

SHINING *Bright*

University of Georgia professor Dr. Doug Bachtel led the lineup of special guests at Lighthouse Institute 2002, the 7th annual gala honoring excellence in teaching. Presidents of the technical colleges and divisions each selected up to four outstanding teachers to attend the event, held Sept. 10-11 in Macon. Lighthouse Institute rewards effective teaching by allowing attendees to share teaching skills with peers and gain knowledge from innovators like Bachtel.

A professor of housing and consumer economics, Bachtel related the demographic, economic and social factors that distinguish Georgia and foretell the future of technical education in this state. For example, 53.7 percent of Georgia firms have fewer than five employees, and since small companies have neither the time nor resources to train workers, technical colleges stand poised to fill this need.

Other distinguished speakers at the event included Dr. George Baker III, professor emeritus at North Carolina State University's Department of Education and Psychology; Dr. James McKenney, VP of economic development and international programs at the American Association of Community Colleges; and Dr. Timothy Mescon, dean of the School of Business at Kennesaw State University. **R**



Doug Bachtel shares demographic data that will impact trends in technical education.



Chris Firor and other Gwinnett Tech students are learning the latest in iSeries technology.

A steady stream of technology professionals versed in IBM's widely used iSeries platform are emerging from Gwinnett Technical College, which graduated more than 400 such students last year.

With some 490,000 iSeries systems installed around the world, this networking server is the No. 1 e-commerce server in the world and supports a variety of programming languages, databases and business applications. As a result, leading businesses are continually seeking employees with iSeries platform knowledge.

To help fill that need locally, Gwinnett Tech participated in IBM's Partnership in Education program and teamed with the Atlanta office of Palarco, an IBM business partner and systems integrator. (The Pennsylvania-based company has since merged with another IT firm and was renamed Lever8 Solutions.)

The collaboration works like this: IBM leases iSeries hardware to Gwinnett Tech at

1 percent of the normal leasing cost. Lever8 Solutions pays that 1 percent — which means free hardware for student use. IBM provides software for the iSeries, the first year of hardware maintenance

and unlimited access to its educational sites at no cost.

In addition, project partners Rock-Tenn and Inter American Data give free technical support.

"Our financial commitment to the iSeries project has enabled Gwinnett Tech to upgrade to the latest hardware and software technology, in order to broaden the capabilities they offer to the corporate world," says Bob Broome, who ran the Atlanta branch of Palarco prior to the merger. "Our company, and local industry in general, recognizes that Gwinnett Tech is a great resource for providing qualified information technology professionals." **R**

HELP WANTED: iSeries pros

