Vijay K. Dhir, distinguished professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering, was named Dean of UCLA's Henry Samueli School of Engineering and Applied Science in March 2003.

Born in India, Dhir received his Bachelor of Science degree from Punjab Engineering College in Chandigarh, India, and his Master of Technology degree from the Indian Institute of Technology in Kanpur, India. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Kentucky. Dhir joined the faculty at UCLA in 1974.

He has worked to make UCLA Engineering a hub for interdisciplinary research and education. In recent years, the School has won seven competitive research centers from the federal government and private industry that have brought more than $150 million dollars to Southern California to spur research and development on emerging technologies.

In 2006, he was elected to the National Academy of Engineering – among the highest honors awarded to engineers – for his work in boiling heat transfer and nuclear reactor thermal hydraulics and safety. Dhir received the 2004 Max Jakob Memorial Award of ASME and AIChE. He is a fellow of ASME and the American Nuclear Society. In 2004, he was selected as an inductee into the University of Kentucky's Engineering Hall of Distinction. He has also received the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Heat Transfer Memorial Award in the Science category and the Donald Q. Kern award from the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE). He is recipient of the Technical Achievement Award of the Thermal Hydraulics Division of the American Nuclear Society. Twice he has received the Best Paper Award for papers published in ASME Journal of Heat Transfer. Recently, he was chosen to give the Thurston Lecture of ASME, received an honorary Ph.D. in Engineering from University of Kentucky, Lexington, and received the Lifetime Achievement Award at the ICCES conference.

Dhir served as senior technical editor for the American Society of Mechanical Engineers' Journal of Heat Transfer from 2000 to 2005. Prior to being named senior technical editor, he also served as the Journal's associate editor. He is also a former assistant editor of Applied Mechanics Review. He has
served on the advisory boards of several other journals. Recently he completed his service to the National Research Council’s Steering Committee on the “Decadal Survey on Biological and Physical Sciences in Space.” He currently serves on the National Research Council’s Aeronautics and Space Engineering Board (ASEB) and the Steering Committee for Lessons Learned from Fukushima.

Professor Dhir leads the Boiling Heat Transfer Lab, which has conducted pioneering work in fundamental and applied sciences involving boiling, an efficient process of heat removal. Currently the lab is involved in the study of flow boiling, micro-gravity boiling, and nuclear reactor thermal hydraulics. Since 1999 a team of researchers led by Dhir has been taking part in a NASA research program to examine the effects of microgravity on boiling. Forty PhD students and forty MS students have graduated under Dhir's supervision. He is author or co-author of over 300 papers published in archival journals and proceedings of conferences.