

## Biographical Sketch

**Dr. Karen A. Thole** is a Distinguished Professor and head of the Department of Mechanical Engineering at The Pennsylvania State University. Dr. Thole is an ASME Fellow and an AIAA Fellow. She is internationally recognized as a leader in gas turbine heat transfer. Her research has taken innovative cooling technologies from theory to application, which has allowed increases in turbine thermal efficiencies. Dr. Thole has established two research laboratories at Penn State with the most recent housing a unique one stage test turbine. Both laboratories have been awarded the distinction of being Centers of Excellence in aerodynamics and heat transfer for two different gas turbine manufacturers. Dr. Thole has been recognized for her technical contributions by numerous best paper awards, the ASME George Washington Medal and the AIAA Air Breathing Propulsion Award. She has also been recognized for her work in mechanical engineering education and diversity including being selected as a U.S. White House *Champion of Change*, by ASME's Edwin F. Church Medal and by ABET's Claire L. Felbinger Diversity Award. She holds two degrees in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Illinois, and a PhD from the University of Texas at Austin.