



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Sanders Jr.

Senator Sanders Hosts Successful Community Development Day Event

JAMES SANDERS JR. June 28, 2017



State Senator James Sanders Jr. (D-Rochdale Village, Far Rockaway) held a successful Community Development Day event on Wednesday, June 28, 2017 at the Richi Rich Palace in Richmond Hill with more than 100 people in attendance. The full day of free workshops featured information on grant writing, fundraising, growing a non-profit, small business or house of worship and much more.

“Funding is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain,” Senator Sanders said. “Under those

conditions, the skills you will be learning today are more important than ever. I am proud to bring this event to the community to make it easier for residents to realize their dreams, and in doing so, potentially benefiting the entire district and beyond with innovative and inspirational services.”

Senator Sanders is a strong proponent of community building through economic development particularly advocating for more opportunities for people of color. Although he could not attend the event in person, since state legislators had been called back to Albany by the Governor for a special session, he conveyed greetings to the attendees via video conferencing.

In the grant writing portion, Lynn Lobell, the Grants and Resource Director, for Queens Council on the Arts, covered grant budget basics including how to fill out an application, writing a letter of intent, writing a letter of proposal, creating a budget and providing documentation and support materials. Lobel explained that those applying for grants should include a detailed project description outlining the who, what, where and why of the proposal. The budget components should contain information about the organization’s expenses (operating costs, money for personnel) income and in-kind contributions.

In a class on fundraising, the instructor, Gregory Cohen, Associate Director of Cause Effective, outlined how this task is based on a development cycle which includes: identification (finding the right people to donate); cultivation (building relationships with those people); solicitation (asking for the right amount at the right time); and recognition (giving donors a social return on their investment). Cohen also explained how to ensure year-round donors, which included recognizing each supporter as an individual and a partner, highlighting what you have accomplished together and taking every opportunity to thank those donors for their support.

For the section of the Community Development Day devoted to clergy, attendees learned about the Governor's Office of Faith-Based Community Development Services, which is the first of its kind in New York State, and was designed to be a resource for faith-based non-profit organizations who help sustain vulnerable communities by providing a wide range of social services.

The clergy also heard a presentation from the Rev. Reginald Bachus, CFO of Abyssinian Development Corp., who shared his experience and advice on how churches can grow their congregations and expand their reach into the community by providing housing and social services among other programs. He used the example of the biblical figure Nehemiah, who was instrumental in the rebuilding and reestablishment of Jerusalem in the fifth century B.C. following the Babylonian exile to illustrate how strength can be derived from focus and discipline. Bachus also talked about how to create a board for a 501(c)3 and fundraising.

Also part of the day's educational offerings was an informational session on compliance by the New York State Office of the Attorney General's Charities Bureau; information on the Black Wealth 20/20 initiative provided by Senator Sanders' Director of Economic development, Latoya Benjamin; and a small business workshop which included information on how to build credit, presented by the Sullivan Hernandez Agency.