



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Sanders Jr.

Thousands Attend Senator Sanders' First Ever Rockaway Caribbean Carnival

JAMES SANDERS JR. August 19, 2017



Thousands of people lined the streets and packed the beach for the 1st ever Rockaway Caribbean Carnival, which was hosted by State Senator James Sanders (D-Rochdale Village, Far Rockaway) and held on Saturday, August 19, 2017. There were parade floats, costumed masqueraders, steel pan bands, moko jumbies, calypso and soca music, traditional foods, clothing and crafts and much more.

“For many years, people having been toying with the idea of bringing a Caribbean Carnival to

Rockaway, but we have done it,” Sanders said. “My team along with residents, leaders and multiple organizations worked hand in glove to make this amazing day possible. It is a day when we can celebrate all cultures – Caribbean and American – those from Rockaway and those from all over this great city and state. Out of many, we are one. That's the motto of Trinidad -- together we aspire, together we achieve.”

The Carnival was conducted in collaboration with the West Indian American Day Carnival Association (WIADCA), Rockaway Development & Revitalization Corporation (RDRC) and NYC Parks Department. It started on Mott Avenue and Beach 20th Street and continued to Seagirt Blvd ending at Beach 17th amphitheater in the park.

The parade's grand marshal was Randolph Holder Sr., a resident of Far Rockaway and the father of slain New York City Police Officer Randolph Holder, who was killed in the line of duty and was recently honored with a street renaming. Both father and son are of Guyanese descent.

The goal of the Carnival was to celebrate the various arts & culture of the Caribbean while highlighting the hidden jewel that is the Rockaways. The opening ceremony kicked off with the playing of the American National Anthem, featuring a Marine Corps Color Guard. Senator Sanders is a Marine Corps Veteran. Many civic groups and performers walked the parade route, dancing, singing and waving the flags of the many Caribbean countries.

When the parade portion concluded at the beach, dozens of performers took the stage including Billy Bob “The Jamaica Cowboy,” Sassy, and Mr. Pearly. The headliner was The Mighty Sparrow aka “The Calypso King of the World.” The Mighty Sparrow is one of the best-known and most successful calypsonians. He has won Trinidad's Carnival Road March competition eight times, Calypso King / Monarch eight times, and the Calypso King of Kings

title twice.

Due to the great success of our inaugural event, we plan to hold it annually.

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