

SECNAV Visits Georgia Tech Research Institute, Underscoring Commitment to Innovation and Collaboration



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ATLANTA – Oct. 23, 2024 – The Secretary of the Navy Hon. Carlos Del Toro visited the Georgia Tech Research Institute today to highlight the vital role of research and development in maintaining naval dominance and warfighting excellence. The Secretary addressed Georgia Tech students and faculty, and Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps students from Georgia Tech, Spelman College and Morehouse College, emphasizing the importance of their contributions to national security.

The Secretary's visit underscored the Navy's commitment to fostering strategic partnerships with academic institutions

like Georgia Tech. GTRI, the applied research division of Georgia Tech, plays a crucial role in developing cutting-edge technologies for the Department of the Navy and the Department of Defense.

“Georgia Tech is a powerhouse of innovation, and GTRI’s research is critical to ensuring our Sailors and Marines have the technological edge they need to prevail in any conflict,” said Secretary Del Toro. “The work being done here, particularly in areas like artificial intelligence, cyber-physical systems, and electromagnetic spectrum operations, is directly aligned with the Navy’s strategic priorities.”

The Secretary highlighted GTRI’s contributions to the DON, including:

Collaborative Research: GTRI works closely with the Office of Naval Research (ONR) and other DoD entities to address specific technological needs.

R&D Contributions: GTRI develops advanced systems such as autonomous vehicles, millimeter wave radar technologies, and electronic warfare solutions.

Prototyping and Testing: GTRI provides facilities for testing and validating new technologies to meet military specifications.

Technology Transition: GTRI focuses on translating research outcomes into practical applications, enhancing operational capabilities for the Navy and broader defense community.

The Secretary’s remarks also emphasized the importance of innovation in the face of evolving global challenges.

“To win the fight of the future, we must embrace and implement emerging technologies,” said Del Toro. “We are in an innovation race, and it is one we must win.”

The Secretary highlighted several DON innovation initiatives,

including:

The Naval Science and Technology Strategy: This strategy guides the Navy and Marine Corps' investments in science and technology research.

The Naval Innovation Center (NIC) at the Naval Postgraduate School: The NIC accelerates the innovation process by bringing research concepts out of the lab and into the field faster.

The Department of the Navy's Science and Technology Board: This board provides independent advice and counsel on matters relating to science, technology, and acquisition.

The Disruptive Capabilities Office (DCO): The DCO identifies and implements already-available or emerging technologies to address the fleet's capability gaps.

"With today's enemies developing more advanced technological threats, we are grateful that the Secretary of the Navy made time to visit our Atlanta Region NROTC Midshipmen," said Atlanta Region NROTC Commanding Officer Capt. Jesus Rodriguez. "Our future Naval officers were provided with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity when the Secretary personally impressed on them the importance of continued studies in science and technology. Our Midshipmen and NROTC staff are all appreciative for the opportunity to meet with and listen to our Navy's leadership emphasize the importance of our students' initiative in technological development during their Naval careers."

The Secretary concluded by issuing a call to action to the students in attendance.

"Innovation must permeate every aspect of our department's approach to deliver technologies and capabilities at a speed and scale necessary for our Navy and Marine Corps to confront the challenges of today and the future."

Read Secretary Del Toro's remarks [here](#).