



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Inc. Hosts 46<sup>th</sup> Annual National Convention**  
*~ Celebrating Diversity Within The Sickle Cell Community: Commitment, Innovation, Practice ~*

**Baltimore, MD-** The Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Inc.'s (SCDAA) 46<sup>th</sup> Annual National Convention is a four-day conference designed to address the multi-factorial aspects of sickle cell disease (SCD) and sickle cell trait (SCT). In an effort to advocate for improved quality of life for individuals and families affected with SCD and its associated morbidity and mortality, the conference fosters the exchange of the latest scientific and clinical information related to the disease. This is done through the offering of innovative symposia, training seminars, interactive panel discussions, and special events that include multiplatinum recording artist and actress Jordin Sparks, Actor Dexter Darden, and Model London Knight.

This year's convention offers an array of exciting activities designed to educate and motivate the entire community to get involved in the fight against sickle cell disease. With over 600 researchers, physicians, nurses, social workers, individuals living with SCD and SCT in attendance, last year's convention was a major success and our largest to date. The 46th Annual National Convention will be held at the Hyatt Regency Baltimore Inner Harbor, located at 300 Light Street in Baltimore, MD on October 10-13, 2018. **See attached Program-at-a-glance for conference sessions and special events. (The media can coordinate interviews with speakers, presenters and attendees by contacting SCDAA.)**

**Target Audience:** Individuals living with sickle cell disease and sickle cell trait and their family members, physicians, researchers, nurses, social workers, psychologists and community health workers will benefit from these educational offerings.

The participants will be able to:

- Interact with medical experts as well as others living with sickle cell disease.
- Demonstrate in an effective manner procedures for addressing sickle cell pain in various settings.
- Utilize evidence-based guidelines and best practices in their daily self-care to improve overall health and quality of life.
- Understand the latest in treatment options.
- Appreciate the growing number of new medications being developed in clinical trials.
- Identify how to participate in clinical trials.
- Decrease the amount of fragmentation of care from adolescent to adult providers.
- Recognize, identify or assist in the development of social and emotional resources for patients and families.

"This year's convention theme is *Celebrating Diversity Within The Sickle Cell Community: Commitment, Innovation, Practice*," said SCDAA President and Chief Executive Officer Beverley Francis-Gibson. "The sickle cell community is not one-dimensional and encompasses a wide spectrum of people from all walks of life. We look forward to providing not only an opportunity for individuals from around the world to connect and learn from one another, but also to highlight the diversity within the community that creates unique opportunities for collaboration in addressing this life-threatening and complicated disease."

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**The Convention also includes two special events:**

**Thursday, October 11, 2018**

SCDAA is proud to partner with Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation to bring Generation S to our 2018 Annual Conference. Generation S is a recently launched awareness platform for sickle cell disease (SCD). The Generation S Rock The Block Awareness Event will be taking place on Thursday, October 11, 2018. Rock the Block is a live event that will foster engagement within the community and continue to grow awareness for SCD. Generation S will also provide an opportunity during the conference for attendees to share their own personal SCD stories.

Generation S celebrity spokesperson, Jordin Sparks will also be present to engage conference attendees at the SCDAA Gala on October 12, 2018. Rock The Block will be co-hosted by Big Tigger (Radio personality and former host of BET's Rap City and 106 & Park) and DJ Trauma (DJ for comedian Dave Chappelle).

**Friday, October 12, 2018**

On Friday, October 12, SCDAA hosts its annual Unity Soiree Gala, where we will have a Latin theme. The special event includes a Red Carpet photo opportunity, awards presentations and announcement of Celebrity Ambassadors, including Dexter Darden, London Knight, NBA Player Billy Garrett and NFL Player Markus Golden.

On-site registration opens on Wednesday, October 10, 2018 at the Hyatt Regency Baltimore Inner Harbor.

Convention sponsors include: Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation, Imara, Global Blood Therapeutics, Pfizer, Bioverativ, Emmaus Life Sciences, Bluebird Bio, Prolong Pharmaceuticals, Be the Match, University of Connecticut, and our convention media partner, Blackdoctor.org.

**Hashtags:** #SCDAAAnnualConvention #SCDAA #SCD #SCT #sicklecelldisease

**About the Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Inc.**

Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Inc's 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 people in the world with sickle cell disease. Visit: [www.sicklecelldisease.org](http://www.sicklecelldisease.org).

**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.

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