



PRESS RELEASE

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Hartford Public Library to Hold Winter Coat Giveaway January 7

HARTFORD, December 30, 2020 – Hartford Public Library will be holding a winter coat giveaway on Thursday, January 7.

The giveaway will take place at Barbour Library, 261 Barbour Street, from 2:30 to 3:30 pm.

Coats will be distributed on a first-come, first served basis. Limit one coat per individual. The coats were donated by Button Up Connecticut, a non-profit organization whose mission is to collect gently used winter coats and distribute them to residents in need all throughout Connecticut.

The Library on Wheels will also be on hand to distribute free books, new youth books, and craft supply bags.

“We are always looking for ways to meet people where they are,” said Bridget Quinn-Carey, HPL’s president and CEO. “Sometimes that means giving people access to books. Sometimes it means helping people keep warm. At this event, we excited to be able to offer both to our community.”

Irene Blean, manager of Barbour Library, believes that is hard for people who are struggling with basic needs to be open to what the library has to offer. A person can’t focus on the possible joy that books and movies can provide if they are hungry and cold. The winter coat giveaway is an opportunity for Hartford Public Library to attempt to care for the whole person.

“Now more than ever, we need to creatively address the basic needs of our customers to be able to continue to provide library services. Our customers need ways to hold beauty in their minds, especially during this troubling time. The arts, whether a good story through a book or movie, music, poetry, and creative art, provide our customers with opportunities to experience something positive,” Blean said.

Michelle Lipar, an intern from the University of Connecticut School of Social Work, was inspired to put together the event by witnessing the dedication of HPL’s branch managers to their communities. She had been invited to participate in events across the city and wanted to make her own contribution.

“I can see how they are working hard to meet the needs of their customers, even when the buildings are closed,” Lipar said.

She thought providing coats could meet some of the needs of the library’s customers, especially as the weather turns colder.

“I am looking forward to the event because it provides opportunities to meet and talk with our customers in person, and to see if there are ways we can help beyond providing coats. In-person contact has been very limited during the pandemic, so I appreciate the opportunity to safely interact with the community. I’m hopeful that we can host additional coat distribution events at other branches in the future,” Lipar said.

For more information about Hartford Public Library, visit hplct.org or call 860-695-6300. For more information about Button Up Connecticut, visit buttonupconnecticut.org.

[About Hartford Public Library](#)

Now celebrating its 126th year, Hartford Public Library remains at the forefront of redefining the urban library experience in the 21st Century. With seven 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.