

DR. DONNA STRICKLAND

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Donna Strickland was born May 27, 1959 in Guelph, Ontario, the second child of Edith and Lloyd Strickland. She attended Victory and Willow Road Public Schools and began her studies at the Guelph Collegiate-Vocational Institute in the fall of 1972. While at the GCVI she participated in the Outers' Club and the school band. Donna Strickland was the valedictorian at her graduation in 1977. She was the winner of a Chancellor's Scholarship for McMaster University, the Frank Braucht Memorial Award and the James Davison Scholarship for general proficiency and high standing in mathematics, and was one of the first recipients of the Maynard Kingsmill Watt scholarship.

After graduation from the GCVI, Strickland attended McMaster University where she received a Bachelor of Engineering degree with honours, in 1981. She was awarded an NSERC scholarship for graduate studies. In 1989 she earned a Ph.D. in Optics from the Institute of Optics at the University of Rochester. From 1988 to 1991, Dr. Strickland worked as a Research Associate at the Steacie Institute for Molecular Science at the National Research Council, Ottawa. The following year she accepted a position as a physicist with the laser division of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in Livermore, California. From 1992 to 1996 she was a scientist at the Photonics and Opto-Electronic Materials Centre at Princeton University, New Jersey. Dr. Strickland returned to Canada in the fall of 1996, with her husband, Dr. Douglas Dykaar, and their two small children, Adam and Hannah, to join the faculty of the Physics Department at the University of Waterloo.

Alice Jansen, Zee Rana
May 1997

Update October 2018: Dr. Strickland served as fellow, vice president, and president of The Optical Society, and chair of their Presidential Advisory Committee. In 2018, Dr. Strickland was the first Canadian woman to be awarded the **Nobel Prize in Physics**, together with Gérard Mourou. The Nobel Prize states, "In 1985, Gérard Mourou and Donna Strickland succeeded in creating ultrashort high-intensity laser pulses without destroying the amplifying material. "Chirped pulse amplification" has many uses, including corrective eye surgeries." Dr. Strickland said, "Now not everyone thinks physics is fun, but I do. I think experimental physics is especially fun, because not only do you get to solve puzzles about the universe or on Earth, there are really cool toys in the lab. It is truly an amazing feeling when you know that you have built something that no one else ever has – and it actually works."