

THIS WEEKEND: 40,000 FREE BOOKS & HPL SUMMER LEARNING KICK-OFF

HARTFORD, CONN (June 7, 2018) – This Saturday, the City of Hartford’s Department of Families, Children, Youth & Recreation, in partnership with a number of community stakeholders, will be giving away 40,000 free books to Hartford children at Parker Memorial Community Center. Also, on Saturday, the Hartford Public Library will be launching its Summer Learning Program at its Kick-Off Celebration at the Downtown Library.

“We are thrilled that thanks to First Book and ESPN, Hartford families will begin the summer with 40,000 new books,” said Mayor Luke Bronin. “When students don’t read in the summer they can lose several months’ worth of reading skills, and as they progress in school that can cause them to fall significantly behind their peers. By promoting reading with these new books and with the Hartford Public Library’s Summer Learning Program, we can help prevent the ‘summer slide.’ I want to thank the dozens of community partners who are taking part in the Summer Learning Kick-Off and engaging young people throughout the summer.”

The book giveaway will take place between 9 AM – 1 PM on Saturday, June 9th, 2018 at Parker Memorial Community Center, 2621 Main Street. Families are invited to choose up to 10 free, new books for each child age 18 and under on a first-come, first-serve basis. Children must be present to select books. There will be activities, crafts, and special guest readers.

The book giveaway is sponsored by First Book and ESPN, with additional event support from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, Catholic Charities, the Metropolitan District Commission.

“We are pleased to launch our Summer Learning Program in conjunction with the free book giveaway. Learning shouldn’t stop when school lets out and these efforts are providing kids the opportunity to feed and stimulate their minds throughout the critical summer months,” said Bridget Quinn-Carey, chief executive officer of Hartford Public Library. “We are grateful that this innovative community collaboration came together to further serve Hartford children and their families year-round.”

The Summer Learning Program Kick-Off will take place between 12:30 PM - 3:00 PM on Saturday, June 9th, 2018 at the Downtown Library, 500 Main Street. The event will include local authors, a maker space offering a variety of activities, community booths, and tattoo and face painting booths. The band, Boogie Chillun,’ will perform at 2:00 PM on the Library terrace.

Summer Learning passports will also be available at the kick-off event. Those who participate in the day’s activities and have their passports stamped will receive a free ice cream from Ice Cream for Dream.

Many community organizations are scheduled to attend the celebration including: the Connecticut Science Center; Village for Families and Children; Sexual Assault Crisis Service; Paws to Read; Regional School Choice Office; Community Solutions Inc.; Hartford Yard Goats;

Hartford Stage; UConn Book Store; Jumoke Academy; Habitat for Humanity; NAACP Youth Council; Double Dutch League; Wadsworth Atheneum; Mount Olive Nurse Ministries; Trinity Health of New England; and, 4Unity.

Arch Street will be closed between Main Street and Prospect Street from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM for the event.

This year's summer learning program in Hartford is about building a better world together. Marie Jarry, HPL Youth and Family Services Director, said, "Building a better world can sometimes mean taking care of ourselves, our communities, or the earth. This summer, learning is about getting out into Hartford to Read. Go. Do!"

Everyone who signs up for the Summer Learning Program will receive free Connecticut Suns tickets, available throughout the program from June 9 to August 24. Participants who join one of the Library's clubs—Health, Hartford, STEM, Art, Nature, or Literature—and complete at least 5 club activities will also earn a free book (for those under 19) and a ticket to the August 24th Hartford Yard Goats game, the Summer Learning Program's finale event. Six hundred Yard Goat tickets are available, and the event will include fireworks and a barbecue - first come, first served.

To learn more about Hartford Public Library's Summer Learning Program, please visit summer.hplct.org.

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 national leader in redefining the urban public library in the 21st century as an innovative and stimulating place that provides free resources that inspire reading, guide learning, and encourage individual exploration. We serve adults, children and families seeking early literacy opportunities, work skills training, civic engagement, arts enrichment, and so much more. Please visit www.hplct.org.

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