

**BC Alumni Board Meeting**  
**Georgia Tech Hotel and Conference Center**  
**Thursday, May 8, 2008**  
**7:30 a.m.**

**Attendees:** Pat Jones; David Pritchett; Eric Taylor; Scott Jennings; Brenda Stokes; Trevor Pitt; Rob Lafayette; Roozbeh Kangari; Lisa Borello; Brenda Morris; Linda Thomas-Mobley; and Yarrow Smith. Guests: Shannon Barnes and Stephen Harter.

Chair Pat Jones opened the meeting at 8:00 a.m.

***SCA Announcements***

Student Construction Association President Shannon Barnes and SCA Vice President Steven Harter attended the meeting to introduce themselves and provide the Board with an overview of SCA and its plans for the coming academic year.

Ms. Barnes said the SCA currently has about 75 members (undergraduate and graduate students) and its goal is to increase its membership and to provide more social and networking opportunities. SCA has four general meetings each semester (scheduled for Tuesdays at 11 a.m.; about 50 students attend each meeting), with a guest speaker invited to attend every other meeting. Another goal of the coming academic year is to place better in national competitions; SCA members currently participate in four competitions (National Association of Home Builders, Mechanical Contractors Association of America, Associated Builders and Contractors, Associated General Contractors, with the possibility of also attending the Design Build Institute of America competition).

In terms of how the Board can assist SCA, Ms. Barnes stated that the student group would like help setting up speakers for its meetings; SCA officers are interested in bringing in an expert on BIM, as well as a real estate developer and an HR representative to assist students with interviewing and resumes.

Ms. Barnes also added that SCA was interested in participating in Project Playhouse, a volunteer project in which students design and build a large playhouse which is auctioned off for charity. She said they may need assistance from the Board in securing materials. Mr. Harter added that the primary focus, however, of the SCA for the coming year will be on competitions; one of the areas the students may need help is on improving their presentation skills, and another is in estimating. Dr. Kangari stated that the students should focus on one area, rather than trying to participate in too many projects which may be difficult to manage.

Ms. Jones then asked what is involved in the competitions. Mr. Harter explained that the criteria vary depending on the organization; for example, NAHB sends plans to participating groups in advance and the team prepares a proposal which is presented at the conference. Dr. Kangari added that the BC Program pays for student travel to these competitions out of the funds raised from the Golf Tournament.

Ms. Jones suggested that the SCA officers prepare a list of projects and needs for the coming year, which can then be distributed to the Board members.

### ***Program Updates***

Dr. Kangari provided some updates on recent news from the Building Construction Program.

He announced that the Program has hired two new full-time, tenure track faculty members who will start in the Fall semester. He gave credit to Dean Doug Allen for supporting the program in its efforts to respond to its enrollment growth. He added that one of the Dean's administrative priorities has been in moving the College of Architecture from hiring part-time instructional faculty to full-time permanent faculty. Dr. Kangari stated the benefits of having full-time faculty are that they are required to be in the Program office and can be more available to students; tenure-track faculty are also required to do research, which fits with the mission of the Institute. He said the move from part-time to full-time faculty also helps with planning purposes, in ensuring there are always faculty available to teach several courses; he also stated it helps with the Program's national rankings.

The Program has also been given approval to hire an additional faculty member to start in January 2009; the faculty member will share time between BC and Civil Engineering. Dr. Kangari said this faculty member will serve an important bridge function between BC and Civil to build collaborative teaching and research partnerships; since the Civil Engineering School decided to not offer the construction-track degree program, the relationship between the two programs has been disconnected. There was then a discussion concerning the Program's attempts to forge partnerships with other Colleges and departments at Georgia Tech. Dr. Linda Thomas-Mobley added that Professor Kathy Roper and herself were part of a women's faculty group housed in the College of Management; the group provides a forum to begin discussions about interdisciplinary partnerships. Dr. Thomas-Mobley also added that the Leadership Roundtable (part of the Leadership Institute at the College of Management), of which she has participated, has been instrumental in bringing together faculty, department chairs and laboratory directors together from all over the Institute; this influential group has a direct line to the President and Provost.

Dr. Kangari then discussed how BC is looking to expand its graduate program and is considering adding two additional tracks to the existing three. The two proposed tracks are: digital design and construction (BIM); and sustainability. The graduate tracks generally required outside funding for the first two years before they can be self-

sustaining; the existing three tracks were all funded by outside professional organizations. Currently, the Program is exploring its sponsorships options. Dr. Thomas-Mobley then added that if Board members had any students they would like to recommend for admission to the graduate program they should contact her. She stated that the Program's top students tend to be recruited from the military and from recommendations of alumni.

Dr. Kangari then announced that a group of 10 BC students were participating in the Program's study abroad program in Paris this summer. The study abroad program started about 6 years ago and was not offered last summer; students earn 12 credit hours for BC and classes are taught by BC instructors. During the two-month program, students visit construction sites and companies across Europe. The study abroad program is an attempt to provide students with international experiences; the Program also has an exchange agreement in place with Hong Kong Polytechnic. Dr. Kangari added that the Program is exploring agreements with institutions in Shanghai and Dubai, which are high-growth construction areas. Students also have the opportunity to do their summer internships abroad as well.

There was then a follow-up discussion on student participation in competitions. Dr. Kangari clarified that the Program funds the student travel to these competitions, largely from the funds raised in the golf tournament. Although the cost is high, he stated that student participation at these events is critical to their overall learning experience.

Dr. Kangari then discussed possible concerns about a slowing economic market, which could affect students' abilities to secure jobs after graduation. As of now, students are not having a problem securing employment after graduation, with students averaging two job offers and a salary of low-to-mid \$50Ks. The Program still plans to host its annual career fair in February; the Institute also hosts a campus-wide fair in September. He said the Program is considering other events, such as networking opportunities with companies. Ms. Jones added that she would be interested in an organized reception between the Board and members of SCA. Eric Taylor added that students now have to be willing to put themselves in networking situations rather than wait for companies to come to them; he suggested organizing some informal networking event to give students the skills and confidence needed to be successful in the job market.

### ***Golf Tournament***

Dr. Kangari then provided an update on the Jim Dreger Golf Classic. Jeff Eidson is chairing the golf tournament subcommittee and is working with Ms. Karen Houston and W.J. Blane on the event planning and sponsorship solicitation. The tournament is scheduled for Tuesday, October 14, 2008 at Settindown Creek in Roswell (same location as last year). The tournament consists of 36 teams and the subcommittee is focusing its efforts on securing more high-level sponsors (more teams in the \$5K sponsorship level). Dr. Kangari added that the Program is considering expanding the tournament and moving to a different course in 2009. There was then some discussion about whether the tournament should provide more networking opportunities, whether for companies to

mingle with students and/or other companies. There was agreement that there needed to be more participation from students at the tournament.

### ***Alumni Database: Ownership Issues***

Eric Taylor addressed the issue of who “owned” the newly developed alumni database, and whether the Board was able to send out announcements on behalf of the Program for social events. Dr. Kangari responded that the chair of the Board is permitted to send messages, with Program approval; the e-mail will be sent by Yarrow Smith, who compiled and coordinated the database project. He added that his concern was in sending too many announcements to alumni; he also stated that he wants announcements to be strictly informational and event-related, rather than solicitations. Dr. Kangari clarified the BC Program, not the Alumni Board, has ownership over the database. Ms. Jones commented that it is critical for the Program to be the owner of the database, as it creates one unified voice for the Program. However, she added that there needs to be a stronger vision and articulation of how the Program wants to engage with alumni. She stated that the Program needs to have a dedicated staff member who reaches out to industry and to alumni, adding that the program needed to adopt a more customer service point-of-view in its approach to alumni, particularly as it moves toward fund-raising efforts. There was then discussion about the need to organize regular social events and to communicate more regularly with alumni. There was also discussion concerning how e-mail announcements about certain social events, particularly those where alcohol may be served, should come from the Alumni Board Chair, rather than the Director. There was agreement that e-mails concerning Program-related news should be sent from Dr. Kangari, whereas alumni-related news and events should be sent from the Board Chair.

### ***Alumni Database: Update***

Yarrow Smith then provided an update on the Database Project. She first clarified that, as part of the agreement with alumni to provide their contact information for the database, the Program agreed to not share confidential information with any outside organization. She also added that, in gathering feedback from alumni, a number raised concerns about the different organizations that have contacted them, including the College of Architecture and the GT Alumni Association. Because alumni are already receiving numerous messages from varying groups, she cautioned against bombarding them with too many e-mail messages. Ms. Smith suggested collecting information and events and sending them out monthly, rather than separate e-mails for each event or announcement. Ms. Jones agreed that the volume of messages needs to be controlled, but the main issue is that the Program needs to develop a formal structure for communicating with its alumni.

David Pritchett then raised a question concerning the Program’s ideas on how to use the database. Dr. Kangari responded that communication about the golf tournament, the newsletter, meeting minutes and SCA events were some options, adding that the Program was open to suggestion from Board members. Mr. Pritchett expressed concern that the

Program had invested significantly in the development of the database and was not using it.

Ms. Smith then announced that the collection of contact information was near completion, with the final letter sending and callbacks completed in June. There was then discussion on whether the program wanted to start a subscription service, in which alumni signed up for certain news or events of interest to them. Ms. Jones commented that alumni should not be given a “choice” and to send newsletters and announcements to all. She also added that the program should look at revamping its current newsletter and working with Teri Nagel in the Dean’s Office on a redesign.

### ***Space Needs***

Scott Jennings then provided an update on his task to solicit general feedback concerning alumni willingness to support BC leasing office space at Tech Square to accommodate its enrollment growth. He said that he spoke with Tommy Holder who conceptually supports the idea of a lease, rather than a renovation of existing facility (not a promise of support, but rather served as “test” for gauging the receptiveness of Program alumni). He then said that the Program needs to develop a compelling argument to gather support, in terms of identifying its’ needs and helping potential donors understand the critical space issues.

### ***Board Leadership***

Ms. Jones then announced that she will be stepping down as chair of the Alumni Board in order to serve a distinct fund-raising role within the Program by helping form a Development Council to identify prominent industry players and gather support for the program. She stated that she contacted Board members prior to the meeting to see who was interested in assuming the role of chair. She stated Brenda Stokes and Jennifer Moore expressed interest, though Ms. Moore was more interested in serving as chair of a subcommittee. Ms. Stokes then confirmed her interest in serving as Chair and acknowledged there may some concern from the Board because of her distance from Atlanta; however, she said she was very interested in taking on the leadership role. Ms. Stokes will finish Ms. Jones’ term for the remainder of the year and when the full board meets again in September there can be a more formal vote for the coming term. Ms. Jones added that she was planning on sending an e-mail to board members to more explicitly outline the requirements of serving on the Board, in order to ensure greater consistency in meeting attendance.

Dr. Kangari then thanked Ms. Jones for her years of service as Chair, adding that Ms. Jones was influential in helping re-structure the Alumni Board and in taking a leading role in the areas of visibility and connectivity, especially with the Alumni Database. He said that her new charge in working with the Program on the Development Council is critical to the Program, particularly in helping meet its space needs. He added that the new Board Chair will be critical in helping improve the visibility of the Program through key events, including the development of the Anniversary Event/Symposium. Dr.

Kangari again thanked Ms. Jones for her service to the Program, inviting Ms. Jones to a lunch with BC faculty members.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 18, 2008 at 7:30 a.m. at the GT Hotel and Conference Center.