Uncertain whether he would out through surgery, Christopher Nance began saying goodbye to some of his NBC colleagues—a rocky speech because none of them even knew he had sickle cell anemia.

CHRISTOPHER NANCE: WEATHER MORE PREDICTABLE THAN LIFE

BY SAM RICHARD
PUBLIC AFFAIRS ASSISTANT

To watch Christopher Nance do his upbeat weather forecasts on NBC you might think that his only real challenge in life is to convince people that real men can wear carnations.

But TV is TV, and even though it's Nance's job to have his head in the clouds, he's not shrinking violet. With both feet firmly planted on the ground, Christopher Nance is on a mission.

"My commitment is to children and to my God," says Nance, who shook his head. "If a man feels 4 inches tall wearing a carnation can sneek in — for a May 8 appearance at Cal State. The author of several children's books and founder of an organization devoted to helping children with life-threatening illnesses, he spoke of a disabilities awareness workshop organized by human resources.

Ever since the age of three Nance has been battling sickle cell anemia. Now he has broadened his fight against the disease by setting up donation centers at 7-11 stores around the Southland and holding camps for the children.

Only three years ago Nance almost died from complications brought on by the disease. Gallstones are common among sickle cell sufferers. Concerned that he could suffer "some kind of" his own gallstone surgery, Nance decided he should be realistic. He began to say some goodbyes.

He too close to a prediction when, in fact, a crisis developed night on the operating table. "They're going to let me go," Nance had told himself as he prepared to hear the worst from NBC.

"Tell us what we can do," is what he heard instead.

In any given company, television news producers pretty much like their meteorologists to stick to talking about weather in terms of weather, not about where they can put a bottle of water on the producer's nice uncluttered studio set. Plenty of water is good for someone with sickle cell. So you could have knocked Nance to the floor with an empty bottle of Evan when they told him he could have his water and drink it, too — on the set.

What's more, the studio moved Nance's assistants into the same NBC building, and moved the water cooler closer to his office, a particularly neat gesture because Nance drinks about five liters of water a day.

"This disease should have been cured years ago," says Nance.

"The reason it hasn't is because people keep quiet about it. Also, it only affects 83,000 in the U.S. and it's a Black disease."

Operations to help sickle cell patients procure softer, rounder cells rather than the sickle-shaped ones they produce cost $100,000.

Nance would have one of these operations himself. But doctors told him there was little he could do. "It's the next best thing," Nance said. "They're going to let me go."

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Clarke, a boy Nance befriended years ago, has had such an operation. He is now cured and planning to become a researcher. Nance points to his respite as an example of what is needed by those with a disability and those without. Despite life's hardships, says Nance, "Whatever your dreams are, never surrender them."

Carthen Earns Employer Award

Twelves Carthen, human resources management specialist at Cal State, was honored June 5 by the San Bernardino County Committee for the Employment of Persons with Disabilities. Awarded an Employer of the Year designation, Carthen received the honor at a luncheon at the Radisson Hotel in San Bernardino.

Carthen has been responsible for faculty and staff on campus. Carthen has been with the university nine years and holds a master's degree in public administration.

(continued on next page)
Long-time local CPA Jim Kennedy was named Cal State's Distinguished Alumna for 1997, while four other CSUSB graduates have earned Outstanding Alumni Awards.

Chosen from among the five outstanding alumni who were selected by the university’s five schools of business, Kennedy was named California Society of CPAs and California State Auditors Association Young Alumnus for 1997, while four other CSUSB graduates were honored.

Kennedy graduated from Pacific High School in 1963 and today owns a CPA firm with his brother, David. Besides being a former president of the Alumni Association and involved in several university development functions, he has been a volunteer with the University of the Sun Belt chapter of the California Society of CPAs and for 10 years, served on the Alumni Advisory Board for the city of San Bernardino. He has also served as a campaign chair for the Arrowhead United Way fundraising program.

The Tieuchs have been performing with piano trios and around the United States since their graduation from Cal State in 1978.

The undergraduate honorees are

Marilyn McShane, associate probation officer of the year. McShane has volunteered as the student recorder for the California Bar Association, served as president of Psi Chi, psychology honorary society, and assisted in the selection of the student of the year at Cal State the year she graduated.

Robert Ladd, a former assistant in the criminal justice administration. While on campus he was selected as president of the Thirty-eight, the psychology honorary society. She did her master’s and Ph.D. work in psychology at the University of Michigan.

Ashley-Navaroli, Lucinda Smith, and Cindy McCallum from natural sciences, Pacific High School in 1963 and graduated from Redlands High School.

Ruby Beale from social and performing arts, the Arrowhead United Way fundraising program.

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