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Introduction to the Special Issue: “Natural Product Discovery and Development in the Genomic Era”

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This Special Issue of the *Journal of Industrial Microbiology and Biotechnology* contains 25 reviews, original articles, and perspectives describing recent and exciting scientific advances in natural product discovery and development. Among these are contributions from invited speakers and poster presenters at the first international conference on “Natural Product Discovery and Development in the Post Genomic Era” held in San Diego in January, 2015. The conference was sponsored by the Society for Industrial Microbiology (SIMB), the Korean Society for Microbiology and Biotechnology (KMB), and the Society for Actinomycetes Japan (SAJ), and featured speakers from 11 countries representing academia or industry. The conference covered major scientific advances that are accelerating the pace of discovery and development of new and novel natural products and semisynthetic derivatives for human medicine, animal health and plant crop protection.

During the meeting, the editors decided to dedicate this Special Issue to Professor Satoshi Ōmura for his many contributions to the field of natural products discovery and development. We are especially pleased that, coinciding with the publication of this Special Issue, the 2015 Nobel Prize in Medicine was awarded for the discovery of two natural products now used for the treatment of human parasitic diseases, recognizing Professor Ōmura for the discovery of avermectin, developed as ivermectin for the treatment and prevention of river blindness (see Dedication to Satoshi Ōmura by Sir David Hopwood).

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