President and CEO

Highlights

August 2022

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APRIL–JUNE 2022
at a glance

39,239
TOTAL CIRCULATION

984
TOTAL PROGRAMS

13,243
TOTAL PROGRAM ATTENDEES

8,359
REFERENCE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

160
MUNICIPAL IDS CREATED

10,070
COMPUTER SESSIONS

3,647
VIRTUAL PROGRAM VIEWS

17,900
SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS AND FANS
In Q4, $2,062,549 in Awarded Grants (consisting of Private Foundation, Corporate, Federal, State, and City Grants), and an additional $1,628,569 in Pending Grants (as of 7/6/22)

Travelers awarded Hartford Public Library $100,000 for operating support of educational initiatives and support of the 2022 Beyond Words event.

The 2022 summer learning program received $20,000 from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and $25,000 from the Fisher Foundation.

The Roberts Foundation is once again sponsoring Hartford Public Library’s Artwalk in the amount of $14,000.

Hartford Public Library was also awarded grants from The Ensworth Charitable Foundation, the Evelyn Preston Memorial Fund, the Charles Nelson Robinson Fund, and the Aurora Foundation.

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On June 21st and 22nd, Vision to Learn offered their services to customers at the Albany and Park branch locations. Vision to Learn is a mobile van that offers free vision exams and eyeglasses to children from ages 5-18. HPL was the first library to host this service. Altogether, they provided free eye exams to 27 children and prescribed free eyeglasses for 24. The children will receive their new glasses at the branches on July 20th. HPL is already discussing the possibility of providing this service again soon.
KINGS OF B’MORE BOOK RELEASE WITH R. ERIC THOMAS, IN CONVERSATION WITH VERSATILE POETIQ

Thursday, June 9th 2022: 6-7:30pm
Hartford Public Library, Atrium
500 Main Street Hartford, CT

Hartford Public Library had the opportunity to host best-selling author R. Eric Thomas in an in-person event in conversation with Hartford poet Versatile Poetiq, celebrating the release of his new book, Kings of B’more. HPL received grant funding for this event from Hartford Foundation’s Equality Fund for LGBTQ.

Kings of B’more tells the story of two Black queer best friends who face their last day together with an epic journey through Baltimore in this magnetic YA debut. Through their unpredictable adventure, main characters Harrison and Linus learn about the necessity of friendship and queer community.

In order to connect with as many queer young people, as well as adult queer communities, in Hartford, HPL promoted this event to the Hartford Public School’s Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) network, Q Plus, UConn Rainbow Center, and Trinity Queer Resource Center.

Local LGBTQ served organizations such as Kamora’s Cultural Corner and the Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective who co-sponsored the event and provided giveaways and materials about their services.

The event started with a conversation between Eric and Versatile, as they discussed inspiration for the book, Eric’s writing origin story, and the importance of Black queer representation. The audience Q&A furthered conversation around the seemingly bright future of YA publishing, writing diverse Black characters, and discussing what is next for Eric’s varied career. Afterwards, Eric met with audience members for book signing, with book sales from Barnes and Noble UConn Hartford.
R. Eric Thomas is the bestselling author of Here for It, or How to Save Your Soul in America, a Read with Jenna book club pick featured on Today and a Lambda Literary Award finalist. He is the co-author of Reclaiming Her Time, a biography of Rep. Maxine Waters. He is also a television writer (AppleTV+’s Dickinson, FX’s Better Things), a playwright, and the long-running host of The Moth in Philadelphia and D.C. For four years, he was a senior staff writer at Elle.com where he wrote “Eric Reads the News.” Kings of B’more is his YA debut. Learn more at rericthomas.com.

Brittana “VersatilePoetiq” Tatum was born and raised in the Hartford area and has a Business Administration degree from the University of Hartford. She has been performing Spoken Word for 10 years and teaching Spoken Word for 8 years. Currently, she works for Charter Oak Cultural Center and Arts for Learning Connecticut and has taught at many schools in Hartford. Versatile has performed in front of 20,000 people at the 2019 Greater Hartford Jazz Festival and hosted the 2019 Trinity International Hip Hop Festival. Her stage name is VersatilePoetiq due to her universal appeal and unique mix of Spoken Word and Rap. 
@versatilepoetiq

**PROGRAM PRODUCTION & ENGAGEMENT/HPL STUDIOS**

Long awaited, this quarter Hartford Public Library released the first ever online music collection of Hartford music: The Beat!

Thanks to the work of the Community Curators group, The Beat! was set up for success from the very beginning. The group was tasked with the job of curating the collection and consists of influencers of Hartford’s music scene such as: Yolande Spears (Bushnell), June Archer, Maurice Robertson, Jocelyn Pleasant, Andres Chaparro, Stephen Cusano (Parkville Sounds), and Elijah Williams (HPL/YOUmedia).
The convergence of the influencers was immediately followed by the process of launching the platform to the public. The first step of the launching process was to produce marketing material that would grab and hold the attention of Hartford artists and music-lovers; therefore, HPL produced two promotional videos that showcased the idea of Hartford musicians bringing their music to HPL. The production featured Ghazi Omair, a Hartford producer and lyricist, who’s album Lavender is one of the initial albums featured during the launch of The Beat!

The Beat! officially launched on June 6th, making the first submission round open to Hartford artists. This new platform and initiative garnered a great deal of excitement and buzz around the city, resulting in HPL being featured in multiple interviews and stories, including Fox61 News, and the Hartford Courant.

This new resource has continued to influence excitement for Hartford music-lovers of all kinds. As the first submission comes to a close, The Beat! has received a total of 14 album submissions, with many more interested artists looking forward to the Winter ‘22 round.
OPPORTUNITIES YOUTH

On June 30th, ten youth program participants completed HPL’s IT training program.

It has been rewarding to see them learn about the IT field, the world of work, employer expectations, and to complete three college courses at Capital Community College during this program. They’ve developed confidence in their futures and see HPL as an educational community resource for them and their families.

HPL’s IT department provided a valuable job shadow experience for all of our students. Thank you to the IT staff Kashif Chaudhary and Zachary Peters. Our participants expressed that observing the activities in a busy IT department was quite an eye opener and enabled them to see themselves in this type of work.

Charisse Snipes and Linda Martinez of the City of Hartford enthusiastically welcomed eight of our students to internships at Metro Hartford Innovation Services (MHIS) where they were allowed to intern in units where they had specific interest such as network security, asset tagging, and technical support.

Two other students interned on site at HPL (downtown) in our children’s department and in YOUMedia based on their specific career interests. Thank you to Lina Osho-Williams, Mike Elder and Marc Pettersen for providing these valuable learning experiences.

Two out of ten program participants have entered employment in IT at Infosys in Hartford. A third is also under consideration once his background check is completed. One participant is registered to continue IT study as a full-time student at Capital Community College this fall.

Our students have expressed that they were surprised to find such an opportunity at a library. Parents have also mentioned that they had no idea that this type of training would be free and available to their children at HPL. Some parents are referring new students to us based on their child’s experience.

Our students enjoyed attending the musical Hamilton at the Bushnell the evening after program completion.

This was a perfect end of program celebration.
HARTFORD HISTORY CENTER

The Hartford History Center worked closely with its neighbor, the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, in support of the Wadsworth’s recent exhibition on the life and work of Milton Avery. HHC staff located an image of Milton Avery in the Hartford Times Collections, which became the cornerstone of the Wadsworth’s Hartford specific aspect of the traveling exhibition, “Milton Avery.” The HHC’s contributions landed the library’s HHC an acknowledgement and thank you in the exhibition catalog. Additionally, the HHC hosted the Friends of the Wadsworth Atheneum on April 13th. HHC staff presented an overview of the HHC and a tour through its exhibit, “October 1920” featuring Marilyn Parkinson Thrall’s sculpture, “The Art of Perseverance.” HHC staff also exhibited collection materials thought to be of interest to the group. On display were Hartford Times photographs of the exterior and interior of the Wadsworth. One photo featured a young woman who worked at the reception desk in the mid-1960’s. One of the visitors was visibly moved upon seeing the photo. It turns out that the young woman pictured was our visitor’s brother’s fiancé who died shortly after the photograph was taken and shortly before she was to be married. This is just another example of the serendipitous things that happen in HHC.

ARTWALK

Hartford-based mixed media artist, Megyn Craine, showed her first solo exhibition on the ArtWalk May 13 through June 25, 2022. Her exhibition, Artifact, was a collection of work that mixes common materials and found objects with various concepts – from Alzheimer’s to the prison system to sexist language – to reveal unseen connections and create new layers of meaning from our everyday experiences. Approximately 720 people of all ages and backgrounds came to see the exhibition and also interacted physically with it as two of her pieces were made to add to and take from, being transformed by viewers throughout the exhibition period. Some of the comments visitors wrote included: “thought provoking,” “witty and shimmering with spirit,” “interesting use of space/layers/texture,” “past and present converge” and “insightful.” On May 21, Craine led 16 adults
through a conceptual collage workshop and made gorgeous, layered, mixed media work.

**DLL@HPL**

Brad Overturf was hired as the new DLL@HPL Manager, joining the library in mid-June. Brad worked on and supervised engineering, research, and planning teams at the CT Department of Transportation for over 30 years. As CTDOT’s Photolog Supervisor he oversaw the first-ever High-Definition image collection of all state roadways completed by a US state DOT (think Google Street View before Google Street View) and the 35mm-to-4K digital transfer of over 11 million archived roadway film images. He holds a master’s degree in American Studies from Trinity College. In his spare time, he runs, reads, and travels, and is the VP of the US Track and Field CT Association.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

In Q4, Communications wrapped up a multipronged marketing effort for HPL’s popular Baby Grand Jazz Series that included a paid social media campaign as well as print materials and display advertising. While in-person audiences returned to the concerts at the Downtown Library, they continued to be streamed online and received strong interest across our platforms. In total the series was viewed more than 8,200 times on our YouTube channel and Facebook page.
DONOR RECEPTION FOR THE PARK STREET LIBRARY @ THE LYRIC LEGACY CAMPAIGN

A thank you reception was held on June 3rd at the Park Street Library for major donors to the Legacy Campaign. The recently installed donor signs were there for all to see.

Eversource employees Theresa Hopkins-Staten, President Eversource Energy Foundation, and Ana Alfaro, Legacy Campaign Co-Chair, thanked all the donors.

HPL President & CEO, Bridget Quinn, welcomes the guests to the reception.

Ana Alfaro and Marilda Gándara, Legacy Co-Chairs, thanked all the donors.

Jill Hutensky, SVP Hartford Market, shared how honored Bank of America is to be a supporter of HPL in many ways.
$125,000 in confirmed Sponsorships

Invitations mailed November 12th

Website (hplbeyondwords.com) has been upgraded to register people for tickets or tables with immediate confirmations emailed and data going directly into new Bloomerang donor management system. Donors may choose to cover credit card processing fees or make a gift in lieu of participating.

Endow Hartford 21 is a new matching gift endowment program, initiated by the Zachs Family Foundation and supported by other lead donors who believe in the nonprofit community across Greater Hartford. The 1:2 match seeks to inspire donors to give generously to support the long-term future of the organizations they love.

HPL was one of only 51 organizations selected to benefit based on their strength and importance in the community. Generous HPL donors have contributed $9,550 as of 11/10/2021.

Human Resources

Below is a highlight of Human Resources activities for the first quarter:

Talent Acquisitions
10 hires, 3 separations, 3 promotions.

New Hires

John Marshall, Security Guard
Eshwar Persaud, Security Guard
Juan Diaz, Security Guard
Carmen Acevedo, Project Support Specialist, TAP
Russell Blair, Communications Manager

25

Jason Rojas, House Majority Leader and Chief of Staff to Trinity College President Joanne Berger-Sweeney, explains why Trinity and the State of CT supported this important new addition to the Frog Hollow community.

Guests enjoy the new Eversource Community Room at Park Street Library@The Lyric—something the community had been requesting for a very long time.

Update: "Hartford Public Library Endow Hartford 21 Fund raised over $53,000 with gifts and matching funds" the Library has signed on for Endow Hartford 21 Phase 2! Thank you to everyone who participated to date!

CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

ALBANY BRANCH ANNEX

The North-West School Building will be renovated and built out to create the Albany Branch Annex. The annex will be connected to the existing Albany space providing additional capacity to meet the needs of the community. The project will consist of two phases. Phase I consists of the stabilization and remediation of the North-West School Building. Phase II will be the building out of the space and connection to the existing library building.

The specifications and drawings for the remediation and stabilization work have been completed and an RFP was issued on June 24, 2022. A site walk through was conducted on July 12, 2022, with potential bidders. Bid responses are due back the 1st week of August.

BARBOUR LIBRARY @ SWIFT

A series of Community engagement meetings were facilitated by Margaret Sullivan Studios providing the community with the ability to share the services they would like to have available at the new library.
Preliminary design schematics were completed by Silver Petrucelli and Associates architectural firm in June/July timeframe.

Downs Construction Company, LLC was selected as the Owners Project Manager for the Swift Project.

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

In June, the Library successfully transitioned to a new IT infrastructure service provider, All Covered. As part of this transition a full time and a part time IT Help Desk staff were hired who will be supporting help desk and IT project implementations.

Cybersecurity – Knowbe4 cybersecurity company, providing employee education, testing, and phishing protection services was selected to provide cybersecurity services for the Library in June.

IT is in the process of implementing the services in the month of July and anticipates beginning all staff cybersecurity training by the end of the 1st quarter.

**HUMAN RESOURCES**

**NEW HIRES**

Abigail Gagliardi, YOUmedia Mentor
Madison Gaucher, part time, Library Assistant
Natasha Goodwin, part time, Library Assistant
Grady Jones, Security Guard
Nichole Hawkins, Program Coordinator, Leap into Learning
Jeanne Hendricks, Security Guard
Sabrina Houghton, Security Guard Supervisor
Mia Lozada, part time, Library Assistant
Mary O’Neil, Adult Education Coordinator
Bradley Overturf, Digital Library Lab Manager
Stephen Pendergast, floating, Library Assistant
Michele Rosas, YOUmedia Mentor
Daniel Santiago, Development Assistant
Lenard Stewart, Security Guard

**NEW POSITIONS**

Lina Osho-Williams, Assistant Director, Youth and Family Services
Stephanie Turner, Maintainer I

**ORGANIZATIONAL INITIATIVES**

HPL continues their ongoing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Programs & Efforts. Four of four facilitator-led modules in the Leadership Recenter phase were completed; 7 of 8 facilitator-led modules in the all-staff Learn phase were completed. All staff continue to have access to 12 self-paced learn modules through the LSC website.
## Statistics

### Programs

#### Downtown Programs Attendance Views

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#### Branches Programs Attendance Views

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#### Pilot & Other Programs Programs Attendance Views

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### Hartford Public Library Programming Totals

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*Hartford Public High School

### Visits Systemwide

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