



For Immediate Release
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THE AMERICAN PLACE AT HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY RECEIVES \$250,000 GRANT FROM U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES

*Funding will support programs to help Hartford-area immigrants,
refugees on their path to citizenship*

(Hartford, CT) – The American Place at Hartford Public Library has received a two-year, \$250,000 grant from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to continue its important work helping immigrants and refugees on their path to citizenship.

Hartford Public Library [was one of 40 organizations](#) to receive the grant and the only library. It was also the only organization in Connecticut chosen. The 2021 recipient organizations serve both traditional immigrant population centers and emerging immigrant population centers in 25 states.

“The citizenship preparation program at The American Place has a proven track record of assisting immigrants and refugees from across the region and we are pleased to receive this significant grant from the USCIS to support that work,” said **Hartford Public Library President and CEO Bridget E. Quinn**. “Helping our neighbors navigate the citizenship process is just one example of the critical work we do each day at Hartford Public Library to meet the needs of the community.”

The funding, allocated through the USCIS’ Citizenship and Integration Grant Program, aims to assist prospective citizens’ integration into American life by supporting educational programs designed to increase their knowledge of English, U.S. history and civics in preparation for the U.S. citizenship exam. The American Place received a similar two-year grant in 2019.

According to the 2019 American Community Survey by the U.S. Census Bureau, an estimated 15% of Connecticut’s population, or more than 525,000 residents, were born outside the U.S.

“Given that the pathway to citizenship can be daunting and lengthy for many hardworking immigrants, Hartford Public Library’s recent USCIS award will allow us to continue offering both

cost-free citizenship application and educational support,” said **Homa Naficy, executive director of The American Place**. “We are privileged to provide such life-changing services.”

When COVID-19 forced Hartford Public Library to close its doors to visitors last year, work at The American Place continued uninterrupted. Services shifted online, and the library loaned devices and Wi-Fi hotspots through its Crossroads to Connectivity program to those in need.

“I am proud of Hartford’s legacy of welcoming immigrants with open arms,” said **U.S. Rep. John B. Larson of the 1st Congressional District**. “The Hartford Public Library is home to a citizenship preparation program that has been nationally recognized, and this \$250,000 grant from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services will allow the Library to expand their services and ensure Hartford remains a city of opportunity for all residents.”

The American Place has been recognized locally and nationally for its efforts. It received grant funding last year from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to provide critical digital literacy skills training for Hartford residents. The American Place also was the 2021 winner of the Partners in International Education award from the Council on Social Work Education’s Commission on Global Social Work Education.

Established in 2000, The American Place provides industry-recognized certificate training, GED preparation services, English as a second language classes and a nationally recognized U.S. citizenship program, supporting immigrants in achieving citizenship and becoming vested citizens. For more information visit <http://tap.hplct.org>.

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About Hartford Public Library

Now celebrating its 127th year, Hartford Public Library remains at the forefront of redefining the urban library experience in the 21st century. With locations throughout the city, the library provides education, intellectual enrichment and cultural development for thousands of children, youth and adults every year. Hartford Public Library has also gained local and national recognition for its wide range of new initiatives and partnerships designed to meet the needs of a diverse and dynamic city and region, including immigration services, employment assistance and youth leadership training. www.hplct.org.