Preface

We live in an increasingly diverse world. Organizations in every area, including K-12 schools, higher education, health care, the military, banking, government, telecommunications, and manufacturing, are continually being impacted by the challenges and opportunities presented by diverse groups of students, customers, and workers. In order to overcome the challenges and maximize the opportunities presented by our diverse world, organizations have to develop leaders who are not only knowledgeable about their own business or industry, but are also culturally aware and technologically sophisticated.

The editors’ purpose in developing this book was to provide an opportunity for leading researchers and practitioners in the area of diversity leadership to explore the complex interactions between technology, diversity, leadership, and organizational development. At the beginning of this process, we hoped we would be able to present an inclusive, compelling, current, and broad group of perspectives related to the topic of diversity leadership. In looking now at the final collection of chapters in the book, we are very impressed with the breadth of viewpoints presented, the quality of the discussions, the range of backgrounds of the authors, and the timeliness of both the technologies and theories presented.

The chapters in this book provide an interesting overview of technology’s role in promoting diversity leadership in organizations. Each of the chapters provides a current and thoughtful discussion related to the implementation of diversity leadership into an organization. Taken as a whole, the chapters present a comprehensive knowledge base that researchers, practitioners, managers, and others can use to understand and facilitate diversity leadership through technology.

The first chapter, by two of the editors, is an introductory chapter to diversity leadership principles, barriers, and implications. This chapter also includes a model for implementation of diversity leadership. Chapter 2, by Kowch, describes a crisis in leadership, discusses evolving perspectives of leadership thought, and proposes that we begin to think about organizations as complex ecosystems. The chapter highlights the importance of diversity within organizations. The next chapter, by Sanders and Cain, takes up the crucial issue of how technology can be used to facilitate effective communication between diverse groups within an organization. Their chapter includes a thoughtful discussion of the positive and potentially negative aspects of using technology for communication.

The fourth chapter, by Millington and Carter, describes the digital divide and discusses four types of barriers that limit access to the internet and other powerful technologies. The focus of the chapter is on one type of access barrier, psychological access. Prospect theory is presented as a valuable tool that practitioners can employ to address psychological access barriers and, as a result, close the gap in technology use. Chapter 5, by McFadden, McMath, Hale, and Price, explores how technology is changing leadership in political, economic, and educational contexts. Of particular note in this chapter, is the
discussion of how emerging technologies are altering the types of interactions between leaders and their followers. The chapter also includes interesting discussions of how technology is changing the time and place elements of leadership and the roles of the individual and the group.

In Chapter 6, Bonvillain explores the different types of “personality shapes” within an organization and the importance of having a variety of shapes represented on a team. The chapter also includes a discussion of the “Cultural DNA” of an organization. The seventh chapter of the book, by Williams, moves the focus away from educational settings and provides a discussion of the important topic of supplier diversity. The chapter begins with an overview of supplier diversity, discusses minority firm ownership, and discusses the role technology plays in enhancing supplier diversity.

In Chapter 8, Faulkner presents 8 keys to the design and development of effective diversity instruction. He emphasizes the importance of analysis and evaluation to the instructional design process. Chapter 9, by Parks, Mokuolo, and McDonald, presents a useful framework for measuring the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion programs. In the book’s tenth chapter, Guest, Culhane, and McDonald present a definition of diversity management, discuss emerging technology-based tools for supporting diversity management, describe current issues, problems, and controversies in the field, and present an interesting set of recommendations that could benefit diversity management programs. Chapter 11, by Nickson, Archer, and Chaudhury, focuses on an innovative approach for enhancing cross cultural communication and developing diversity leadership. The twelfth chapter, by McGuire, emphasizes the crucial role that leadership plays in effective diversity management in organizations. The chapter looks at various aspects of diversity management in different types of organizations including the military, education, medicine, and business. Chapter 13, by Hunter and Smith, offers a compelling discussion of religious diversity and technology. Their chapter presents the results of a survey of religious beliefs given to active-duty military personnel and provides recommendations for how military leaders might use information about religious identification to improve the performance of their organizations.

In Chapter 14, Green, an editor of the book, describes the role of diversity leadership in preparing new science teachers by mentoring. This chapter explores the development of community with use of technology. The next chapter, by Ferguson Martin, proposes that technology can be an important tool for K-12 educators to elevate the status of students from traditionally marginalized groups. The chapter includes a fascinating case study of how one teacher used technology to address issues related to diversity and cultural differences. Chapter 16, by Mouck, presents a thoughtful discussion of the literary classroom as an active community and the challenges and opportunities for collaboration provided by Web 2.0 technologies. Mouck also includes a series of recommendations for teachers hoping to create a collaborative student-centered classroom on the Internet.

In Chapter 17, Eley explores a number of task and technology tools that can be used to enhance student motivation in mathematics instruction. The next chapter, by Kent, describes the concept of teacher leaders, explores the role of teacher leaders in school reform and creating diversified learning communities, and discusses the significant part technology plays in teacher leadership. Chapter 19, by Packer-Williams and Evans, describes the importance of mentoring in developing diversity leadership in higher education and discusses how technology can play a key role in the mentoring process. The book’s final chapter, by Sterling and Williams, examines the connection between the diversity of community college student and community college administrators.

The main themes that run throughout this book are the importance of diversity to the success and growth of an organization, the vital role that technology plays in fostering diversity, and the need to develop and nurture leaders who understand the complex interactions between diverse groups of people
and emerging technological tools. We hope the readers of this book will reflect on these main themes and look for opportunities, both large and small, to take on leadership roles, promote diversity, improve their technological competencies, and change their own organizations, and our society as a whole, for the better.

Joël Lewis  
*University of South Alabama, USA*

André Green  
*University of South Alabama, USA*

Daniel W. Surry  
*University of South Alabama, USA*