

**WILLIAM & MARY  
RETIREMENT OF VIRGINIA J. TORCZON  
DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE**

Virginia J. Torczon received her B.A. from Wesleyan University with a major in History. She earned her M.S. and Ph.D. in Mathematical Sciences (now the Department of Computational Applied Mathematics & Operations Research) from Rice University. She joined the faculty of William & Mary in 1995 as Assistant Professor of Computer Science, was promoted to Associate Professor in 2000, and to Professor in 2007. In 2013 she was named Chancellor Professor of Computer Science.

Professor Torczon's background in the liberal arts served as her motivation and guidance to become an effective teacher at W&M. She inspired her students with her enthusiasm for computer science, particularly algorithms, and she taught at both the undergraduate and graduate levels with overwhelmingly positive student reviews. In 2000 she was selected for an Alumni Fellowship Award, an honor given annually to five outstanding early-career professors at William & Mary who reflect the best of teaching, mentoring, and research at the university.

Professor Torczon's research has focused on nonlinear numerical optimization algorithms, which have broad application in science and engineering. In particular, she published groundbreaking research on the convergence of derivative-free algorithms for nonlinear optimization problems. Her research residencies at NASA Langley Research Center and Sandia National Laboratories, Livermore, along with her publications with co-authors at these national research labs, speak to the practical application of her research results. As of Spring 2023, her long list of high-quality publications has received more than 12,000 citations as recorded by Google Scholar, which makes her one of the most cited authors in her field worldwide. In 1998 she received a National Science Foundation Faculty Early Career Development Grant (CAREER Award), the first faculty member in the Department of Computer Science to be so honored. In 1999, she was selected as one of the first three recipients of an Outstanding Paper Prize from the Society of Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM), her primary professional research organization. She was elected for two terms to the SIAM Council and was selected by then-Secretary of Energy Samuel W. Bodman to serve for three years as a member of the U.S. Department of Energy's Advanced Scientific Computing Advisory Committee.

Service to her department, school and to the university has been important to Professor Torczon. She has held significant leadership positions, such as Arts & Sciences Dean of Graduate Studies & Research from 2013-2022, and as the first female chair of the Department of Computer Science from 2010-2013. For her department, she chaired several committees including the Personnel Committee, and for Arts & Sciences she chaired the Retention, Promotion & Tenure Committee. She also chaired the university-wide Faculty Research Committee. Over the years she contributed by serving on many other W&M committees and as W&M's representative to several external professional organizations.

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While serving as the A&S Dean of Graduate Studies & Research, Professor Torczon shifted the focus of the Office of Graduate Studies & Research from largely administrative and financial matters to a holistic approach to student success. She modified administrative processes and academic policies to bring them in line with best practices nationally and with expectations set by W&M's accrediting body. She advocated tirelessly – and successfully – for increased stipends and a subsidy for the student health insurance premium, both to reduce financial stress for A&S graduate students as well as to make offers of admission more competitive for recruitment. She lobbied successfully to reinstate the position of Director of the Graduate Center which made it possible to institute programs to improve graduate student outcomes by focusing on better support for writing, mentoring, and career development. Most notably, she initiated the Halleran Dissertation Completion Fellowship program, which has dramatically improved outcomes for humanities doctoral students. Her thoughtful leadership and stewardship of graduate studies will have a lasting positive impact on the quality of graduate programs in A&S.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, That the Board of Visitors acknowledges the retirement of Virginia J. Torczon; expresses its deep appreciation for her 28 years of service; and approves a change in status from Chancellor Professor of Computer Science to Chancellor Professor of Computer Science, Emerita.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the resolution be spread upon the minutes of the Board and a copy delivered to Professor Torczon with best wishes from a grateful Board for her years of dedicated service to William & Mary.