Foreword

Since its beginnings in instructional media, ICT has evolved into a complex field that is driven by not only its history and guiding theories, but also by new technologies. New technologies are especially relevant with today’s fast-paced development of technologies. Emerging technologies and their associated methodologies are impacting all stages of education and training at an exponential rate. Of special note are the increased possibilities for interaction afforded by emerging technologies; interaction with learning objects, interaction between teacher and learner, and interaction among learners. As an ever-evolving field, ICT’s theories reflect these new technologies and methodologies. Interactive learning issues like social presence and interface design are impacted by innovations such as online learning, augmented reality, pedagogical agents, virtual worlds-communities, interactive whiteboards, game-based learning, and interactive multimedia. With these new interactive technologies also come learner challenges such as cyberbullying, building online community, and implementation of assistive technologies.

In his book, *Educational Stages and Interactive Learning: From Kindergarten to Workplace Training*, Jiyou Jia has included the writings of scholars from over a dozen countries. This illustrates the worldwide importance of ICT and interactive learning to all facets of teaching and learning. One of the most noteworthy aspects of this book is that it is truly a global collection of interactive learning history, trends, and issues; combined with interactive learning cases from researchers and practitioners from a myriad of educational and training settings. In an age of globalization, I believe that *Educational Stages and Interactive Learning: From Kindergarten to Workplace Training* provides an invaluable resource supporting the integration of interactive learning in the ICT field.

*Marcus D. Childress*
*Emporia State University, USA*

*Marcus D. Childress* is Professor and Chair of the Instructional Design and Technology Department at Emporia State University (Kansas, USA), where he directs an online Master of Science degree program in Instructional Design and Technology. Dr. Childress teaches courses in instructional design, multimedia design, and online learning. Research interests include online learning, using virtual worlds for training and education, heutagogy, and using technology integration as a catalyst for school reform. Dr. Childress has made over 200 conference presentations at the national/international level. His research has been documented in publications such as *Distance Education, Journal of Research on Computers in Education, International Journal of Educational Telecommunications, Globalized e-Learning Cultural Challenges*, and the *Encyclopedia of Distance Learning, Teaching, Technologies, and Applications*. He is a former President of the Research and Theory Division of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT). As President-Elect of AECT, he currently serves on the Executive Committee and Board of Directors of AECT and will assume the duties as the President of AECT in 2013.