Preface

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Biographical notes: Jamison V. Kovach is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Information and Logistics Technology at the University of Houston. She received her BS in Textile Engineering from North Carolina State University and received her MS and PhD in Industrial Engineering from Clemson University. Her industrial experience includes several years as a product and process improvement engineer in the US textile industry. Her responsibilities included working within both ISO 9000 and QS 9000 quality management systems and improving the shade quality of apparel and automotive dyed fabrics. Currently, her research interests include robust design, experimental design and the application of quality improvement and management methods for organisational problem solving. She is certified in Six Sigma Black Belt training and she instructs industrial clients on the use of Six Sigma and other quality improvement initiatives within their organisations. Her research has been published in *Engineering Optimization*, *Quality Engineering* and *International Journal of Quality and Reliability Management* journals.

Given the use of process improvement methods such as Total Quality Management and Six Sigma, there is growing evidence to support the fact that these methods eventually reach a point of diminishing return because often, yet unintentionally, defects or errors are designed into processes. The critical point of consideration with respect to quality improvement, therefore, has migrated upstream to the design process and now includes designing and redesigning both products and services. This special issue on 'Design for Six Sigma' is intended to share experiences amongst practitioners and researchers in this field and contains research that confronts system design/redesign challenges, as well as other knowledge derived from the Design for Six Sigma methodology.

I am honoured and most appreciative that Dr. T.N. Goh agreed to write the Editorial for this special issue on 'Design for Six Sigma'. His expertise and experience in the design field provides an important commentary that sets the tone for this special issue. Additionally, I would like to extend my thanks to the authors and reviewers for their contributions to this special issue, which have helped to enrich the body of knowledge regarding Design for Six Sigma.