Preface

ISPP2009, the 13th International Symposium on Phototrophic Prokaryotes, was held in Montreal, Canada, from August 9 to August 14. This was only the second time that the ISPP series was in North America. ISPP2009 was well attended with about 280 registered participants from over 30 countries. A stimulating and informative program showcased the recent developments in this ever-evolving field. This is always one of my favourite conference series to attend because not only does it inform my specific research passions, it broadly educates me in ways that improve my teaching and increase my breadth of understanding in a variety of outside areas. Indeed, the ISPP series brings together a broad spectrum of interests, techniques, and disciplines. Both established researchers and newcomers to this field gave oral presentations in a large number (80) of plenary and parallel symposia sessions which proved to have active audience participation and lively discussions. A large number of excellent poster presentations supplemented the oral program. I think that the high quality of the scientific presentations, as well as the enjoyable social events, was widely appreciated. Things ran very smoothly, from the original registration to the closing ceremony, thanks to Isabel Stengler and her team at IS Event Solutions.

This volume is based on ISPP2009 and presents selected invited works, reviews, and research articles covering the spectrum of the diverse subject matter covered by this symposium series. Here the authors have greatly expanded on what was presented in Montreal to ensure complete coverage of each topic, covering the gamut from ecology, physiology, proteins and genomics, signal transduction to applied aspects. These articles not only are timely, presenting up-to-date published and unpublished results, but, since they are extensively referenced, should serve as valuable source material for some time to come. I hope that you enjoy and find this volume useful, covering the range of topics in which these organisms play an important role, one that is ever relevant to our understanding of the natural world around us, the biogeochemical cycles that shape our environment, and the impact of the microbial world on climate change.

Best wishes, I hope to see you at a future ISPP conference which will without a doubt be as interesting, exciting, and illuminating as ISPP2009.

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