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New Partnership to Launch Community Information Hub

Two Events in May to Focus on Workforce Skills Gap

Hartford, Connecticut (April 22, 2013) — A new partnership has been formed to enhance communication between members of the public and community leaders on important issues.

Working in collaboration, CT News Project, WNPR, and Hartford Public Library, with the support of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, have launched the Community Information Hub for the Capital Region to increase opportunities for people to have their voices heard on issues affecting them and their communities.

The Community Information Hub will offer web-based and community-based forums and dialogues where concerned citizens can report and discuss issues they care about and work together toward solutions. The online resource will provide residents with a broader platform to share their perspectives and ideas for community action. The Community Hub also will present and connect to data and other information on issues and sponsor public events.

"The CT News Project's mission to inform and engage, which has been the cornerstone of The CT Mirror, will be further advanced by our new civic media effort, working in concert with these wonderful partners – WNPR, Hartford Public Library and other contributors," said Jim Cutie, CT News Project's chief executive officer and publisher. "We are very grateful for the support of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, who has been with us from the very beginning."

In its first public event, the Community Information Hub will host a forum on the workforce skills gap in Connecticut on Tuesday, May 7, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Hartford Public Library. The Hub will also offer people the opportunity to participate in a community conversation on the workforce skills gap and training programs on Saturday, May 18, from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Hartford Public Library.

"WNPR has been working with each of these partners for years – The CT News Project in an editorial collaboration to serve listeners and readers in the state, Hartford Public Library in public events and programs, and Hartford Foundation for Public Giving in a reporting project covering the Greater Hartford Region," said WNPR News Director John Dankosky. "This new effort strengthens those ties, and will create something important for Connecticut."

The Community Information Hub builds on the ongoing partnership between The CT News Project's online news site, CT Mirror, and WNPR to collaborate on web and radio stories, cross marketing, and to share reporters and other resources. The project also integrates and expands on the Hartford Public Library's experience in providing facilitated community dialogues through its *Hartford Listens* series. Offered in collaboration with Everyday Democracy, these events will inform residents of the issues, and the dialogues will help residents develop action agendas. Recent community dialogues have focused on adult learning and the special needs of children of incarcerated parents.

"Being a visible, successful, and distinct leader in the increasingly crowded civic engagement space requires a strategic approach that reaches far outside the Library's walls," said Matthew K. Poland, chief executive officer of Hartford Public Library. "The formation of the Community Information Hub in partnership with the Connecticut News Project, WNPR and Hartford Foundation for Public Giving leverages our assets in new ways and puts the library at the center of an important community movement. We are already at the heart of the community, and civic engagement is at the heart of where the public library is going in the 21st century."

The Community Information Hub is supported by a three-year, \$374,362 grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving.

"The Hartford Foundation is pleased to support the Community Information Hub in its efforts to bring digestible news, data and discussion platforms that enable residents to residents of this region," said Linda J. Kelly, president of the Hartford Foundation. "The Hartford Foundation supports the Community Information Hub partners' goal of broadly engaging the community, reaching residents and organizations from throughout the region, including local schools, faith-based organizations and diverse nonprofit and community leaders."

To register for the workforce skills gap forum log onto:

<https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?llr=eco8pgdab&oeidk=a07e7adwijkh9a034b6f&oseq=>

To register for the community dialogue on the workforce skill gap log onto:

<http://workfordialogue.eventbrite.com/#>

About Hartford Public Library

The Hartford Public Library traces its roots to 1774. It operates 10 locations in the City of Hartford. The Library receives more than 865,000 visits per year. Services include access to a large collection of materials for reading and research, as well as music and video. Programs provide education, information and enrichment to the people of Hartford in such areas as citizenship training, literacy, business skills and cultural awareness. The mission of Hartford Public Library is to provide free resources that inspire reading, guide learning, and encourage individual exploration. To learn more about the library, please see www.hplct.org.