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**HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY PARTNERS WITH HARTFORD'S LITERART INTEGRATED
TRAILBLAZERS FOR SEVENTH ANNUAL BOOK FESTIVAL**

Saturday, September 27, 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

[HARTFORD, CT]— Hartford Public Library (HPL), in partnership with Hartford's Literary Integrated Trailblazers (Hartford's L.I.T. / H.L.I.T.), will host the 7th Annual Hartford Book Festival on Saturday, September 27, at Hartford Public Library's Downtown Library, 500 Main Street, Hartford, and a virtual writing festival on Sunday, September 28. This year's theme is "Literary Art Aligned in 2025."

The free two-day event celebrates community through literature and art, featuring live stage performances, open mics, workshops, panel discussions, family activities, author highlights, raffles, awards, and book giveaways. Families can enjoy the Lit Kiddie Parade (10:45-11:10 a.m.), where children dress as favorite book characters and parade through the Library. A book drive and giveaway will provide new and gently used books to children.

Highlights include a Poet Laureate Panel with Antoinette Brim Bell, Atom Rush, Frederick Douglass Knowles, and Sharmont Little; Voices of OUT, Barbara McClane's storytelling and photography project; the Kemet Cartoon Workshop with nationally recognized artist Joe Young; Nzima Hutchings's workshop Whispers and Shadows: Exploring Eerie Lyrical Literary Art; and Sa'id Abdush Shakur's presentation The Power of Transformation in Story: Honoring Malcolm X.

Special recognitions include the Trailblazer Award 2025, presented to Sharmont Influence Little, and the HoneyWata Award to Shanna T. Melton, as well as performances by Jason Jahsun Dorsey. Featured authors include youth writer Bella'Rae K. Robinson (*What's Inside*) and Alphonso McGriff III (*Roots of a Tree*).

Day Two: HLIT Writing Room (Virtual, Sunday, September 28, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

Workshops include Brass Lips and Braided Verse: Contrapuntal Poetry and Gathering, Renaming and Blooming: The Art of Lyrical Writing led by Nzima Hutchings, and Ancestors and Elders: A Look Back at Lessons with T'challa Williams. Poet Laureate Clare Rossini will present readings and insights.



The festival closes with An Evening of Poetical Musings on Sunday, September 28, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at 30 Bartholomew Street, Hartford. The evening features Paint and Poetry, live performances, open mic, and vendors.

HLIT Team

Nzima S. Hutchings: Visionary Founder, CEO, and Program Director – Enfield Poet Laureate and founder of Hartford's L.I.T. and Book Festival, is a bestselling author, Literary Art Wellness Coach, and Master Teaching Artist. Through workshops, Every Kinda Lady LLC, and Nzima's Poetry Café Show, she empowers voices and builds a legacy.

T'challa Williams: Executive Founding Board Member and Spokeswoman – poet, performer, and community advocate, serves on the Greater Hartford Arts Council board and teaches youth poetry and theater. An award-winning leader, longtime Hartford L.I.T. supporter, and author of Captured Thoughts, she uplifts stories and strengthens community through creative expression.

Barbara McClane: Executive Board Member, Outreach Coordinator, and Photographer – A best-selling author, photographer, and President of CCAR, empowers women worldwide through storytelling, recovery, and her memoir, Blessed Not Bitter. Founder of I Am Woman2 and member of Hartford L.I.T., she transforms lives with words, images, and resilience.

Lorraine Nahabedian: Advisory Committee Member and Outreach Assistant

Lashawn Middleton: Founding Member, Special Committees & Commemorative Officer

Alphonso McGriff III: Founding Member, Special Committees & Supportive Advisor

Sponsors: Connecticut Community for Addiction and Recovery (CCAR)

Partners: Joe Young Entertainment

Supporters: Wabi Sabi Yoga and Wellness Center

About Hartford Public Library:

Founded as the Library Company in 1774, and over its 250 years, Hartford Public Library has remained 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. For more information, visit hplct.org

About Hartford's L.I.T.



Hartford's Literary Integrated Trailblazers (HLIT) is a collective of authors, artists, and entrepreneurs revitalizing literary arts in Greater Hartford. Their work spans literacy, productions, entrepreneurial growth, and community building, culminating each year with the Hartford Book Festival. Email: Hartfordslit@gmail.com | Website: Hartfordslit.com | Instagram: [@Hartfordslit](https://www.instagram.com/Hartfordslit)

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