



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Inc. Hires New President & CEO
~Beverley Francis-Gibson Brings 20 Years of Nonprofit Management Experience~

BALTIMORE, MD (February 20, 2018) – The Board of Directors for Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Inc. (SCDAA) announces the hiring of Beverley Francis-Gibson as its 5th President & CEO in its 45 year history. After an extensive national search, Francis-Gibson emerged as the best fit for the organization. She brings over 20 years of diverse experience as a nonprofit leader, and most recently served as the Executive Director for the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Howard County (NAMI HC) in Columbia, Maryland. Over her career, Francis-Gibson has led organizations in achieving their mission, vision and strategic priorities.

Francis-Gibson received both her bachelor's degree in Public Relations & Broadcasting and her master's degree in Industrial & Community Counseling from Eastern Kentucky University.

"SCDAA is the largest nonprofit advocacy group in America organized to advance initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life for those affected by sickle cell disease, and I am very much looking forward to working with SCDAA's Board of Directors, staff, and membership," said Francis-Gibson. "I am also excited to work with the sickle cell community, as we advocate together for a universal cure."

SCDAA's current President, Sonja L. Banks, will continue her support of SCDAA and has agreed to serve as a senior advisor to the organization on key special projects and as the Co-Principal Investigator for the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) grant, awarded to SCDAA in 2017, to oversee efforts across 15 states to place sickle cell patients in medical homes. "We are thrilled to have Beverley Francis-Gibson join SCDAA's leadership team," said David N. Braxton, SCDAA Board Chairman. "Beverly and Sonja will work together to ensure a continuity of leadership and the achievement of deliverables related to our HRSA grant."

About Sickle Cell Disease

Sickle cell disease, an inherited blood disease, causes red blood cells to have a sickle shape. With their stiffness and unusual shape, blood flow is blocked to different tissues, ultimately damaging them. These red blood cells contain an abnormal type of hemoglobin, hemoglobin S, while normal red blood cells have hemoglobin A. Hemoglobin is important to the body because it helps the body carry oxygen throughout the body. There is currently no universal cure.

About the Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Inc.

Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Inc. serves as the nation's only advocacy organization working full time on a national level to resolve issues surrounding SCD and trait. Our mission is: To advocate for and enhance our membership's ability to improve the quality of health, life and services for individuals, families and communities affected by sickle cell disease and related conditions, while promoting the search for a cure for all in the world with sickle cell disease. Visit: www.sicklecelldisease.org.

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