth through the education and support of our students, faculty, and staff, but also as a thought leader with expertise to influence global progress. Through capacity building and opportunity development efforts, Georgia Tech can intentionally drive growth and highlight our values as a community through our Strategic Plan. Below, you will find three key initiatives we believe are necessary for both short (12-18 months) and long-term impact:

Connect Georgia Tech students with experiential learning and career opportunities within 'non-traditional' organizations, which may include **non-profits, start-ups, NGOs, or departments within large enterprises focused on SDGs or service-oriented goals, through multi-dimensional, interdisciplinary partnerships.**

12-18 month action steps:

- Improve visibility within Georgia Tech to current efforts and pain points
- Identify and catalog 'non-traditional' organizations locally, regionally, and nationally that have opportunities for GT student participation
- Identify both immediate needs and longer-term desires from both students and industry, and methods of possible connection (i.e. targeted career services programming, grant opportunities, etc.)
- Cement Georgia Tech's role as a connector of communities and promoter of societal wellbeing by establishing a continuous feedback loop between the Georgia Tech community and non-traditional external partners to inform both student-serving programs and skill-building curriculum
- Establish funding support to provide stipends for student participation (internships, coops, etc.) where 'non-traditional' organizations may lack financial resources to do so.
- Connect these non-traditional organizations with the career center or an entity that can vet and support the authenticity of the work that students are doing, to ensure it is relevant and that both sides are gaining a positive experience
- Establish and support experiential learning, reskilling, training, and upskilling initiatives and partnerships within Georgia Tech related to the SDGs

12-18 month action steps (continued):

- Review current efforts within academic and professional education divisions as well as career services to identify opportunities to incentivize participation and fully integrate and highlight SDGs (i.e. curriculum clusters or new programming within GTPE, support for SLS and/or other programming, etc.)
- Engage with technical and trade-oriented education partners, such as the Technical College System of Georgia, to explore opportunities for alignment and mutually beneficial partnerships
- Partner with external entities that connect students with the organizations that we have considered to be under utilized. These external entities can be local and state Chamber of Commerce

Both of the goals above will require Georgia Tech to undertake an internal mapping exercise to identify current initiatives, as well as associated best practices and demands for further action. As one group member stated during the discussion, Georgia Tech needs to find out what is currently being done that complements the focus areas of SDG 8, including “technology, equity (work/life), bridging the divide that currently exists [between academic and industry].” Georgia Tech has a wide variety of initiatives that involve outreach and experiential learning for students, so efforts must be made to intentionally direct influence in and contribute to efforts that draw value, create economic growth, and support wellbeing more broadly.

Our group felt that the two ideas listed above are meant to be treated as starting points, and are certainly not exhaustive of all opportunities for Georgia Tech.

Discussion Feedback:

What went well?

- People easily identified ways GT could connect and make an impact on goal 8. Allowing people to self-select the topics encouraged active participation.
- Group members were engaged during the discussion. Keeping the group small, as well as encouraging active participation on the collaborative document was essential to this engagement.
- The Zoom Room format worked well and did not hinder any discussion.

What improvements could be made?

- Our group needed more time for the discussion.
- The overall group could have benefitted from a specific grounding discussion in the Georgia Tech Strategic Plan, perhaps at the very beginning directed at all 17 rooms participants.
- When the Strategic Plan is released in its final form this year that would provide an opportunity for review alongside the SDGs

- More external partners are needed to inform and influence the discussion. One way to do this while still maintaining the internal integrity of the discussion would be to host focus group listening sessions for external partners, where they are asked questions such as, “If Georgia Tech were to work towards SDG 8, where do you see the institution playing a role...”

## **SDG 9**

17 Zooms Synthesis Report  
SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure  
Submitted by: Joy Harris

**Please list the 2-3 ideas that emerged for advancing this SDG through our Strategic Planning work and provide some explanation.**

Our top ideas are to integrate the SDGs into the GT curriculum and use our resources to connect the public to the SDGs.

- Integrate SDGs into capstone courses by ensuring that all Capstone projects advance at least one SDG.
- Help establish a Public Innovation Center in Tech Square in 2021.

**Please include a section explaining what went well and suggestions for improvement in the future.**

- The ORID framework for questions went extremely well.
- For future sessions, I would block just a few more minutes to identify the top ideas for the report out. We used all our time discussing the questions and had no time left.

**Raw notes - by discussion question (as detailed as possible)**

- Here's a link to our [SDG 9 notes and discussion](#).

## SDG 10

### Room 10 Reduce Inequality

*Jamie Jones, Janani Guru, Olga Kemenova, Nupar Kothari, Jeremy Brown, Fatemeh Shafiei, Chris Burke (moderator)*

Reducing inequality requires that disenfranchised groups be provided opportunities they have both been underrepresented in, and denied participation. Addressing this issue requires longitudinal strategies that address root causes for inequality. An inclusive economy would create a shared prosperity and ultimately the ability for every person to thrive. This also starts with better integrating GT into the community and the community with GT. With this in mind, our room discussed approaches GT could utilize to contribute to this goal in several core areas:

- Education
  - Improved access to quality education both inside and outside classrooms through engagement with Title I schools (K12) to provide academic support for teachers which includes peer-to-peer mentoring with university faculty and business professionals. Additional mentoring/tutoring support with students and exposure to university labs and business professionals.
  - Ensuring all students and teachers have adequate technology & tools for teaching and learning.
  - Foster a support environment so students, faculty, staff doing K12 outreach feel supported and are provided adequate resources (paid leave, technology loan library)
  - Faculty/staff in leadership to provide mentoring to existing GT students in all underrepresented groups.
- Community Support
  - Offer skill development courses for both small businesses and individuals (business plan writing, financial planning)
  - Simplify pathways for small business to engage with university for both procurement of both goods and services
  - Have more community events on campus to foster *community* with students and surrounding (city) residents to give both groups a better sense of belonging.
- Upward Mobility
  - Create internal mechanisms and clear procedures (faculty have clear procedures to gain tenure, but not staff) for staff promotion.
  - Create internal review communities representative of the campus instead of just department heads
  - More diverse representation of GT as a whole on key decision making committees (this would include front-line hourly employees as well as management)

## SDG 11

### Main Ideas on SDG11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities

The focus of our ideas combines the GT Strategic Plan themes of “Connect Globally” with “Expand Access”. Although global issues must be addressed, we have many of these issues in our backyard and we are doing our home base of Atlanta a disservice if we do not work to apply our own research and teaching locally. (In addition, one person’s local is another’s global – therefore by addressing our local issues, we address global issues.)

Therefore, we encourage Georgia Tech to **Connect Locally**. GT needs to break down our walls, physically, but also mentally and culturally to make meaningful connections to the local community.

1. Break Down the Walls: We need to allow access to our campus by physically opening up connections to adjoining communities. This can help in simple ways such as making transportation to campus more sustainable by allowing people to walk and bike more easily to campus.
2. Teach and reach locally: We need to **institutionalize service-learning** and support **community-engaged teaching** and research, including formally considering it in Promotion & Tenure process.
3. Create Joint Research-Action Projects: We need to put programs in place to encourage and fund partnerships with community organizations. This should include the skill and expertise in how to connect to communities that is provided by organizations such as SLS.
4. Engage in Sustainable Tech Transfer: Rather than doing this on a project by project basis, we need organizations on campus dedicated to making sure that there is carry-over from one initiative to another to sustain these efforts and build real relationships.
5. Build Systems: We need efforts to build systems to help communities connect within them and between them by focusing on education programs and technologies that can enable these connections. We should provide ways for local organizations, leaders, and nonprofits to seriously flesh their ideas and visions out.
6. Enhance the Curriculum: In order to create sustainable cities and communities, we must understand the history of the development of cities, communities and their supporting assets – institutions, infrastructure and other assets. We must infuse our curricular with key elements of the history of the development of cities, communities and their infrastructure, to enable our students to understand the role of history in the current status of cities, communities and infrastructure and how to move these toward more sustainable systems.

## SDG 12

### Goal 12: Responsible Consumption & Production Recommendations

In no particular order:

1. Transition to an emissions free transportation system (e.g., buses) on campus
  - a. Engage students in building electric buses
2. Expand access to composting facilities across campus – universal access to compost in all building types and functions
3. Implement procurement policies which support zero waste or responsible sourcing goals (e.g., recycled content paper)
4. Eliminate single use plastics from campus (e.g., The University of California System)
  - a. Pursue a zero-waste pour contract
5. Work to promote Surplus on campus to increase its use
6. Develop a GT Repair Café whereby individuals can be provided resources to fix common household goods themselves rather than repurchasing. The scope would include mechanic work, craftsmanship, and homesteading skills (e.g., sewing). This concept would support student engagement and thus cultural change on campus.
7. Expand the current move out event and transition to a yard sale program, whereby goods collected in the spring are resold to new students in the fall at a heavily discounted price
8. Utilize a collective impact approach (partnering with other institutions and private sector partnerships to support integrated collaboration on a regional circular collaborative.
9. Expand programs focused on hard to recycle materials – e.g., plastic film, Styrofoam

## SDG 13

### Room 13 CLIMATE ACTION: Moderator Report

Carolyn Burch, Kim Cobb, Matt Cox, David Eady, Alice Favero, Grace Fletcher, Jairo Garcia, Mica Landwermeyer, Andrew McGraw, Anne Rogers, Greg Spiro

***Our recommendation is to identify and update a holistic climate action plan. Climate action is urgent and there are inherent synergies between climate action and all 17 of the SDGs and would advance all the goals of the GT Strategic Plan. A short term goal we recommend is the development of a data-driven, evidence based study to achieve carbon neutrality that paves the way for the longer-term development of a climate action roadmap for reviewing our curriculum, research portfolio, investment strategies, and larger community impacts.***

#### **Why a climate action plan?**

Climate Action is urgent.

The synergies between a climate action and all of the SDGs (via impacts, solutions, and their co benefits) would advance all the goals of the Strategic Plan (no bigger challenge!)

#### **What we mean by Climate Action Plan**

Content – scope of institute influence where plan is applied

- Curriculum – Climate competency integrated into institutional learning objectives.
- Research Leadership – Elevate, build and attract talent at Georgia Tech to drive global reputational expertise related to this grand challenge and the breadth of solutions to address it.
- Campus Business Operations – A plan to achieve carbon neutrality by 2040.
  - Immediate Deliverable: Data-driven, evidence-based study to perform the analysis and model the targets and timelines for carbon neutrality - account for the co-benefits of climate action
  - Need funding to develop a mathematical model that acts as a baseline for our actions.
- Investment – Align the endowment investments with the principle of climate action.
- Community Impacts
  - Tie the institute’s contributions to climate justice and action in Atlanta and GA.
  - Measure and define how contributions have societal benefit.
- Campus Culture – Support programs that create a culture of knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors that advance the goal.

- Programmatic Support – Develop and attract endowed program that encompasses umbrella structures required to achieve the plan (i.e. governance structure, leadership support and resources, funding, staffing and visible organizational commitment for GT to lead and achieve the plan).
- Adaptation / Resilience Strategies – Define how Georgia Tech’s curriculum, research, and actions prop up local resilience measures.
  - Water scarcity; temperature/climate changes; agricultural and food sourcing;
  - Workforce / Student costs for housing, transportation, quality of life

Inclusive Process to define how a plan is developed and implemented well

- Committee structure – develop inclusive Task Force to shepherd the scope into a complete action plan and design accountable implementation process.
- Engagement needed to build buy-in – not just hearing perspectives, but understanding how stakeholders are impacted by the action plan.
  - Student, Community, Faculty, Staff, Administrators

This climate action plan needs to address every strategic theme in the Institute Strategic Plan. Georgia Tech will not genuinely make the impact to improve the human condition without addressing Climate Action in all of the ways it represents itself in society and Georgia Tech’s influence.

## SDG 14

### Report from SDG14 Room October 9, 2020

#### **Contributors** (\*\*Prepared Write-up):

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#### **Executive Summary**

The discussion of the GT 17 ROOMS panel identified three major areas of action that are primed for Georgia Tech to advance the SDG14 goals over the next 12-18 months:

- *Translating Research into Ocean-based Solutions to Climate Change*
- *Raising Awareness Coastal Ocean and Climate in Georgia*
- *Leading by Example in Advocating for Ocean Health*

For each area, we identify below a short-term possible action that leverage ongoing efforts and resources at Georgia Tech. We also list important point of contacts to initiate action. Throughout the document we highlight the links to the **Georgia Tech Strategic Plan** using **bold underline text**.

### **IDEA #1 Translating Research into Ocean-based Solutions to Climate Change**

We recommend that Georgia Tech **amplify its impact, champion innovation, and connect globally** by developing a task force that brings together a sub-group of faculty, researchers and students to lead and advance ocean solutions in Georgia and around the world. Georgia Tech has several existing resources and efforts to leverage to this end. We have identified three immediate inter-disciplinary lines of action:

#### **(a) Ocean Carbon Sequestration**

In October 2020, **Ocean Visions\*** (*a Georgia Tech led initiative and research consortium see below*) received a multi-million-dollar grant to prototype, test and deploy ocean solutions for removing carbon dioxide (ocean CDR) from the atmosphere and help alleviate/reverse the effects of climate change. Georgia Tech has considerable expertise in the area of carbon sequestration with several units and ongoing efforts on campus, including the Global Change Program with the Carbon Reduction Challenge, the Strategic Energy Institute, and the upcoming Climate Solutions Labs in collaboration with Create-X. We propose to elevate this expertise by co-designing a few pilots in ocean CDR with Ocean Visions.

**Points of Contact:** Taka Ito (EAS, OSE), Joel Kostka (BioS, OSE), Chris Jones (ChBE), Joseph Sadighi (Chemistry), Tim Lewin (SEI), Kim Cobb (Global Change, Climate Solutions Lab), Emanuele Di Lorenzo (OSE, Ocean Visions), Berril Toktai (Carbon Reduction Challenge, Ray C. Anderson Center for Sustainable Business)

**\*The Ocean Visions ([www.oceanvisions.org](http://www.oceanvisions.org))** initiative led by Georgia Tech's program in Ocean Science and Engineering, has developed a formal agreement between major engineering and ocean science institutions in the US, including MIT, Stanford, Woods Hole, Scripps, UC Santa Barbara, Smithsonian, UGA, Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute, Ocean Conservancy and others, to work together towards accelerating the translation of research into scalable ocean solutions. Building on this alliance, Ocean Visions is now partnering with international organizations to launch the Global Ecosystem for Ocean Solutions (GEOS; [www.oceansolutions.org](http://www.oceansolutions.org)) - a Programme under the United Nation Decade for Ocean Sustainable Development 2021-2030.



### **(b) Coastal Ocean Solutions**

Over the last few years, Georgia Tech has developed major ties to Georgia coastal communities through the Smart Sea Level Sensor program (SSLS) as well as programs to bolster resilience capacity through development of green infrastructure and restoration of coastal ecosystems. These projects are developing the knowledge, tools and education necessary for responding and planning against the threats of flooding and sea level rise. We propose to bring additional capacity to this project to help students and faculty translate some of the knowledge gained in this project to sustainable coastal solutions businesses that can scale such approaches in under-served communities.

**Points of Contact:** Kim Cobb (Global Change, Climate Solutions Lab), Alex Robel (EAS, OSE), Joel Kostka (BioS, OSE), Iris Tien and David Frost (CEE, OSE), Kim Cobb (Global Change, SSLS), Russel Clark (CS, SSLS), Emanuele Di Lorenzo (OSE, Ocean Visions).

### **(c) Ocean Health and Biodiversity**

Recent research lead by Georgia Tech and others on coastal marine ecosystems demonstrates that species and genotype diversity is not only desirable but is also critical for i) suppressing marine diseases and pathogens, ii) sustaining ecosystem functions such as food provision and coastal storm protection, and iii) preventing environmental collapse and for accelerating recovery of ecosystem function and ecosystem services following environmental disturbances. Via synergisms among GIT's CoS, CoE, the Georgia Aquarium, and the consortium of collaborators organized by Ocean Visions, Georgia Tech's program in Ocean Science and Engineering (OSE) is especially well suited to lead efforts focused on leveraging the new understanding of how diversity affects ecosystem resilience to apply new approaches to environmental restoration of threatened ecosystems. Ongoing and recently funded programs led by Georgia Tech include those on the restoration of coral reef and salt marsh ecosystems. On coral reefs, manipulations of diversity to more rapidly restore function and suppress coral bleaching and diseases would be an obvious proof-of-concept that should encourage applications of this proactive approach. In salt marshes, adaptive management solutions such as the beneficial use of dredged sediments and the development of living shorelines have shown promise and a pilot scale demonstration project would go a long way in providing evidence to decision makers on the efficacy of green infrastructure approaches in building the resilience capacity of the coastline in the face of major disturbances.

**Points of Contact:** Mark Hay (BioS, Ocean Visions), Jenny McGuire (BioS, EAS), Joel Kostka (BioS, EAS), Jula Kubanek (BioS, Chemistry), Joe Montoya (BioS), Lin Jiang (BioS), Joshua Weitz (BioS)

## **IDEA #2 Raising Awareness of Coastal Ocean and Climate Solutions in Georgia**

We discussed how important it is for Georgians to understand their connections to the ocean, even if they do not live by the sea. Our second recommendation is to **expand access and cultivate well-being** by increasing awareness of ocean issues in our city and state and empowering the new generations with knowledge and tools:

**(a) Ocean Education in K-12**

Bring Ocean Education into K-12 classrooms with standards-based curricula developed at GT/CEISMC that includes the SDG14 goals. There is the opportunity to develop this initiative through our ongoing partnership with the Georgia Aquarium and the new Tybee Island Marine Science Center, who together host 100,000's of students every year.

**(b) Ocean Health Meter for the Georgia Coast**

In collaboration with other higher education institutions in the state, develop a network of ocean and coastal sensors that can inform a publicly-accessible ocean health meter for different portions of the GA coastline. The Smart Sea Level Sensor program has recently received a large instrumentation grant to expand the coastal sensor network throughout the Georgia Tech, and is an ideal opportunity to **amplify impact**.

**(c) Ocean Art Exhibit and Competition**

Develop an Ocean Art exhibit harnessing input from K-18 students that builds upon the SDG14 goals and themes.

**Point of Contact:** Annalisa Bracco (EAS, OSE), Alex Robel (EAS, OSE), Mark Hay and Joel Kostka (BioS, OSE), Iris Tien and David Frost (CEE, OSE), Kim Cobb (Global Change, SSLs), Russel Clark (CS, SSLs), Emanuele Di Lorenzo (OSE, Ocean Visions), Yanni Loukissas (Literature and Media), Jayma Koval (CEISMC), Martin Gray (CMO at Georgia Aquarium), Maria Procopio (Director, Tybee Island Marine Science Center)

**IDEA #3 Leading by Example in Advocating for Ocean Health**

Our final recommendation is to increase awareness and take action on ocean health through **leading by example**.

**(a) Sourcing on GT Campus**

The Office of Sustainability can fund student organizations to find permanent opportunities to reduce plastic production that ends up in the oceans, as well as work with GT Dining Services to source seafood sustainably (e.g. see [Sea2Table](#)).

**(b) GT Carbon Reduction Pledge**



Georgia Tech should also consider divesting from fossil fuels as an institution, and knowing there are alumni that work in extractive industries, consider creating a “pledge” program for those alumni to incorporate sustainability into their work via energy efficiency projects, supporting their companies’ work in renewable energy, etc.

### **(c) Formal Recognition of Ocean Stewardship for GT Students & Faculty**

Georgia Tech should **cultivate well-being** by providing formal recognition (e.g. class credit, acceptable component in evaluations) to community members who make the time to do advocacy and community organizing on specific topics like ocean health. Taking science and policy to the streets has an incredible impact in the “real” world and the institution would be a great leader by supporting it (see [Sustainable Ocean Alliance](#) for youth-led work).

### **Feedback on Panel Logistics**

- Chronological order of discussion questions was good, very fast timing but we had a great facilitator
- Read-out from each group went by really quickly
- Would have appreciated an additional session with 1 rep from a random subset of SDGs to discuss nexus between their recommendations (e.g. what overlap is there between the Oceans, Poverty, and Health SDGs?)
- Would appreciate a check-in in 3-6 months time, perhaps a recorded video from President Cabrera about how ideas from each SDG are being incorporated actively

## SDG 15

<p>Georgia Tech 17 Zooms 2020 SDG 15 Life on Land Zoom meeting report Thiago Esslinger, Dr. Jenny McGuire, Dr. Marc Weissburg</p>	 <p>The image shows a grid of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) icons. The 15th goal, 'Life on Land', is highlighted in green. The grid is titled 'SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS'.</p>
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### Top Ranked ideas:

1. Increased internal GT communications on this SDG
2. Sustainable tech Create-X like program
3. Project based or VIP on the ecology of the GT campus

(see *Summary of Discussion 4* for more information)

### Summary of Discussion 1: What strikes you about this goal?

All of the participants felt that natural terrestrial ecosystems and communities serve a variety of important functions, ranging from providing humans with food, cleansing air and water (e.g. ecosystem services), as well as giving people a place where they can feel connected and experience a sense of well being that comes from being in a natural setting (i.e. shinrin-yoku or forest bathing). There was the recognition that society has not honored it's commitment to preserving terrestrial ecosystems despite the emphasis placed on preserving biodiversity by the UN and other organizations. Participants felt that progress is limited by, among other things, a lack of clear appreciation for the benefits that nature provides and the importance of species preservation, no information or misinformation about the effects of local and immediate actions that improve the environment, and lack of incentives or disincentives for acting in an environmentally benign way. Conservation efforts often are directed at charismatic species in exotic environments rather than less obvious species that may be quite important. This may partially reflect a lack of clear information on how even small actions can provide enormous benefits when extrapolated over many people doing quiet good over time, and the apparent difficulty of understanding the behavior of inter-connected ecological systems in a regional and global context. Convenience is often the default consideration that dictates people's actions since costs of environmentally positive actions are direct and immediate whereas benefits are indirect, especially for those of us who live in otherwise healthy (if not wholly natural) settings that insulate them from many of the negative consequences of environmental degradation. Establishing appropriate behavioral norms through a combination of education, communication and incentives seems key, as is making people aware of the things they can do to affect change.

### Summary of Discussion 2-How is this related to your work/life?

All the participants had strong connections to the environment in both their work and their professional life. This is consistent with the anecdotes of many of the participants who generally agreed that outdoor experience provides an emotional connection which results in increased concern regarding environmental problems and a desire to help mitigate them. Nearly all the participants valued being able to access nature; urban parks and forests, gardens and wilderness all were mentioned as being places that provide positive connections likely to foster greater concern for this SDG generally and preservation of terrestrial systems specifically. Participants felt more connected to local concerns (e.g. increasing native plant and pollinator diversity) than far removed efforts to preserve other ecosystems or creatures (e.g. conserving elephants in Africa).

All participants were knowledgeable about environmental issues that affect them, either as a result of their professional training or outside interests. There was a strong connection between this knowledge and the activities the participants engaged in and felt important. Either through their profession or avocation, all participants were active in taking steps to help advance this SDG. Not surprisingly, local tangible actions in their community were the dominant form of expression. The central message was that the ability to apply knowledge (however gained) to benefit the environment (in whatever way) is a key activity and the cycle of *knowledge acquisition -application-results-positive feedback-action* is not strictly an academic pursuit; in fact, it was only for a minority of the participants.

### Summary of Discussion 3-How does this goal relate to the key goals of the GT strategic plan?

Participants felt that GT is in a unique position as a result of having a large presence in an urban region, the existence of a community of experts and knowledgeable practitioners, and a set of physical and biological resources that could be employed for a variety of purposes that involve undergraduate education, life-long learning, community building and tangible beneficial outcomes. Key goals are to provide intellectual and physical resources that can enhance our student educational experience, help individuals understand the impact of their actions and the need to advance this SDG, and establish a vigorous and diverse community empowered to act locally.

It was universally agreed on that GT's position and resources paves the way for GT to establish itself as a model for local actions that advance SDGs within the university, city, region, and state. Despite pockets of academic expertise that could (and may) have broad impacts, participants acknowledged the difficulty of GT substantially influencing international efforts as a result of the complexity of such a task, the lack of connection to organizations engaged in that task, and faculty expertise where appropriate international connections may be limiting: "Think globally and act locally" was the favored strategy. In this theme, participants often cited opportunities for GT to serve as a sustainability hub and innovator for Atlanta, and partner with local organizations in programs promoting community and project-based learning. Given the difficulty of measuring such efforts, some participants even suggested GT's role in developing

quantifiable sustainability metrics- a project which allows the Institute to lead by example.

GT's strategic plan emphasizes the need to use technology and education for the public good, taking care to understand the broad social and cultural impact of technology and to serve those who's voices have not been well heard. It is student facing, collaborative, innovative, responsive to the need to serve the community and predicated on stewardship. The actions suggested by the participants reinforce these values.

#### Summary of Discussion 4-Action items to support the SDG

Action items are listed in the accompanying spread sheet, along with rankings by all the participants who responded. A ranking of 1 indicates the highest priority and perceived benefit whereas a ranking of 3 indicates the lowest. Note that these are relative rankings; respondents indicated they were enthusiastic about all the ideas.

#### Summary thoughts on workshop efficacy

##### What worked:

- All the participants from the tech community were enthusiastic and the discussions were vigorous and open minded.
- The diversity of faculty, staff and students created a lot of synergism and contributed strongly to a positive outcome.
- The remote format worked well.

##### Things to think about:

- Post meeting feedback from participants was difficult to obtain.
- It would have been valuable to consider synergisms or conflicts with different SDG, but the format and time did not allow for this.
- Participants identified a number of local organizations with compatible interests (resources spreadsheet). This should have been well ahead of time and some of these stakeholder invited to participate.
- University staff, students and faculty represent a relatively narrow range of perspectives on this issue, and the lack of other participants reinforces the idea that conservation is only a concern of the privileged, and benefits primarily this group.



## SDG 16

### SDG #16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions -- Report

#### *Co-Facilitators:*

Sebnem Ozkan - Atlanta Global Studies Center/Modern Languages

Ellen Zegura - College of Computing

Kathleen Kurre - Fusion Advisors

#### **Ideas that emerged for advancing this SDG through our Strategic Planning work:**

##### ***The main idea/30 sec pitch:***

In connection to the “*Leading by Example*” pillar of the strategic plan, our proposal is a new School for Peace and Justice in partnership with other higher education institutions in the region, especially HBCUs, and peace-focused organizations such as the Carter Center, NCCHR, The King Center. We want to take the innovative models for higher education represented by the inter-inter-institutional School Biomedical Engineering and the new interdisciplinary School for Cybersecurity and Privacy model to the next level by expanding our engagement to other institutions and organizations.

##### ***Ideas leading to the main idea/pitch:***

- Lead by example
  - Strong institutions are required for peace and justice; peace and justice are required for strong institutions. How would we ground Georgia Tech in peace and justice? We can't give what we do not have - so we need to cultivate peace and justice at GT first. We have to cultivate well-being of students, faculty, and staff. We all need to feel more at peace within GT.
- To achieve this, we need a campus-wide mechanism/platform/structure/program/practice that would “mainstream peace and justice” across the institute and across projects, across faculty, students, and staff:
  - We need this to overcome the natural resistance that exists in many schools/colleges to SDGs, including #16, due to unfamiliarity and the perception that these societal goals are separate from our jobs, and also because asking someone to look at humanness and vulnerabilities is scary and hard.
  - We propose an emphasis on curriculum as the center piece for peace. This will require and encourage us to overcome inherent rigidities in curriculum. Students want to, in fact, strongly demand, to learn more about sustainability, SDGs, peace, but the current curriculum makes that

challenging. Restrictions in the GT/USG system doesn't give students any room to be curious and seek out other things - other schools, ways of thought etc. Enhance access to interdisciplinary learning and encourage students to do that rather than living in their own college. Within USG, it is really hard to do interdisciplinary studies. Make it easy to get a 2nd minor and earlier to take classes outside of your major.

- For example – modify the English requirement to embrace peace and justice concepts of mindfulness, ethics, and exploring other disciplines.
  - SGA is working on project to restructure health classes to include mindfulness. Plan a similar restructuring of other core, required courses.
  - Acknowledge that experiential learning/service learning, and community-engaged teaching are key in mainstreaming peace and justice into the curriculum. Students and faculty should be able to experience the practice of peace and actually engaged in peace/justice work. SLS should be supported in its efforts to build these practices into GT.
- We cannot do peace and justice work just within GT. We have to build it in partnership with the community in Atlanta as well as regionally, nationally, globally, globally.
  - There is tremendous promise in breaking down Staff/faculty/student silo. Unleashing the collective abilities across these three groups could unleash tremendous untapped potential. Staff/faculty/students working on peace-building projects together can be a powerful mechanism. An Interdisciplinary Peace Education Institute that provides curriculum/(imperative) training across all that GT does (curriculum, research, procurement) can be built.

**What went well:**

- Discussion questions worked well as good prompts for the conversation
- Including students was a great idea since they brought valuable and unique perspectives

**Suggestions for improvement in the future:**

- More time. It would have been totally fine to go for 3 hours, for example.
- Include graduate students, as well.
- More guidance and specs for the final idea(s) would be helpful.

## SDG 17

### SDG 17 - Participant Discussion Notes

Moderator Team: Anna Stenport, JT Taylor, Kris Chatfield

#### SDG 17: DECISIVE - Synthesis of ideas

- **Academic/Education/Learner Approaches for Partnerships in Internal Transformation** Need for providing STEM and CS majors (or all majors) with a broader background. Trend towards specialization at Tech - need business, humanities, social sciences, and liberal arts requirements as well to enhance the ability of our students to provide broader impact in the world as they prepare to become global leaders in whatever workplace
  - a. To provide a broader background... perhaps we can implement a mandatory first-year seminar on UN SDGs and our role as community members of GT, Atlanta, and the global society - this can give students the tool to activate around the SDGs no matter their academic and personal interests (connect to GT 1000?)
  - b. Humanities are important - even/also for engineers! Changing the focus of graduation requirements at Tech. Integrated and interdisciplinary - partnerships between Colleges at Tech to graduate students with broader backgrounds
  - c. Leading and bringing together institutions for research and learning - higher ed, partners, etc.
  - d. For students - most valuable coursework and projects have been the interdisciplinary ones. Multiple perspectives working on problem-solving projects really makes the experience and outcome more enriching. Education is the root of achieving the SDGs.
  - e. Train students as communicators to have broader impact
  - f. Valuing interdisciplinary education will attract a more diverse array of students, who may not perceive themselves welcomed in a "hard" STEM-exclusive environment; expands access and inclusivity
- **Public, Community Engagement, Academic/Education, Partnerships** SLS is one really great thing we've done at Tech - needs to be continued as an important part of how we work with external partners
  - g. Especially with equity at its core, SLS is so important towards advancing the UN SDGs at a campus and local level -- includes the RCE network
  - h. SLS has done so much in the past 4 years and has the ability to continue making a huge impact by integrating into campus and community activities for many years to come

- i. Leader in foundation and implementation of RCE Greater Atlanta - U.N. designated network addressing key SDG challenges in the Atlanta Region. Includes active engagement in the RCE Americas group - partnership with RCEs in North, Central, and South America
- j. Includes faculty, community, and industry related partnerships (not just a student service)

- **Public, Community Engagement to Serve External Stakeholders** Tech extension service (or STEM extension service, but also humanities, social sciences, liberal arts) - create space to help teach skills to students outside of Tech (K-12 and also adult learners). Make space that encourages exploration and innovation - westside communities. Forming a larger structure similar to the existing Agriculture extension service that exists in Georgia. Could reach students across Georgia - even in rural areas. Would give Georgia Tech a broader role as a resource to communities. GT already involved in the Manufacture Extension Program - could use as a model; would also engage global industry and an international/migrant workforce in Georgia (including ag sector). *How does this relate to the CNE's ATRIUM idea, which is already in the planning pipeline? A new or related direction?* Related. Having makerspaces/atriums/distributed physical presence in other locations (esp rural GA) could also drive economic activity, engage alumni to volunteer, and expand learning opportunities for both K-12 and adult learners

- **Research, Scholarship, Creative Inquiry, and Advancing Knowledge** One of the ways our researchers could be engaged across all the SDGs is to work on data (both qualitative and quantitative) to measure progress for each goal. There are already “indices” for many of the goals (eg poverty measures, air and water quality surveys, partnerships, etc.) but what if GT created a full blown SDG dashboard that Academic Institutions, Governments, Companies, Foundations, and even individuals etc. could use to measure their own progress toward the goals. We could measure our own progress and also be the “US News and World Report” ranking for SDGs
  - Could integrate some citizen science component to get community members engaged in contributing to the data collection

## OBSERVATIONS ON PROCESS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE EVENTS

1. SDGs are still new to the organization; ongoing education, championing, and positive reinforcement of this paradigm will continue to be critical to success, and GT explores the SDGs for organizational transformation and as catalyst for action;

2. Substantial groundswell among the students who are both excited and prepared to lead in the charge to address the UN SDGs. This student energy and commitment should be harnessed in efforts going forward;
3. Clear that the concepts of GT as a “local anchor institution, globally connected” resonated with the group and that this designation carries both great responsibility and opportunity;
4. At least initially, in the partnership group, there was a sense or presupposition that “partnerships” means external connections and community or industry collaboration. But the focus of the discussion was really on internal “partnerships” across disciplines, academic programs, and offices to effect societal change starting “at home”. This came as a bit of a surprise to some in the group, but also demonstrates opportunity and critical need for GT to “lead by example” internally in terms of implementation of the SDGs before “imposing” on others.
5. ORID framework worked well for discussion, but could have used more time. Perhaps some rules of engagement could be provided and discussed at the start of the session (e.g., limit your contribution to 30 seconds and stop when/if asked). This is particularly important when the interaction is virtual/online as we lack visual cues and affordances (e.g., timer).
6. Using the chat function and the shared document provided additional outlets for contributions -- very effective.
7. Enable participants to vote on those concepts that best align with the Georgia Tech Strategic Plan enabled us to arrive at consensus and a synthesized list in a short amount of time.
8. With ~15 participants (in addition to facilitators), it was good to have the speaker/participant charts organized ahead of time. Allowed people to begin typing into the document right away. Saved time and allowed for inclusive participation (especially when people were not able to express their comment verbally in the amount of time allotted. As we moved on to the next section, participants were able to continue to add their comments.)
9. Good to have a moderator team - made everything flow more smoothly. Lessened the load on each of the leads and allowed for better facilitation.



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