

**March 2010**

Hartford Public Library

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**

## A Review of the Library's Operations

### Second Quarter Year-to-Date FY 09-10

<i><b>FY 09-10</b></i>	<i><b>Budget</b></i>	<i><b>Actual</b></i>	<i><b>Percent of Expenditure</b></i>
<i><b>Personnel</b></i>	7,186,747	2,898,044	41%
<i><b>Non-personnel</b></i>	1,856,489	715,712	39%
<i><b>Total</b></i>	9,043,236	3,613,756	40%

### Budget

The Library ended the first half of FY2009-2010 in a good financial position. The report for personnel is on an accrual basis. All other categorical expenses are reported by the city on a cash basis in accord with the fiscal systems of the city's finance department.

For the 6-month period ending 12/31/2009, total expenditures of \$3.6 million, which include encumbrances, represent 40% of total budgeted appropriation of \$9,043,236.

Personnel services are slightly under budget due to existing vacancies and other personnel turnover. General Administration is trending slightly less than budget. Library materials expenditures are in line with 6-month estimates. Plant Maintenance is slightly under projection due to contract renewal expected during the third quarter. Plant Operation came in as projected. Staff Development came below projections. Public Programs came in as projected. Technical and Professional services are on target. Outlay is slightly below projection pending future technology acquisitions.

Total revenue to date is slightly under projection. Revenues from State grants and other agencies will be received in the second half of this fiscal year.

Expenditures continue to be closely monitored to ensure full utilization of resources within the Adopted Budget.

## Library and Public Services

### Adult Services

Adult classes, programs, and workshops increased by 27%. For adult learner programming, this reflects increases in the number of ESOL, health, job and career (including reading and math classes), and nonprofit classes and workshops. The number of technology classes decreased due to cancellation of classes when a worm compromised the computers. For arts, cultural, and heritage programming, this reflects increases in the number of visual arts programs (weekly refugee sewing circle, the American Mural Project and **ArtWalk** receptions). There were fewer programs in association with One Book.

Attendance at adult classes, programs, and workshops increased by 33%. For adult learner programming, this reflects increases in attendance at ESOL, health, job and career, nonprofit, small business, and technology classes and workshops. For arts, cultural, and heritage programming, this reflects a dramatic increase in the number of attendees at One Book programs, especially the author event, and large turnouts for the **ArtWalk** receptions.

The number of adult questions decreased by 14% (-21% Downtown, -3% in the branches). The decrease Downtown may be attributed to several factors: a decrease in adult visits (-16%), a decrease in computer use due to the Conficker virus (-56%), a redefinition of reference questions, and the out-of-commission Library-on-Wheels. The decrease in reference and computer coaching questions, which are the most labor-intensive and often are job search related, combined, was negligible.

A new event, the *Return to College Learning Fair*, was held at the end of October. Governor Rell attended the event. Organized by the newly formed Graduate! Connecticut partnership ([www.graduact.org](http://www.graduact.org)), the fair's target audience was working adults who have not earned college degrees. While attaining a degree is important to an individual to advance in the workplace, corporate members of the partnership have a keen interest in and need for an educated workforce. Approximately 100 people attended. They had opportunities to talk with representatives of area academic institutions about options for returning adults. They also could attend one or more informational workshops on financial aid options; regional hiring trends; matching interests and strengths to careers; and, balancing family, school, and work obligations. Planning is underway to produce this event again in April.

November was *National Career Development Month* and the occasion for adding extra job and career programming to the Library's schedule. In *Envision the Life You Want*, participants made vision boards, visual collages to help them define and clarify their goals. A certified life and career coach led this workshop. In another workshop, attendees developed elevator speeches to introduce themselves and highlight their job skills in the length of time they might be in an elevator with a potential employer. The Library "cut to the chase" with the workshop *Finding a Job in a Tough Economy*. The presenter, an inspirational speaker and successful trainer and entrepreneur, spoke about the challenges of career development, transitions and redirection - often necessitated by economic downturns.

Grant writers, entrepreneurs, and job seekers attended *Writing Your Best Self Forward*, a workshop on professional writing standards to help people make the best impressions possible on paper or online. The successful nonprofit and small business/entrepreneurship programming resumes in March and February respectively. Currently, the Library is working closely with two

entrepreneurs who are serious about putting together substantive business plans. One plans to open a restaurant in Hartford in March, the other a motorcycle repair and detailing shop in the Greater Hartford area later in the year.

Fall health programs included two dances for wellness, yoga classes, a breast cancer screening, Women's Health Heart Day, and a healthy holiday eating demonstration/discussion.

Staff attended Webinars to become familiar with Text-A-Librarian (TAL), the mobile text messaging reference technology with which they will answer questions texted to the Library. After this training and a period in which the technology was used in-house, the service was announced to the public. Typical of the times and a thread in this report, the first questioner asked whether the Library had any job openings.

## **Youth Services**

Early literacy program attendance was up for both children (+42%) and adults (+44%) in the second quarter, due to continuing collaborations between Library sites and other agencies serving young children and families (e.g., Ropkins Branch/Women's League), plus some new collaborations (e.g., Camp Field/M.D. Fox kindergartens). The majority of adult attendees reported gains in their knowledge of key early literacy skills (78%) and changes in behavior as a result of this new knowledge (89%). Circulation of early literacy printed materials also increased (+10%), as Youth Services staff found opportunities to "sell" book checkout to the increasing number of adults and children attending early literacy programs.

Three new or restarted programs for young children and their families and caregivers should continue to build interest in reading, language skills, and understanding of the process by which young children acquire literacy through the remainder of this fiscal year. "What Do you See?", art and illustration-focused story times funded by the Greater Hartford Arts Council, began in the January 2010, and are proving very popular. Training for library staff, preschool teachers, and caregivers in "Picture Book Science, Picture Book Math", a Hartford Foundation-funded program, will begin this spring. "Homelinks II", also funded by the Hartford Foundation, will permit Youth Services staff to return to the homes of unlicensed day care providers, and work one-on-one with them to create more literate environments for their children. This later program, which will begin in the late spring, builds off the success of the Library in reaching these providers in 2007 and 2008.

The book discussions, writing activities, health information sessions, math games, and other enrichment programs offered by the Library continue to attract Hartford's elementary, middle, and high school students: attendance at out-of-school time programs this quarter (20,087) was more than twice that recorded for the same quarter last year (9,120). In-house use of youth Library materials was also up, by 75%, and circulation of school-age and teen materials was up by 7%, as (again) staff members used opportunities created by programming to promote book reading and checkout. The special health awareness initiative undertaken by the Library, as a part of the City Goal Group II, was successful, as 75% of students and teens using the Library reported they had increased their knowledge of healthy lifestyle choices, through program attendance or reading, and 92% of these individuals reported changes in behavior based on the knowledge they had gained. The latter result is substantially higher than that for our first quarter health programming. We are finding that the ability of young people to adjust behavior based on the information they receive in the library varies greatly, based on the topic. In the first quarter,

the focus was on healthy eating, and most young people reported that they were not able to put the information into practice in their homes. In the second quarter, the focus was on personal practices which could prevent infection with H1N1, and (as noted) most young people were able to follow the advice given on hand washing, keeping a distance from people who were ill, etc.

In addition to health programs, popular activities in October included finger printing at Blue Hills, a “Clue” tournament at Central, urban legends at Albany, and a Graveyard Book discussion at Goodwin, all on the monthly theme of “MYSTERY!” In November, programs focused on history, and students enjoyed Colonial cooking at Ropkins, making and writing with quill pens at Camp Field, Native American stories at Park and Twain, African American biographies at Barbour, and making “personal history” scrapbooks at Dwight. A December highlight was the second annual Kwanzaa program at Central, which drew 200 attendees for lessons in head-wrapping and jewelry-making, traditional foods, drumming, storytelling, and an explanation of the holiday’s history and principles.

On area of decline in the Library’s service to students was in “homework assistance” (-48%). The method by which this assistance is calculated was changed this year, to conform more closely to general practice in the library field. This more rigorous approach accounts for some of the drop-off. However, the Library will be assessing types of assignments currently given; the homework service we offer, in relation to these assignments; and homework services offered by other Hartford agencies, in addressing the decline. We will also (as always) seek every opportunity to work with the schools, and ensure that our collections and programs support the curriculum, as well as meet the personal needs and interests of our younger customers.

### ***Community Development and Civic Services***

*Democracy in Action* (DIA) was in full swing in the second quarter. DIA is a series of Library programs and activities that focus on the democratic process and community development in Hartford. Several DIA programs took place including a Board of Education candidates forum, poll worker training in collaboration with the Registrar of Voters, a program on Hartford boards and commissions, a forum on the Hartford landfill, and a community conversation on healthcare reform. Attendance at these programs ranged from 50-120, and most of them were videotaped and later aired on Hartford Public Access TV. In addition, our annual Voter Registration Day in October was a great success, and on Election Day three HPL locations served as polling places.

In addition to the programs listed above, on October 13<sup>th</sup> a DIA press conference was held at Hartford Public High School (HPHS). The purpose of the press conference was to publicize the November Board of Education election. Secretary of State Susan Bysiewicz and Mayor Perez participated as did several HPHS students. As part of the press conference, one of the students was registered to vote by Ms. Bysiewicz.

In conjunction with the DIA initiative the Library has taken a leadership role in the formation of the Hartford Votes~Hartford Vota Coalition, a group of about a dozen organizations working together for the purpose of increasing voter turnout in Hartford. Many of the programs listed above were carried out in collaboration with the Coalition.

In November, the Library held its fourth *Youth Making an Impact* program in collaboration with Hartford 2000, Connecticut Youth Forum, and Connecticut Pipeline Initiative. The program was the most successful one yet. We plan to continue the series.

Throughout the second quarter we worked with Everyday Democracy and the Institute for Municipal & Regional Policy at Central Connecticut State University to plan a deliberative democracy dialogue entitled *Investing in Our Children: Community Costs of Incarceration*. The dialogue will occur in the first half of 2010. This is our first use of the deliberative democracy dialogue process and we are hopeful that it can be used for other topics in the future as a way to engage broadly diverse groups around critical community issues.

In October, Library staff was invited to make a presentation on HPL's Community Development and Civic Services activities at a Faculty Fellows meeting at the University of Connecticut (W. Hartford campus). As a result of the presentation, we will have a new graduate level intern next semester at no cost to the Library. Also resulting from the October meeting, discussions are underway with three professors on various potential projects and collaborations.

HPL was honored in October as a *Library that Demonstrates a Commitment to the Democratic Humanity of its Community* by the organization *Librarians for Human Rights* (LHR). Each year, LHR recognizes one library in North America for this honor. LHR chose HPL for our neighborhood level action work through the Neighborhood Teams.

We continued to implement the Library's new community outreach model in the second quarter. This model updates and improves upon the Neighborhood Teams and we expect it will enable the Library to deliver outreach services more efficiently and effectively. For the quarter, Library staff engaged in relationships (e.g., collaborated on programs, attended meetings, or engaged in other activities) with Non-Profit Organizations 175 times, with Community Organizations 59 times, with Government 20 times, and with Youth Service Providers & Organizations eight times. As we are still in the first year of implementation no previous year comparative data is available.

Use of HartfordInfo.org was up 80% for the second quarter compared with a year ago. This continues the upward trend of recent years, but the especially large increase this quarter may be due to the City's public outreach efforts with regard to the ten year Plan of Conservation and Development (One City, One Plan), which we believe has driven greater use of HartfordInfo.org by both City staff and the public. Notable items added to the site include: a full color map showing Hartford voting districts; a report on the City's new project on critical health indicators; a new foreclosure prevention guide produced by the Connecticut Fair Housing Center; a report on the Coltsville development; and a Brookings Institution report on suburban poverty growth in 100 metro districts (including Hartford). Videos of several recent public programs were also added to the site including most of the *Democracy in Action* programs mentioned earlier. New agreements were reached with two of the most respected Hartford blogs (*Real Hartford*, and *Urban Compass*) to permanently add selected items to HartfordInfo.org. These new agreements, added to already existing agreements with print sources such as the *Hartford Courant*, *Hartford Business Journal*, *Hartford Advocate*, and others, will add to the richness of HartfordInfo.org as an information resource.

The third quarter will bring several more *Democracy in Action* programs and activities, a series of three programs on education topics, a program on job creation featuring Congressman John Larson, a program on Hartford's town committees and how they work, the deliberative democracy dialogue mentioned above, and others. All of these programs and activities will

occur in collaboration with a variety of other organizations based on the many strong relationships we continue to build on an ongoing basis.

## ***Readers Services***

Total circulation was stable system wide (+1%) with adult activity slightly off (-2%) compared with the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter last year. Book circulation decreased (-2%) and media decreased (-4%) downtown. Audio books increased (+19%) since we were able to expand their display area and make them more accessible. The decline in print materials was recorded in the new book area of the collection, while increases occurred in both fiction (+17%) and nonfiction (+16%) on the main floor of the library. Due to budget constraints the library has decreased the number of multiple copies of best sellers and new DVDS purchased, which directly impacts activity in these categories. Another contributing factor was the inactivity of the Library on Wheels for most of the quarter, where most activity occurs with adult materials.

All three branches in the north cluster recorded circulation increases, along with Camp Field and Mark Twain, resulting in higher (+3%) book activity that offset the same small decline (-3%) in media.

Overall the numbers remain quite steady despite the cut in the materials budget which has required making some difficult decisions about how to appropriate resources.

Frequently people who come to the library to read or research a topic of interest do not check out the materials they use, so in house use is also an important barometer of collection activity. Staff is making a concerted effort to record this activity daily throughout the system by scanning materials left in study rooms and on tables throughout the facilities. Downtown recorded a substantial increase (+56%) in this activity when compared with the same quarter last year.

The library is considering a system wide inventory for the first time in a number of years. This is an important project because staff cannot utilize or promote the collections well if catalog holdings are not accurate. Unfortunately over a long period of time materials have gone missing and the correlating records not removed from the database. Hand-held wireless devices with updated software will allow staff to perform this huge task in a more timely fashion than in the past. The ongoing work of evaluating, weeding and shifting the ground floor collection will facilitate this process downtown.

Most successful library book sales are orchestrated through the efforts of Friends groups and additional volunteers recruited to process, setup, price and sell on the actual day of the sale. Staff currently is considering new ways of managing de-accessioned library materials and gifts in order to generate more interest and revenue.

## ***Information Technology Services***

### ***Tech Services***

ITS assumed responsibility for administrative technology planning and support as part of the recent reorganization. Procedures, software and training needs will be reviewed and documented and potential changes will be recommended.

ITS reviewed and revised pc and server management procedures in response to the library network becoming infected with the Conficker computer virus in November. For a 10 day period most public pc's were not available as staff worked to isolate and remove the virus, install updates and install new antivirus software on the servers. Among other things, Conficker blocked authentication, which prevented the Pharos public computer time management system and other applications from working properly. It also opened the door for other worms to infect the network, which prolonged the recovery process. MHIS and HPL IT staff reviewed policies and procedures following the incident and determined that older pc's that could not run Windows XP were to be taken out of service because of the risk unpatched pc's created for the entire city network. ITS continues to monitor computer security and address lingering authentication issues.

Planning for a software upgrade of the Millennium integrated library system (ILS) was initiated, which will require new pc's at most service desks.

ITS projects planned for the third quarter include completion of the rollout of Gates Grant computers and Pharos time management software to the branches; upgrade of the Millennium integrated library system (ILS); support of the move of the Downtown service desk; and upgrading staff and public computers with Microsoft Office 2007.

#### *Web Services*

The process of selecting a vendor to redesign the HPL web site continued in 2Q 2009/10. In preparation for the new site, content was reviewed and revised, and discussions were held on how to improve the online user experience by enhancing access to all information about Hartford in all formats.

A new site was created and launched for Big Read 2010, <http://www.hplct.org/bigread>.

## **Arts, Cultural and Heritage Programs**

### **Connecticut Center for the Book (CCB)**

#### *Center for the Book in the Library of Congress*

A letter requesting renewal of our affiliate status through 31 December 2012 has been sent. It outlined our accomplishments regarding the Connecticut Book Awards, Letters about Literature, and the Connecticut Book Festival; extolled our unique position as steward of Connecticut's literary heritage; and, expressed excitement about completion of the Gallery of Contemporary Connecticut Authors and Illustrators—a cultural destination waiting to happen.

#### *Connecticut Book Awards*

The 2010 Call for Entries will go out at the end of February, soliciting titles published in 2009. Entry fees will be increased slightly and a \$5 handling fee will be added for self-published works, to cover the cost of re-shipping to judges. This year's Awards ceremony can take place on Sunday, 19 September.

### *Connecticut Book Festival*

The first celebration of writers, readers, and Connecticut's "community of the book," will take place on the University of Connecticut's Greater Hartford campus on 21-22 May, 2011. The planning committee includes Connecticut Center for the Book at Hartford Public Library, Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism, Connecticut Humanities Council, Connecticut Library Association, Connecticut State Library, UConn's Dodd Research Center, and the UConn Co-op. The free event will be modeled after the National Book Festival, with author presentations and opportunities for cultural agencies and reading promotion partners to promote their offerings.

### *Letters about Literature*

Connecticut realized a 40% increase in submissions for 2010, while the number of national entries increased by 21%. Target, the corporate sponsor, had expressed concern about continued support for this reading and writing promotion, but has extended a grant application for 2011 funding. The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress has sponsored this competition for more than twenty-five years.

### *National Book Festival*

The tenth annual Festival will take place on the National Mall on Saturday, 25 September.

### *The Big Read*

As the CCB assumes administration of our participation in the National Endowment for the Arts' Big Read, the program will need to reach beyond Greater Hartford to satisfy the mandate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress; we have already engaged the public libraries of Wallingford and Willimantic in expectation of receiving a 2010-2011 grant.

### **ArtWalk at Hartford Public Library**

- Stanwyck Cromwell's exhibition will remain on the **ArtWalk** through January 16, 2010.
- Planning is underway for an installation art exhibit featuring the works of Dawn Holder – February 19 through April 20, 2010. Opening reception to be held on February 19, 6-8 p.m.
- *Treasures of Hartford Public Library* sponsored by the Hartford History Center is scheduled for May through the summer.
- Andrew Kyle Phillips will close out the year with an exhibition of his paintings in October 2010.

### **Hartford History Center**

Opening in December and continuing through May 2010 is the Hartford History Center exhibition "Treasure Books: Selections from the Caroline Hewins Collection of Children's Literature." The well-attended opening reception featured speaker and guest curator Leonard Marcus on Sunday, December 6. Marcus is the leading authority on American children's

literature both nationally and internationally. Of special note was the January 3<sup>rd</sup> visit to the Hartford History Center by Caroline M. Hewins' grandniece Nan Hood and her daughter, Naomi. It was a first-time visit for both to Hartford Public Library and they thoroughly enjoyed the "Treasure Books" exhibit that illuminates Hewins' impact on libraries and literature throughout the world. An exhibition booklet guides you through the display cubes and a biographical look at Hewins' life is represented under glass on the Hartford History Center map cases.

Hartford History Center also hosted the Welles family, direct descendents of Gideon Welles, editor and part owner of the *Hartford Times* in 1826 and co-founder of the *Hartford Evening Press* in 1856. Welles became Abraham Lincoln's Secretary of the Navy in 1861. The Welles family traveled to Hartford this January to examine the recently acquired Gideon Welles diaries, a new collection donated to the Hartford History Center by Gary Wait.

The Hartford History Center now has 16 strong community members in place to serve on its advisory committee for the 2010 year, they include current HPL Board of Director member Steve Goddard and past board members Cynthia Reik and Jo Casey; Connecticut State Library - State Archivist Mark Jones; Executive Director of the Amistad Center for Art and Culture Olivia White; Hartford attorneys Bob Smith and Jim Lyon; co-founder of the American Studies program at Trinity College Dr. Eugene Leach as well as Trinity's multicultural assistant director Carol Correa de Best; Chief Charles Teale; Hartford archivists Gary Wait and Luke Williams; HPL Associate Librarian Anwar Ahmad; Associate Publisher of *CT Explored* Diane Foley; Society of the Descendents of the Founders of Hartford member Barbara Ulrich; and Bushnell Park Foundation community member Terry D'Italia.

## Development

### *Grant Status*

**Pending**— Grant applications with a total request amount of \$ 120,674 -\$145, 674 are pending approval for FY 09-10. Among the proposals are two requests to **Hartford Foundation for Public Giving** for matching dollars to The Big Read (\$20,000) and Website support (\$50,000-\$75,000); a request to the Barbara Bush Foundation for a literacy project to help recent refugee arrivals build ESL skills (\$50,674).

A request to the **Institute of Museum and Library Services** for FY 10-13 (\$687,864.00) is being proposed to create a replicable model for promoting immigrant civic. A request to The National Endowment for the Arts Big Read FY 2011 (\$20,000) is being proposed and the Library's partners are Trinity College and for the third consecutive year, Hartford Stage.

**Received**—The Library received notification of three awards for a total amount of \$123,000. The awards include \$68,000 for FY 10-12 from **Hartford Foundation for Public Giving** for a family literacy project, Homelinks II: Licensed and unlicensed ("family") day care providers will learn how to build the literacy of the young children whom they see in their homes and for Strategic Planning (\$50,000), and **The Hartford** (\$5,000). Grants confirmed for FY 09-10: **\$343,363**

### *Individual Giving*

Individual Giving Fall 09 Appeal-Total revenue: \$22,833.01; Yield: for every dollar spent \$2.87 was earned (Fall); Summer 09 appeal: \$10,407.00; Yield: for every dollar spent \$1.15 was

earned (Spring); Other Revenue Non Appeal: \$8,299.81 Total Revenue all Sources (FY09-10 YTD) \$41,539.82; Average Gift per Donor Comparison: Summer 09 Average Gift- \$66.71; Fall 09 Average Gift \$115.90: 73.74% increase.

Gifts In-Kind: AdamsAhern—sign facing out to Main Street for **ArtWalk** \$2,500 and The Connecticut Laborers' District Council (CLDC) \$6,000 new carpeting and installation for Mark Twain Branch.

Spring 2010 Appeal is being be planned and will be sent to donors and prospective donors.

### *Events*

One Big Summer Night, the Library's annual fundraiser, is scheduled for Thursday, June 24, 2010 at the Connecticut Convention Center and will be able to accommodate 400 plus attendees, with a goal to raise \$40,000. The event will feature author Julie Powell, the inspiration to the Golden Globe nominated movie "Julie & Julia," and a silent auction.

### *Media*

Fox 61 morning program did a live remote from the Library, December 31, 2009 to showcase the Library's First Night events.

Hartford Business Journal published a Movers and Shakers column featuring a Q&A with Matt Poland, the Library's CEO.

## **Facilities**

### *Albany Branch*

The development of the design and cost of the new Albany branch is complete. The City's Planning and Development department has approved the project and the architects are planning for the public hearing. Construction documents and bidding will commence mid-winter. Construction will follow in the summer of 2010; completion by late winter/early spring 2011.

The grant from the State Library for \$1MM is pending the approval of the Bond Commission.

## **Safety and Security**

The Library had (9) reportable incidents in the fourth calendar quarter. Five (5) reports were filed at the Downtown facility (one (1) report of property theft, two (2) medical emergencies, and one (1) false alarm place through 911. The Hartford Police Department assisted in resolving two (2) of these incidents.

Four (4) reports were filed by branches:

- Park Street – Seven year old child kicked materials that resulted in breaking the front glass window.
- Albany (2) – group of pre-teens were acting in an aggressive manner; child was pushed in front of a library vehicle by another child (no injury) – police were called.
- Blue Hills – young female customer was physically and orally abusive to another customer. The same young teenage girl, who has a history of inappropriate behavior in the library, was orally abusive to a staff member as well. Library privileges have been suspended for one year.

## Staff

Recruitment for the chief public services officer and the chief financial officer is underway.