

Ginkgo Bioworks and XWELL Implement Expanded CDC Traveler-based Genomic Surveillance Program to Test for More than 30 Known Pathogens

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The program can be an effective early warning system for public health and national security officials, leveraging voluntary nasal and wastewater sampling from international travelers at major U.S. airports

BOSTON, Nov. 6, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- Ginkgo Bioworks (NYSE: DNA), which is building the leading platform for cell programming and biosecurity, and XWELL, Inc. (Nasdaq: XWEL) today announced they are expanding their work with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) [Traveler-based Genomic Surveillance program \(TGS\)](#) to test for more than 30 additional priority pathogens, in addition to SARS-CoV-2. TGS is a flexible, multimodal platform that consists of three complementary approaches of sample collection from arriving international travelers at U.S. airports, including voluntary nasal swabbing, aircraft wastewater, and airport wastewater sampling to enhance early detection of new SARS-CoV-2 variants and other pathogens, and fills gaps in global surveillance.



Concentric by Ginkgo, the biosecurity and public health unit of Ginkgo Bioworks, and XpresCheck by XWELL, are partnering to expand their work with the CDC to monitor more than 30 new viruses, bacteria, and antimicrobial resistance targets including several seasonal respiratory pathogens, such as influenza A and B, RSV, and SARS-CoV-2. The partners continue to help the CDC grow TGS's capabilities to detect pathogens as early as possible, allowing for the best public health response.

The program expansion will launch at four of the program's seven major international airports (New York, JFK, San Francisco, Boston, and Washington DC, Dulles).

The TGS program has proven to be an agile and beneficial asset to public health officials in the United States—quickly adapting to an evolving pandemic in real time since it launched in 2021. As of October 2023, TGS has enlisted over 370,000 travelers and maintains an ongoing enrollment of around 6,000 volunteer travelers weekly. The program covers travelers from all World Health Organization regions and more than 135 countries. Since its inception, the program has sequenced more than 14,000 samples and made the genomic data available on several public health platforms to enable further analysis. The expansion will enhance the program's ability to monitor and change focus as needed to identify priority pathogens. The TGS program can augment global surveillance systems, especially as testing and sequencing information become limited as Covid-19 monitoring wanes.

"By building sustainable, scalable infrastructure that is capable of detecting biological threats beyond SARS-CoV-2, the TGS program is a global leader in the evolution of biosecurity," said Matt McKnight, General Manager for Biosecurity at Ginkgo Bioworks. "Persistent monitoring can give officials an early warning by offering a view into how pathogens spread across the globe."

TGS was among the first to detect many new SARS-CoV-2 variants entering the United States up to six weeks before they were reported elsewhere, including Omicron BA2, BA3, XBB, and BA2.86 – demonstrating the program's valuable ability to detect new variants early.

"With air travel exceeding pre-pandemic levels and the ongoing spread of COVID-19 and other viruses, it is crucial that we continue to test," said XpresCheck CEO Ezra Ernst. "The data that we collect provides crucial insights for public health officials to inform how best to protect our nation from the threat of evolving viruses. We thank the volunteers who elect to swab their noses in service to our national security and public health."

About XWELL, Inc.

XWELL, Inc. (Nasdaq: XWEL) is a leading global health and wellness holding company operating multiple brands: XpresSpa®,

Treat™, Naples Wax Center®, XpresCheck® and HyperPointe™.

- XpresSpa is a leading airport retailer of wellness services and related products, with 30 locations in 14 airports globally.
- Treat is a travel wellness brand and a fully integrated concept blending technology with traditional brick and mortar offerings to provide a holistic approach to physical and mental well-being for travelers.
- Naples Wax Center is a group of upscale skin care boutiques in Florida and represents the first step in building the Company's retail portfolio outside the airport.
- XpresCheck is a provider of screening and diagnostic testing in partnership with the CDC and Concentric by Ginkgo, conducting bio-surveillance monitoring in its airport locations to identify new SARS-CoV2 variants of interest and concern as well as other pathogens entering the country from across the world.
- HyperPointe is a leading digital healthcare and data analytics relationship company serving the global healthcare industry.

About Ginkgo Bioworks

Ginkgo Bioworks is the leading horizontal platform for cell programming, providing flexible, end-to-end services that solve challenges for organizations across diverse markets, from food and agriculture to pharmaceuticals to industrial and specialty chemicals. Ginkgo's biosecurity and public health unit, Concentric by Ginkgo, is building global infrastructure for biosecurity to empower governments, communities, and public health leaders to prevent, detect and respond to a wide variety of biological threats. For more information, visit ginkgobioworks.com and concentricbyginkgo.com, read our [blog](#), or follow us on social media channels such as X (formerly known as Twitter) ([@Ginkgo](#) and [@ConcentricByGinkgo](#)), Instagram ([@GinkgoBioworks](#) and [@ConcentricByGinkgo](#)), Threads ([@GinkgoBioworks](#)), or [LinkedIn](#).

Forward-Looking Statements of XWELL, Inc.

This press release may contain "forward-looking" statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. These include statements preceded by, followed by or that otherwise include the words "believes," "expects," "anticipates," "estimates," "projects," "intends," "should," "seeks," "future," "continue," or the negative of such terms, or other comparable terminology. Forward-looking statements relating to expectations about future results or events, including the Company's current plans and expectations relating to the business and operations and future store openings for Naples Wax Center, are based upon information available to XWELL as of today's date and are not guarantees of the future performance of the Company, and actual results may vary materially from the results and expectations discussed. Additional information concerning these and other risks is contained in the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q and Current Reports on Form 8-K, and other Securities and Exchange Commission filings. All subsequent written and oral forward-looking statements concerning XWELL, or other matters and attributable to XWELL or any person acting on its behalf are expressly qualified in their entirety by the cautionary statements above. XWELL does not undertake any obligation to publicly update any of these forward-looking statements to reflect events or circumstances that may arise after the date hereof.

Forward-Looking Statements of Ginkgo Bioworks

This press release contains certain forward-looking statements within the meaning of the federal securities laws, including statements regarding the capabilities and potential success of the partnership and Ginkgo's biosecurity platform. These forward-looking statements generally are identified by the words "believe," "can," "project," "potential," "expect," "anticipate," "estimate," "intend," "strategy," "future," "opportunity," "plan," "may," "should," "will," "would," "will be," "will continue," "will likely result," and similar expressions. Forward-looking statements are predictions, projections and other statements about future events that are based on current expectations and assumptions and, as a result, are subject to risks and uncertainties. Many factors could cause actual future events to differ materially from the forward-looking statements in this press release, including but not limited to: (i) volatility in the price of Ginkgo's securities due to a variety of factors, including changes in the competitive and highly regulated industries in which Ginkgo operates and plans to operate, variations in performance across competitors, and changes in laws and regulations affecting Ginkgo's business, (ii) the ability to implement business plans, forecasts, and other expectations, and to identify and realize additional business opportunities, (iii) the risk of downturns in demand for products using synthetic biology, (iv) the uncertainty regarding the demand for passive monitoring programs and biosecurity services, (v) changes to the biosecurity industry, including due to advancements in technology, emerging competition and evolution in industry demands, standards and regulations, (vi) our ability to realize the expected benefits of merger and acquisition transactions, (vii) the outcome of any legal proceedings against Ginkgo, including as a result of recent acquisitions, (viii) our ability to realize the expected benefits from and the success of our Foundry platform programs, (ix) our ability to successfully develop engineered cells, bioprocesses, data packages or other deliverables, and (x) the product development or commercialization success of our customers. The foregoing list of factors is not exhaustive. You should carefully consider the foregoing factors and the other risks and uncertainties described in the "Risk Factors" section of Ginkgo's quarterly report on Form 10-Q filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") on August 9, 2023 and other documents filed by Ginkgo from time to time with the SEC. These filings identify and address other important risks and uncertainties that could cause actual events and results to differ materially from those contained in the forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements speak only as of the date they are made. Readers are cautioned not to put undue reliance on forward-looking statements, and Ginkgo assumes no obligation and does not intend to update or revise these forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events, or otherwise. Ginkgo does not give any assurance that it will achieve its expectations.

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