

# Preface

We received our doctoral degrees in the years 1983 and 1984; we are the oldest doctoral descendants of Martin Grötschel who celebrated his 65th birthday on September 10, 2013.

In the summer of 2011, with this happy occasion still more than two years in the future, we wondered what would be a nice birthday present for Martin. We knew that we were just the first two in a long list of doctoral descendants, but little did we know then how many there were. (Now we do, see Part III.)

We came up with the idea of organizing a celebration with his doctoral descendants and his closest scientific friends. We started serious work on the project during the Oberwolfach Workshop on Combinatorial Optimization in November 2011, where we also decided to organize a colloquium in his honor at the University of Cologne on September 13, 2013, and to edit this book that will be presented to him and all participants during the colloquium.

Many of Martin Grötschel's doctoral descendants still work in research, in and outside academia. When we issued a call for contributions on November 24, 2011, including the sentence "We aim at the highest quality, so please dedicate your best work in honor of Martin Grötschel!", we had an overwhelmingly positive response. The result is Part IV, the core of this book. It is preceded by a personal tribute by the editors to our mentor (Part I), a contribution by a very special "predecessor" (Part II), and the doctoral descendant tree 1983–2012 (Part III).

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