

Dean's statement prompted by events in Charlottesville, Virginia

To the College of Sciences Community at Georgia Tech:

I write to you with a sadness and a dismay. My sadness stems from last weekend's use of violence to try to intimidate people who strive for equality, especially the citizens of Charlottesville, home to our sibling institution, the University of Virginia. This abhorrent attack was planned and executed by a deplorable group of provocateurs, all of whom choose to hate, based on race, religion, and sexual identity. Their learnt forms of prejudice fuel misguided notions of superiority and an innate right to special advantage over others. My dismay stems from the false equivalence – expressed in some quarters – of the vile ideas and violent conduct of the racist, anti-Semitic, homophobic attackers and the sentiments and actions of those who resisted the attack.

More than seventy years ago, the citizens of many, many nations did not equivocate in the face of the attempt to spread the terror and devastation of Nazi and Fascist ideologies around the globe. Indeed, we venerate those who contributed to that resistance. Today, we cannot be equivocal about those who would spread racism, religious intolerance, and homophobia. These and other forms of prejudice and discrimination have no place in our society. It is not complicated.

So, I shall stand with the people of Charlottesville in unequivocal repudiation of hate-filled ideologies; I shall stand in unequivocal support of civility, respect, fairness, and enlightenment; and I shall support the free-flowing exchange of ideas and the power of civil debate and reason to sift through them. I have confidence that our community stands together on these matters.

As we embark upon a new year of scholarship, education, and service – and the fulfilment they bring via the lifting up of the next generation to value and apply the power of reason – let us affirm this to all faculty, staff, and students who together make up our community: *Whoever you are, whatever your roots, wherever you come from, the Georgia Tech family wholeheartedly welcomes and cherishes you.*

Respectfully,



Paul M. Goldbart, Dean
Betsy Middleton and John Clark Sutherland Chair
College of Sciences
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