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<http://www.Sesameflyers.org>

## MEDIA RELEASE

*For Immediate Release*

### Burglars rob the headquarters but not the spirits of Brooklyn's Caribbean Carnival Champion Band

**Brooklyn, NY** -- The strength, resilience and character of the Sesame Flyers International (SFI) brand stood up to the test this week in the face of two burglaries at the Church Avenue headquarters of the community-base organization. In the robbery which took place in two separate incidents on Wednesday and Saturday nights, the organization suffered losses of computers, televisions, sound systems and electronic equipment and a small amount of cash. There were also some significant damage to the property, known as the Cultural Center, as the burglars ransacked both floors of the building located at 3510 Church Avenue. But despite the losses, the organization this week was back to its full operational schedule.

The organization's chairman, Raymond Luke took the opportunity to inform and assure the wider community that all is well with everyone in the Sesame Flyers family. "As expected, the burglaries may have momentarily rattled some nerves, but by pulling together as a team we have been able to put all our operations back up and is fully operational," says Luke. "This is a testament to the strength of the organization which has been one of the vanguards of community and cultural empowerment in Brooklyn. You don't build an organization of 28 years and have the kind of success that is part of our track record by being weak and giving in to challenges in any form," he adds.

Luke also praised their neighbors who alerted the police while the robbery was still in progress and also officers of the 67<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct who took swift action and have been able to recover some of the stolen items. "I guess the good neighbor policy which we have embraced and developed over the past 20 years at this location has paid dividends in this case," says Luke.

“And in addition, the police officers have been outstanding in their response and are feverishly working toward apprehending the perpetrators.”

With the distinction of being the “winningest” band in the Brooklyn Labor Day Carnival, Sesame Flyers again captured the coveted title of “Band of the Year” in both the adults and children categories of the 2011 Carnival/parade with a presentation titled: *Brazilia*. The significance of this win, more than a dozen in its history, was celebrated even in the face of the robberies.

“We have a commitment to making excellence a priority in everything we do whether it is mastering our presentations on Eastern Parkway or in the numerous youth and community empowerment programs which form a part of our annual roster of services,” says Luke. “So we will celebrate both our victory in the masquerader competition as well as the fact that our daily operations are in full effect not just at our main office but at all three locations under our supervision.”

The celebrations move forward with an appreciation party for masqueraders of the winning children’s band on Sept. 24 and on Sept. 25 for the adult masqueraders. The events take place at the (SFI) Culture Center on Church Avenue and Tikki Village on Ralph Avenue respectively.

For more information call 718-693-0500 or visit [sesameflyers.org](http://sesameflyers.org).

#### **ABOUT SESAME FLYERS INTERNATIONAL, INC.**

Founded in 1983 by Joseph Charles, SFI is a multi service agency catering to the needs of youth and adults. The agency provides a comprehensive, holistic strategy to youth and community development with culture art at its core. Recognized as one of the top eight youth community programs in New York City, Sesame Flyers International schedule of programs includes academics support, recreational programs, counseling services, cultural events, summer youth employment, computer literacy and job readiness.

Over the past 28 years the organization has enriched its name and recognition in the New York cultural community by winning the “Band of The Year” title in the West Indian American Day Carnival Parade for the past 12 times in the last 13 years. (There were 11 consecutive wins from 1999-2008). Their steelband orchestra has also been a force in the annual Panorama competition and has performed at some of the most prestigious concert venues in New York City.