

Harford Public Library

2016 Annual Report

Library Leadership

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Homa Naficy, Chief Adult
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Cover photo by **Jack McConnell**

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Not pictured: Anne Marie Dowling, Ana Alfaro (Secretary), Arunan Arulampalam, Edward C. Keith III, Marc DiBella, Jack Godsill, and Dr. Gislaine Ngounou. Mayor Luke Bronin (Ex-Officio).

A Message From Our Library Leadership



The Hartford Public Library has been transforming lives since 1893. The Library's educational programs, services, and collections along with its commitment to providing a welcoming community gathering space and celebrating local art and culture make it a place like no other.

As the needs of our citizens change, the Library changes too, and we are now offering a broad range of educational services to our entire community through initiatives to promote literacy; providing creative early educational learning opportunities and play-based learning to preschoolers and their families and caregivers; training and counseling adults to help them develop skills and find employment; helping immigrants on their path to citizenship; serving teens who need a safe and stimulating environment to explore technology and career goals; assisting students with homework; running creative art classes for older adults; preserving and promoting the City's unique story through the Hartford History Center; presenting our long-running Sunday jazz concerts; and showcasing local artists in our beautiful ArtWalk gallery.

All of our programs are offered for free. The Library is welcome to all, and accessible to all. To do this we depend on the support of the City of Hartford, private and corporate contributions, and grants for specific programs. The generosity is appreciated by the staff and Board of the Library and by all who are served through its many programs at its 10 locations.

The past year was marked by a change in leadership and renewed commitment to planning for the future of the organization. After a national search, Bridget Quinn-Carey was hired as CEO, the tenth person to hold the job as the Library's leader. One of her first official duties was to represent Hartford Public Library at the April 21st signing ceremony for a historic partnership between the University of Connecticut, HPL and the City which will welcome UConn into the Downtown Library as part of UConn's new downtown campus, scheduled to open in the fall of 2017.

The Library faced difficult budgeting choices as the City's financial challenges resulted in significant reductions in the Library's FY16 budget. Although branch hours were reduced and difficult staffing reductions were necessary, all branches currently remain open to serve the community. The Library's leadership is working with community residents and stakeholders on a strategic plan to help ensure that the Hartford Public Library continues to provide transformational services to the residents of Hartford and our neighboring communities.



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Gregory C.
Davis



Bridget Quinn-
Carey, Chief
Executive
Officer

2015-2016 Financials

Revenue

City contribution / **\$8,215,000**

Total
\$10,316,112

Expenses

Personnel costs / **\$7,694,111**

Endowment income / **\$740,037**

Fees income / **\$390,244**

Grants / **\$470,831**

Gifts / **\$500,000**

Other operating
expenditures / **\$1,626,705**

Library materials /
\$610,976

Plant operations &
maintenance / **\$384,320**

BY THE NUMBERS

850,000

ANNUAL VISITS

408,972

ANNUAL CIRCULATION

300 +

COMPUTERS
IN ALL LOCATIONS

20,726

AFTER-SCHOOL
SESSIONS

9,492

RECEIVED JOB AND
CAREER GUIDANCE

34,434

RECEIVED EARLY
LITERACY
PROGRAMMING

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Connecticut State Department of Education

Connecticut State Library

Institute of Museum and Library services (IMLS)

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)

State of Connecticut

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

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SAND Ropkins Branch Manager Anwar Ahmad runs his composting class as part of the NEA sponsored The Big Read program featuring John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Big Read Inspires Community Gardeners

Anwar Ahmad started a community project this summer inspired by composting workshops he ran at SAND Ropkins branch as part of *The Grapes of Wrath*, The Big Read initiative, supported by the National Endowment for the Arts.

The result has been helping his customers grow fresh food in a community garden near the library.

"Last summer I took an organic farming class at Capital Community College," says Anwar, manager of the SAND/Ropkins branch. "That class enabled me to learn a little more about something I was always interested in."

Over the winter he gathered seeds that he used in the adult summer reading program.

"I wanted to put together the folks from my composting class, the seeds and start an organic garden," he says. He did just that.

He had the summer adult readers study "Grow or Die: The Good Guide to Survival Gardening."

"I invited the adults to take the seedlings we grew and plant them in the shared space at the Battles Street Garden," says Ahmad, who secured the 30 foot by 60 foot plot that he divided into 3 foot by 4 foot plots.

They grew tomatoes, peppers, onions, squash, herbs,

gandules (pigeon peas), recaio (similar to cilantro), in this community garden.

Latroya Blue, a mother of three who works at St. Francis Hospital, is one of the gardeners.

"I went to visit the library with the children and Mr. Anwar told me about the garden that he had. He had different plots. He invited me to visit and one Saturday I came with my kids. We had a chance to plant some tomatoes and some onions. My kids were so excited about it. They never planted anything like this. We never had a garden. I always wanted a garden. This was my opportunity to learn. I think it's so great that he has this. He opened up to the public to share his love and interest of garden and have other learn about it. I think it's a great way. I love the fact we get to grow our own vegetables. It's a way to save money and it's a way to teach others to get a plot and garden.

"I read somewhere when you garden and put your hands in the dirt it's a way to relieve stress. It's a way for young children to get out, get involved in the community, and learn something new."



**National
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arts.gov

Generous Neighbors

Howard and Sandy Fromson live on the same street as the downtown Hartford Public Library. They are frequent visitors.

"I think it's the one institution in town where almost everybody feels welcome," Howard says. "And it's really central to the existence of downtown Hartford. In the morning I am always amazed. I see this line of people waiting to get in when the library opens. It's such a welcoming place. It fills almost everybody's need. Everytime I pass by I get a wonderful feeling."

The Fromsons are generous donors. But they give in other ways, too.



Howard, a graduate of Harvard and a World War II veteran, started his own company, Ano-coil, in Rockville in 1957. He recently sold the printing plate manufacturing company, but he keeps his art workshop in the building's basement.

About a decade ago he started making art. His specialty is a triangular pyramid called a tetrahedron. He has made chairs and sculptures using this shape by bending, crimping and folding sheets of steel in repeating patterns. One of his most common creations is the Fromson Tetra Chairs.

A photo of a pair of these chairs is found in the South Reading room. His "Tête-à-Tête" sculpture shows two chairs welded together, which would be the perfect arrangement for a private conversation between two people who would face each other.

Howard's "Skin and Bones," two complementary 13-foot high structures made of tetrahedron shapes that oscillate



when you touch them, stand tall in the Kitchen@HPL.

His "Who, What, When, Where, Why" is a question mark made of small tetrahedron shapes that hangs at the end of a hallway on the second floor, and is visible from the main floor.

Sandy Benson Fromson is also an artist. She works in fiber, creating felted garments including hats, coats and capes. She will be showing her work in the Library's ArtWalk Gallery, along with Ellen Schiffman, in: Fiber Alchemy: Two Viewpoints, Oct. 14 through Nov. 27.

Howard Fromson, below, is the creator of "Skin and Bones," far left, and "Tête-à-tête," above, which make use of his favorite tetrahedron shape.





YOUmedia at Hartford Public Library is a creative learning environment open to teens to “hang out, mess around, and geek out.”

Teens Can Be Creative At YOUmedia

YOUmedia, a teen learning space, opened at Hartford Public Library on Oct 2, 2014.

The model for the program came out of a digital learning space in the Chicago Public Library begun in 2009.

The philosophy of YOUmedia is based on the research of Mizuko Ito, a Japanese cultural anthropologist at the University of California, Irvine and author of the book *Living and Learning with Digital Media*.



YOUmedia is a HOMAGO space, which stands for Hang Out, Mess Around and Geek Out, based on Ito's research about how teens interact digitally.

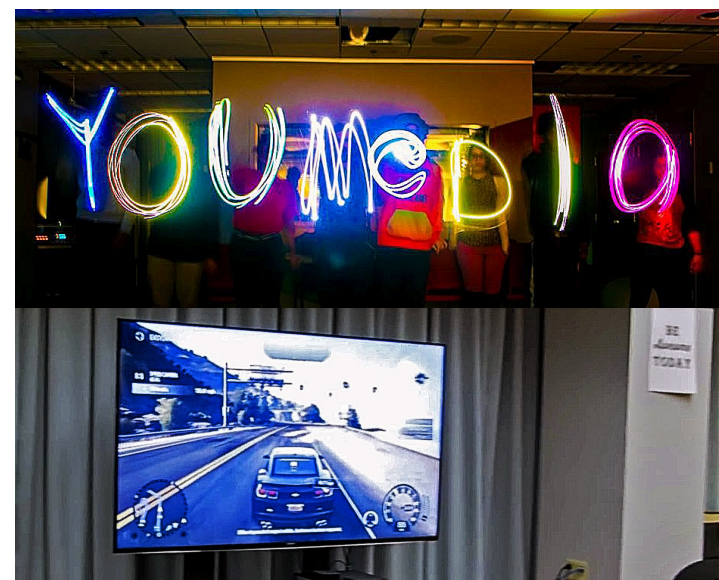
The six content areas in YOUmedia are: video/photo;

music production; computer programming; gaming; design; and creative maker spaces. YOUmedia staff work with teens with an eye to college and career readiness.

Teens in Hartford created digital projects, a Best of Hartford Hip Hop album, and projects involving textiles, 3D printing, laser cutting, and game design.

YOUmedia is open to teens ages 13 to 19, Tuesday through Thursday, 3 to 8 pm; Friday, 3 to 5 pm; and Saturday, 10 to 5 pm.

Funders for Hartford Public Library's YOUmedia include Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, the Travelers Foundation, The Hartford Financial Services Group, Fund for Greater Hartford, and Lincoln Financial.



Learning Later In Life

The Creative Aging program runs workshops for adults 55 years and older. These classes continue the programming initiated in the Library's Arts and Archives: Master Classes in the Arts and Humanities for Older Adults series.

The goal is to have social and informative creative learning experiences, foster lifelong learning through the arts, and most importantly, to have fun.



For each HPL class, a master artist signed on to present eight, two-hour sessions. Each group had a public display of the students' work at the end of the sessions.

Karen O'Maxfield, an artist and photographer from Hartford, taught her students the basics of working with a digital camera, how to create a PowerPoint presentation, and how to compose good pictures.

Julio Valencia Cortijo's students from the Hispanic Senior Center learned Plena folkloric songs and dances.

Irma Nelson held a quilting class in the Downtown Library. Participants began with 27-inch squares, learned to use templates, hand pieced the blocks, created borders, and bound the edges with mitered corners.

Creative Aging in America's Libraries is supported by a National Leadership Grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services in collaboration with Lifetime Arts, Inc., AARP Foundation, American Library Association and Westchester Library System.



Park Branch Manager Letty Cotto, top photo, introduces the senior students in the Puerto Rican music class. Below, quilters from a series of Creative Learning classes showed off their work in an exhibition.

Leap Into Learning

Leap Into Learning is the Hartford Public Library's early learning and literacy network for Hartford's youngest residents.

The target audiences are children from birth to age 5; parents and caregivers; childcare providers in homes, schools and centers; and community groups and organizations that serve young children and their caregivers.

Being prepared for kindergarten is the key for academic success and lifelong learning. Children take part in play activities and classes in the library.

The program also delivers services into the community with its Leap Into Learning Literacy van, donated by the Hoffman Auto Group.



Donors who have made Leap Into Learning possible include: The Ahern Family Foundation, The Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation, Howard & Sandy Fromson, George A. and Grace Long Foundation, Cate & John Grady-Benson, Hoffman Auto Group, J. Walton Bissell Foundation, Barry N. Lastra & Alison Coolbrith, Monday Reading Club of Hartford, Newman's Own Foundation, John & Terry Ryan, Tim & Gerri Sullivan, The College Club of Hartford, The Robert and Margaret Patricelli Family Foundation.



Young children can find story hours, reading preparation, and other learning readiness activities in the Leap Into Learning program.



Auden di-Corcio-D'Amato, library assistant in the children's department, reads to children in the downtown library.



Rajranie Busgith, early literacy specialist, drives the Leap Into Learning van.

Locations

- 1 Downtown Library**
500 Main Street
860.695.6300
- 2 Albany Branch**
1250 Albany Avenue
860.695.7380
- 3 Barbour Branch**
259 Barbour Street
860.695.7400
- 4 Blue Hills Branch**
649 Blue Hills Avenue
860.695.7420
- 5 Camp Field Branch**
30 Campfield Avenue
860.695.7440
- 6 Dwight Branch**
7 New Park Avenue
860.695.7460
- 7 Goodwin Branch**
460 New Britain Avenue
860.695.7480
- 8 Mark Twain Branch**
55 Forest Street
860.695.7540
- 9 Park Branch**
744 Park Street
860.695.7500
- 10 SAND/Ropkins Branch**
1750 Main Street
860.695.7520



Hartford Public Library Welcomes University of Connecticut



Representatives from Hartford Public Library, the City of Hartford, and the University of Connecticut, sign the partnership papers on April 21 to locate the university's downtown library inside Hartford Public Library.

In attendance: UConn President Susan Herbst, HPL CEO Bridget Quinn-Carey, Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin, HPL Chief Administrative Officer Mary T. Tzambazakis, and UConn Attorney Robert Sitkowski.

Photos by Peter Morenus/ UConn.

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