

# AAUW of Virginia

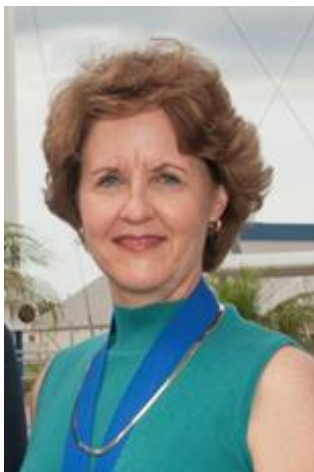
## 2016 Woman of Achievement



AAUW of Virginia is honored to present Kathryn C. Thornton its 2016 Woman of Achievement Award on April 16 at the state conference in Herndon, Virginia. The award will be presented at the Saturday banquet. Thornton is a professor at the University of Virginia's School of Engineering and Applied Science in the Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering. She served from 1999 until 2012 as the assistant dean and later associate dean for graduate programs.

Selected by NASA in May 1984, Thornton is a veteran of four space flights from 1989 to 1995. She has logged over 975 hours in space, including more than 21 hours of extravehicular activity.

Thornton had several firsts as a woman astronaut in her 12 years with NASA: she was the first female crew member aboard the space shuttle Discovery, she was the second woman to walk in space, but her record for the most space walks by a female was held for 12 years, and she was the first astronaut to use a power screwdriver in space. In completing her fourth space flight, Thornton orbited the Earth 256 times, traveled over 6 million miles, and logged a total of 15 days, 21 hours, 52 minutes, and 21 seconds in space.



Thornton has been committed to educational outreach, including co-authoring a science program for K-6. She is currently a member of the board of the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation, which seeks to retain the U.S. world leadership in science and technology by providing college scholarships to students pursuing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) degrees, as well as promote the importance of science and technology to the general public.

The recipient of numerous awards, Thornton was inducted into the Astronaut Hall of Fame in 2010, only the third woman to hold this honor.