



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Anne Farrow, 860-695-6296, afarrow@hplct.org

Author Walter Dean Myers Part of Library's Naturalization Event

Hartford, Connecticut (April 2, 2013) — Hartford Public Library invites the public to join us for a special Naturalization Ceremony from 11 a.m until noon on April 11 in the Atrium of the Library's Downtown Branch.

Music and remarks will be part of the agenda as the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services presents 30 candidates for U.S. citizenship. The Honorable Thomas P. Smith, United States Magistrate Judge, will administer the Oath of Allegiance to America's newest citizens, who hail from many countries. Walter Dean Myers, the influential author and national advocate for children's reading programs, will be the keynote speaker. He will speak again after the ceremony.

Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman and Hartford Public Library Chief Executive Officer Matthew K. Poland will provide the Naturalization Ceremony's opening remarks, while additional remarks will be made by Secretary of State Denise Merrill, Hartford Mayor Pedro Segarra, and Hartford Superintendent of Schools Dr. Christina Kishimoto.

Special elements of the April 11 ceremony also will include a presentation of the nation's colors by the First Company Governor's Foot Guard; former students of the Library's citizenship education program leading the Pledge of Allegiance; and performances by the Martin Luther King Elementary School Choir and the Hartford Public High School Show Choir.

After the ceremony, the public is invited to remain for a presentation from 1 to 2 p.m. by *The New York Times* bestselling author Walter Dean Myers, who has written more than 80 books for children and young adults. Last year, Myers was named the National Ambassador for Young People's Literature by the Library of Congress, and is the first African American in this post. Myers' message for the country is his trademark *Reading is Not an Option!* On April 11, Myers' will discuss his popular book *We Are America, A Tribute from the Heart*, an illustrated work combining murals and writings on the subject of freedom. Myers' presence at the event and the talk afterward has been sponsored by Connecticut Humanities, whose executive director, Stuart Parnes, will introduce Myers.

As part of its outreach to Hartford's significant immigrant population, the Library's American Place program has hosted Naturalization Ceremonies for more than a decade.

All are welcome to attend the Naturalization Ceremony, the reception in The American Place (TAP) that follows (TAP is on the first floor of the Library), and Myers' presentation in the Center for Contemporary Culture (also on the Library's first floor). Space is limited, so the Library asks those who wish to attend to e-mail Homa Naficy naficy@hplct.org

About Hartford Public Library

The Hartford Public Library traces its roots to 1774. It operates 10 locations in the City of Hartford. The Library receives more than 865,000 visits per year. Services include access to a large collection of materials for reading and research, as well as music and video. Programs provide education, information and enrichment to the people of Hartford in such areas as citizenship training, literacy, business skills and cultural awareness. The mission of Hartford Public Library is to provide free resources that inspire reading, guide learning, and encourage individual exploration. To learn more about the library, please see www.hplct.org.

About The American Place

The American Place is a nationally recognized Library program that assists immigrants in realizing their goals for a secure immigration, citizenship and literacy. The program focuses on citizenship preparation, English as a Second Language classes, and supports immigrants in making a successful transition to living and working in Hartford. The American Place brings long-term residents and recent immigrants together to learn, connect and share as they move toward full participation in our democracy. To learn more about The American Place, please go to www.hplct.org, then click on Library Services.