

## II. Formative Influences

1. Briefly describe your early experiences with science and/or technology. As mentioned above, I worked two different internships while attending college as a Mechanical Engineer. In my first internship, I designed changes to existing manufacturing equipment to meet safety regulations. For the other internship, I was a Sales Engineer Specialist in which I assisted in selling manufacturing equipment to various customers. When I chose after college to go into Systems Integration, I started out as a programmer. I programmed in various languages: Natural, AION (artificial intelligence), COBOL, C and Visual Basic. From there I moved on to a lead developer – leading a team of developers, to a business analyst, database administrator and technical manager.

2. When did you know you wanted to be an engineer/scientist? How old were you?

I knew in high school that I wanted to do something related to math. Math was a fairly easy and interesting subject for me – so I knew I wanted to do something that required strong math skills. I applied to college under Mechanical Engineering as my father was an engineer, and suggested this as a way to build upon the math skills and extend into other areas such physics and engineering sciences.

3. Did your family and/or teachers provide encouragement? If so, how?

Absolutely. I had tremendous support from my teachers in high school (especially the math teachers) as well as my family in going into this field. Everyone at the time mentioned it could be the harder road to follow as there were not many women engineering students at the time. However, that just presented this as a challenge!

4. Have you had a mentor at any time during your career or life? What role did s/he play?

I would say that my father was my biggest mentor early on. He provided the encouragement and support that I needed during my college career. When I started my first job with Andersen Consulting (now Accenture) there were several people who took me under their wing and helped to shape my career development. Since coming to IBM, I have had tremendous support from a variety of people. There has been one constant mentor however for the last 10 years, Mike Sylvia, who has provided the greatest amount of encouragement and motivation for me. He listens and provides advice on

career direction, pushes me to take steps that I didn't think I had the skills to take and is an overall sounding board for the challenges in my daily job. He has provided incredible support over the years and I attribute where I am today in my career largely due to his advice and counsel.