MANHASSET, N.Y. — Georgia Tech's College of Computing has partnered with Sony, Toshiba and IBM to create a "center of competence" at Georgia Tech focused on the Cell microprocessor technology.

The Cell is used in Sony's Playstation 3. Georgia Tech researchers will look to broaden the scope of applications for the processor, focusing on bioinformatics, scientific computing, finance and entertainment.

The Cell Broadband Engine (BE) processor features a central processing core, based on IBM's Power Architecture technology, and eight synergistic processors. The Cell BE addresses compute-intensive applications and is included in the IBM BladeCenter QS20 Cell-based blade server. Through collaboration with Mercury Computer Systems, the BE architecture is being pitched for aerospace/defense, semiconductor, medical imaging and other markets.

The Georgia Tech center will sponsor discussion forums and workshops; provide remote access to Cell Blade hardware installed at Georgia Tech; create and disseminate software optimized for Cell BE systems; and perform research on the design of Cell BE systems, algorithms and applications.