ANNUAL REPORT 2018
Libraries are the great equalizer, the cornerstone of our democracy.

– Bridget Quinn-Carey
CEO, Hartford Public Library

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Photo: Naturalization Ceremony at Hartford Public Library. April 2018.
A message from the Board President and the Chief Executive Officer

Hartford Public Library’s history spans more than 243 years, with the first library in Hartford organized in 1774 as the Library Company. In 1878, The Library Company became the Hartford Library Association. On May 3, 1893, by a special act of the general assembly, the library’s name was formally changed to Hartford Public Library and the doors were opened to all, free of charge.

In 2018 we are celebrating 125 years of service as Hartford’s free public library. HPL is a premier urban public library and is recognized nationally for its innovative programs and services.

The staff and board look forward to continuing to serve the Hartford community through the myriad programs, partnerships, services and collections we offer including The American Place, ArtWalk, Boundless, Hartford History Center, Baby Grand Jazz, American Job Center, Library on Wheels, Leap into Learning, Community Collections, and YOUmedia. We continue to be the place for books and information with hundreds of thousands of materials in print and online for reading, learning and exploring our world.

And it’s all still free! Come visit us today.

Bridget Quinn-Carey
Chief Executive Officer

Greg Davis
Board President

Hartford Public Library has always sought ways to bring the library to the people. In the early 1900s, it brought books out to fire stations and factories. Today, the Library On Wheels travels throughout the city.
In 2016 the Library embarked on a strategic planning process to address HPL’s long term sustainability. For many years, the Library had struggled to maintain services across its ten locations in the face of rising community needs. Service levels had eroded over time through reductions in open hours and reduced staffing.

To secure its future and preserve the ability to serve the people of Hartford, the Library created a Strategic Plan to prioritize critical services over the next three years and chart a course toward a long-term vision that maintains the Library’s position as a city-wide anchor for learning and community engagement.

As part of the Plan, the library restructured its service model. The Downtown Library, Albany, Park, Dwight, Barbour, and Camp Field branches remained open with expanded hours and days of service. Ropkins Branch is open after school and early evenings. The Goodwin, Mark Twain, and Blue Hills branches closed in January 2018, and the staff was redeployed across the system. Efforts to repurpose the Goodwin facility were launched with HPL working closely with the NRZ’s. The Library is working with Hartford Public Schools to develop services for the Blue Hills neighborhood, and HPL plans to continue to offer classes from the West Middle School (former Mark Twain Branch) location.

The Plan also called for enhanced outreach efforts. The Library on Wheels now makes 8 - 10 stops per week, depending on the season (see box). In addition, HPL started “Community Collections” in August 2017. Small collections of books are available at over 15 high-traffic sites in Hartford (see box). Community members may borrow or keep the books of their choice.

One of the most popular new services at HPL is the Library Of Things. City residents, like Nyesha McCauley and her daughters, Nia and Seven, were delighted to find that they could borrow a fishing pole or a cake pan just like a book or DVD. HPL’s Johana Blanco is at right.

Another key element of the Strategic Plan is working even more closely with partners. HPL’s most visible new partner is the University of Connecticut’s Hartford campus (see page 14). UCONN Hartford’s library is located within the HPL Downtown Library on Main Street. The relationship has proven to be mutually beneficial for students and the entire community. Other partnerships include Hartford Stage, Hartford Public Schools and many more (see page 15).
Hartford Public Library’s Big Read 2018 was the event of the season, drawing hundreds for an evening with Claudia Rankine, acclaimed author of *Citizen: An American Lyric*. Many who read the book through the library’s Big Read program attended the event to hear Rankine deliver the keynote address of the evening.

Big Read 2018 also featured a provocative dance performance by TNMOT AZTRO, led by Arien Wilkerson. The performance was held in the library’s atrium, with spectators crowding the floors above to watch.

Author Claudia Rankine speaks to students at the Downtown Library’s YOUmedia Center before giving the keynote address at the Big Read.

(Hartford dancer Arien Wilkerson performs in a piece he created for the Big Read.)

Evelyn Heintz has her book signed by author Claudia Rankine.

Young poet Toni-Ann Wilson recites some of her work for the large audience at the Big Read 2018.

TNMOT AZTRO performs in the library atrium. The dramatic piece was inspired by local experience.

Author Claudia Rankine (center) with HPL’s Lauren Thompson and Martha-Rea Nelson.

Construction on the new Park Library is scheduled to begin in the Spring of 2019. When complete, the two-story, 13,000 square-foot facility will be the largest branch library in the Hartford Public Library system.
The Hartford History Center

Refining and Redefining Hartford History

Hartford History Center collects, preserves, and makes available materials and information relating to the history, literature, and culture of Hartford. It shares its holdings in traditional formats but also uses state-of-the-art technology to serve the needs of the customer.

Major Collections Added in 2017-2018

- Local photographer Lanny Nagler donated his collection of 35mm slides, transparencies and negatives of Hartford subjects taken in the late-20th and early 21st centuries. Lanny Nagler’s images go beyond the purely documentary, they are also works of art and will prove a valuable resource for future generations as they try to understand the period in which we now live.
- Lydia J. Mele and John G. Mele donated 15 Hartford-specific awards that their mother, Olga M. Mele, received for her years of community work. Olga M. Mele made a significant impact on the Puerto Rican and faith-based communities in the Greater Hartford area.
- Ferne Ware Ridley donated more than 1,000 negatives and 35 mm slides that speak to her family’s very active history in Hartford. This robust collection, spanning the years 1954 to the 1990s, is in wonderful shape, and many images thoughtfully identified. When fully processed, the Ware Family Collection will make our neighborhood histories that much more dynamic.
- Wayne Fleming and former Peace Train organizer and collector Tim Wolf donated 217 digitized photographs and fliers that show the early Hartford hip hop scene through the lens of the 1970s and 80s Hartford arts organization, Peace Train. The Peace Train Hartford Hip Hop Collection includes images from Peace Train’s Breaking and Popping competitions in Bushnell Park, Peace Train’s mobile stage with breakdancers in downtown Hartford, and graffiti mural projects off Van Dyke Avenue.

2017-2018 Awards

- Hartford History Center received the 2018 Empowering Communities Award from the Connecticut Fair Housing Center for work done in creating the CT Fair Housing Tour of Hartford.
- Hartford Public Library and the Hartford History Center were honored by the Connecticut Institute for Community Development (CICD) Puerto Rican Parade, Inc. with the 2018 Maria C. Sanchez Arts and Culture Award. The award was given in recognition of the work done in preserving the history of Hartford’s Puerto Rican community in the city and in the region.

A local student studies an item from the Real Art Ways archive at the Hartford History Center.

Hartford native and Weaver High School valedictorian Elbert Weinberg was widely regarded as one of the most promising young artists of the 1950s and 1960s. In 2014, the Weinberg Trust donated several of Weinberg’s sculptures, many of his prints and drawings, and a large collection of manuscripts, ephemera, and photographs documenting his work to Hartford Public Library. Hartford History Center staff processed the collection, and an electronic finding aid is available. Additionally, over 1000 artworks were digitized and are now accessible online in the Hartford History Center’s Digital Repository.

In the Grand Tradition: The Enduring Art of Elbert Weinberg

In the Grand Tradition: The Enduring Art of Elbert Weinberg, published this past spring, presents an in-depth analysis of Weinberg’s most important sculptures as well as a brief biography of the sculptor. Fifty-six illustrations, most drawn directly from the Weinberg Collection in the Hartford History Center, introduce readers to many different aspects of his work, including his prints, drawings, and preparatory studies as well as finished sculptures ranging from intimate small objects such as mirrors and menorahs to large public monuments and fountains. Written by Hartford History Center consulting curator Nancy Finlay, this book is now available for purchase through the Hartford History Center’s partner organization Wesleyan University Press.

To welcome the Hartford branch of the University of Connecticut to downtown Hartford, the Hartford History Center mounted an exhibition, “The Times in Our Lives.” The exhibit celebrated the Hartford Times Building, center of the new UCONN campus, and The Hartford Times’ role in Hartford’s history. Pictured is the Hartford Times Employee Reunion on September 27, 2017, following the closing reception of “The Times in Our Lives.”
YOUmedia on the Move!

Building a sense of community for teens is the goal of the new YOUmedia Albany, a next-generation digital learning and creative space. And on April 10, with a snip of the ceremonial scissors, leaders with the Hartford Public Library, students, and elected officials officially opened the library’s second YOUmedia Learning Lab. The first opened in 2014 at the Downtown Library. Albany YOUmedia is filled with tools for creating — from screen printing and video editing, to vinyl cutting, computer coding, and 3D printing. Technology is important to teens, but only part of the story, said Tricia George, Director of Teen Services for Hartford Public Library. “The three most important things to teens today are access to technology, adults who care about them, and their friends,” she said.

Friendship is in fact a key element at both YOUmedia Learning Labs. George said that in a survey taken among teens at the Downtown YOUmedia, 75% of those surveyed said they made 15 or more new friends at the learning lab. “These are friendships based on shared affinities, not on what school you go to or what neighborhood you live in. Young people who are interested in something, like making music or taking photos, invariably bond with other people who are interested in the same thing,” she added.

Funding for the new YOUmedia Learning Lab at Albany came from a generous donation from the Mandell-Braunstein families. The Weaver Class of 1967 has also provided support.

After over three years of success at the Downtown Library, YOUmedia expanded in 2018, opening a new center for teens at the Albany Library.

Passport Services

HPL has changed the hours of its Passport Service at the Downtown Library to better meet rising demand. If this is your first US passport, you will need to apply in person. If you are renewing an expired adult passport issued within the last 15 years, you must apply by mail. If you are under age 16 and are renewing an expired passport, you must appear in person.

New Passport Service Hours

No Passports on Monday
Tuesday Passport Services from 11:30-7:00
Wednesday Passport Services from 11:30-7:00
Thursday Passport Services from 11:30-7:00
Friday Passport Services from 10:00-3:00
Saturday Passport Services from 10:00-3:00

Passport Services

In addition to being a great public convenience, HPL’s Passport Service also brings in additional revenue to the library, generating $70,007 in FY 2017-2018.
PARTNERING FOR PROGRESS

The past year has seen Hartford Public Library (HPL) increase its partnerships with local institutions in order to enhance and extend literacy, education and cultural enrichment among members of the Greater Hartford Community.

Hartford Stage

In September 2017, HPL and Hartford Stage announced a multi-tiered partnership designed to increase access to quality live theater for residents of Hartford’s many diverse neighborhoods.

Hartford Stage/Hartford Public Library Free Pass Program

January - May, 2018

Nearly 1,000 free passes distributed!

This unique program enables Hartford Public Library card holders the opportunity to reserve free theatre tickets to all Hartford Stage productions. Two tickets for each public performance at Hartford Stage are set aside for each library branch, making approximately 4,000 tickets available to Hartford residents. Response has been enthusiastic throughout the HPL system.

In addition to free passes, the Neighborhood Ambassador Program brought people together at Hartford Stage to discuss how the themes of productions intersect with current issues in Hartford.

Book displays at all Hartford Public Library locations featured curated reading selections hand-picked by the Hartford Stage Artistic team and librarians to correlate to themes and ideas presented in the theater’s productions.

In addition, HPL@Hartford Stage – a Hartford Public Library kiosk branch at Hartford Stage – enabled theater patrons with Hartford and Connecticut library cards to check out books related to each production to deepen their experience of the art presented onstage.

UCONN-Hartford

In April, 2016, UCONN and HPL entered into a unique and exciting space and resource sharing partnership. A major renovation of HPL’s Downtown Library created new areas for the UCONN’s Hartford campus library, classrooms, technology centers and student study areas.

We welcomed the first students to the new UCONN campus in August 2017. UCONN and the library collaborated on several events, including the weekly Hartford Open Mic Event (H.O.M.E.) in the Fall of 2017; the Connecticut Civic Ambassadors Summit December 2, 2017; the Black History Month Kickoff Event in February 2018 and a Painting Workshop at the Big Read Kick-off on March 20, 2018.

In addition, the Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library, The Amistad Center for Art & Culture, the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, and UCONN Humanities Institute formed a community engagement partnership to present Encounters, a series focused on encouraging informed and informal conversations about issues that affect our lives.

UCONN students research local history at the Hartford History Center.

These are just a few examples of partners with whom Hartford Public Library has a current project or initiative.

The Library is proud to have worked with hundreds of organizations, institutions and companies over the years to bring great things to Hartford.

Working together for a stronger community!
The UCONN renovation at the Downtown Library provided an opportunity to reimagine the main floor workflow and layout, specifically related to those areas which were not included in the renovation project. The increased use of the space and number of people in the building has invited a new approach to the configuration of the space and service points.

HPL used a human-centered design approach to create flexible solutions to meet user needs. Our new vision for customer service and support, technology, and resource access creates a flexible, dynamic and customer focused experience.

Through prototyping and modeling with the staff, the Library developed a new floor and furniture plan enabling staff to better serve the public. Highlights of the new configuration include:

• Moving the Passport Office from the second floor to the first to improve visibility and service
• Creating ‘genius-bar’ areas for people to use our computers (or their own laptops) and connect with staff
• Reconfiguration of the American Job Center space to better serve those seeking employment and career assistance
• Introduction of service points to issue library cards and Hartford City IDs
• Introduction of a business center with technology available including photocopiers, scanners, and faxing services
• Introduction of self-service check out kiosks using RFID technology to streamline borrowing and requesting transactions (coming in 2019)
• Staff using mobile service carts to assist users in the stacks or on the floor – wherever they need help
• Additional table seating to accommodate increased number of users
• Mobile displays and interactive exhibits to highlight programs and services offered by the Library

These changes will be made with new furniture and signage to provide the most flexible design and to provide the ability to reconfigure in the future depending on workflow and user needs.
We’ve all heard the old saying, “Give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach a man to fish and he eats for a lifetime.” But Hartford Public Library’s Career Pathways Initiative is adding an addendum to that well-worn saying, “Teach someone how to properly and safely prepare and handle a fish – or any other food product – for public consumption, and he or she has a very good chance of landing a job in today’s modern food-service industry.”

The Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) kicked off in September 2016. Funding was provided by an initial $165,375 grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, plus supplemental grants. CPI is a partnership between the library and Hartford Public Schools & Family Nutrition Services. The school system’s food service division provides internships to CPI students.

CPI’s achievements have been recognized nationally. Thanks to the program, the Urban Libraries Council named Hartford Public Library HPL as one of its 10 Top Innovators. A panel of expert judges selected the CPI program from 220 submissions in 10 categories that demonstrated the value and impact of public library service.

And make no mistake, this is not charity. The program is free, but the students have to work. They go to class, they complete work in computer training, language and writing. If they’re not interested in doing the work, there’s a deep waiting list of people behind them who are eager to take their seat in the classroom... But what’s most impressive about this program is that it has a tangible, visible result... They have the foundation to begin a larger career.

The Hartford Courant
March 16, 2018
ANNUAL REPORT FINANCIALS
FY18 BUDGET

Revenue

- City Contribution: $8,100,000
- Grants: $930,784
- Endowment Income: $659,310
- Gifts: $300,000
- Fees Income: $341,117

Total Revenue: $10,331,211

Expense

- Personnel Costs: $7,408,092
- Other Operating Expenditure: $1,915,912
- Library Materials: $571,823
- Plant Operations & Maintenance: $435,384

Total Expense: $10,331,211

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
June 30, 2018 and 2017

ASSETS

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<th>2018*</th>
<th>2017</th>
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<td>Total Assets</td>
<td>$35,414,179</td>
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LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

LIABILITIES

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<td>Deferred Revenue</td>
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<td>Total Liabilities</td>
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NET ASSETS

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<tr>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temporarily Restricted</td>
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<td>Permanently Restricted</td>
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<td>Total Net Assets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</td>
<td>$35,414,179</td>
<td>$28,077,432</td>
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</table>

*2018 statements are unaudited
HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY
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(2017 – June 30, 2018)

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Margaret and Robert Patricelli
Nilsa Ramos

HPL Corporators Sandy Bender Fromson and Margaret Patricelli at the Art & Alechemy Art Show on May 20, 2018 at the home of Margaret and Bob Patricelli. Sandy generously donated a portion of her proceeds to Hartford Public Library.

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Thank you to the West Indian Foundation for awarding the Albany Library the Youth Violence Prevention Grant, designed to forgive youth and teen library fines and maintain a safe place for teens.

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At the Hartford Public Library Annual Meeting in October 2017, John Alves (left) was given the first Corporator of Distinction award and Steve Goddard (right) was named the first HPL Emeritus Board Member.

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Thank you to everyone who helped make Beyond Words 2017 a resounding success including Marlene Ibsen, Honorary Chair, the Travelers, Presenting Sponsor, and all of our sponsors. In addition, we’d like to recognize our Board, Honorary Committee, Working Committee, all of the table captains, our event co-chairs, Cate and Terry O’Italia and Lois and Ed Lewis, and Tim Sullivan, Jr. who graciously raised $40,000 in 5 minutes for the Fund the Mission ask.

Sharon R. O’Meare, sketch by Kenyon Grant

Victor LaValle, sketch by Kenyon Grant

Bridget Quinn-Carey, HPL CEO, Victor LaValle, featured speaker and author of The Changeling, Tim Sullivan, Jr.

Greg Davis, HPL Board President, Bridget Quinn-Carey, Cheryl O’Meare, accepting Caroline M. Hewins Award, Judy Rozie-Battle, HFPG

Beyond Words Books for Sale with Bridget Quinn-Carey, Jasmin Agosto, Marie Jarry, Bonnie Sollberg, and Beth Papermaster, HPL Corporator

Arunan Arulampalam, HPL Board Member, Andrea Diaz-Mates, HPL Board Member, Lisa Proch, Dan O’Shea, HPL Board Member, and Karen Fitzgerald
Sculptor Robert Charles Hudson discusses his exhibit “Door of No Return” at the HPL ArtWalk, January 2018.
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