Semana Latina 2001 hits Tech

Technology pioneer selected as Commencement Speaker

By Jim Perry

Computer technology pioneer Gordon Moore has been named the featured speaker of the California Institute of Technology's 107th annual commencement ceremony which will begin at 10 a.m., June 15, on Beckman Mall on the Caltech campus.

An estimated 414 students will be receiving degrees: 207 bachelor's, 83 master's, and 124 doctoral.

Prior to the conferring of degrees, the commencement address will be given by Moore, who went through the same ceremony himself 47 years ago when he received a PhD in chemistry from Caltech.

A few years after graduating from Caltech, Moore cofounded Fairchild Semiconductor Corporation at Mountain View in the late 1950s. He managed the corporation's engineering department and later directed Fairchild's research and development when the company produced the first commercial integrated circuit.

In 1968, he and a few of his colleagues at Fairchild decided to create a start-up to focus on large-scale integrated products. They typed a one-page business plan, received $2.5 million in venture capital in two days, and named the company Intel, short for "integrated electronics." Their first commercial product, the 3101 Schottky bipolar 64-bit static random-access memory chip, was moderately successful, but they hit their stride when they designed a general-purpose logic chip that could be programmed to take instructions. This meant that intelligence could be programmed by means of software; it didn't have to be burned into hardware, saving both time and money.

This chip changed history by making programmable intelligence so cheap it could be embedded into household appliances and so powerful that people could have computers of their own. Within a decade, the microprocessor was hailed as one of the top inventions in American technology history, ranking with the invention of the light bulb, the telephone, and the airplane.

In 1974, Moore remarked of the chip's impact, "I'd like to think that we're the real revolutionaries in the world. Things are being reprogrammed a lot more by electronics technology than by some political things going on."

Moore was chief executive officer at Intel from 1975 to 1987, and is now chairman emeritus. He is widely known for "Moore's law" which he formulated in 1965. The law states that the number of transistors the industry would be able to place on a computer chip would double every year. In 1995 he updated his prediction to once every two years. While originally intended as a rule of thumb, it has become the guiding principle for the industry, which endeavors to deliver ever more powerful semiconductor chips at proportionate decreases in cost.

Moore, 72, has been a Caltech trustee for 18 years, and served as chairman of the board from 1993 to 2000. Moore's generosity to the Institute has included the establishment of a program for visiting school

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Please see Page 2 for the Semana Latina 2001 Calendar.

True to NASA's words, we reserve tickets: donut.caltech.edu/ess

Carmina
Burana!
Friday May 4, from 8-10 PM
At Thorne Hall on Occidental campus

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The innovation that has probably played the biggest role in the decline of handwriting, however, is e-mail. Email has so revolutionized the way we communicate that many of us don’t even have phones anymore, much less write or receive letters. Although the word email suggests that it is a digital letter, I think that emailing is such an essential different experience that it doesn’t replace letter-writing so much as displace it. Although we gain speed and connectivity with our new forms of interpersonal communication, we seem to be losing much of the person in communication.

The act of writing is a very personal experience. The scratch of a pen against paper, the feel of smooth Strathmore Wove Finish stationary, and the precisely directed movement of hands to form words are all subtle but integral parts of the writing experience. When writing an email, these are replaced by the dull taping of keys on a QuietKey keyboard, causing the display of anonymous symbols on our screens. Since hand writing is a slow process and erasing is much harder than pressing backspace, we more carefully translate our thoughts into words. Most email messages are haphazardly tapped out and sent without even so much as a run through the spell-checker. But while emailing shares the grammatical inaccuracy of speech, it lacks all of the emotion and character that speech conveys. In fact, email seems to be the very limit of meaningful communication (the lower limit, that is), lacking both the coherence of a letter, and the emotion of speech.

Furthermore, not only is the content of email of lesser quality that of letters, it lacks the physicality and personal character that makes letters so much more than words. While typing conveys nothing more than the words themselves, handwriting is imbued with the spirit of the writer, creating a mood and a memory. The tilt and curvature of each character remind us that we are reading barely even read my emails once before deleting them.

In many ways, email is the most impersonal and impermanent form of communication, but it’s also probably of the easiest. Email allows us to correspond at each other’s convenience as well as discreetly ignore the people we don’t want to correspond with. I am perhaps even more of an email junkie than most, but I can’t help but wonder if we are losing more than we gain in the exchange.

Most email messages are hopelessly trivial, and I can’t help but wonder if we are losing more than we gain in the exchange. For those who have had to live through the towering hope that followed the original moon landings, and the dry wasteland of human spaceflight that followed, the wait has been particularly galling. As Eric Lipton wrote in an article at Salon.com, “If you told me, at age 8, that by the time I was 28, I’d have a chance to see our world from 10 miles up, I wouldn’t have believed you.”

There is hope this time. This time the inspirational space story which has captured our imagination is different. It’s not about some old hero returning to space, or some cute little robot rolling around in the Martian dust. It’s about real people, paying a price which, if a bit high, is imaginable. Real people, you and I, getting a chance to get into space.

The new spaceship will be full of stories about companies who plan to bring space tourism into reality. Even if the accommodations aren’t quite as fancy as those Tito is enjoying abroad Alpas, the fare should be more less astronomically.

It’s really too bad. After all the high hopes about space being colonized for the good of mankind and the rich of the stars, perhaps it will be reached because of a bunch of greedy tourists. But after waiting so long, we’ll learn to with it. As long as they don’t wear silly hats and fanny packs.

Denis Tito, space tourist, is scheduled to return to earth on Saturday.

THE CALIFORNIA TECH

Semana Latina 2001 Calendar

Monday, May 7th
Andes: Sol de América
Winnett quad, noon - 1 pm
Lunch: Pollo con Papas, $4

ISP: Open House & Street Party
Center for Student Services, 4 - 6 pm

Tuesday, May 8th
Los Angeles: Quinto Sol
Winnett quad, noon - 1 pm
Lunch: Fajitas, $4

Spanish Night: Clurta and the Arte Flamengo Dance Theatre
Avery Courtyard, 6 - 9 pm
Free Paella and Sangría

Wednesday, May 9th
Brazil: Sambá Li Samba School
Winnett quad, noon - 1 pm
Lunch: Fejipada, $4

Movie & Round Table: Libertad ("Freedom") USA, 1997
A powerful film about a young Cuban artist turned political prisoner who escapes the island on a raft. Actors Oscar Torres and Tony Pacheco will be present to converse with the audience. 22 Gates, 7 pm

Thursday, May 10th
Mexico: Mariachi Esmeralda
Winnett quad, noon - 1 pm
Lunch: Carné Asada, $4

Keynote Speech: "The Construction of Latin and Latin American Identity," Prof. Beatriz Cortiza, California State University- Northridge 24 BB, 3 - 4 pm

Bohemian Night & Club GUSH: Poetry and Guitar Players
Red Door Café, 6 - 9 pm
All items $1 each

Friday, May 11th
Caribbean: Johnny Polanco y su Conjunto Amistad
Winnett quad, noon - 1 pm
Lunch: Ropa Vieja, $4

Movie: Tesis ("Thesis") Spain, 1996
While doing a thesis about violence, Angela finds a snuff video where a woman is tortured until death. 70 Moore, 7 pm

Saturday, May 12th
Sabor Latino Party: Ricardo Lemno & Makina Loca
Ricketts & Fleming Courtyard, starting at 9 pm

TITO

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to NASA to be displaying so much bad grace over this issue, hurting relations with Russia’s space program and adding a de­cidedly sour note to a story which has captured the public’s attention - it is necessary to un­derstand where they are coming from. The Challenger disaster still looms large over NASA’s future, a sober reminder of what happened the first time NASA tried to put a private citizen into space.

So while we try to be patient with NASA, NASA should try to be patient with Tito and us. It’s time to be in space. It’s the 21st century and only a handful of people have had the chance to see our world from above. The current pace of progress is simply not fast enough, and Tito’s story reminds us of that. We are almost in space-­anyone can get there with a couple million dollars. How much longer before the rest of us get our chance?

For those who have had to live through the towering hope that followed the original moon landings, and the dry wasteland of human spaceflight that followed, the wait has been particularly galling. As Eric Lipton wrote in an article at Salon.com, “If you told me, at age 8, that by the time I was 28, I’d have a chance to see our world from 10 miles up, I wouldn’t have believed you.”

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Click on Insurance Policy, Prescriptions, and scroll down to “Through the Mail”.

Moore

MOORE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

years, for fellowships, and for undergraduate scholarships; the funding of a professorship in engineering; and funding for The Gordon and Betty Moore Laboratory of Engineering, completed in 1990. Moore is a director of Varian Associates, Gilead Sciences Inc., and Transamerica Corporation. He is a member of the National Academy of Engineering, and a fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. He received the National Medal of Technology in 1990 from then-president George Bush. Founded in 1891, Caltech has an enrollment of some 2,000 students, and a faculty of about 275 professorial members and 130 research members. The Institute has more than 19,000 alumni. Caltech employs a staff of more than 2,100 on campus and 4,800 at JPL.

Over the years, 28 Nobel Prizes and four Crafoord Prizes have been awarded to faculty members and alumni. Forty-seven Caltech faculty members and alumni have received the National Medal of Science, and eight alumni (two of whom are also trustees, including Moore), two additional trustees, and one faculty member have won the National Medal of Technology. Since 1958, 13 faculty members have received the annual California Scientist of the Year Award. On the Caltech faculty there are 78 fellows of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; and on the faculty and Board of Trustees, 71 members of the National Academy of Sciences and 47 members of the National Academy of Engineering.

Letter to the editors

BY RICHARD KARNSKY

Although I was glad to see the correction in the last issue of the tech, I was absolutely appalled by another correction. The Prefrosh issue was the first since the first of the year to feature a credits box that was up to date. The others had had it pasted in from previous papers, so had given credit to a staff that had changed.

In the Prefrosh issue, Roger O'Brient, Christoph Baranec, and Rik Williams were finally given credit for months of hard work on the circulation staff. These gentleman woke up at 5:00 AM every Friday morning to perform the thankless job of picking up, sorting, folding, labeling, and circulated thousands of issues of the paper. Having worked this job, I can attest that it takes not only these early hours of Friday, but the rest of the morning and afternoon as you sleep to recover-your hands smeared with ink from folding hundreds of papers.

The circulation staff has magically finished their grueling job in time to get the paper to ASCIT doughnuts except when the printing press broke or when the editors had gotten it to press too late. They have shown devotion to the paper, delivering it even when they hadn't been paid for months of work.

In last week's issue, the circulation staff was left out entirely. A minor grammatical error is one thing, but to deny credit where it is due is despicable!

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May 4, 2001

ASCIT

Minutes

April 23, 2001

Present: BoD - 3 Moles who have to skip out a bit later. Guests: Kally Parish, Anyway, Karl Hammond, Dan Daly (vice-class president); Mike Fleming (Ballroom Dance Group); Peter Plavchan (Jamm Room manager), Karl Hammond (Glee Club King, or something to that nature); Mel Goodrich, Monu Sheik, and Eric Tuttle are interviewees for positions on this year’s Big T staff, in light of the fact that the Ballroom of the originally appointed students.

General Meeting

Previously on ASCIT: Vize-a-member of the BoD voted by a 7-1 margin to approve Martha-Helenium’s executive committee comprised of Al Valdivia, Derek Shumon, Liz Starneshkin, and Dan Stick.

Three roles free themselves from the meeting before their votes can be formally recorded. The new appointments are of Little significance. Muahaha. Then Joe Jewell comes in, chimes in, and on his own conviction, modified the resolution to have a small amount of funding from the student body. However, they will be warned not to follow the same principles that were used in the past. The Diplomacy Club will receive $25 towards purchasing a new board. However, they will be warned not to follow the precedent. The Card Club and the Pranks Club, who received substantial funding from ASCIT and rather similarly, all members of the BoD, with the exception of Eric Tuttle who was approved by a 4-1 margin, with an impassioned dissent, “I dissent for not putting two unqualified Eric’s into that office.”

The Diplomacy club will receive $25 towards purchasing a new board. However, they will be warned not to follow the precedent that was used in the past. The Card Club and the Pranks Club, who received substantial funding from ASCIT and later fertilized. So, if the Diplomacy Club dissolves, we’re taking back the funding.

The Ballroom Dance Club will receive $111.33 on the basis that some of us were acting rather tip-py and didn’t realize how immature it was to give someone 33 cents when a nice round number would have been more appropriate. One person cast a dissenting vote. On a side note, Ballroom Dance considers to be appropriate. The self-designed fitness program. Speaking of self-designed fitness, Alan Rosenwinkle once walked for 40 hours to get credit.

The Carmina Burana concert at Oxy is the only performance in which the glee clubs will be performing along with the orchestra. A second performance will be given without the orchestra. Accordingly, the subsidizing of 30 tickets is reasonable, as long as the Glee Club makes contributions in planning for transportation. $225 is dedicated to purchasing tickets and the resolution passes unanimously. And all the people in the village were happy to sing and dance.

The Jamm room membership has risen since the inception of the recording room. On the downside, the majority of the new members are grad students, which reflects the lack of advertising to undergraduates. The web page hasn’t been updated recently, and GSC hasn’t been too nice in funding the Jamroom. As long as ASCIT is providing funding, we should be allowed to appoint an undergrad as a co-manager in addition to Peter’s grad student choice for manager. We also voted to take money for Ballroom Dance and the two should know each other at some point. Also, we’re destroying the junior class officer positions and replacing “no one.” The event will be held May 18th which gives me roughly 3 weeks to create something aesthetic for the viewing audience. I wonder if the Carmina Burana concert is the glass case on the Olive Walk could be a substitute.

Now, back to Dan’s resolution. We are in agreement with making sure office elections earlier. The By-laws presently state that students elected to the post must win by absolute majority, which complicates matters if they are running for co-president positions and we were to take the top two vote-getters as the winners. Therefore, we propose that the co-presidents run as a team, thereby averting potential difficulties in working together as the two should know each other at some point. Also, we’re destroying the junior class officer positions and replacing “no one.” The event will be held May 18th which gives me roughly 3 weeks to create something aesthetic for the viewing audience. I wonder if the Carmina Burana concert is the glass case on the Olive Walk could be a substitute.

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The California Tech
May 4, 2001

ASCIT

Form Appreciation Club (GAFAC), Aaron Esser-Kahn, has been busy keeping the collection organized and negotiating more acquisitions. That’s fresh enthusiasm for you.

Joe Jewell was also technically a guest, representing Lloyd House with receipts from the Capture the Flag event/food stand from Pre-frosh weekend. It falls under the Multi-house category of the ASCIT budget, and the board voted unanimously to pay $200.

General Meeting
Todd had a meeting with publications people last week, though the only groups that actually had to show up that weren’t members of the board already were the editors of the Tech and the business managers. I.e. Ahoy is in charge of the Totem, and Todd, well… Todd can just talk to himself about how the Big T and the Little T are going. The Tech is working toward 12-page issues, and they also recently received $2400 from the GSC. Martha-Helene interrupts “Did anyone read my column from two weeks ago?”

Awkward pause. Todd complains that there hasn’t been an Inside World yet, one of those abrasive, fake news spreads that are distributed exclusively to the undergrad houses. Tradition has dictated one Inside World per term, but that hasn’t been happening. Damn it, we won’t fake news on crack.

Social Director stuff. We’re drinkin’ (making a survey to include the ASCITiness of the carnival. All of the clubs that had a booth will, hopefully, agree to repeat next year. It turns out that all of those abrasive, fake news spreads that are distributed exclusively to the undergrad houses. Tradition has dictated one Inside World per term, but that hasn’t been happening. Damn it, we won’t fake news on crack.

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I have been hearing a lot of arguments about how much Corel contributes to a Caltech education. Before being introduced into an already-bloated curriculum, the communication requirement was intensely discussed by the faculty. A scientist or engineer must know how to express even complex ideas and results in a clear fashion, understandable not just to scientifically sophisticated colleagues but also to non-specialists, members of the general public, government officials and others.

The verbal component of the science communications requirement ended up as the responsibility of the different divisions. The written component was deemed to require a specialized approach, a combination of writing and scientific skills, what we now call Corel, required of all which turns out to be a lot of work for a one unit course. A comment that is heard very often is that our students will have many other opportunities to write scientific articles and so that yet another one is superfluous. Judging from my own experience, I firmly believe that getting help with writing skills from an expert is crucial.

The first time I received advice about scientific writing was while preparing my Ph.D. thesis, when I was encouraged to pepper my text with "however", in strategic places. It was a long time before I received further guidance, except from journal referees who did not like how I said things, and expressed their dismay by none-too-useful tongue lashings. I progressed only when a colleague and I started making a conscious effort to prepare a flow plan before starting to write out our papers, aiming to lead the reader down an idealized thought path. All right you’ll say, maybe it is useful to learn to structure one’s papers, if one does not yet know to do this, but why should the core papers be “dumbed down” versions of the real thing?

What is hard to realize is that eliminating jargon and the mists of overly technical terminology is one to present ideas clearly, a great advantage even for “real” scientific papers. Why write if no one can understand what’s being said? “Words bring out and the ability to recognize Diogenes grye and gimble in the wood.”

Another very important skill, one so basic that it is not always expressed overtly, is to make sure to properly give credit to others. I know by experience, having read many “research papers” prepared by students in my courses over the years, that this simple concept is somehow not so simple to realize. Our present understanding of the world depends on previous knowledge, our personal contribution is made possible by standing on the shoulders of giants. We need to reveal whose are the shoulders we stand on. This is important as a “courtesy”, applying the golden rule. It is also one of the means by which to validate the background data, and thus to set limits on how much faith to have in our own results. Not making that backup work helps our understanding of the universe, and perhaps worse, cause bridges to collapse.

But it is not enough to apply the Honor Code in our dealing with others. I can hear you now, “Dean,” you’ll say, “we know. We read the honor code booklet every morning before going to bed and consult it as we go about our tasks. We are careful to acknowledge other people’s work, and are dedicated to fight plagiarism.” Listen, I answer, don’t make light of it, listen, it turns out that even great scientists don’t necessarily handle themselves well in this respect.

To illustrate, let me just tell you what happened when I decided to quote the original of the “on the shoulders” statement, a saying so common as not to require a quote perhaps. A bit of computer work revealed that no lesser light than Newton wrote those words in a letter to Hooke, dated Feb. 5, 1676, before they fell out. My primary mission accomplished (perhaps I should have looked for confirmation elsewhere), I went on reading about Newton. I knew that Newton was a difficult man, not a gentle dreamer who enjoyed sitting in his orchard but I did not realize his shortcomings in the intellectual honesty department. Witness his behavior towards Flamsteed, the Astronomer Royal, whose catalog of stars, the work of 35 years, was appropriated and gave to his friend Halley to publish: “I hope against hope that this is all wrong, but you can go and read about it at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terry.wang.”

I am not sure this qualifies as plagiarism, after all I don’t know if he passed off the whole of it or perhaps I should have taken it away from Flamsteed, how Halley got involved and so on. A topic for research another day. In any case it is easy so plagiarize, sometimes even unwittingly! Look at what happened to me last week. Remember my column, “Are you what you’re revisited?” Well, it seems that for it if you haven’t yet. “You are what you eat”, is an old adage, for which I can find no attribution, but it also was the title of a recent article in the Tech correspondent Jialan Wang. Considering how different our takes, I thought it would be fun to refer to her article, all right?...

A common (not the only) way to do that in a scientific paper, is to place a number in superscript right after the item we wish to quote. This serves to send the reader to the end of the article where references will be listed either in order of appearance or alphabetically. Somehow, although I had a little super­script, like that in the manuscript I emailed off, the superscript disappeared from the printed version, how I do not know. And so the pointer is gone, but at the end of the article there is a “1” and a relation with no place to go. Did you find it? It gives the author’s last name, her first name (it could have been initials instead), the year of publication, the journal where it was published, the volume and the page(s).

There is also an issue number because the pagination starts at 1 for each issue of the Tech, so Vol 102 has some thirty page 4s and the article would be hard to find without the issue number. So, sorry Jialan, I was not, trying to pass off your title or ideas as my own. I also had problems with my reference number two: there was to be supposed 2 and 3 there and I indicated where I got my data. It’s not so bad in this case because my text states that I would be using Gary Taubes’ Science paper as my information base. Note however (sic) how sloppy I was in this second quote: I am sure that the Corel instructors would have commented on the fact that I was not consistent in the use parentheses for the year, and in abbreviating the first name, without a period after it, yet it is quite written in the bibliographic section three, there, in the third paragraph the 3 after the word “lipoprotein” should have been a superscript. The honor code booklet makes it clear to tell whether this is lipoprotein3 or what the three is doing there.. and insofar as number 4 is concerned oh, well...

The point of all this, is to watch for worms in the core of that apple, to strive for honesty, in all that we do. A bientot.

Dean’s Corner

A worm at the apple’s core

by Jean-Paul Revel

The Formula for Low-Cost Credit!

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For Graduate Students

The California Tech

May 4, 2001
Work-Study Opportunity at JPL: Compton Gamma-Ray Observatory Archival Data Analysis for Studying Temporal and Spectral Properties of Gamma-Ray Sources. This is an announcement of opportunity for 1 or 2 undergraduate students in physics or astrophysics to participate in a part-time work-study research program to process and analyze archival data obtained by the Burst and Transient Spectroscopy Experiment (BATSE) onboard the NASA Compton Gamma-Ray Observatory. The major scientific objective is to study the properties of gamma-ray emission from cosmic sources including black holes and active galactic nuclei and neutron-star systems. For this research, it would be useful if the student had some experience with programming as well as working with the Interactive Data Language (IDL) package. Employment would be on a part-time work-study basis during the school year and possibly up to 40 hours per week during the summer. Contact information: Dr. James C. Ling, JPL 169-327. Phone: (818)354-2819. E-mail: james.c.ling@jpl.nasa.gov

Guitar Classes at CIT for the spring quarter will meet on Tuesdays in SAC Room 1, starting on April 3 as follows: Beginning Guitar Class 4:30 PM - 5:30 PM. Intermediate Guitar Class 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM. Advanced Guitar Class 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM. Classical and flamenco repertoire are explored, but techniques transfer to other styles of guitar. Undergrads can receive 3 units of credit. The instructor, Darryl Denning, has an international background in performance, teaching and recording (two of his CDs are available in the Bookstore). Mr. Denning can be reached at (323) 465-0881 or by email at: ddenn @caltech.edu. The Guitar Home Page is at: music.caltech.edu/caltech/guitar.html

The Jeff Hamilton Trio will perform a program of jazz works on Sunday, May 6, at 3:30 p.m. in Caltech’s Danby Lounge. This is a Paco A. Langerstrom Chamber Music Concert. The Trio is made up of Jeff Hamilton, drums; Tamir Hendelman, piano; and Christoph Luty, bass.

The California Tech
Caltech 40-58
Pasadena, CA 91125

Scholarships

The Financial Aid Office has applications and/or information on the following as well as additional undergraduate scholarships. All qualified students are encouraged to apply. Our office is located at 355 S. Holliston, second floor.

Please visit our web site at: http://www.finaid.caltech.edu/news for complete information on the following scholarships:

- Dennis Cabaret Scholarship
- The National Scholars Honor Society
- Scholarships sponsored by SHARE
- Win cash in EFDFUND photo contest
- Windstar Environmental Studies Scholarship Program for 2001
- Vermont Student Assistance Corporation
- P.S. A.T.
- National Institutes of Health Scholarship Program
- American Electroplaters and Surface Finishers Society (AESF)
- John Gyles Education Awards
- Danville-Alamo Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW)

Summer Work Study: Information and applications for 2001 Summer Work Study are available in the Financial Aid Office. If you are interested in Summer Work Study, please submit the required application as soon as possible, but no later than June 1, 2001. Your entire financial aid application must be complete by June 1 in order to be considered for Summer Work Study. If awarded, the work study funding will begin with the July 2nd payroll.