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- Barbara Harrison, Vice President
- Lorenzo Nichols, Jr., Treasurer
- Denise Garner, Secretary
- Madline Morsha-Taylor, Chaplain
- Iola Y. Williams, Founder/Exec. Director

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- Kendall Moody
- Syreeta Jones
- Cathy McCoy

# Winter Newsletter

## About Us

The Sickle Cell Association of the National Capital Area, Inc. (SCANCA, Inc.) is a community-based organization serving the District of Columbia, Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties, and Northern Virginia. Our focus is to educate individuals about the management of sickle cell disease.

Our education programs include workshops, health fairs, client support groups, and publications that inform the community, including health and social professionals, about sickle cell disease. Our client support programs include counseling, referrals, and advocacy for individuals with sickle cell disease and their families. We partner with community organizations in the area to provide medical and social resources for our clients and assist in research about sickle cell disease.

The Sickle Cell Association of the National Capital Area, Inc. was organized in April 1994 by a group of concerned medical professionals, individuals with sickle cell disease, their families, and the interested community. SCANCA, INC. was incorporated in 1995 under the name Metropolitan District of Columbia Sickle Cell Disease Association; however, it was granted a name change to Sickle Cell Association of the National Capital Area, Inc. by the District of Columbia regulatory agency. SCANCA, INC. received its 501(c)(3) not-for-profit status in 1996.

## Our Mission Statement

The mission of SCANCA, Inc. is to provide programs that educate the National Capital Area community about sickle cell disease and to utilize effective resources that benefit the lives of individuals with sickle cell disease, their families, and their communities. Our goals are to:

- Further education and research in sickle cell disease.
- Promote community awareness of sickle cell disease.
- Promote and enhance educational and other opportunities for individuals with sickle cell disease.
- Provide a nonpartisan platform arena for major issues of local significance.
- Be a community advocate for those with sickle cell disease and their families.

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## President's Corner

I am honored to be the new President of the Sickle Cell Association of the National Capital Area, Inc. (SCANCA, Inc.). I have been an advocate in the sickle cell community for over 30 years. I am an adult living with sickle cell disease. I have the passion, drive, and determination to make changes within the SCD community. I have served on the board since January 2019. We have some exciting programs coming next year. We will shine a light on SCD throughout the year by having several events that you can participate in. We ask that you support SCD and spread awareness daily. We have to get the word out more. Sickle cell disease is a disease that has been silent for several years. So, if you have any ideas, programs, or volunteer options, that you would like to see and participate in, please reach out to us because we want to hear from you.

In SCANCA, Inc. every voice counts. I believe we can find a cure for sickle cell disease and relieve some of the stress of everyday warriors living with it. In 2023 we will launch our very first campaign to raise awareness, funds, and, most importantly, morale in our community surrounding DC, Maryland, and Virginia. I'm thankful for the board's faith in my vision and abilities for SCANCA, Inc.

I look forward to serving with you as we take SCANCA, Inc. to the next level.

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*“Not Everybody can become famous but everyone can become great, because greatness is determined by service” Martin Luther King, Jr.*



**Lola Y. Williams , Founder**

## Message From Our Founder

I pay homage to our recently deceased secretary and friend, Beverly Ames. Bev was a dedicated worker in the formation and progress of the Sickle Cell Association of the National Capital Area, Inc. (SCANCA, Inc.). May her spirit rest in peace.

2021 and 2022 have been such baffling years. It has felt like a treadmill which stops, reverses, then starts again. All forward efforts are done in faith. We have new members of the Board of Directors. This is promising and includes our new president, Shanetta Richardson, who comes with much enthusiasm and stimulating ideas. Other new board members are Kendall L. Moody, Ph.D. and Syreeta Jones. Both have delivered exciting support activities and programs; I thank God for both.

As always, I thank the Board of Directors, the sickle cell community, and our friends for your support over the past 28 years. I thank you all and want you to know we still need your continual support in this journey. May God Bless You All!

Lola Y. Williams, R.N.

Founder, Executive Director

**Would you like to receive the SCANCA, Inc. newsletter electronically? You can help us save money and have a positive effect on our environment! Email us at [info@scancainc.org](mailto:info@scancainc.org) and let us know your preference.**



## The Sickle Cell Association of the National Capital Area, Inc. Announces the 2022 Scholarship Recipients

The Sickle Cell Association of the National Capital Area, Inc. (SCANCA, Inc.) is a local organization that services Sickle Cell patients and their families who reside in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Northern Virginia. One of the goals of the organization is to support the educational endeavors of persons living with sickle cell disease in higher education. This year the organization has chosen four phenomenal young women who have risen above adversity and are on track to be future leaders of tomorrow. Each acknowledges the challenges of their medical conditions but have refused to be defined by it and have remained steadfast in their goals of giving back and reaching back to bring others in their situation along by their own herculean efforts and by their own example.

We are honored to provide scholarships this year to the following recipients.

**Ms. Bessie Agwu** is a rising sophomore at the University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland where she is pursuing a degree in Nursing with the dream of becoming a Hematologist so that she can help others.

**Ms. Jasmin Baker** is a rising junior at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Charlotte, North Carolina where she is majoring in Elementary Education and Sociology. Ms. Baker desires to pursue a career in Elementary Education working in low-income, specifically black, indigenous and people of color communities where she hopes to make a difference.

**Ms. Zoe Davis** is a rising freshman at North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University, Greensboro, NC where she plans to major in Animal Science and Computer Science. In preparation for her future career Ms. Davis has immersed herself in the 4-H Club, Girl Scouts, volunteering at the local animal shelter and pursuing an internship in the Caring Hands Animal Clinic in Ballston, Virginia.

**Ms. Ariel Wright** is a rising junior at Morgan State University, Baltimore, Maryland where she is majoring in Nursing and aspires to become a Hematologist. Ms. Wright undergirds herself with her faith, academics and purpose. Instead of viewing her medical condition as a hindrance she views it as an opportunity to advocate for and help others.

We wish each of our recipients much success in their individual endeavors as they pursue their professional goals and utilize their own experiences to reach back and help others.

We invite persons with sickle cell disease who are pursuing technical school, college, graduate or professional school to apply for our 2023-2024 Scholarship. You can find an application on line or inquire at your medical facility.

*We congratulate our 2022 recipients and wish them much success as they continue toward their career goals.*

Written By :  
Denise I. Garner

## Support the Scholarship Program

SCANCA, Inc. has a mission to enhance the education of persons with sickle cell anemia disease.

This is done by providing scholarships to students enrolled in institutions of higher learning (e.g. college, technical school or graduate school) Each year a \$500.00 award is given to qualified applicants. Some receive several through consecutive years, if qualified.

We encourage all students to remain determine to the directions of their lives and even through adversity hold their heads high with optimism and a "CAN DO SPIRIT."

**See the enclosed application or please visit our website to apply for the 2023 Scholarship:**

**[WWW.SCANCAINC.ORG](http://WWW.SCANCAINC.ORG)**

**Please mail your financial support to:**

SCANCA, Inc.  
P.O. BOX 41479  
Washington, DC.20018

**Give electronically via PayPal  
or credit card at  
[www.scancainc.org](http://www.scancainc.org)**

**We are a 501(c)(3)  
Nonprofit organization**

## IN REMEMBRANCE



**Ms. Beverly Jean Ames**

Ms. Ames advocated for sickle cell disease and joined the Sickle Cell Association of the National Capital Area, Inc. in 1994. Ms. Ames was the Secretary of SCANCA from 1998-2021 and could be found throughout the year representing SCANCA, Inc. at every event, participating in and educating the community about sickle cell disease.

We continue to miss her.

## 2022 World Sickle Cell Day

On June 19, 2022, SCANCA, Inc. celebrated World Sickle Cell Day at the National Harbor! The Capital Wheel was RED, as part of the Shine the Light on Sickle Cell efforts going on around the globe. We were joined by friends, like Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc., PG Chapter, who helped us pass out information to people walking by, educating them about sickle cell disease and sickle cell trait. We had a wonderful time and look forward to doing it again!



## 2021 and 2022 Holiday Drive Through and In-Person Celebrations

The 2021 SCANCA, INC. Holiday Drive-Through Celebration was a great success, despite the pandemic! Although Santa could not make it (he has to stay healthy for Christmas night!), plenty of SCANCA, INC. volunteers were on hand to distribute gifts and food to over 75 families affected by sickle cell disease.

In 2022, we were able to accommodate both a drive-through and an in-person event. We served almost 200 individuals affected with sickle cell disease, and Santa was able to make an appearance after three years! A great time was had by all.

Thanks to our supports, the Top Ladies of Distinction-Prince George's County Chapter and The Christopher Gipson Sickle Cell Moya-Moya Foundation, both of which provided gifts and gift cards; what a blessing!! We did not let the pandemic keep us from connecting with you, and we hope you had a wonderful and safe holiday season.



## IN REMEMBRANCE



**Mrs. Oceola Y.  
Briscoe**

Ms. Briscoe, twin sister of founder Ms. Iola Williams, was a consistent and active supporter of the organization, serving on the Board of Directors from 1994 until she stepped down in February of this year, even serving a term as President. She always took pictures and had an encouraging word.

We will miss her dearly!

## SPRING EDUCATION WORKSHOP

### HOW TO PUT THE BREAKS ON YOUR RACING MIND

The Sickle Cell Association of the National Capital Area, Inc. (SCANCA, Inc.) held their annual educational workshop on May 14, 2022. This year our workshop focused on mental health issues and their impact on persons with sickle cell disease. We had the honor of having Dr. Charles Jonassaint, PhD, MHS as our featured speaker. Dr. Jonassaint is a professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Pittsburgh.

Dr. Jonassaint's talk focused on the intersection of Stress-Pain and Mood; Depression and coping strategies for dealing with stress and depression. He pointed out that there was a connection between stress and one's mood and pain. He pointed out that we all experience stress and cannot stop that from happening. The emphasis was on stopping stress from creating a negative mood that can lead to pain.

Dr. Jonassaint shared that we all have an automatic response to stress which is the "fight or flight" principle which is an automatic response and something we cannot control. In the context of sickle cell disease that could lead to the exacerbation of a pain crisis and/or hospitalization.

A depression screening set-up at a clinic in Norfolk, Virginia showed that 22-57% of patients reported symptoms of depression. When asked, however, the majority of sickle cell patients experiencing depression go unrecognized. Approximately 7% of patients who were diagnosed with depression were identified by their sickle cell provider who recognized patient's symptoms. It was determined that patients with depression had poorer outcomes.

Dr. Jonassaint shared a concept called "Four Walls" as a plan for patients to take care of themselves. Imagine a box with each side reflecting a basic element of good health: Sleep, Exercise, Nutrition and Hydration. These are the first steps to maintaining a healthy lifestyle with sickle cell disease.

Finally, he offered a few recommendations for coping with stress:

- Write for 20 minutes for three days in a journal; this improves well-being.
- Amplify positive emotions.
- Get activated (exercise).
- Develop healthy sleep habits, including self-monitoring and sleep hygiene (avoiding caffeine, exercise, nicotine, alcohol, heavy meals and consuming excess liquids within two hours of bedtime).

Written by:

Denise I. Garner, LICSW, LCSW-C

# Sickle Cell Trivia



1. Only African Americans can be diagnosed with Sickle Cell Disease. \_\_\_\_ True or \_\_\_\_ False
2. Sickle Cell awareness month is celebrated in \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Sickle Cell disease originated in which country? \_\_\_\_\_.
4. People with Sickle Cell disease cannot get Malaria. \_\_\_\_\_ True or \_\_\_\_ False
5. There are several types of Sickle Cell disease. \_\_\_\_\_ True or \_\_\_\_ False
6. The shape of red blood cells of someone with Sickle Cell disease resemble what fruit? \_\_\_\_\_.
7. People with Sickle Cell disease are born with it. \_\_\_\_\_ True or \_\_\_\_ False

*Answer key at bottom of this page.*

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*“If you are always trying to be normal you will never know how amazing you can be.” Maya Angelou*

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## Grateful Though Living with Sickle Cell Anemia

I experienced my first Sickle Cell Anemia Crisis at age nine (9) months in 1980 after learning how to swim in a cold-water pool. My pain crisis consisted of swollen hands and feet. My parents did not know they carried the Sickle Cell Trait until after being tested at the Children’s Hospital in Washington, DC.

I have learned how to manage my sickle cell disease with the help of my very first nurse lola Williams, my parents and SCAN-CA, Inc. over the years. I suffered several pain crisis during my high school years and completed my high school diploma with my 1998 class. I later received my Associates Degree in Business Administration from The College of Southern Maryland. I am grateful for a full 15 years of employment with the Walt Disney World Company in Lake Buena Vista, FL. Thanks to the warm weather in Florida and consistent medical management I have had few pain episodes.



Written By: Zakee H. Nichols

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## HealthWell Launches New Fund to Provide Financial Assistance to People with Sickle Cell Disease

Adapted from <https://www.healthwellfoundation.org/story/healthwell-launches-new-fund-to-provide-financial-assistance-to-people-with-sickle-cell-disease/>

Starting in April 2020, the HealthWell Foundation®, an independent non-profit that provides a financial lifeline for inadequately insured Americans, launched a new fund to provide co-payment and premium assistance to people with sickle cell disease (SCD). Through the fund, HealthWell provides up to \$10,000 in financial assistance for a 12-month grant period to eligible patients who have annual household incomes up to 500 percent of the federal poverty level. Funds can be used to assist with costs associated with the prescription drugs and biologics used in the treatment or management of Sickle Cell Disease, including the newest FDA approved drugs, iron overload treatments and more.

A nationally recognized, independent non-profit organization founded in 2003, the HealthWell Foundation has served as a safety net across over 70 disease areas for more than 500,000 under-insured patients.

Go to this website to find more information about the program and eligibility.

<https://www.healthwellfoundation.org/fund/sickle-cell-disease>

*“My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style.” Maya Angelou*

## SUPPORT THE SICKLE CELL ASSOCIATION OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA, INC.

The Sickle Cell Association of the National Capital Area, Inc. needs your donations to offer programs, provide support, and continue the function of our organization. We accept donations through the following ways:

SCANCA membership dues are \_\_\_\_\_ \$25 for Individuals \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 for Organizations/ Corporations

Please mail your financial support to:

SCANCA, INC.

P.O. BOX 41479

WASHINGTON, DC. 20018

or

Send donations via Paypal.com to: EMAIL@SCANCAINC.ORG

WE ARE A 501(c)(3) Nonprofit, Tax organization

WWW.SCANCAINC.ORG

Thank you for supporting the Sickle Cell Association of the National Capital Area, Inc.

2023

## UPCOMING EVENTS

SCANCA SUPPORT CORNER and PRAYER LINE

ADULT SUPPORT GROUP

TWEEN SUPPORT GROUP

SPRING WORKSHOP - MAY 2023

WORLD SICKLE CELL DAY - JUNE 19, 2023

SICKLE CELL AWARENESS MONTH - SEPTEMBER 2023

HOLIDAY CELEBRATION - DECEMBER 2023

Sickle Cell Association of the  
National Capital Area, Inc.

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