

# NEWS LETTER

2023

April



Better Health Through Better Understanding | April 2023

HEALTHY  
*Communities*  
BUILT  
A HEALTHIER  
FLORIDA

## IMPORTANCE OF MINORITY HEALTH

In order to protect the most vulnerable population, we have a moral responsibility and a redemptive opportunity to do so. A wonderful way to start is by working together for the underprivileged.



## IN THIS ISSUE:

- Highlights of April Minority Health Events
- Real Warriors, Real Stories Interview - - Dishon Simpkins
- April 2023 Health Awareness Dates To Remember



# REAL WARRIORS

Real Stories



**Dishon  
Simpkins**

Words From A  
Sickle Cell Warrior



## **Where are you originally from? When did you receive your sickle cell diagnosis? How did you grow up and what was your experience?**

Simpkins: "While Tallahassee was where I grew up, I was born in Miami, Florida. I was diagnosed with sickle cell disease at birth. It was "Not good" for me from the time I was a child till I was an adult. Because I didn't have insurance and lived in Miami, I had to treat my pain with over-the-counter drugs like Advil. Up to the age of twelve, I would sit on the floor with my grandma and endure the anguish until it subsided. It wasn't until I was twelve that I visited a hospital for the first time. I went to the hospital for the first time at the University of Florida when I relocated to Gainesville to accompany my mother while she attended school there. "

## **What changes to your way of life have you made to maintain your SC?**

Simpkins: "I made dietary changes and adopted an entirely vegan lifestyle as part of my sickle cell maintenance plan. In addition to exercising, but not too vigorously, I became less ill frequently, and the pain crises didn't last as long. Together with quitting my job, I was better able to control my illness."

## **Do you encounter any obstacles when pursuing SC treatment? If so, What do you currently find to be the most difficult?**

Simpkins: "I've had bad experiences at the hospital. During my initial appointment, the doctor transfused my blood without my consent. Since then, when I sought treatment, I was regarded as a drug seeker rather than a person with sickle cell disease. In the hospital, I get the impression that the doctors don't pay much attention to me. I frequently receive unjust treatment and am not supplied painkillers in a timely manner. Due to the fact that it is a lifelong sickness, I have experienced a lot. It has been the most psychologically difficult. I want to contribute to society and be useful, but sickle cell illness makes it difficult for me to maintain my attention on a single task. Due to this illness, I am unable to work or pursue the career that I once loved. It seems to me that fresh things are continually starting and stopping. I may appear healthy from the outside, yet others are unaware that I have a disease."

# REAL WARRIORS

Real Stories

Cont...

## How did you find out about the Sickle Cell Foundation, Inc. or become involved?

Simpkins: "To educate me further on sickle cell disease, my mother would bring home reading material. I learned about the foundation from some of the publications and brochures, which were how I first discovered them. I then started volunteering at the foundation and at local events. After he won artist of the year in Tallahassee, my artwork was displayed at the gala for the sickle cell foundation, inc."

## Do you have any advice for others living with SCD? Advice for medical professionals looking after adults like you?

Simpkins: "I would advise warriors like myself to stay hydrated, manage stress, eat a plant-based diet, and maintain good mental health because the condition can have a negative impact on it. Keep current with your illness. Know the medications that have been prescribed to you. Choose your doctors carefully. Search for treatments for sickle cell anemia. I would also advise medical professionals caring for adults with sickle cell disease like myself to listen to the patient because they are the ones who know their bodies best. Find out more about sickle cell and keep up with the latest discoveries. Inform patients of all potential side effects from treatments and procedures."

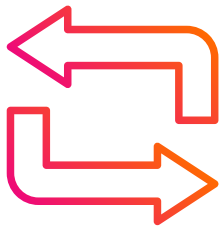
**Are you a caregiver, a parent, a spouse, a close relative, a sickle cell or trait warrior, a community healthcare professional, or a medical doctor?**



Did you like this feature? Would you like to share your Sickle Cell Story?  
Would you like to be featured?

**Contact [Carissa@sicklecellfoundation.org](mailto:Carissa@sicklecellfoundation.org) or call 850-222-2355 to submit an interview request.**





# HIGHLIGHTS

## MINORITY HEALTH Event



APR 5, 2023  
WEDNESDAY

10 AM TO 2 PM



Florida State University Market Wednesday



FREE SCREENINGS

WOODWARD AVE., FLORIDA STATE  
UNIVERSITY TALLAHASSEE, FL

WWW.SICKLECELLFOUNDATION.ORG  
850-222-2355 INFO@SICKLECELLFOUNDATION.ORG

## MINORITY HEALTH Event



APR 7, 2023  
FRIDAY

10 AM TO 3 PM



Florida A & M University



FREE SCREENINGS

H. MANNING EFFERSON STUDENT UNION, FAMU  
1628 SOUTH MARTIN LUTHER KING JUNIOR  
BLVD. TALLAHASSEE, FL 32307

WWW.SICKLECELLFOUNDATION.ORG  
850-222-2355 INFO@SICKLECELLFOUNDATION.ORG

# HIGHLIGHTS





# HIGH LIGHTS

HEALTHY  
*Communities*  
A HEALTHIER  
FLORIDA

# Minority Health Event

Sat Apr 15, 2023

10 AM TO 2 PM

QUINCY, FLORIDA

Quincy Courthouse Square  
10 E Jefferson St, Quincy, FL 32351



WWW.SICKLECELLFOUNDATION.ORG

# HIGH LIGHTS





# APRIL 2023

## HEALTH AWARENESS WEEKS & DATES TO REMEMBER

**APR 1-30TH**

CESAREAN AWARENESS MONTH

**MON 3RD APR - SUN 9TH APR**

NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK

**MON 10TH APR - SUN 16TH APR**

PARKINSON'S AWARENESS WEEK

**TUES 11TH APR - MON 17TH APR**

BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH WEEK

**WED 26TH - WED 3RD MAY**

NATIONAL INFANT IMMUNIZATION WEEK

**FRI 7TH APR**

NATIONAL ALCOHOL SCREENING DAY

WORLD HEALTH DAY

**MON 10TH APR**

NATIONAL YOUTH HIV AND AIDS AWARENESS DAY

**SAT 29TH APR**

NATIONAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK DAY

**SUN 16TH APR**

ANNUAL NATIONAL HEALTHCARE DECISIONS DAY

**MON 17TH APR**

WORLD HEMOPHILIA DAY 2023

**TUES 25TH APR**

DNA DAY 202

**TUES 25TH APR**

WORLD MALARIA DAY 2022

**TUES 16TH APR - SAT 22ND APR**

ORAL, HEAD, AND NECK CANCER  
AWARENESS WEEK

**SUN 23RD APR - SAT 29TH APR**

NATIONAL PEDIATRIC TRANSPLANT  
WEEK

**TUES 18TH APR - MON 24TH APR**

PEDIATRIC SEPSIS WEEK

**SUN 23RD APR - SAT 29TH APR**

NATIONAL INFERTILITY AWARENESS  
WEEK

**MON 24TH APR - SUN 30TH APR**

WORLD IMMUNIZATION WEEK

**MON 24TH APR - SUN 30TH APR**

EVERY KID HEALTHY WEEK

**SUN 23RD APR - SAT 29TH APR**

PATIENT EXPERIENCE WEEK

**MON 24TH APR - SUN 30TH APR**

NATIONAL INFANT IMMUNIZATION  
WEEK

**FRI 28TH APR**

WORLD DAY FOR SAFETY AND HEALTH  
AT WORK





# WORLD Sickle Cell Day

June 2023

Support the global recognition of sickle cell disease as a major genetic disorder and a public health issue.

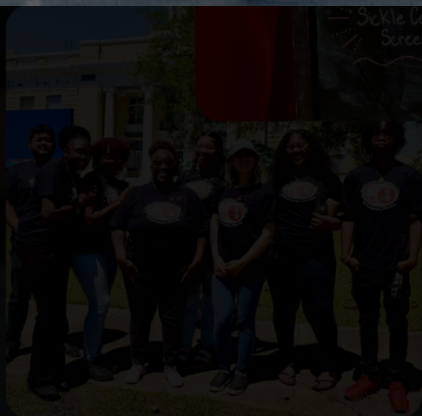
FREE Food Giveaway and Health Screenings,  
OneBlood Blood Drive  
Receive a T-Shirt when you donate!

To sponsor and/or attend as a vendor please  
contact 850-222-2355

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SICKLE CELL FOUNDATION, INC.

# BOWLING

## Tournament

- 40-LANE BOWLING ALLEY
- FULL BAR & GRILL
- ARCADE
- LASER TAG ACTIVITIES

**BECOME  
A  
SPONSOR**



**CAPITAL LANES**

820 Capital Cir NE, Tallahassee, FL 32301

June  
**4**  
**SUNDAY**

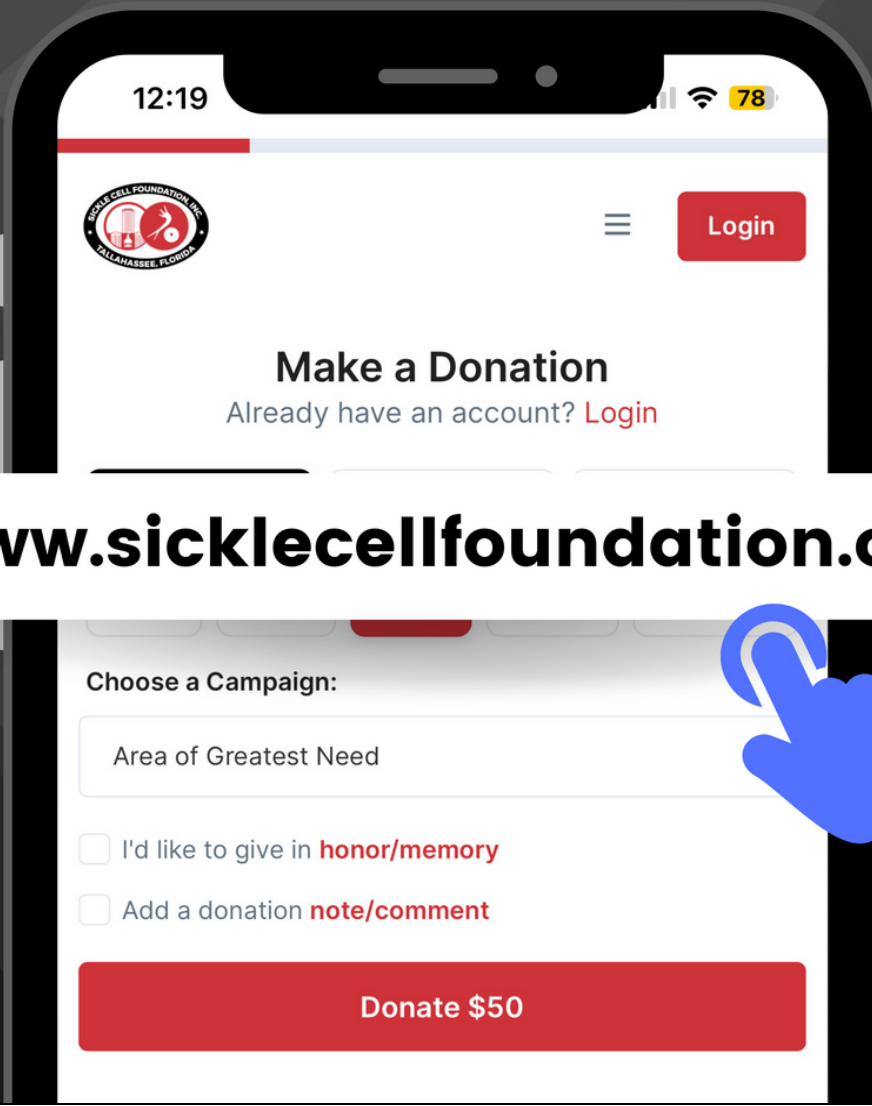
Teams **UP TO 5**  
Starts At 6p

TO SIGN UP  
CONTACT  
850-222-2355

[WWW.SICKLECELLFOUNDATION.ORG](http://WWW.SICKLECELLFOUNDATION.ORG)



TEXT  
SCFGIVENOW  
*to*  
269-89  
TO GIVE



[www.sicklecellfoundation.org](http://www.sicklecellfoundation.org)