



**American
Red Cross**

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NEWS RELEASE

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The Red Cross Challenges Blood Drive Sponsors to Save Sickle Cell Patients The American Red Cross Celebrates 10th year anniversary for Sickle Cell program

(Philadelphia) The American Red Cross is hosting a special dinner to celebrate the 10 year anniversary of its Cooperative Sickle Cell Blood Donor Program on Tuesday September 25th 6:00 pm to 9:00pm at the African American Museum, located at 701 Arch St, Philadelphia PA, 19106. The American Red Cross has received thousands of blood donations since the beginning of the Program, helping to save Sickle Cell patients in the New Jersey and Southeastern Pennsylvania regions.

Action News' Keith Russell will serve as Master of Ceremony of this event that is designed to encouraged blood drive sponsors to increase blood donations for this life-saving mission. The African American Museum of Philadelphia will be giving tours of the exhibits for attendees and Pont Breeze Performing Arts Center (PBPAC) Jazz Ensemble will also be performing.

"It is our hope that this challenge will inspire and compel our sponsors to increase their donations, and encourage coworkers throughout their corporations to encourage African Americans to give blood to support sickle cell patients," says Felicia Parker, Diversity Account Manager at the American Red Cross.

The Cooperative Sickle Cell Donor Program specially matches blood donors whose blood is compatible to share with people who have Sickle Cell Disease to provide the best possible transfusion support. This years' challenge is directed to organizations that have excelled in high Sickle Cell tag usage.

Sickle cell disease is an inherited disease that affects more than 70,000 people in the United States, ninety percent of whom are of African descent. Currently there is no cure for sickle cell disease, but good medical care including blood transfusions can help manage and prevent the pain, strokes, organ damage and serious complications of the disease.

Most healthy people who are at least 17 years old and weigh 110 pounds or more are eligible to donate every 56 days. Donors can give blood at any one of nearly 200 bloodmobiles sponsored by business and community groups in southeastern Pennsylvania and in New Jersey weekly, or at one of nine community donor centers. To make an immediate appointment for an American Red Cross blood drive this week, please call 1-800-GIVE LIFE (1-800-448-3543), or visit www.pleasegiveblood.org to find a listing of community blood drives.

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