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## Georgia Tech, Oak Ridge team up

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After President Bush in his State of the Union address proposed spending more on supercomputing, the College of Computing at the Georgia Institute of Technology announced a new partnership with the federal government that could advance the president's agenda.

The College of Computing, the Energy Department's Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee and the nonprofit company UT-Battelle said they would share facilities and staff for large-scale research efforts that rely on supercomputing. Such research efforts would include the development of nanotechnology and new drugs.

The close proximity of the facilities' computational resources supplies the networking and power to maintain some of the largest computer systems in the world.

In his speech, Bush said, "I propose to double the federal commitment to the most critical basic research programs in the physical sciences over the next 10 years. This funding will support the work of America's most creative minds as they explore promising areas such as nanotechnology, supercomputing and alternative energy sources."

Georgia Tech has plans to make the Southeast a national destination for high-performance computing research and development.

"The Southeastern United States has the 'perfect storm' of elements needed for success in computational science and engineering," said David Bader, associate professor in computational science and engineering at Georgia Tech.

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The region's academic institutions, including Georgia Tech, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Tennessee, run some of the nation's leading computer science departments. Internationally recognized researchers Haesun Park and Bader have joined a new division at Georgia Tech to lead the partnership.

Georgia Tech recently installed a 4,000-processor IBM eServer supercomputer, one of the fastest university computers, for solving problems in computational biology. The Georgia Tech/Oak Ridge supercomputing effort will harness information extracted from the sequencing of the human genome, providing data that researchers can use to accelerate drug design. Supercomputing is used in protein structure prediction and in the molecular modeling of protein-protein interactions.

Additionally, researchers at Georgia Tech's School of Physics are using supercomputer-based nanoscale simulations to discover new technologies that can store massive amounts of information in a compact space.

Dan Reed, vice chancellor of information technology and chief information officer at UNC Chapel Hill, serves as director of the Renaissance Computing Institute, a collaboration among the state of North Carolina, UNC, Duke University and North Carolina State University. The institute is exploring the intersection of computing technology and the sciences, arts and humanities.

Reed is also chairman of the board of directors for the Computing Research Association.

Dave Turek, vice president of IBM Deep Computing, said prospects are good that the new public/private partnership will achieve impressive results. "It's a reflection of ambition that's probably going to have a very positive impact," he said. "It's a kind of strategy that feeds on itself, if you will."



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