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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MAY 12, 2004

Dr. Gualberto Ruaño Is Elected To Prestigious Connecticut Academy Of Science And Engineering

Physician-scientist and entrepreneur is personalized medicine pioneer

HARTFORD –Gualberto Ruaño, M.D., Ph.D., President of Genomas, a biotechnology firm specializing in personalized healthcare using genomics, and Director of Cardiovascular Genetics Research at Hartford Hospital has been elected a member of the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering (CASE).

CASE was chartered by the General Assembly in 1976 to provide expert guidance on science and technology to the people and to the state of Connecticut, and to promote the application of science and technology to human welfare and economic well-being.

CASE Chairman John Cagnetta, Ph.D., said, "Dr. Ruaño is a national leader in the science of applying genetic variation to human disease and a pioneer in personalized medicine who has successfully bridged academia and commerce."

Membership in the Academy, which is limited by state statute to 200, is determined by peer nomination and considered among scientists and engineers to be very prestigious. Members are elected on the basis of significant original contributions in theory or application as demonstrated by original published books and papers, patents, the pioneering of new and developing fields and innovative industrial products, outstanding leadership of nationally recognized technical teams, and external professional awards in recognition of scientific and engineering excellence.

Hartford Hospital CEO John Meehan commented, "On behalf of the entire Hartford Hospital community, I wish to congratulate Dr. Ruaño on this esteemed appointment. His work is leading the way in this important new field of personalized medicine and as a result of his pioneering efforts, patients will soon experience the benefits of powerful new diagnostic and preventive medicine tools. We are proud to have him as a member of our Hartford Hospital team."

Dr. Ruaño is a pioneer in several molecular technologies for profiling genome diversity stemming from population and evolutionary genetics. He has been instrumental in advancing gene haplotypes as the gold standard for pharmacogenetic associations and as one of the fundamental technologies for personalized medicine. He is considered one of the industry's leaders in the impact of gene variation on clinical medicine and drug development.

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In addition to being president of Genomas and his position at Hartford Hospital, Dr. Ruaño is also Adjunct Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the George Washington University School of Medicine in Washington, D.C. In Washington, he has worked with the FDA and pharmaceutical industry representatives in formulating the regulatory issues and scenarios for the use of pharmacogenetic data in drug applications.

Dr. Ruaño also spearheads related efforts in the American Association of Clinical Chemistry, and is a Director of the Personalized Medicine Coalition, an industry policy group in Washington, D.C. He has provided the Patent and Trademark Office technical expertise in pharmacogenetics and lectured to patent examiners. Dr. Ruaño consulted with the Connecticut Laboratory of Forensic Science (Meriden, Conn.) to establish the State Police's DNA analysis unit.

Dr. Ruaño, a native of Puerto Rico, is Ad Honorem Professor of Medical Sciences at the University of Puerto Rico. He came to Connecticut in 1982 from Johns Hopkins University, where he was an undergraduate, to begin his medical studies and research at Yale University School of Medicine. At Yale, he completed both M.D. and Ph.D. degrees, and was a fellow of the Medical Scientist Training Program and of the Ford Foundation. He trained with Professors Dr. Kenneth K. Kidd and Dr. Frank H. Ruddle on population genetics and evolutionary biology. Work he performed at Yale led to breakthrough publications and patents in genomics, which later became the basis of the technology of his two previous companies, BIOS Laboratories and Genaissance Pharmaceuticals, which as its CEO and founder he took public in 2000. One of his inventions is used worldwide for therapeutic management of AIDS and hepatitis.

Jon Soderstrom, Director of the Office of Cooperative Research at Yale said, “Dr. Ruaño has effectively translated his Yale training and ideas in genetics into valuable applications that have had a significant impact on biotechnology and its development in New Haven and Connecticut. This is a well-deserved award.”

Dr. Ruaño said, “Beyond being a great honor, induction in CASE is also a responsibility to enhance the high technology foundation of the state’s economic development and of the scientific education of our citizenry. I particularly look forward to building upon this appointment to build bridges between the sciences and the arts in Connecticut.”

Dr. Ruano serves on the Boards of the Connecticut Technology Council, Connecticut Nanotechnology Initiative, ArtSpace and the Festival of Arts and Ideas in New Haven.

Dr. Ruaño will be introduced as a new member at the Academy’s 29th Annual Meeting May 25 in Rocky Hill. Dr. Henry Lee, Professor of Forensic Science at the University of New Haven and former state Commissioner of Public Safety, who was elected as a new member of the Academy in 2003, will be the keynote speaker. For more information about the Academy, please visit www.ctcase.org.

About GENOMAS
GENOMAS is advancing physiogenomics, a pioneering platform to discover the relationship of genomic "markers" and enhanced human health. In partnership with major clinical research centers, GENOMAS examines the interaction of genomic, chemical, behavioral, and environmental factors on disease prevention and health enhancement in individuals. Physiogenomic information can be translated into novel products to help personalize exercise and diet. The company is developing these products in the prevention of obesity and diabetes. For more information on GENOMAS, please visit www.genomas.net.

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