



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin S. Parker

Senator Parker Hosts Annual Back-to-School Giveaway for 600 School-Aged Children and Their Families

KEVIN S. PARKER September 10, 2014

| ISSUE: **FAMILIES, EDUCATION, HEALTH, CHILDREN, HEALTH CARE**



Brooklyn, NY – For the seventh consecutive year, State Senator Kevin Parker and Sesame Flyers International, Inc., hosted *Harvest Fest* – an end-of-summer / back-to-school celebration for Brooklyn families at Paerdegat Park on Saturday, September 6, 2014. Over 500 families came out for the event which included face painting, games, fitness and nutrition resources and CPR instruction to children and their parents.

"For seven years in a row, Harvest Fest has enabled me and my community partners to connect with Central Brooklyn's parents and children and provide them with the primary school supplies they need," said Senator Parker. "Outfitting one child, let alone several school-aged children, for the upcoming school year can be daunting. Harvest Fest eases our community's parents burden and provides families with the supplies their children need to excel in their classes.

In addition to Healthfirst, Emblem Health and the Gap, Inc., who donated backpacks, families were also offered free food donated by Stop and Shop Supermarket; fitness information from the Flatbush YMCA and Blink Fitness; arts and crafts by East Flatbush Village, the Brooklyn Children's Museum and Ifetayo Cultural Academy; child identification cards by Met Life; an opportunity to apply for a new library card and take out books on site with the Brooklyn Public Library mobile library, and a CPR instruction demonstration by Dr. Melba Taylor, founder of the Medical Roots Project. Dr. Taylor, an emergency room physician in Harlem, NY, and her team of volunteers spoke to enraptured participants about basic health and first aid literacy. Prizes were also donated by the New York Aquarium, the Flatbush YMCA, and others.

"I am particularly grateful to our co-host, Sesame Flyers, our prime sponsors – Healthfirst, Emblem Health and the Gap, Inc. – the Fire Department of New York Explorers Program participants, who volunteered for the day ensuring another seamless event, and numerous other community-based vendors and nonprofit organizations," concluded the five-term Brooklyn Senator.

"It is always a pleasure for Healthfirst to partner with Senator Parker on Harvest Fest and other community events; we are encouraged by the overwhelming participation of parents who attended this event and their commitment to seeing their children succeed. We at Healthfirst are dedicated to doing our part to ensure that school children start the school

year off with the basics," said George Hulse, Vice President, External Affairs, Healthfirst.

About Senator Kevin Parker

Senator Kevin S. Parker is intimately familiar with the needs of his ethnically diverse Brooklyn community that consists of 318,000 constituents in Flatbush, East Flatbush, Midwood, Ditmas Park, Kensington, Windsor Terrace, and Park Slope. He is the Ranking Member of the Senate Committees on Energy and Telecommunications and Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, Assistant Democratic Leader for Intergovernmental Affairs, and Chair of the Democratic Task Force on New Americans.

#