ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost I want to thank my supportive spouse from whom I learned the value of writing tight, succinct sentences. His edits of papers early in the degree program made writing this document much easier. His kind words and gentle hugs also helped.

Next I want to thank my advisor who was always there for me, returning chapter drafts with insightful comments and a cheery “Onward!” A special thank-you is extended to Dr. K. Atman who permitted use of her Goal Orientation Index instrument and who readily gave of her time to discuss my study. Her recommendations for future study are much appreciated. I also want to acknowledge the guided discovery and feedback provided by my committee. Thank you for being my role models and mentors.

To the library staff at the Northern Virginia Graduate Center, especially Pat Murphy, I send a heartfelt thank-you. The staff always accommodated my myriad of requests with smiling graciousness. No request was too small or too much a bother. Thanks, too, are extended to Michele Eldredge, the unit administrator. Anyone who has ever been a student understands the importance of the paperwork involved in a degree program. From the application for program acceptance to the application for graduation, Michele smoothed the way kept me on track.

Last and surely not least, I want to acknowledge my wonderful friends and colleagues, some of whom read the document chapters not once but two and three times. There were periods at my lowest point when someone would purposefully ask, “How’s it going?” or “What are you finding?” serving to renew my spirit and refocus my attention and energy. In particular I want to thank: E.B., R.N., S.M., T.T., C.S., K.M., K.K., G.K., and P.R., without whose support this document would have taken longer to write – and with much less insight.

It is always impossible to personally thank everyone who has facilitated successful completion of a project. To those of you who I did not specifically name, I also give my thanks for moving me towards my goal.