

**CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS HIGHLIGHT NEW DIRECTION FOR NASCD**

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR SICKLE CELL DISEASE LAUNCHES SICKLE CELL MONTH WITH AGENDA TO CHANGE PUBLIC POLICY**



**1993 - 94 NATIONAL SICKLE CELL POSTER CHILD** - 9 year old Anthony Oliver Miller has been selected as the National Association For Sickle Cell Disease, Inc. Poster Child and Goodwill Ambassador. He will serve from October 1 to September 30, 1994.

[LOS ANGELES]-Under the banner "BREAK THE SICKLE CELL CYCLE," the National Association for Sickle Cell Disease, Inc. (NASCD), and its 74 member organization's, will launch its 10th annual "National Sickle Cell Awareness Month" campaign in September with sights set on a new agenda to redirect public policy. Helping in the effort are California Congressman Julian Dixon serving as Honorary Chairman for the month long drive and NASCD's new National Poster Child and Goodwill Ambassador, 9 year old Anthony Oliver Miller of Los Angeles, CA.

"Our goals are to place hereditary blood disease on the front burner of equitable healthcare reform, end institutionalization discrimination against those who have the disease and dispel many of the misconceptions associated with the condition," revealed Lynda K. Anderson, executive director of the 22 year old organization.

"We are aggressively moving forward to address those

**BLACKS IN GOVERNMENT PUT TO THE CHALLENGE**

More than 3,000 African American government workers were challenged to work to improve government from within and to lead the struggle to improve conditions for African Americans at the 15th Annual National Training Conference in Los Angeles August 19-21, 1993.

Rev. Jesse Jackson highlighted four reasons "why we must still march on Washington" in his message on Jobs, Justice and Youth at the Saturday morning plenary, August 21.

"More money is being allocated for jails and the penal



**"NATIONAL SICKLE CELL MONTH HONORARY CHAIRMAN** - California Congressman Julian Dixon will serve as spokesman for National Association For Sickle Cell Disease, Inc. during September's observance of "National Sickle Cell Awareness Month."

issues and see September as the starting point of taking our commitment to advocate for those with sickle cell to another level," she said. According to Anderson, a main component of the thrust will be to take NASCD's case before a federal government in the midst of reshaping its national healthcare policies.

"On September 16th, NASCD officials, medical specialists, health care providers, patients and their families will be giving testimony before the Brain Trust of the Congressional Black Caucus and other invited Congressional representatives, during their annual convention in Washington, D.C.," she informed.

"Out of this we are hoping to carve in the new healthcare package that will reverse policies that have hampered our ability to properly care for the more than 2.5 million Americans who are directly affected by sickle cell conditions," Anderson added.

Among the NASCD officials testifying before the Caucus will

system than for jobs."

"They are using dope as the new rope...drugs and easy access to guns in African American communities are doing more damage than the old lynch mobs."

"The covenant has been broken. When blacks are displaced in the workplace their jobs are resurfacing across the world."

"We have a legacy of not sitting quietly by watching ourselves getting beaten down to pass on to our children."

Rev. Jackson urged BIG to (See Blacks in Gov., Page 22)

be NASCD president, Dr. Kwaku Ohene-Frempong, Director of the Comprehensive Sickle Cell Center Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Frempong says it is essential that America lead the way in committing resources to combat sickle cell which has been erroneously viewed in this country as a disease limited to people of African descent.

"In the United States, where race is the primary defining characteristic of every human

being, sickle cell disease is perhaps best known as the 'disease of black people,' when in fact it affects many races and exists in many countries inside and outside of tropical Africa including all the countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea, parts of the Middle Eastern countries as well as Canada, France, Belgium and the United Kingdom," Frempong noted of the disease which produces sickle shaped red blood cells that, among other

things, interrupt the flow of blood by damaging and plugging the vessels. "New advances in research are encouraging but they can only go so far as our resources can carry us," he said.

Anderson says the key issues to be focused on at the hearings will be the restoration of funds cut from the Comprehensive Sickle Cell Disease Center budget and appropriation of funds for the development of a statistical database;

ending the practice of denying health insurance to those diagnosed with the disease; and calling for pro-active government involvement in monitoring states that are not fulfilling guidelines in administering "Newborn Screening" programs and sickle cell patients' healthcare management.

For more information on NASCD activities during "National Sickle Cell Month" or other services call 1-800-421-8453.

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