



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jamaal T. Bailey

## Senator Jamaal T. Bailey's Community Autism Awareness Walk

JAMAAL T. BAILEY April 30, 2018

(BRONX, NY) Senator Jamaal T. Bailey hosted his first annual Autism Walk at Haffen Park in the Baychester area of the district on Sunday, April 29th. The walk was in collaboration with Team Christian and Christopher's Voice. Team Christian is a family in the community that advocates for autism awareness. The advocacy is spearheaded by Shonta Holmes, whose son, Christian, is diagnosed with Autism. Christopher's Voice is a non-profit organization that focuses on donating funds to low income families with children that have autism for any medical or legal expenses they may have.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) 1 in 59 children are autistic. It is important to continue to bring awareness and support to this issue that affects our community in large numbers.

"One of the most impactful quotes I have heard in regards to autism is 'if you have met one person with autism, then you have just met one person with autism.' We have to remember that people with autism are people first and should not be defined by whatever disease they may have. In my office, I have two staff members that have children with autism and they are some of the brightest and loving children I have ever met," said Senator Jamaal T. Bailey.

"This autism walk is personal to me, it's about coming together as a community to bring awareness to people who are not familiar with autism or understand what it's like live with

autism or someone who is autistic. It is important to support each other and to empower and encourage those who may have it a little harder than others. I want to thank Senator Bailey and all the agencies who came and provided resources and support," said Shonta Holmes.

"It was an honor to be included and to have participated in Senator Bailey's walk for Autism. We are humbled by the opportunity and look forward to working together in the future on behalf of our communities so that we can continue to support and help those with autism," said Christopher Greco, founder of Christopher's Voice.

This is the third event that Senator Bailey's office has held on autism. The office plans on holding the community autism walk annually.