

# News from GENOMAS



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## **Biotech Innovator Finds New Company to Enhance Health Gualberto Ruano's Genomas will Apply Genomics to Disease Prevention**

**New Haven, CT** (September 15, 2003) – The scientific founder of a leading New Haven-based biotechnology company has announced the establishment of a new venture to translate emerging scientific knowledge of human adaptation to the environment into better health. Dr. Gualberto Ruano, founder and former Chief Executive Officer of Genaissance Pharmaceuticals, said his new enterprise builds on his experience in taking genomics to the forefront of drug development, moving such cutting-edge genomic technologies into new disease-prevention directions. Dr. Ruano's new company, called Genomas, is dedicated to enhancing daily life and preserving health. "This new enterprise is unlike any other biotechnology company. Our work explores the relationship between genomic 'markers' and the enhancement of human adaptation and performance to diverse environments," said Dr. Ruano.

"In partnership with major physiological research centers, we look at the whole individual and the interaction of genomic, chemical, behavioral, and environmental factors on health and performance. Understanding and analyzing this interaction is the goal of what we refer to as 'physiogenomics'. This information can be translated into novel products to help individuals utilize one's innate potential most effectively for maximum health and performance in various environments and situations."

Dr. Ruano said possible applications of the physiogenomics platform at Genomas cut across a range of disciplines - from physiological and biochemical research to systems biology and informatics.

Obesity, a leading cause of death in America, is one of the conditions Genomas intends to focus on, Dr. Ruano said. "The study of obesity is interdisciplinary, from the psychological to the physiological. You simply can't think of them in isolation," said Ruano, who received his M.D. and Ph.D degrees from Yale University School of Medicine, "Diet, exercise, nutrition, and appetite - all play a role in obesity and all are influenced by our genes. Only the systems approach of physiogenomics affords the required integration to prevent obesity. This is a new era for me and for biotechnology."

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Dr. Ruaño said the U.S. military has shown an interest in understanding and enhancing the performance of soldiers in various harsh environments. "We know, for example, that there is considerable variation among individuals in how they cope with adverse environments. If we knew how to use that knowledge to develop more appropriate exercise regimens, or better diets, for example, service personnel would be able to perform better, to attain their maximum potential. That's the promise of physiogenomics."

In more than six years with Genaissance, Dr. Ruaño achieved national acclaim for developing a technology - termed "haplotyping" - that looks for subtle, yet linked gene differences or "markers" between patient populations. Under Dr. Ruaño's leadership, the haplotyping technology, based on research he began while at Yale, attracted the attention of the National Institutes of Health and several leading drug companies. Personalized medicines developed with this technology could be customized based on each individual's unique genome to provide greater efficacy and safety. Genaissance grew to nearly 200 people after Dr. Ruaño took his company public in 2000 and raised nearly \$100 million.

"Genomas is my next generation company. It utilizes physiogenomics to enhance life and preserve health," said Ruaño. "The possibilities of this field are enormous".

Genomas LLC analyzes the diversity in human adaptations to diverse environments and challenges to develop physiogenomic information and diagnostics that will enhance performance, improve daily life and preserve health. The Genomas business model is based initially on consulting and strategic partnering followed by operational deployment of R&D programs with industry and academia. This approach allows the company to leverage its executive and industry experience with a systems biological approach to identify genomic markers of physiological performance and organismic response to various environmental challenges.

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