



PRESS RELEASE

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Hartford's L.I.T. Announces All Things Lit Live!

HARTFORD – Hartford Public Library (HPL) is presenting Hartford's L.I.T. (Literary Integrated Trailblazers) virtual programming event, "All Things Lit Live!" - festivities of literary bliss on September 19, 2020, from 10:00am until 5:00pm. Zoom events will stream on [Hartford Public Library's Facebook page](#).

Register free on [Eventbrite](#) and follow HLIT on Facebook.

HLIT's virtual programming is a culmination of the literary community, celebrating the craft of writing, the business of books and the beauty of literature. This event will contain workshops, literary discussions and readings, a panel discussion where writers and publishers meet, Griot storyteller, local author highlights, featured poets, Bookstore highlights, literary intellectuals, words and thoughts turned into a patented Conscious Conversation card game by Alphonso McGriff III, as well as a poetry writing workshop led by the Hartford Poet Laureate, Frederick Douglass Knowles.

Hartford's L.I.T. (Literary Integrated Trailblazers), is a group of local authors, artists, and entrepreneurs. Their mission is to establish presence and awareness of Greater Hartford's local authors, diverse artists and entrepreneurs to revitalize literary arts and communication. H.L.I.T. focuses on literacy, literary productions, entrepreneurial building and networking within Hartford communities, including the underserved and non-traditional communities.

Virtual Event Program September 19, 2020 10:00am-5pm

HLIT Author Highlights The following authors will be featured throughout the day sharing their works and reading excerpts from some of their books. All of which will be available for purchase.

Lyndell Williams is an award-winning writer and bestselling author. She has been published in peer-review journals and presented at national conferences. She is the founder and managing editor of the

NbA Muslims blog on Patheos. Her work has been published in peer-reviewed journals and she is a contributor to multiple online publications.

Rosa M. Bailey, aka CEO Boss Lady, is a native of Hartford, CT. She currently resides in Bloomfield, CT. Her love of reading makes the library her favorite place to visit. She is a wife and the proud mother of three adult sons and four grandchildren. Ms. Bailey is the CEO of RMB Management Group, a full-service training and development center for aspiring entrepreneurs and leaders.

Mack Writtens; Prior to being the educator that he is today, when Mack Writtens was a young student he struggled to find stories that he could resonate with and characters that look like him. He heard those same feelings echo throughout the communities he's experienced. Mack Writtens is dedicated to producing relatable and impactful stories across all sub-genres of fiction that feature black and brown characters.

Mikala Guyton; First-time author Mikala Guyton brings her thrilling perspective to the page with *Home Body: Poetry & Prose*, a peculiar and refreshingly ambitious collection of poetry and prose. Mikala is an artist and prize-winning writer based in Connecticut. She grew up writing stories about strange characters in familiar places and creating art in whatever medium she could get her hands on. Always having a special love for the written word, she obtained a B.A. in writing and worked as an editor in publishing for a few years before finally giving in to her *raison d'être*: writing. *Home Body: Poetry & Prose* is her first book. She currently lives with her head in the clouds, working on many books to come.

Dianne Gill is a Connecticut native raised in the town of Bloomfield. She is the self-published author of the *Cruisin Trilogy*. In her early twenties her love of writing led her to entering essay contests and ultimately becoming self-taught writing in the short story format. Using her maiden name, she created D. James Publishing, LLC in 2012 and focused on making something of all her work. The *Cruisin Trilogy* is an exciting collection that has something for everyone.

NBS Malay is a published author, singer, spoken word artist, writer, braider, curator of NBS Malay's *Speak N' Eat* bi-weekly open mic in Massachusetts

JV Harvey is an award-winning producer, director, and author of an adult novel "A Step Into The Rain" and the children's books "Harvey The Little Brown Duck" and "Even Dragons Have To Go To Bed." What he likes most of all is producing and directing, he has a few short films that have won awards for and a cooking show in the works that he is planning to produce this summer! Are you a behind the scenes person or do you want to be the first one to talk on the film set! We'll find out!

Lynette Johnson is a poet, a performing artist, a voice actor and an event host. She has published four collections of poetry and her most recent book was also a one-woman show; *Supreme*. Using poetry, Lynette discusses relationships, injustice, God, love and unlove with a little humor and plenty of vulnerability. She looks forward to continuing to use her art to uplift and connect.

Rell Erwin is a children's co-author who writes chapter books, middle school books, and YA books with his four youngest children. *THE HOWLING HAPPENINGS* released in 2015, was the first book in the Kizzy Kloo Mystery Series co-written with his daughter, Evie Erin. The second book in the series *THE GOLDEN EGG*, was released in 2019 and is currently available on Amazon in paperback and e-book versions as well as it can be purchased directly through the publishing company website at www.hurstonfifth.com.

Darlene Fernandez aka Dee Truepoetry was born in New York City and presently resides in Waterbury, has been writing since 1996. She began spoken word in 2009, gracing many stages in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York and New Jersey. Dee Truepoetry mother of three, author of Broken Silence, entrepreneur, State of Connecticut Beat Poet Laureate of 2018-2020, President of Make'Em Believe based in Waterbury. Also, a Curator of many events like Grown and Sexy Poetry and Poetry Matters. Her passion is to make a difference in the community by inspiring others to take action hoping her words of encouragement will live forever through her poetry.

Where Publishers & Writers Meet - Panel Discussion moderated by T'challa Williams

Publisher - Melissa-Sue John, Ph.D. is a wife, mother, social psychologist, university lecturer, grant writer, business consultant, mentor, author, and publisher. She enjoys lecturing, researching, and writing. Her professional roles led her to write and publish diverse children's literature with her two daughters, Olivia Lauren and Alyssa Simone, where they focus on STEAM education, diversity, inclusion, and universal design. Dr. John currently serves as the Chief Executive Operator and Blogger of Lauren Simone Publishing House. Visit www.laurensimonepubs.com to learn more.

Publisher - Maryam A. Sullivan (Author Umm Juwayriyah), Umm Juwayriyah, MA; 2018 Highlights Foundation Fellow; #MuslimGirlsReader Founder; New England Muslim Sisters Association Editor-in-Chief. Her company Sabr Publications offer a list of Best Sellers: The Size of a Mustard Seed * Hind's Hands * The Princess and The Good Deed* Yaseen's Big Dream*

Writer - Lyndell Williams is an award-winning writer and bestselling author. She holds a B.A. in Historical Studies and Literature, M.A. in Liberal Studies, and an AC in Women and Gender Studies. She is an adjunct instructor as well as an anti-racism and gender equity advocate.

Writer - Lashawn Henderson Middleton is a published poet and author, Board member of Journey Writers Inc. A nonprofit organization in Hartford, CT and Executive Co-Founder of Hartford's L.I.T.

Independent Book Store Spotlights

We will hear from three Independent Bookstores that have pushed through these trying times and held onto old customers while garnering new ones! Let's find out what worked for them and more.

- People Get Ready Bookstore of New Haven Connecticut
- The Key Bookstore of Hartford, Connecticut
- Riverbend Bookstore of Glastonbury, Connecticut

Poetry Writing Workshop

With Hartford Poet Laureate, Frederick-Douglass Knowles II; poet, educator and activist involved in community education. He is the inaugural Poet Laureate for the City of Hartford. His collection of poetry, *BlackRoseCity* was featured at the 2018 Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP). His works have been featured in the Connecticut River Review; Sinkhole Magazine; *Poems on the Road to Peace: A Collective Tribute to Dr. King Volume 2* by Yale University Press; *Lefoko* magazine, and *Fingernails Across the Chalkboard: Poetry and Prose on HIV/AIDS from the Black Diaspora* by Third World Press. His poem "Mason Freeman Cuts Jenkins Down," has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. His sonnet "Sunday School in the 90's (the way I understood it)" won the 2019 Nutmeg Poetry Award. Frederick-Douglass is an Associate Professor of English at Three Rivers Community College.

Featured Poets & Performers

Naomi D. Williams; Lynette Johnson; Darlene 'DeeTrue Poetry' Fernandez

HLIT Dedication Poem - HLIT Team

A reading from Hartford's L.I.T. dedicated to Black Men

Storytime with Andre Keitt Andre Keitt, The GreatHeart Griot felt a strong connection to the cultural arts from an early age and says that storytelling is “in his blood”. His beloved grandmother Martha Greatheart Thompson, “Mama Thompson,” told him stories that he uses today in his tale telling. Mr. Keitt received a Bachelor’s of Arts in English from the South Carolina State University and worked doing outreach, marketing, writing, teaching and performance arts for such places as the Hartford Public Library, the Dallas Public Library, the Greater Hartford Arts Council, the Bushnell Memorial Performance Hall, the Hartford Stage Company and the Hartford Symphony Orchestra. He will be reading for the youth.

The legendary Life, & Literary Work of Zora Neal Hurston A discussion with Professor Marilyn S. Turner, moderated by Nzima Hutchings. Prof. Turner will be leading a conversation on *Hitting a Straight Lick with a Crooked Stick*, a 2020 publication of the works of Zora Neale Hurston. She will explore the life of Hurston the artist; how her race and gender impacted her work; and her legacy as a writer.

Conscious Conversation Cards with Alphonso McGriff III Alphonso McGriff III is an Executive Founding member of Hartford’s L.I.T., Advisor, Spokesmen, and Stage Manager. As a Public Intellectual, Author, Patented Inventor, a Licensed Cosmetologist, and Speaker. He proposes that when Divine Universal Humans Becoming . . . improve the quality of their consciousness, they will also improve the quality of their decisions, their actions, who they are, their reality, and their lives. He has found his present LIFE purpose in sharing McGriff’s Unique Approach to Harmonious and Productive Communication.

Writing it Out: Healing & Owning Her-Story with Nzima S. Hutchings Nzima Sherylle Hutchings will lead a roundtable candid discussion about writing to heal and expressive truths with contributors from the *Every Kinda Lady and Her Sister's Pages* anthology and Poetry Cafe Spiels group. Nzima’s *Every Kinda Lady Co.* offers free writing to heal workshops for women in the Hartford area and at Mount Holyoke College, Annual Women of Color Trailblazer Leadership Conference; helping women to leave a written legacy, write out their puzzle pieces, heal and tell their story without editing. Nzima facilitated healing through poetry and expressive writing workshops at Saint Francis Hospital, (Greater Hartford Family Advocacy Center), for sexually traumatized young girls. Thus, led her to embark on new projects for teens coming in 2021. The staple used in all her workshops is her book, the *Every Kinda Lady Expressive Writing Prompts and Journal. (Write the Hell Out Your Story)*.

everykindalady@gmail.com www.everykindalady.com www.bn.com

Black Speculative Fiction with author & editor B. Sharise Moore

B. Sharise Moore is a New Jersey native and graduate of Rutgers University. Moore’s poems and short stories have appeared in several anthologies and journals such as *Chosen Realities: Summer 2020* and *Fiyah Literary Magazine*.

At present, she is a sixth grade English Language Arts teacher, the host of [Moore Books with B. Sharise on YouTube](#), an acquiring editor for *Fiyah Literary Magazine*, and a graduate student at McDaniel College where she is pursuing a Master of Science degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a concentration in Writing for Children and Young Adults. Her debut YA magical realism novel, *Dr. Marvellus Djinn's Odd Scholars* is scheduled for release this fall.

Words, Songs & Books with NBS Malay: singer and published author NBS Malay will discuss the process of writing songs, knowing which songs become music and which become poetry and the excitement of publishing your stories.

From Idea to Production with playwright Dr. Valerie Ingram, Dr. Ingram Playwright, Drama Therapist, Transformation Coach & Chaplin, Doula, RSS, LCHW, Reiki Master Teacher and owner of Ruby's Realm Productions will discuss taking an idea into a story that becomes your script and many of the ways you can produce it.

Theatrics; The Art of Delivery with T'challa Williams: Author and actress T'challa Williams will discuss the various ways to deliver lines on stage and how to confidently use your space to present your character and command the audience.

Hartford's L.I.T. - The Team**Nzima Sherylle Hutchings:** Founder & Visionary, CEO, Organization Director & Program Designer of Hartford's L.I.T. Published Author, Poet, Owner & Visionary of Every Kinda Lady Co., Expressive Writing and Literary Wellness Coach; Custom Journal Designer; Community Advocate for the Greater Hartford Family Advocacy Center, and 2020 100 Women of Color Honoree, as well as founder of, I am KNIA Project.

T'challa Williams: Executive Co-Founder, Spokeswoman, Chief Advisor, Director of Organization Affairs, Editor, Project Manager; CEO of Wright Ink Productions, Published Author, Actress, Poet; Community Activist, Chairperson of the School Governance Council for HPHS, Member of Greater Hartford Art Council Artist Advisory Committee

Alphonso McGriff III: Executive Co-Founder, Spokesman, Liaison, Advisor, Stage Manager; Published Author, Poet, Intellectual Speaker, Cosmetologist, Inventor and creator of Conscious Conversation Cards and Alphonso Speaks

Lashawn Henderson-Middleton: is a graduate of Andrew's University, Founding member, Commemorative Arts Award Official, Owner of Lashawn Bakes, Published Poetess, diversity poet for The Village for Families and Children; Board Member of Journey Writer's Inc.

Naomi D. Williams: BA English, Wesleyan University 19', HLIT Member, Collegiate Liaison, Model and a published Poetess

H.L.I.T. has "made it our mission to commit to the awareness and production of literary events within our community. Our stories are being told and we need to ensure that they are heard, discussed, and learned from."

Hartford's L.I.T. Staple Virtual programming

- *H.L.I.T Book Chat
- *Lit Justice Mic
- *Author Highlights
- *Kiddie Corner Saturday Storytime

Hartford's L.I.T. Staple Events

- *Brothas Be Heard
- *Unfinished and Finished Literary Work
- *ChocLit Sundaze

- *HLIT Literary Holidays
- *Speakeasy - A Banned Books Cafe Hour
- *HLIT Annual Hartford Book Festival

Annual Community Outreach

Book Drives
Children Book Giveaways
Food Drives

3-Day Festival 2 Venues

Hartford's L.I.T. (Literary Integrated Trailblazers)
Annual Hartford Book Festival & Writer's Conference
May 21st & 22nd, 2021
Hartford Public Library
500 Main St, Hartford, CT 06103

May 23rd, 2021
An Evening of Poetical Musing
Free CNTR
460 New Britain Ave, Hartford, CT 06106

Hartford's L.I.T. would like to thank all HLIT Red Shirt Volunteers, supporters, and contributors.
For inquiry about Hartford's L.I.T.
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