



## Michael "Mike" Gazarik, Ph.D.

*Director, Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI)  
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**Michael "Mike" Gazarik** is the director of the Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI) and Georgia Tech senior vice president.

A nationally respected aerospace and research leader, Gazarik has led large, complex research organizations across government, industry, and academia, shaping strategy, driving growth, and building institutions that deliver mission-critical innovation. With more than three decades of experience, his career reflects a deep ability to align technology with national priorities and guide organizations through periods of change and opportunity.

A Georgia Tech alumnus, Gazarik most recently served as faculty director of the Engineering Management Program at the University of Colorado Boulder and as a part-time staff member at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory. He previously held senior leadership roles at NASA, including director of engineering at NASA Langley Research Center and inaugural associate administrator for the Space Technology Mission Directorate (STMD). In industry, he spent eight years as vice president of engineering at Ball Aerospace, leading its strategic growth from an elite science contractor into a strategic national security asset that doubled in size.

Gazarik is widely recognized for leading complex research enterprises with a focus on stability, strategic alignment, and mission impact. At NASA, he helped shape the agency's science and technology enterprise during periods of fiscal constraint and technical risk, maintaining balance across broad mission areas and forming STMD to consolidate technology development. At Ball Aerospace, he guided significant growth and aligned strategy with evolving national security and civil space needs. His academic work has focused on preparing engineering leaders for mission-driven organizations — experience that aligns closely with GTRI's role as a trusted partner to government and industry.

He earned a B.S. in electrical engineering from the University of Pittsburgh and an M.S. and Ph.D. in electrical engineering from Georgia Tech. Gazarik is a fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA), a former chair of AIAA's Corporate Strategic Committee, and was elected to the AIAA Board of Trustees in 2025. His honors include NASA's Outstanding Leadership Medal, the Silver Snoopy Award, the 2023 AIAA Rocky Mountain Section Educator of the Year, and recognition as Engineering Manager of the Year by the American Society of Engineering Management.

As director, Gazarik leads GTRI's multidisciplinary research enterprise, advancing its mission to deliver high-impact science and technology solutions in support of national security, space systems, and critical societal needs.