

**VITA**

Katherine Leigh Coffey was born on December 23, 1975 in Christiansburg, Virginia. She grew up in the small town of Eggleston, Virginia. She graduated from Giles High School in May, 1993, and began her studies at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) that summer. While attending Virginia Tech, she majored in Mechanical Engineering, and worked in industry as an engineering intern at Xaloy Inc. during several summers.

Katherine received her Bachelor of Science degree in May, 1997. She began her graduate studies in Mechanical Engineering at Virginia Tech that summer as a Research Assistant in the Thermal Radiation Group, directed by Dr. James R. Mahan. She participated in the LARSS (Langley Aerospace Research Summer Scholar) program at NASA Langley Research Center during the summer of 1998, mentored by Dr. Kory J. Priestley.

On December 18, 1998, Katherine graduated with a Master of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering. She married Juan L. Vega on December 19, 1998, and relocated to South Florida to begin an engineering career at Motorola's Boynton Beach facility in the Engineering Rotation Program (ERP).