

Baby From Brazil At Duke Cured Of Rare Disease

By Janet Pierce Frye
For 9-month old Lia, it's a new, exciting world of taste and touch and sight and sound and smell. She is finally outside the germ-free room that has been her home for the past five months of her short life.

For her parents, Oscar and Claudia Costa of Sao Paulo, Brazil, it's nothing short of a miracle. Lia has been cured of a rare, fatal disease known as severe combined immunodeficiency disease (SCID), a genetic defect of the body's immune system where no germ-fighting cells are present to fight off even the most minor infection.

Lia was cured by a bone marrow transplant from her 7-year-old brother. The transplant was performed by Drs. Rebecca Buckley and Lawrence J. Sindel at Duke University Medical Center. Dr. Buckley is professor of pediatrics and immunology and Sindel is a fellow in pediatric allergy and immunology.

"Lia was very, very sick," Mrs. Costa recalled. "Our doctor (in Brazil), Dr. Charles Naspitz, told us our only hope was to see if a bone marrow transplant could be done. He said it would have to be in the United States because in Brazil, there are no (germ-free) units like this. Our doctor knew of Dr. Buckley's work here."

"We were very lucky. We only knew her (Dr. Buckley's) name and Durham, N.C. She answered the phone herself. I don't know what would have happened if she hadn't been there that night." Forty-eight hours later, following a 20-hour airplane trip with the ill child and their other two children,

the Costas arrived in Durham.

And luck was still with them when it was discovered that Lia's older brother's bone marrow was compatible to hers.

Dr. Buckley said that although bone marrow transplants have proved to be a successful treatment for SCID children, it is difficult to find a transplant donor that matches because there's only one chance in four that a brother or sister will match.

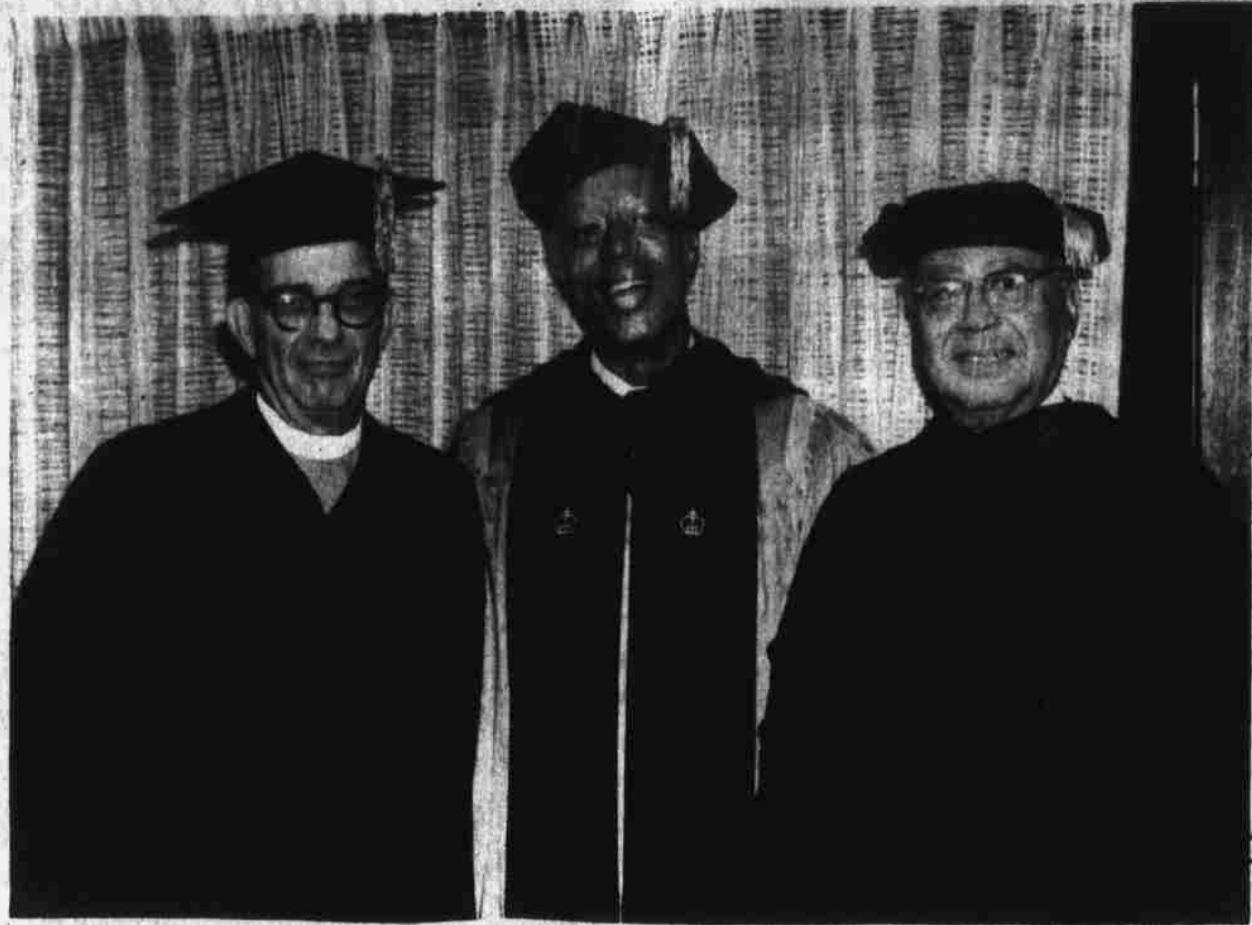
Of more than 20 patients with SCID Dr. Buckley has treated over a 17-year period, Lia was the first who had a sibling with matching bone marrow.

The bone marrow cells were removed from the hip bones of Lia's brother. The center of the marrow contains precursors of immune cells. These were suspended in a tissue culture medium and then infused like a blood transfusion into Lia. Dr. Buckley said.

Once in the body, the cells should seek out the sites in the child's body where the immune cells are supposed to go, such as the bone marrow, spleen and thymus gland. The transplant was successful and Lia soon began producing her own white blood cells. Lia was treated in the Clinical Research Center at Duke, which is funded by the National Institutes of Health (RR30).

Children with SCID lack function of both the major germ-fighting agents in the blood: antibodies produced by B-cells that originate in the bone marrow and T-cells, the white blood cells produced by the thymus gland.

"It's a very rare disease," Dr. Buckley said. "There are prob-



DIGNITARIES AT THE 116TH OPENING CONVOCATION AT ST. AUG.'S — Members of the Board of Trustees gathered for a chat with college officials prior to the 116th Formal Opening Convocation held on last week at Saint Augustine's College. Left to right: The Right Reverend Thomas A. Fraser, Bishop, Diocese of North Carolina, Board of Trustees' member; Dr. Prezell R. Robinson, president, Saint Augustine's College; and The Right Reverend John M. Burgess, chairman, Board of Trustees.

ably no more than 20 children born (with SCID) each year in this country. It's due to one or more genetic defects but we don't know what the missing elements are. It is a recessive trait and for a female to have it, it has to be inherited from both parents. With the exception of one rare

form of this disease, there is no way to detect a carrier.

"There are about 50 infants and children with this disease in the United States who have been corrected and are living normal healthy lives," she added. "Two or three times that many died because they didn't

have a bone marrow donor."

Lia is now able to fight off infections like a normal child and is returning to her home in Brazil.

"First I had to get myself to believe Lia was not normal and that took me awhile," Mrs. Costa said. "Now I'm having a

hard time believing the opposite — that she's almost normal again. It scares me a little, to think of taking her to an airport and back home."

"But Dr. Buckley says she can have a normal life now. I'm just so happy she is alive and well."

Teen Problems Workshop Set For Fri, Sat

"Stress and Conflict: Understanding and Dealing with Preteens and Teenagers" is the topic of a Durham Technical Institute workshop to be held Friday, October 22, 4:30-6:30 p.m., and Saturday, October 23, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Designed for teachers and professionals who work with young people, the course can be used

for teacher recertification credit.

The course will cover key issues and problems related to the intellectual, emotional, and social development of young people from the pre-pubertal age through the teen years. Using the theories of Piaget, Adler, and Erikson as guides, the course will emphasize a teacher's

handling of stresses concerning discipline, peer pressures, sexual issues, authority rebellion, depression, and suicidal concerns, scholastic and test anxieties, drug abuse and family discord.

Dusty Staub is the instructor for the class. Staub holds a master's degree in social work and is a clinical

psychologist. In addition to his private practice, Staub serves as a consultant to the Durham County Mental Health Association.

Registration for the class can be completed by contacting Durham Tech's Continuing Education Office at 596-9311, ext. 275.

Funds To Aid Victims Of Domestic Violence

RALEIGH — Governor Jim Hunt announced Thursday, Oct. 14, the awarding of state grants to 32 communities to aid victims of domestic violence.

The \$184,000 will go to community domestic violence programs to fund emergency shelters and counseling as well as training for volunteers to work with the victims.

The funding was appropriated by the North Carolina General Assembly through House Bill 1148 in June for one year. This is the first year that the Legislature has appropriated funds for these programs.

The YWCA Coalition for Battered Women, Orange-Durham counties, received a grant totaling \$8,867.09. The Coalition for Battered Women is one of 48 similar programs across the state.

The funds were made

N.C. Council on the Status of Women in the N.C. Department of Administration. Grant recipients were selected from among 42 programs requesting a total of \$530,000.

"These community programs are doing an outstanding job and are providing needed services in their communities. We want to help them in every way we can," Hunt said. "This funding will help these local programs to devote more attention to those victims who often have no where to turn," Hunt said.

Recently, Gov. Hunt proclaimed October 10-16 as Domestic Violence Awareness Week in North Carolina and urged all-state and local officials and citizen volunteers to devote special attention to the needs of victims of domestic violence.

Hooks Signs

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The NAACP, by signing the agreement with EEI and AGA, he said, expects to ensure that blacks get their fair share of these opportunities.

On the questions of minority procurement, he said, "if we get business for small companies, that would go a long way in helping to solve the black unemployment problem." As he has repeatedly done, Hooks explained that small businesses over the last 20 or more years have been providing 80 per cent of job opportunities in the nation. However, few blacks have been involved in this area.

Hooks anticipated real progress with the utility companies because they have contracting increasing amounts of their

work in recent years. Thus, he is very optimistic about the NAACP's new thrust.

This is a "pact of unprecedented proportions," he said of the EEI-AGA agreement.

The NAACP, he said, is "insisting that minorities with \$175 billion spending power be included in the economic mainstream of society. With 300 to 400 minority-owned companies tied to the utility industry hiring between 10 and 30 workers each, he said, society would see dramatic progress in the struggle by blacks for equality.

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