

## 1995 Peninsula Engineer of the Year: *Linda Lindroth Vahala*



Dr. Linda Lindroth Vahala is a member of numerous scientific and professional organizations. She has held every office in the Hampton Roads Section of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE). Dr. Vahala was nominated by both IEEE and the Hampton Roads Section of the Society of Women Engineers (SWE) for her many contributions to the engineering profession.

Dr. Vahala achieved the highest level of engineering education in 1983, when she earned her Ph.D. degree from Old Dominion University (ODU). Dr. Vahala's professional career includes Assistant Professorships at the College of William and Mary and ODU. In August 1993, Dr. Vahala achieved the title of Associate Professor at ODU and earned the distinction of being the first tenured female professor in the history of the ODU School of Engineering. Her most recent accomplishment was appointment as Director of the Freshman Engineering Division at ODU.

Dr. Vahala has a national and international reputation in the area of Physical Electronics. Her research is supported by the Department of Energy and the National Science Foundation. Further, she has combined her talents in Physical Science and Electrical Engineering to become an expert in the world's drive to develop fusion as a source of energy. As a result, she has been asked to speak as far away as the Australian National University where she addressed electromagnetic scattering from magnetic fluctuations in tokamaks ( a device that produces controlled fusion). Dr. Vahala has published approximately one hundred papers and presented over seventy of them at professional meetings.

In addition to her research activities, Dr. Vahala is an acknowledged engineering educator. Since 1990, Dr. Vahala has supervised two Master of Science Theses as well as a Doctoral Dissertation. Her consistent service to University activities include the role of faculty advisor to the IEEE Student Computer Society, the student section of SWE, Chair of the Physical Electronics Committee, and organization committee for the 5th International Conference on CAD/CAM, Robotics, and Factories of the Future.

As a professional research engineer and scholar, Dr. Vahala is well-respected by the technical community as well as by her colleagues in academia. She is well-loved by her students and provides and invaluable service to the Hampton Roads area as an educator and role-model for the future generation of engineers.