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**HARTFORD STUDENTS GIVE VOICE TO SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES THROUGH ART**  
*YWCA Hartford Region, Covenant Prep and Leadership Greater Hartford Stage “Art for Social Justice”  
Exhibit at Hartford Public Library*

HARTFORD, Conn. –YWCA Hartford Region and Covenant Preparatory School, in partnership with Leadership Greater Hartford’s 2011 QUEST class, will exhibit “Art for Social Justice” at the Hartford Public Library November 5 through 19. The exhibit showcases the work of more than 70 students from YWCA’s Young Women’s Leadership Corps (YWLC) and Covenant Prep’s grades 5 through 8.

The “Art for Social Justice” exhibit is the culmination of a months-long project in which the students of the YWLC and Covenant Prep worked with artists from the greater Hartford area to explore issues of social justice and injustice through various art forms, including visual arts, written and spoken word, theater and movement.

“This project exemplifies YWCA’s mission of eliminating racism and empowering women. We are honored to collaborate with Covenant Preparatory School and Leadership Greater Hartford on this exciting project. We all share a common vision of creating opportunities for youth in the Hartford area,” said Kristy Lee Downer, Marketing Manager for YWCA Hartford Region.

Both Covenant Prep and YWCA live a mission of social justice every day and share space in the same building at 135 Broad Street in Hartford. Leaders of these organizations viewed the “Art for Social Justice” project as an opportunity to unite their student groups in communicating a shared message.

“With this project, we wanted to showcase the depth of talent, spirit, and leadership of our students through their art while helping them understand important social justice issues facing the world. Through the voices of our youth, there can be wisdom about how to continually align the goals, resources and aspirations of our organizations in service to the greater good of the Hartford region,” said Meara Weaver, Principal of Covenant Prep.

Jonathan Gillman, director of Looking In Theatre, facilitated a peer-led workshop with students in early October. “One of the participants said he learned that not everything is easy and that we can accomplish more together than alone. That’s what art can do – it can help us look at really difficult things, find our common ground, and open the door to more truthful communication and collaboration”, he said.

A community reception to celebrate the students’ work will be held November 5 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the atrium of the Hartford Public Library, 500 Main Street, Hartford.

#### ABOUT THE ORGANIZATIONS

*Covenant Preparatory School is an independent, interfaith, tuition-free middle school (grades 5 through 8) for boys from underserved families in the Hartford area. Located in Hartford, the school provides a rigorous academic program and supportive learning environment, where motivated students are offered an intellectual, ethical, physical and cultural education. The goal is to graduate young men who are academically and socially prepared for higher education; inspired to lead their lives in the pursuit of excellence, who model leadership and integrity; and are committed to their communities.*

*Students are able to attend Covenant Prep through private donations, family foundations and grants. Learn more at <http://www.covenantprep.org>.*

***YWCA Hartford Region** Established in 1867, YWCA Hartford Region is the third oldest affiliate of YWCA, a women's membership movement dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. YWCA Hartford Region provides programs and services in the greater Hartford area including child care, supportive housing, teen leadership development, racial justice awareness, financial literacy and economic empowerment. For more information, visit [www.ywcahartford.org](http://www.ywcahartford.org) and follow them on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).*

***Leadership Greater Hartford (LGH)** develops, connects and inspires diverse leaders to build strong and vibrant communities. LGH's QUEST program develops and engages emerging and established leaders to sharpen skills, build and strengthen professional relationships and address community issues. To learn more, visit [leadershipgh.org](http://leadershipgh.org).*