

2013 TAB HALL OF HONOR RECIPIENT



ELLEN YOFFA

Dr. Yoffa leads research in a spectrum of technologies at IBM's TJ Watson Research Center from mobile to human language and image analytics to cybersecurity. Prior to her current position, Dr. Yoffa held research technical executive roles in next generation web technologies and in emerging system technologies. Her responsibilities include direction of research in system hardware and software ranging from hand-held devices to massively parallel computers, sensor networks and web infrastructure. Dr. Yoffa served one year as technical assistant to the Vice President of IBM's Research Division. She spent many years in electronic design automation research and received the 2006 Marie Pistilli Achievement Award for Women in Electronic Design Automation. She received BS and PhD in Physics degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

CITATION:

For transforming the TAB Society Review Committee through the adoption of new policies and processes to the benefit of societies and all of TAB.

DESCRIPTION OF ACCOMPLISHMENT(S) RELATIVE TO THE CREATION, DEVELOPMENT, OR ADVANCEMENT OF THE TECHNICAL OBJECTIVES OF THE IEEE:

Through her leadership as Chair of the TAB Society Review Committee, Ellen Yoffa initiated many improvements to Tab's approach to performance review and fostered better communications, a stronger strategic focus, and improved planning. She effectively changed the focus of the committee's activities from a critical review of Society past activities to a constructive forward-looking view focused on helping Societies improve their operations to better accomplish their own strategic goals. In so doing, she effectively changed the view of society review, for Societies under review, from a dreaded activity to one of helpful interaction.

As Chair of this committee Ellen made reports to the TAB Management Committee and to TAB. Her reports featured positive aspects of the society under review, as "best practices," along with helpful suggestions from the committee for possible improvements. For the larger TAB, the noted "best practices" were of benefits to others. As a result, the atmosphere in TAB related to review has changed dramatically from one of dread to one of collegiality.

Ellen's approach is the basis of a general approach that can be used by a variety of committees to achieve more positive results by creating an atmosphere of collaboration rather than criticism. The results of her efforts have effectively changed the perception of this important committee by removing the fear factor. This approach has also been apparent in her other roles as a member of the TAB Strategic Planning Committee, a member of the TAB Management Committee, and as the President of Circuits and Systems Society (CAS) in 2006. A measure of her value to CAS is illustrated by her receipt of the CAS Meritorious Service Award in 2009. It will serve her well as an IEEE Division Director for 2014-2015.

RELEVANT IEEE ACTIVITIES:

IEEE Director, 2014-2015, IEEE Director-Elect 2013, Member and Chair, TAB Strategic Planning Committee (2007-2012), Chair, TAB Society Review Committee (2008-2011), Member, TAB Management Committee (2008-2011), Member, Member TAB Restructuring Committee 2011, Member, Women in Engineering Committee 2007, Member Technical Activities Board 2006, President Circuits and Systems Society 2006, Member IEEE Spectrum Magazine Editorial Advisory Board (1996-1998).