



CONTACT:
Rachel Gary
Communications Manager
860-695-6352
rgary@hplct.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Life and Legacy of Hartford Educator 'Doc' Hurley Celebrated at Jan. 28 Book

Launch



The life of Walter "Doc" Hurley is documented in a new book, launching Jan. 28 at Hartford Public Library

Hartford, Connecticut (November 12, 2014) - A new book on the life and legacy of legendary Hartford coach Walter "Doc" Hurley will be celebrated at Hartford Public Library's Hartford History Center at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 28 with a special reception honoring book author Charles A. Teale, Sr., a former chief of the Hartford Fire Department.

The Making of a Legend: The Life and Times of Walter J. "Doc" Hurley is an autobiographical narrative based on more than forty interviews Teale conducted with Hurley during the last few years of

Hurley's life, and is written in his own words. To the illustrated book, Teale includes the memories and experiences of those who knew Hurley, whose work in the community helped hundreds of Hartford students attend college. Hurley died in February of this year, at the age of 91.

Born in Jim Crow-era Georgia, Hurley and his family moved to Hartford when he was a boy. Nicknamed "Doc" by his father, who had wanted him to become a medical doctor, Hurley graduated from Weaver High School with four varsity letters – track, football, basketball and baseball – and received an athletic scholarship to Virginia State University. He served as a Marine in World War II, then returned to college before becoming a career educator, administrator, and sports coach in Hartford, where he worked for decades and raised a family.

Credited with turning around the lives of hundreds of city youth, Hurley encouraged kids to stay in school and pursue higher education. His scholarship programs helped fund college careers for innumerable Hartford students, and one of the lives he impacted was that of an 18-year-old dropout named Charles Teale. "Doc was my gym teacher in fifth grade," recalls Teale who, with Hurley's encouragement, finished his education, earned a master's degree, and served in the Hartford Fire Department for 28 years - ten of those as chief - before his retirement in 2009. According to Teale, Hurley told him to finish his schooling and to get a job in which he could be of service.

"Doc Hurley lived and breathed Hartford," Teale said. *The Making of a Legend* details the life of Hurley, who refused to become bitter about his experiences with racial prejudice, and who fought prejudice throughout his long life. For students of Hartford history, Hurley's precise and evocative memories of his childhood and adult experiences are a vivid view into a city that has changed greatly. Teale was inspired to write about Hurley's life after the two men participated in an oral history project with the Hartford History Center, and serves on the center's advisory committee.

The Jan. 28 program will begin at 5:30 with a light reception at Hartford Public Library's Hartford History Center located at 500 Main Street. At 6 p.m., Chief Teale will discuss the process of researching and writing *The Making of a Legend*, and sign copies of the book, on sale for \$16.95. In case of inclement weather, the event will be held January 29. All are welcome, and a special invitation is extended to those whose lives were touched by Doc Hurley. For more information, visit hplct.org.

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As a finalist for the 2014 National Medal from the Institute for Museum and Library Services, Hartford

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