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HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY AND HARTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS CELEBRATE SUMMER LEARNING

(Hartford, CT) – On Saturday, June 1 Hartford Public Library (HPL) and Hartford Public Schools (HPS) held their Summer Learning Kick-Off celebration at the Downtown Library. The event included a 250th Anniversary parade, celebrating the historic milestone of the Library.

“We are so grateful for the continued relationship with Hartford Public Schools as our partner in our Summer Learning initiative and are thankful to all our community partners that help make this happen year after year,” said Bridget E. Quinn, HPL President and CEO. “We are looking forward to the Summer Reading Challenge, this year’s theme is *Reading Through Time* to help celebrate HPL’s 250th anniversary. This program is vital to help prevent the ‘summer slide’ and keep literacy rates steady during the summer months.”

With over 300 attendees, the 250th Parade included Library customers, families, and community members, as well as mascots from the Hartford Yard Goats and Hartford Athletic, Artist Joe Young’s Kemet the Time Traveler, Ann Cubberly’s Mother Earth Giant puppet, Melissa Craig Stilt Walker, and Hartford Proud Drill, Drum and Dance. The parade route started at the Downtown Library Patio (500 Main Street) it continued down the sidewalk on Main Street to the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art (600 Main Street) where Anne Butler Rice, Georgette Auerbach Koopman Director of Learning and Engagement, greeted the procession. The parade continued around the block, through Burr Mall, and back to the Downtown Library patio.

After the parade, there was a performance by the Hartford Proud Drill, Drum and Dance team, and remarks from Bridget E. Quinn, HPL President & CEO, and Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez, HPS Superintendent. There was also face painting, ice cream, community partners, henna tattoos, balloon twisting, a Pride café, the Children’s Museum StarLab, and more.

“I’m so proud to once again be joining our friends at the Hartford Public Library and our other community partners to offer a variety of activities for our young people throughout the summer months,” said Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez, HPS Superintendent. “They share in our belief that learning has to happen all 12 months of the year! Thanks to their partnership, we are able to help our young people develop a love for reading, become more connected to their community, and keep their minds sharp over the summer!”

Many community organizations attended the celebration, including Real Art Ways, Gizmo & Frens, Hartford Decides, United Way, The Village, Greater Hartford Regional School Choice Office, Connecticut Museum of Culture and History, African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities, Inc.,



Connecticut Association of School Library, Connecticut Children’s Medical Center, DFCYR Early Learning Division, American Job Center, Husky Hub, Connecticut State Library Outreach Ban, and Project SAVE Hartford Behavioral Health.

This year’s summer learning program is history-themed, tying in the milestone 250th birthday that HPL is celebrating this year. The Reading Challenge starts June 17 and runs through August 17. There will be weekly raffles for prizes, surprises, and more. To sign up visit any HPL Branch or learn more on our website, <https://bit.ly/HPL2024>.

The party continues with kick-off parties happening at Libraries throughout the system.

- [Ropkins Library, 1750 Main Street](#)
 - Monday, June 10 | 4 - 4:45 p.m.
- [Dwight Library, 7 New Park Avenue](#)
 - Tuesday, June 11 | 3 - 5 p.m.
- [Park Street Library @ the Lyric, 603 Park Street](#)
 - Thursday, June 13 | 1 - 3 p.m.
- [Albany Library, 1250 Albany Avenue](#)
 - Friday, June 14 | 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
- [Camp Field Library, 30 Campfield Avenue](#)
 - Friday, June 14 | 2 - 3 p.m.

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, and follow us on social media ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [X \(Twitter\)](#)).

About Hartford Public Schools

Hartford Public Schools serves more than 16,500 PreK-12 students from Hartford and nearly 70 surrounding towns. They are one of the largest public school districts in Connecticut, with 39 schools, including 18 magnet schools. The District believes in their beautiful and capable students, high expectations, inclusiveness, collaboration, continuous improvement, and systemic accountability. Their Mission is to provide all our students with the learning and support they need to succeed in school and in life. Their Vision is that all students will graduate prepared to transform our world.

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