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## **Hartford Public Library Receives Grant from the Department of Homeland Security**

**Hartford, Connecticut (September 29, 2011)** —Hartford Public Library announced today that the US Citizenship and Integration Services (USCIS) has given the Library a \$148,000 grant to expand citizenship opportunities in Hartford through the development of immigrant peer support systems and e-learning. 42 organizations nationwide received grants totaling \$9 million. The Library was the only public library in the country to receive a grant, the only institution in Connecticut and one of three organizations in New England. This competitive grant program, administered by the USCIS Office of Citizenship, was made possible through funding provided under the Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act of 2011 (Public Law 112-10).

“We are honored to be recognized by the federal government with another grant for the work that the Library does with immigrants and refugees on their paths to citizenship in broad collaboration with government, educational and non-profit organizations,” said Matt Poland, the Library’s chief executive officer. “Preparing new Americans for life in our great country is important work and the Library stands ready to expand its capacity to meet an ever-increasing need here in Hartford,” said Poland.

“Hartford has been the ‘Gateway to the New World’ for generations and we continue to reflect that diversity by being a city where 65 different languages are spoken. We embrace our wide variety of cultures and are proud that our Hartford Public Library is the recipient of such a prestigious grant,” said Mayor Pedro E. Segarra.

Last year the Library received \$637,000 from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to create a civic integration model will transcend the existing naturalization process to give immigrants a specific sense of belonging in America, and experience as active community participants and future civic-minded individuals. A project Web portal and other materials will offer other libraries guidance on establishing similar programs in their communities. Also in 2010 the Library also received a \$98,000 grant from USCIS to expand Hartford's capacity to prepare lawful permanent residents for citizenship and the naturalization process.

***The American Place*** at Hartford Public Library, which administers citizenship programming, was named a model for this work in the 2008 report from the President's Taskforce on New Americans.

### **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 860,000 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.*