Acknowledgements

Putting together a comprehensive publication of this magnitude requires a tremendous contribution and much assistance from everyone involved. The most important goal of editing this encyclopedia, as with most publications, was identifying and selecting quality contributions. This goal could not have been achieved without the valuable contributions of more than 1,000 external reviewers who have provided me with their expert, rigorous, unbiased blind review and assessment of the manuscripts assigned to them. I am extremely grateful for their contribution to this publication. I am also indebted to all the authors for their excellent contributions. I would also like to express my gratitude and deep appreciation to the members of the Editorial Advisory Board of this publication for their wisdom, guidance, and assistance in deciding on different issues of this publication.

In terms of editorial assistance, I would like to convey my deep appreciation and gratefulness to Idea Group Reference Senior Managing Editor, Ms. Jan Travers, for all her wisdom and encouragement, Ms. Mandy Appicello, Managing Editor, for her countless attention to detail and keeping this project on schedule, and Ms. Renee Davies, Assistant Acquisitions Editor, for her immeasurable assistance during the review process. I would like to express my many thanks to Ms. Sara Reed, Editorial Assistant, Ms. Michelle Potter, Editorial Assistant, Ms. Rachel Shepherd, Editorial Assistant, numerous copy editors, particularly Ms. Ingrid Widitz, and Ms. Lisa Tosheff, Graphic Artist, for their involvement and assistance with this publication. My warmest thanks go to my wife, Beth Peiffer, for her support, wisdom, encouragement, understanding, patience, and love. My heart also goes to my two young girls, Basha and Anar, for the joys that they have brought to my life. Finally, much gratitude goes to all those who have taught me immeasurable amounts during the past three decades.

Mehdi Khosrow-Pour, D.B.A. Editor-In-Chief