

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Hartford Public Library Celebrates City's Immigrant Artists with Evening of Special Events**



HARTFORD, Connecticut (February 6, 2014) – **On Thursday, February 20, Hartford Public Library will celebrate significant accomplishments in the lives of Hartford's immigrant community with two very special events.**

The evening will begin at 5:00 p.m. in the Library's Ground Floor Atrium, with a Naturalization Ceremony for **Greater Hartford residents who will see their dreams realized as they become American citizens.** Surrounded by friends and family, the life-changing ceremony signifies the final step in a challenging road to citizenship.

Immediately following the ceremony, the celebration continues with an **opening reception for "We Belong Here Hartford," an art exhibit celebrating the lives and artwork of professional immigrant artists and students from Hartford Public Schools.**

Originating from many different countries, these artists have found freedom and expression in the Greater Hartford community. Their work is also featured in the new book, *Freedom Dreams: We Belong Here Hartford*, published by Hartford Public Library, which will be unveiled during the reception.

The public is invited to attend what is sure to be a truly moving and celebratory evening. **To RSVP, please contact 860-695-6334 or [hnaficj@hplct.org](mailto:hnaficj@hplct.org).**

### **ABOUT WE BELONG HERE HARTFORD**

Hartford Public Library provides key support to residents new to America by linking them to programs and services available at both the Library and within the region. These resources help them acclimate to their new homes and position them for success within the community.

**We Belong Here** initiatives are based upon building relationships of trust between individuals of different backgrounds and countries. This is achieved through:

- A Cultural Navigators Program, which pairs immigrant “mentors” with those who have recently moved to the country;
- Community Dialogues, which bring immigrants and the community together to discuss and develop solutions for an issue of common interest;
- Coalition-building among key stakeholders for information sharing and advocacy.

**We Belong Here** was initially funded through a three-year National Leadership Grant from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services.

### **ABOUT [HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY](#)**

The Hartford Public Library traces its roots to 1774. It operates 10 locations and a Library-on-Wheels in the City of Hartford. The Library receives more than 860,000 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. Visit [hplct.org](http://hplct.org) and the library’s new blog at [blogs.hplct.org](http://blogs.hplct.org).

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