

**CONTACT:**

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dlarcen@hplct.org**For Immediate Release****Hartford Financial Services Group Supports YOUMedia and The American Place**

February 26, Hartford CT — The Hartford Financial Services Group awarded the Library \$60,000 under the corporate partners initiative. The Hartford is the library's Literacy Partner.

This funding from The Hartford allows the library to serve the community to address literacy from early childhood to adults, improve resources for immigrants and refugees, offer job and career services, provide access to computers and the Internet, work on digital literacy, refine skills, offer library services through the school district, and present arts and culture programs.

This grant supports the creation of YOUMedia@Hartford High School. The downtown branch of the library began YOUMedia Hartford in September, 2014. The program is targeted to visitors ages 13 to 19 years and focuses on practical skill building, STEM learning, and hands-on experience. The space uses the HOMAGO learning theory of constructionism: hanging out, messing around and geeking out.

The upcoming YOUMedia space at Hartford High School will be open to the population of 1,300 students in the three academies at the Asylum Hill school. The center will provide equal access to technology, minimize the opportunity gap through inclusive projects that help students, and expose students to new ideas and ways of learning, help build relationships with industry professionals and other mentors, and help students achieve higher goals.

Through The American Place program, started in 2000, services to immigrants and refugees has become one of the library's core functions. These services include English As A Second Language instruction, citizenship test preparation, assistance with the citizenship application process, and strategies to promote immigrant integration.

About Hartford Public Library

As a finalist for the 2013 and 2014 National Medal from the Institute for Museum and Library Services, Hartford Public Library has been recognized as a national leader in redefining the urban public library in the 21st century as an innovative and stimulating place where people can learn and discover, explore their passions, and find a rich array of resources that contribute to a full life. Hartford Public Library provides free resources that inspire reading, guide learning, and

encourage individual exploration. Serving the residents of Hartford and beyond at its nine branches and Downtown location, Hartford Public Library receives more than 833,000 visits per year from adults, children and families seeking early literacy opportunities, work skills training, civic engagement, arts enrichment, and so much more. Visit www.hplct.org.

Hartford Public Library/500 Main St./Hartford CT 06103