

# SANDERS MONTHLY

A Monthly Roundup of NYS Senator James Sanders Jr.'s News and Events from Albany and the 10th Senatorial District



February 2020  
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NYS Senator James Sanders Jr.  
Presents



# Together Towards Tomorrow

Women's History Month Event

## Save the Date!

**Saturday, March 21, 2020 1-4 pm**

Location: New Jerusalem Worship Center  
122-05 Smith St, Jamaica, NY 11434



## From the Desk of New York State Senator James Sanders Jr.

February 15, 2020

Greetings!

I would like to welcome everyone to Albany. Thank you for joining me for the 49th Annual Legislative Conference of the New York State Association of Black and Puerto Rican Legislators.

I am honored to be serving a fourth term as your State Senator. Remember, my job is to represent your needs and to fight for the betterment of our community. I value your input and use it to guide my decision-making in the District and on the Senate floor.

This is my second year as the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Banks, an entity that is central to ensuring the financial stability of the state's economy. This weekend, I will be hosting two workshops to further those goals: How Coalitions Win: Using Community Benefit Agreements to Own Our Community; and Community Impact in Opportunity Zones: Will EOZ Spur Wealth Creation or Gentrification? I hope you will attend both of them. I will also be delivering my State of the District Address, where I will speak about local issues affecting our community.

In addition, I serve as the Chairman of the Senate's Task Force on Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBES). I will continue to do all I can to help empower these businesses and grow New York's economy. I am also a member of the following senate committees: the Committees for Commerce, Economic Development and Small Business; Labor; Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation; Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs; and Insurance.

Here in Albany, the Democratic majority has already begun passing historic legislation this session covering issues like rent reform, sexual harassment, driver's licenses for undocumented immigrants, recreational marijuana, climate change, women's rights, LGBTQ rights, labor, education, Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBES), and criminal justice reform.

As Malcolm X once said, "The future belongs to those who prepare for it today." We are forging a path to a bright future, my friends. I am prepared to keep this momentum going and I would love for all of you to join me on what will be a unique and remarkable journey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Sanders Jr." in a cursive style.

James Sanders Jr.  
NYS Senator, 10th District





## Senator Sanders Bring STEM / Tech Education to the Community with MLK Blueprints for Success Event

In commemoration of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, a national day of service, State Senator James Sanders Jr. hosted a STEM / tech event in Far Rockaway on January 20, 2020. It was a full day of workshops, panel discussions and resource tables as well as entertainment - all aimed at encompassing the vision presented in Dr. King's famous speech, "What is your Life's Blueprint?" The event was co-sponsored by Assembly Members Clyde Vanel and Alicia Hyndman.

"Dr. King famously spoke about having a blueprint for life that includes the determination to achieve excellence in your various fields of endeavor, so it is only fitting that we honor his legacy with an educational event that will help community be prepared for a technologically advanced future," Sanders said. "The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Day Jr. is a day of service and we are proud to be serving Southeast Queens and beyond with this STEM focused event.

More than 100 people of all ages, both youth and seniors, attended the event. It was great to see the different generation learning together, side by side. The workshops tackled subjects like online banking, financial literacy and the environment. The green-themed classes explored wind energy by having attendees make and test fan blades out of different materials while another class explored creating new green spaces in one's own neighborhood by using Google Earth. In the area of technology sessions on block coding and how to use Microsoft Office were offered. There was even an opportunity to learn about aviation. The Black Pilots of America discussed how to get a pilot's license.



Senator Sanders asks some people in attendance to speak about what Dr. King means to them. On the right, is 11-year-old child advocate Obocho Peters, who recited Dr. King's "What Is Your Life's Blueprint?" speech at the event.

Even though it was an education-rich day, there was still plenty of time for entertainment with performances by Grammy-award winning singer-songwriter, Anslem Douglas, a hip-hop routine by Rok Nation Dance Team, an interactive magic presentation by Wayne Superius Garland of Superius Magic, and 11-year-old child advocate Obocho Peters, who recited Dr. King's "What Is Your Life's Blueprint?" speech. He is also the CEO of a thrift store in Brooklyn that sells gently used children's clothing and he shared the secrets of his success.

"Today was an incredible day of learning and togetherness," Sanders said. "If Dr. King were alive today he would be proud to see all of the great things we have done here in his honor."

Senator Sanders would like to thank all of the community partners and volunteers who helped make this event a success. We would also like to thank Village Academy / MS 53 / Success Academy for allowing us to use their space to host the event.



# MLK Blueprints for Success



It was great to see so many young people embracing Dr. King's vision at the event.



Gary Hilliard, member and political organizer for 1199SEIU, second from left, and many other members of 1199SEIU attended to show their support and were commended by Senator Sanders who reminded everyone of the importance of unionized labor, something Dr. King often mentioned publicly.



Youth and their parents learn about wind energy at one of the green workshops.



**NYS SENATOR JAMES SANDERS JR.  
PRESENTS**

# Community Leadership Dinner

## **TOPIC: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION LAW**

Being a responsive and responsible citizen requires greater understanding and participation in government accountability tools. SECTIONS 84-90 known as The Freedom of Information Law (FOIL), governs the rights of access to government records.

Join New York State Senator James Sanders Jr. as we invite the Committee on Open Government to lead the discussion on the principles underlying the FOIL and the Open Meetings Law, which outlines the conduct of meetings of public bodies and the right to attend those meetings.

**THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2020  
6 P.M. - 9 P.M.  
FIRST CHURCH OF GOD  
14-25 BEACH CHANNEL DRIVE  
FAR ROCKAWAY, NY 11691**



To RSVP, Call Senator Sanders' Office at 718-523-3069 or 718-327-7017



## 32BJ Rally (Albany) – Healthy Terminals Act

Senator James Sanders Jr. joined members of 32BJ SEIU in support of the NY Healthy Terminal Act (S6266C/A8142C), a bill which he has co-sponsored, that would provide transportation hub employees with a benefits supplement to help them access high-quality health care.

“I am a strong supporter of unions and of 32BJ,” Sanders said. “These workers help to ensure that our city runs efficiently and they deserve proper healthcare.”

The members of 32BJ include office cleaners, security officers, doormen, porters, maintenance workers, engineers, bus drivers and aides, window cleaners, school cleaners, and food service workers.

The bill would ensure that these workers who are employed at New York City’s John F. Kennedy International Airport, LaGuardia Airport, Port Authority Bus Terminal, Pennsylvania Station and Grand Central Terminal can afford health insurance.

Assembly Member Felix Ortiz and Kyle Bragg, president of 32BJ, were also in attendance at the rally.





## More than 200 Attend Senator Sanders' Free Movie Screening of "Just Mercy"

Senator James Sanders Jr. hosted a free movie screening of the film "Just Mercy," for his constituents on January 30, 2020 at Bow Tie Cinemas (Grand Avenue Cinemas) in Baldwin.

"This is an opportunity to educate as well as entertain," Sanders said. "I hope that watching this film will spur a thought provoking conversation about the troubling flaws in our criminal justice system."

The film stars Jamie Foxx and Michael B. Jordan and tells the true story of Walter McMillian, who, with the help of young defense attorney Bryan Stevenson, appeals his wrongful murder conviction.

Following the film screening there was a Q&A session featuring representatives from the Innocence Project and Queens Defenders.

More than 200 community members, including many youth and seniors, attended the event.



Senator Sanders told attendees that he hoped they would find the movie entertaining and educational.



After the film, Senator Sanders chatted with students from York College who had attended the screening.



Many seniors from across the community came to enjoy the movie.



Community members of all ages packed the theater for the screening.

## Hundreds Attend Senator Sanders Town Hall Meeting on Sewage Spill in SE Queens



Hundreds of homeowners who were affected by the sewage spill attended the town hall meeting hosted by Senator Sanders at PS 223 in Jamaica on Sunday.

Senator James Sanders Jr. held a town hall meeting on Sunday, December 8, 2019 at PS 223 in Jamaica to address the recent sewage spill in Southeast Queens, which damaged some 300 homes over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend.

“This is a terrible and unfortunate incident to have happened, especially around the holidays,” Sanders said. “My office will be working with the city and all of the appropriate agencies to help affected homeowners recover and resume their busy lives.”

Senator Sanders was joined by other Queens elected officials and all relevant city agencies to provide residents with updates on the situation and answer their many questions. The primary concern people had regarded covering the cost of the cleanup and repairs to their homes, whether the cleanup crews dispatched by the city were qualified and any health repercussions stemming from being near the sewage.

Many homeowners have flood insurance, which does not cover disasters like sewage spills. All

affected residents may file a claim with the NYC Office of the Comptroller within 90 days of their loss. However, the Comptroller’s Office will not begin to process claims until the Department of Environmental Protection determines the exact cause of the blockage. It is also important to note that if a person decides to hire a private lawyer, they forfeit their ability to file a claim with the Comptroller.

The exact cause of the blockage is still unknown, is being investigated and will take a few more days, according to DEP Commissioner Vincent Sapienza. The affected pipe, which is located 40 feet below ground, is hard to reach and excavate, leading to the delay. Areas heavily impacted by the sewage spill include the section of Jamaica near the Belt Parkway and Kennedy Airport.

The city has added a pump around system (a pipe at ground level that can carry the sewage away from the area), while the main pipe is being repaired. DEP and the Department of Health told residents



## Town Hall Meeting on Sewage Spill

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that the water in their homes is safe to drink because it is transported through different pipes.

The DOH also said they tested the air quality in the affected homes and nothing abnormal was detected. They also have an epidemiologist who will continue to evaluate the areas flooded by sewage. Senator Sanders told the DOH that he wants to receive continuous reports regarding their findings.

Deanne Criswell Commissioner of the NYC Emergency Management Department said all of the cleaning crews dispatched to homes by the city are qualified to perform the sewage removal services and that the work is evaluated by a city inspector once its completed to ensure it meets the highest standards and is conducted to the satisfaction of the homeowner.



Senator Sanders listens to the concerns of constituent Supreet Sidhu of Jamaica.

Senator Sanders advised all of the city agencies that they need to be more proactive regarding the maintenance and cleaning of pipes and other infrastructure and to improve response times when unforeseen accidents do occur. Many residents complained about what they considered a poor performance by 311.

The city had set up an emergency center at the Courtyard Marriott, 145-11 North Conduit Avenue, Jamaica, NY 11436, to provide affected residents with resources.

Senator Sanders had a limited supply of cleaning kits available for pick up at his District Office for those who need the proper gear. He also had Comptroller claim forms.

We would like to thank PS 223 for the use of their space to host the event.

**Anyone who is still experiencing issues or has concerns about the sewage spill should Senator Sanders' Community Liaison, Ms. Lisa George, at 718-523-3069.**

**All those affected by the sewage backup please send in your claim forms immediately. The deadline is soon approaching. THE DEADLINE TO FILE ALL CLAMS WILL BE FEBRUARY 28, 2020.**

**Go to <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/services/for-the-public/claims/file-a-claim/>**

The 149th Street South Ozone Park Civic Association will host it's next monthly meeting at 2 p.m. on February 29, 2020 at St. Paul Baptist Church, located at 148-02 130th Avenue, Jamaica, NY 11436, and Vice President Aracelia Cook will provide a brief summary of the follow-up sewage meetings that took place on February 1 and February 8.



## Senator Sanders Hosts Leadership Dinner and Discusses the Epidemic of Human Trafficking



Many community and faith-based leaders attended the event.

Senator James Sanders Jr. held a community leadership dinner at the Springfield Gardens Church of the Nazarene on January 23, 2020, where experts and advocates presented important information on the global epidemic of human sex trafficking which is also afflicting the local community in Queens.

According to 2019 report by the U.S. Department of State, human sex trafficking is one of the most horrible crimes on Earth, impacting people's freedom and human dignity. It is reported that a figure of 24.9 million people are currently being sex trafficked.

"This is a serious epidemic and it is our duty to protect our community, particularly our youth, from being exploited for the purpose of commercial sex or forced labor," Sanders said. "We need to stop this victimization before it starts, because once these traffickers get a hold of

someone they will use psychological and physical coercion to prevent them from leaving."

Among the speakers at Senator Sanders' event were representatives from UNITAS, an international humanitarian organization working to provide solutions in the fight against human trafficking, Detectives from the NYPD Human Trafficking Team, and Nicky Sunshine an actress, comedienne and writer, who shared her own experience of engaging in sex work as a massage parlor madam.

Lamont Hiebert, UNITAS Program Director, discussed the different types of human trafficking, which can include labor trafficking and sex trafficking and explained that all types usually involve force (violence, starvation, and confinement), fraud (lies, tricks, and false promises) and coercion (threats, debt bondage, and drugs). Youth are especially vulnerable

## Human Trafficking Epidemic

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because the trafficker will identify the victim's need – food, clothing, shelter, etc. – and fill that void, leading the victim to become trapped and dependent.

Hiebert was joined by Tonya Turner, UNITAS Training and Education Director, and Dr. Coralanne Griffith-Hunte, UNITAS Board Member, psychologist and clinical trauma specialist.

“These victims feel broken,” said Dr. Griffith-Hunte. “Trauma doesn't have an expiration date and when it comes to trauma, there is no one-size-fits-all solution.”

If someone is being forced to engage in sex for money, a place to live, for other necessities, or because someone is holding their important documents like a passport, they may be a victim of trafficking, according to the NYPD. Detective Olashina Williams of the NYPD Human Trafficking Team explained that this crime is getting worse in Queens, with many young men choosing to pimp women instead of selling drugs

because they see it as a less dangerous way to make fast cash. When it comes to helping victims, Williams said, “You have to engage them where they are. They feel judged. They feel shame.”

Nicky Sunshine spoke about her time as sex worker at a “rub and tug” massage parlor and admitted that she felt ashamed of what she was doing but became addicted to the easy money. “There's a value system in our society,” she said. “As a black woman, I did not know how vulnerable I was.” Now, she uses her platform as a public figure to educate and warn others.

The Rev. Lenroy Pascall, Pastor of the Springfield Gardens Church of the Nazarene, where the event was held, said he has noticed that more and more of his congregants have confided in him that they have been trafficked. “I don't think any human being should have to go through that,” he said, adding that he believes the perpetrators must be experiencing some type of “spiritual and psychological madness” to commit such crimes.



Lamont Hiebert, UNITAS Program Director, and Tonya Turner, UNITAS Training and Education Director, discussed the different types of human trafficking, which can include labor trafficking and sex trafficking.

## Senator Sanders Brings Joy and Love to Elderly / Disabled Veterans with his Send a Vet A Valentine Program

In celebration of Valentine's Day, Marine Corps veteran and New York State Senator James Sanders Jr. distributed special gifts to residents at the New York State Veterans Home at St. Albans on February 7, 2020.

"Valentine's Day is a celebration of love and affection, a golden opportunity to let our veterans know that we care about them and that they are not forgotten," Sanders said. "It is always a great joy for me to thank them for their service to our country and to offer them a small token of our appreciation."

Sanders distributed greeting cards, gloves, hats, scarves, socks, towels and other items which were donated by community members and groups such as P.S. 104 (The Bayswater School) – Far Rockaway, P.S. 176 (Cambria Heights), Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority (AKA), August Martin High School, Blaque Resource Network, Females Making Moves, Flowers of Hope, House-A-Soldier, New York Racing Association (NYRA), Queensborough Community College and Success Academy.

"I would like to extend a special thank you to all of our donors, without whom this event would not have been possible," Sanders said. "Their generosity and commitment to helping this community will not soon be forgotten. I would also like to thank the New York State Veterans Home at St. Albans for their hospitality and allowing us to use their space to interact with their residents."

Also in attendance at the event were: April Jones, Founder of House-A-Soldier, who donated 10 new coats, Gina Vasquez, Founder of Flowers of Hope, who donated 30 new scarves, and long-time volunteer with Senator Sanders' Office, Ms. Lucille Fowler, who donated pants and other items.

The patients at the New York State Veterans Home at St. Albans have served in either World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam War, or Gulf War and have suffered a service-related injury that requires skilled nursing care. Others are spouses or dependents of military personnel, who receive medical or rehabilitative care. Residents range in age from 45 to 100 years old, and their stay can last anywhere from 6-8 weeks to the rest of their lives.

We would like to extend special thanks to Deirdre Samuel, Coordinator of Volunteer Services, at the NYS Veterans Home at St. Albans for helping to facilitate the event as well as the home's volunteers, many of whom are students at the Institute of Health Professions at Cambria Heights.



Senator Sanders presents a Valentine's Day card to Army veteran, Keith Scott.



Senator Sanders joins April Jones, Founder of House-A-Soldier, as she presents one of the 10 new coats she donated to the VA home to veteran William Perry.



Senator Sanders expressed his appreciation to each veteran for their service to our country.



## Albany News

Senator Sanders met with the Coro Fellows to discuss his leadership roles in the senate and how he could potentially partner with them in the future. The Coro Fellows Program develops emerging leaders to work and lead across different sectors by equipping them with knowledge, skills, and networks to accelerate positive change. They achieve their mission by: honing communication and critical-thinking skills, exposing participants to multiple sectors of various industries, providing a cohort structure that gives a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to practice complex decision-making and active feedback, and facilitating hands-on learning in real-life situations.



Some 200 charter school parents traveled to Albany to speak about the need for educational excellence and the right to choose schools that are the best fit for their children. Parents from all 45 Success Academy schools traveled with parents from Public Prep Network and Classical Charter Schools for the Albany Day of Action. Senator Sanders spoke about the importance of their advocacy work and the potential of New York City's public charter sector.



## Albany News *continued*



In his role as Chairman of the Senate Banking Committee, Senator Sanders met with NYS Department of Financial Services Superintendent Linda Lacewell and other members of the NYS Senate Banking Committee in Albany to discuss the state of financial institutions in New York for the 2020 legislative session.



Senator Sanders held a round table discussion in Albany with children from the New York State Network for Youth Success. They were visiting to lobby against cuts to their after school programs. He encouraged them to envision themselves as future leaders. “If you can’t see it, you can’t be it,” Sanders told them. “What move are you going to make that’s going to make the crowd say, ‘I’ve never seen anything like that?’ You should be able to see the house you are going to buy and the business you are going to own.” Most of the children were from Senator Sanders’ district.



## Senator Sanders Hosts Property Tax and Rent Freeze Event

Senator James Sanders Jr. hosted a multi-part event series with Department of Finance to assist homeowners with reducing their property taxes and to aid tenants in applying for a rent freeze. Veterans who served in the U.S. military during designated periods of conflict, their unmarried surviving spouse and Gold Star parents also had the potential to qualify for property tax exemptions.

Other organizations and agencies that were on hand to provide services included: Sheltering Arms, Neighborhood Housing Services of Jamaica, Margert Community Corporation and Queens Defenders.



Stephanie Reynolds of Jamaica and Rosie Gorman of Queens Village were just some of the many people who attended.



Each person received individualized and customized services to meet their specific needs.



The event was well attended with many residents seeking assistance.



Representatives from the NYC Department of Finance were hard at work helping community members.



# Senator Sanders in Action on the Senate Floor Fighting for Legislation That Will Benefit Our Community and Our State.



# We Are Here To Help

At Senator Sanders' Office, our motto is: "We Strive to be the Best, Because We Serve the Best."

Tell Us How We Can Help You and Let's Make Our Community Better Together

## District Office

142-01 Rockaway Boulevard  
South Ozone, Park, NY 11436  
718-523-3069

## Satellite Office

1931 Mott Avenue  
Suite #305  
Far Rockaway, NY 11691  
718-327-7017

## Albany Office

Legislative Office Building (LOB)  
Room #711  
Albany, NY 12247  
518-455-3531



E-Mail: [sanders@nysenate.gov](mailto:sanders@nysenate.gov)

Website: [sanders.nysenate.gov](http://sanders.nysenate.gov)



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## Free Legal Services for Seniors

My District Office hosts free legal services for seniors, age 60 and older, on the first Monday of each month from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. To make an appointment, call 718-327-7017.



**NYS Senator James Sanders Jr.**

**Presents**



# **4th Annual Caribbean Carnival in the Rockaways**

**Saturday, August 29, 2020**



For more info, call Senator  
Sanders' Office at 718-523-3069  
or 718-327-7017





