



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Sanders Jr.

## Senator James Sanders Jr. Leads in Protecting Southeast Queens Community from COVID-19 By Donating 5,000 Masks to Local School

JAMES SANDERS JR. June 29, 2020

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Today Senator James Sanders Jr. (D-Rochdale Village, Far Rockaway) who is always proactive when it comes to handling a crisis was at the forefront of protecting his district from COVID-19 by donating 5,000 masks to a local school. Senator Sanders wants to make sure that teachers, staff and students stay safe in anticipation of schools being open for the fall semester, and plans to give away more PPE in the coming months.

The masks were provided through a collaboration with Ambassador Huang Ping, Consul General of China's Consulate General in New York and were given to P.S. 354 (The STEM Institute of Queens). Principal Raevan Askew and School Superintendent (CD 28) Dr. Tammy Pate accepted the masks on behalf of P.S. 354. They said they were very thankful for the donation.

"Community District 28 is a very diverse district for our students to learn and to grow," Dr. Pate said. "We want to thank you for being mindful of the health and concerns of our parents and our students. It means more than words can express."

Ambassador Huang Ping who spoke to Principal Askew and Dr. Pate virtually via Zoom said he believed it was important for China and the United States to help each other and build positive relationships moving forward.

"As a diplomat living in New York, I see myself as a New Yorker, so I feel this is my privilege and also my obligation to join hands with everybody here in New York to fight against this pandemic," Ambassador Huang Ping said. "I am very glad that with the help of Senator Sanders we are able to donate 5,000 facial masks to the STEM Institute. I hope that our kids can be better equipped and protected during this challenging time."

Ambassador Huang Ping even extended a personal invitation to the students and faculty of PS 354 to take a trip to China in the future. "When we get over this pandemic, I welcome you to China to see China's 5,000 years of culture," he said. "I believe you will find the Chinese people are just like the people of America. We are all very, very good people. We can establish a very good friendship. We can work together. We can play together, and we can build together."

Senator Sanders, who was in Albany for an emergency legislative session on the budget, also attended the event virtually via Zoom and agreed that unity between the nations is important. He added that Ambassador Huang Ping and the consulate have been a friend to the Southeast Queens community for a long time.

"I would like to thank China's Consulate General and Ambassador Huang Ping for their generous mask donation, which will give many here in the community peace of mind that they will have some protection in the fall as students may return to school and the coronavirus will likely continue to be a pervasive issue," Sanders said. "It is my belief that we have to take what we have learned from these past few months and use that knowledge to prepare for what will be a tough road ahead. I will continue my proactive efforts to ensure that everyone in my district who can be protected from coronavirus, will be protected."

Sanders' Chief of Staff, Marvin Holland, and Constituent Liaison, Kristen Holness transported the masks to the school on Senator Sanders' behalf.