



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Hartford Public Library To Celebrate City Changemakers**

HARTFORD – In an effort to update the traditional historical narrative of Hartford, Hartford Public Library will work with city teens, elders, and local artists to create public art celebrating the stories of city change makers from the Black, Latinx, and indigenous communities.

“Making these stories accessible will instill pride in both contributors to the murals and people who view them for years to come,” said Bridget Quinn-Carey, president and CEO

Jasmin Agosto, education and community outreach manager for the Hartford History Center at the Library, Liz Castle, programming and events manager, and Nygel White, program coordinator for the YOUmedia Hartford teen center came together to develop this project.

The Ensworth Foundation of Bank of America awarded the library a \$14,000 grant to support the project.

The collective of teens, adults and muralists will create at least two murals, one each in the North End and the South End. They are tentatively scheduled to be unveiled in September 2020 at family friendly virtual celebrations that will include a DJ, brief remarks by team members and partners, story sharing by elders, and live performances by workshop participants and local performers.

Leading up to the celebrations, there will be a workshop series around mural design, performance, storytelling, movement, and photo documentation. “Hartford has a vibrant artist community and our programming is an opportunity for Hartford artists to showcase and teach their art forms,” Castle said.

The workshop process and celebrations will be documented by the YOUmedia teen media team and archived in the Hartford History Center at Hartford Public Library.

The library has opened registration for the Hartford Changemakers summer program, which is geared to Hartford residents ages 13 and older. Interested individuals can sign up using this Google Form: [bit.ly/HartfordChangeMakers](https://bit.ly/HartfordChangeMakers)

The virtual workshops will begin July 13 and run through August 21. The workshops will integrate themes around leadership, organizing, and creative responses to shaping history in your own neighborhood.

Each virtual workshop will engage approximately 20 participants for six, 90 minute sessions and will include:

- Mural design and execution with Lindaluz Carrillo
- Storytelling with master storyteller Andre Keitt
- Music creation and performance with Khaiim Kelly the RapOet aka Self Suffice
- Poetry writing and performance with a local poet
- Dance with Jus Hues of Jus Move Studios and Ginette Christie
- Documentary photography with Jasmine Jones

“The program was designed with an effort to help remedy the erasure of Black, Latinx, and indigenous people from Hartford’s traditional historical narrative. Hartford’s history often only highlights white historical figures such as Mark Twain and Harriet Beecher Stowe. The selected changemakers, many of which were part of an exhibit project the Hartford History Center produced in 2017, will represent communities that are relevant to the majority of current Hartford residents in an effort to increase inclusivity in the historical record,” Agosto said.

The program also fits in with HPL’s ongoing efforts to create practical opportunities for city teens to increase their skills. “Hartford has a growing creative industry. The teens who participate in the program will gain an understanding of how their creative skill sets can improve their communities and their future careers,” White said.

For more information about Hartford Public Library, visit [hplct.org](http://hplct.org) or call 860-695-6300.

#### **About Hartford Public Library**

Now celebrating its 126th year, Hartford Public Library remains at the forefront of redefining the urban library experience in the 21st Century. With seven locations throughout the city, the library provides education, intellectual enrichment and cultural development for thousands of children, youth and adults every year. Hartford Public Library has also gained local and national recognition for its wide range of new initiatives and partnerships designed to meet the needs of a diverse and dynamic city and region, including immigration services, employment assistance and youth leadership training. [www.hplct.org](http://www.hplct.org).