



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Hartford Public Library's Barbour Library to Hold Public Health Fair October 27**

HARTFORD – In an effort to provide information about health issues, health and wellness, and opportunities offered by local health organizations, Hartford Public Library's Barbour branch will be convening a public health fair.

The event will take place on Tuesday, October 27 from 12 to 3 on at Unity Plaza, 261 Barbour Street.

In addition, the library will be distributing boxes of shelf-stable food donated by Cigna.

"This is part of Hartford Public Library's effort to care for the whole person," said Bridget Quinn-Carey, HPL's president and CEO. "We hope that by providing people with trusted and verified information, and connecting them to other community service providers, we can help people have healthier lives."

The neighborhood surrounding the Barbour Library wrestles with serious health concerns, including food scarcity, diabetes, obesity, and mental health issues.

"In the North End and Northeastern parts of Hartford health is a big issue," said Irene Blean, Barbour Library manager. "It's my goal to help people become more educated in terms of their health."

In the past, Barbour Library has offered nutrition classes and Blean helped facilitate a farmer's market across the street from the Albany Library.

Blean believes that libraries cannot approach their traditional mission – access to literature and learning opportunities – without acknowledging the vulnerabilities that many patrons experience. For example, the neighborhood around Barbour Library is considered a food desert. Helping people find fresh food and providing information on how to prepare it becomes the first step towards everything else Hartford Public Library offers.

"We can't even approach enriching things with customers without addressing their basic life needs," Blean said.

The following local health organizations will participate in the Barbour Branch health fair:

- Trinity Health of New England
- University of Connecticut, Department of Nutrition Science

- Urban League of Greater Hartford
- Connecticare
- University of Connecticut, School of Social Work

In addition, the Library on Wheels will be there to distribute free books, HPL's school choice coordinator to provide parents with school sign up information, and a representative from Hartford Next handling voter registration. Artist Jacqueline Bright will provide jewelry kits for men and women that can be done at home.

For more information about Hartford Public Library, visit [www.hplct.org](http://www.hplct.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](http://www.hplct.org).