

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**One Big Summer Night Sizzled with Support for Hartford Public Library**



*Author Ruth Reichl chats with Hartford Mayor Pedro Segarra*

HARTFORD, Connecticut (June 24, 2014) – Hartford Public Library and more than 400 of its supporters, including state and local government leaders, business executives, some of Hartford’s top chefs, and dedicated community leaders came together for the spectacular annual gala, *One Big Sizzling Summer Night* at the Downtown Hartford Library on June 12. The event, presented by Travelers, raised over \$100,000 to support free access to educational and cultural programs and services for all.

“Public libraries are crucial resources for students and their success,” said Erin Haberman, Director of Community Relations at Travelers. “We remain committed to supporting and helping build strong communities, and that’s why we’re proud to partner with Hartford Public Library as presenting sponsor of *One Big Summer Night*.”

**This year’s gala featured best-selling author and former *New York Times* food critic Ruth Reichl.** A six-time James Beard Award-Winner, Ms. Reichl served as editor-in-chief of *Gourmet* magazine for ten years, has authored five critically-acclaimed, best-selling memoirs on the topics of food and family, and served as editor of countless collections of cuisine-inspired publications. She spoke to the importance of libraries in her own life, including assisting in research for her latest novel “Delicious!”

Highlights of the event included a pre-event cocktail reception with Mr. Reichl sponsored by First Niagara, a silent auction, and gourmet cuisine and drinks served up by 18 of Great Hartford's finest restaurants.

Governor Dannel Malloy called for ongoing support of the Library, highlighting the importance of access to free education, exploration, and encouragement, and sharing the moving experiences of his own family.

Matt Poland, the Library's chief executive officer, launched a fundraising campaign for the Library's new partnership with Hartford Public Schools, a program to fill a critical gap in educational materials and opportunities for Hartford students. Several students of Hartford Public Library, in a video produced by the Library, described their experiences utilizing the Library's Mark Twain Branch, located inside the school, and the significant impact it has had on their education, love of reading, and involvement in their school community.

#### **ABOUT [HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY](#)**

As a finalist for the 2014 National Medal from the Institute for Museum and Library Services, Hartford Public Library has been recognized as national leader in redefining the urban public library in the 21st century as an innovative and stimulating place where people can learn and discover, explore their passions, and find a rich array of resources that contribute to a full life. Hartford Public Library provides free resources that inspire reading, guide learning, and encourage individual exploration. Serving the residents of Hartford and beyond at its nine branches and Downtown location, Hartford Public Library receives more than 860,000 visits per year from adults, children and families seeking early literacy opportunities, work skills training, civic engagement, arts enrichment, and so much more. Visit [hplct.org](http://hplct.org).

###