

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



**Hartford
Public Library**
A place like no other.

STATE OF THE LIBRARY

2021 was a year of major accomplishments for Hartford Public Library, capped off by the completion of the new Park Street Library @ the Lyric, a project that was decades in the making.

The incredible, creative staff at Hartford Public Library continued to find new ways to meet the needs of the community during the pandemic, including efforts to address food insecurity through a partnership with Foodshare and helping our neighbors get the COVID-19 vaccine when it became available.

We also worked to safely reopen our branches to in-person visitors and delivered robust programming both online and at our libraries, keeping the health and wellbeing of our employees and community front and center. Major annual events — like the Big Read and Beyond Words — were held virtually but remained as lively as ever. The future of the Hartford Public Library is bright and we are excited for what lies ahead, including plans for a new library in North Hartford to replace our well-loved but much too small Barbour Library.

Hartford Public Library truly is a place like no other and we have shown why through our resiliency and flexibility as we continue to adapt to changing circumstances.



Bridget E. Quinn, President and CEO
Gregory Davis, Chair, Board of Directors





“One of the things the Hartford Public Library team has always been committed to is making sure that its branches are true centers of the community. And these modern, open, attractive, welcoming branches give the library an incredibly powerful presence in the neighborhoods where they are needed most.”

Mayor Luke A. Bronin

2020-21
AT A GLANCE

TOTAL CIRCULATION (INCLUDING E-BOOKS)

90,941

TOTAL NUMBER OF VISITORS

110,603

TOTAL PROGRAMS (LIVE & VIRTUAL)

2,640

REFERENCE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

22,438

TOTAL PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

27,758



Top Titles for 2020-21

ADULT BOOKS

The Vanishing Half
by Brit Bennett

ADULT MOVIES

Leverage

ADULT EBOOKS

Everything I Never Told You
by Celeste Ng

ADULT "LIBRARY OF THINGS"

Laptops

DIGITAL MAGAZINES

The New Yorker

YOUTH BOOKS

Diary of a Worm
by Doreen Cronin

YOUTH EBOOKS

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone
by JK Rowling

YOUTH DVDS

Frozen II

YOUTH "LIBRARY OF THINGS"

Bumblebee doll kit

WHERE WE WORK

DOWNTOWN

500 Main Street, Hartford,
CT 06103
860-695-6300

ALBANY

1250 Albany Avenue,
Hartford, CT 06112
860-695-7380

BARBOUR

261 Barbour Street,
Hartford, CT 06120
860-695-7400

CAMP FIELD

30 Campfield Avenue,
Hartford, CT 06114
860-695-7440

DWIGHT

7 New Park Avenue,
Hartford, CT 06106
860-695-7460

PARK STREET LIBRARY @ THE LYRIC

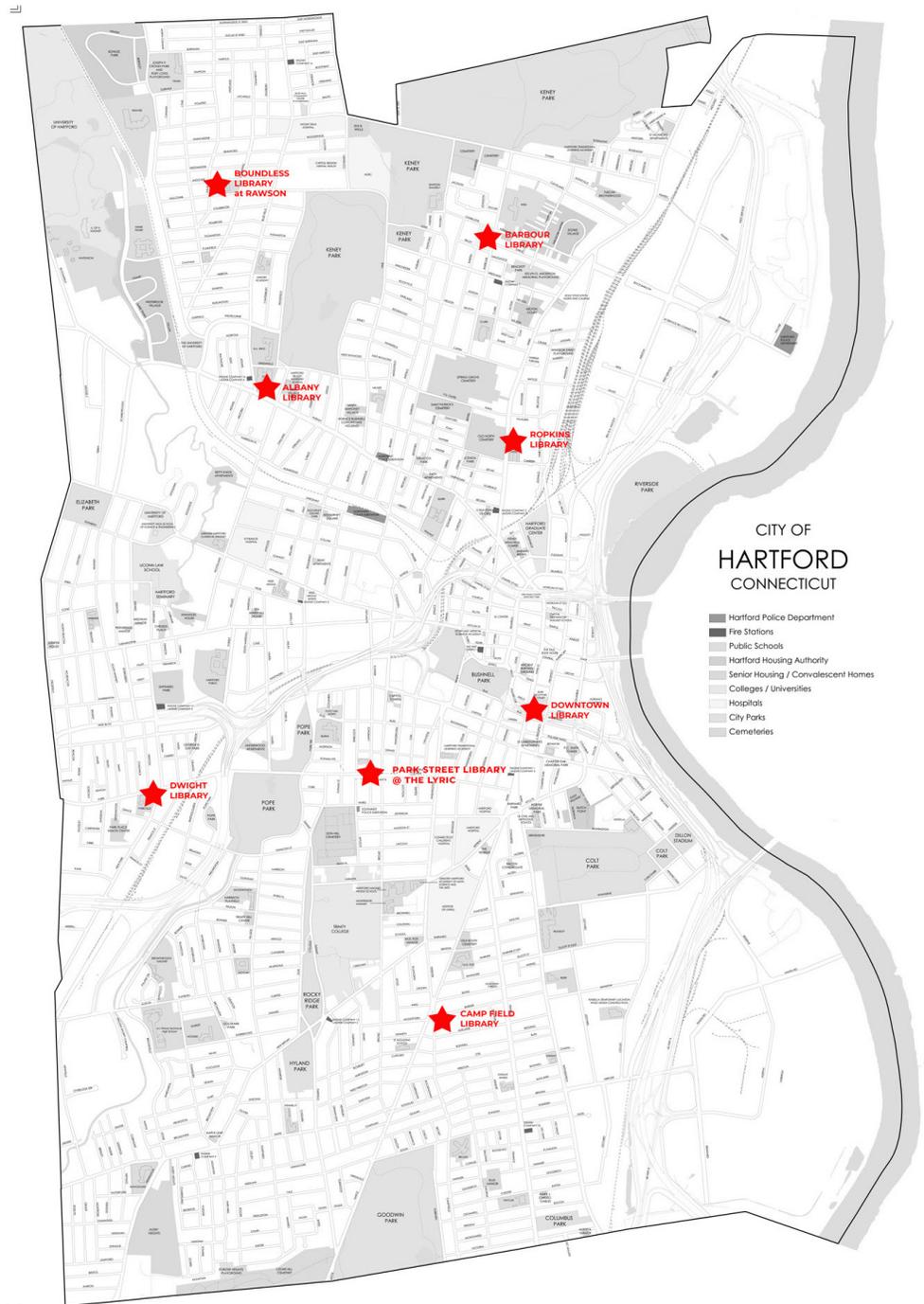
603 Park Street, Hartford,
CT 06106
860-695-7500

SAND/ROPKINS

1750 Main Street,
Hartford, CT 06120
860-695-7520

BOUNDLESS AT RAWSON SCHOOL

260 Holcomb Street,
Hartford, CT 06112
860-695-7481



LEADERSHIP

Bridget E. Quinn
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Leticia Cotto
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE OFFICER

Marie Jarry
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICES

Brenda Miller
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CULTURE AND COMMUNICATIONS

Homa Naficy
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THE AMERICAN PLACE

Gilda Roncari
DIRECTOR OF DONOR RELATIONS

Diana Smith
DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Mary T. Tzambazakis
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

HPL BOARD MEMBERS

2020-2021

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Bridget E. Quinn, *President & CEO*

Hon. Luke A. Bronin, Mayor, *Ex-Officio*

Geraldine Sullivan, *Director Emeritus*

**Bad libraries build collections, good libraries build
services, great libraries build communities.**

—R. David Lankes



*HPL President and CEO Bridget E. Quinn, Park Street Library
@ the Lyric Branch Manager Graciela Rivera, and HPL Board
Member Ana Alfaro in the new Park Street Library @ the Lyric.*

THE NEW PARK STREET LIBRARY @ THE LYRIC

Ana Alfaro remembers standing on the corner of Park and Broad streets in the heart of Hartford's Frog Hollow neighborhood decades ago trying to build support for a new community library.

"It was a vision and a wish," she said. "We all wished for the new library and we all had that vision that it would happen someday."

Now that vision has come to fruition, with the recent opening of the new Park Street Library @ the Lyric, a project that has been decades in the making.

Alfaro, who serves on the Hartford Public Library Board of Directors and has been active in the Park Street community for years, said the two-story, 13,000-square-foot building will provide ample space for programming and events that could not be held at the former Park Street library that was located in a cramped, 2,000-square-foot storefront.

"For me and others who had this vision back then, we knew this was important for the new generation of children coming into the neighborhood," she said.

One child who grew up visiting the old Park Street library will be tasked with overseeing the new location.

Graciela Rivera, branch manager of the Park Street Library @ the Lyric, said it's been an honor to be part of the transition for the Park branch, which she started visiting at the age of 12.

The new library "really is a community asset," she said, with a large meeting room on the second floor that can be used for forums and other events relevant to the neighborhood.

"We've had a lot of interest from local organizations, local schools who want to utilize the space," Rivera said. "They want to collaborate with us, bring resources and things to us that they wouldn't have otherwise."

Hartford Public Library has expanded its collection of Spanish language materials in anticipation of the move. The new space will also meet a specific need that's arisen in the community: programs serving and catering to families who have children with disabilities.

Beyond activities and events for children, the library will also offer job training opportunities, classes for English language learners and other assistance for adults in the neighborhood.

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION

Tai Soo Kim, an architect and founder of the Hartford firm TSKP Studio, said the building is designed to be welcoming and inviting, a significant improvement over the dilapidated Lyric Theater that sat vacant on the corner for decades.

“This building, I consider it really to be a neighborhood living room,” Kim said. “That’s why the corner area of the building is all glass. I want people to look in and be welcomed.”

Another feature Kim highlighted is a courtyard in the back of the building where outdoor events will be held.

While the new library has replaced the Lyric, it honors the historic theater in both its design and construction.

Decades after a devastating fire in 1979 spelled the demise of the theater, local artists painted a series of murals that were installed in the second- and third-floor window openings of the shuttered venue. While the original murals could not be salvaged when the building was demolished, they have been reproduced and will be displayed in the new library in a similar fashion.

Scott Scholl, project manager for Downes Construction, the New Britain firm that built the Park Street Library @ the Lyric, said some other components of the original theater

were removed and reinstalled as part of the project. He said the project was designed and built to seamlessly blend with the surrounding neighborhood.

“It’s satisfying for us as a construction company to be part of this for the local community,” Scholl said. “It’s a beautiful example of a mix of a modern building, taking into account details of surrounding structures. To see it in its final stage is certainly satisfying.”

‘A BEACON IN THE COMMUNITY’

Hartford Public Library President and CEO Bridget E. Quinn said she has been hearing about the desire for a new library in the neighborhood since she was hired in 2016.

She said the new Park Library @ the Lyric will “set the stage for our branch libraries.”

“Decades of planning and advocacy led to the construction of a beautiful and welcoming new center for literacy, education, community, culture, history and civics,” Quinn said.

The library will also be an economic development engine for the neighborhood, she added, driving foot traffic to the area and boosting community pride.

“The new Park Street library branch is a beautiful, noble, welcoming space,” Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin said. “And I hope it will be an oasis in the neighborhood for many years to come. This is a project that was a neighborhood aspiration for decades, and it’s a reality because so many people worked together to make it possible.”

Greg Davis, chair of the Hartford Public Library Board of Directors, said he’s been looking forward to the new Park Street library for many years and called its completion a “testament to the hard work and effort put in by many people, everyone coalescing together to make it happen.”

“It is obviously in my opinion going to be a beacon in the community,” he said. “I think it will change the whole perspective and look of Park Street. I can’t wait to see that building bustling with young and old.”

The \$12.5 million project received \$11.1 million from the Stand Bond Commission, a \$1 million grant from the Connecticut State Library and additional funding from the City of Hartford. Construction began in the summer of 2019 and the library opened to the public in October 2021.





PUBLIC SERVICES

The Hartford Public Library stepped up in a variety of ways to assist city residents with food and other necessities in FY21 even as the pandemic limited in-person services.

When the COVID-19 vaccine became available, the Library held several clinics and made more than 4,400 calls to community members encouraging them to sign up to receive their shot.

A new LibChat service was launched and provided customers an additional way to connect with Library staff and get answers to their questions at all hours of the day. In addition to chatting online with a librarian, customers can also send a text. In the first three months of the new service staff answered 67 tickets and 326 chat questions.

The Library continued to offer contact-free pickup, allowing customers to reserve books and pick them up without having to enter the building.

Hartford Public Library's branches, while closed to visitors for part of the year, continued to be key gathering points in the community to provide outreach and assistance.

In February, the Barbour Library was designated as a Connecticut Foodshare pantry site and nearly 200 bags of shelf-stable food were distributed in two months. The Library partnered with Our Piece of the Pie and teens affiliated with the nonprofit volunteered to help bag and distribute the food.

At the Camp Field Library, Library Assistant Julie Carroll led HPL's systemwide effort to educate and inform citizens about the importance of voting in the 2020 election. Voter registration was promoted through outreach events at Connecticut Foodshare mobile stops across the city.

Park Library manager Graciela Rivera helped arrange for the distribution of 150 donated boxes of shelf stable food that were distributed to families in need in the Frog Hollow neighborhood.



SPOTLIGHT

COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics

Vaccine clinics held at Library branches in the spring proved to be popular with local residents, as more than 500 people were vaccinated in just three days at the Dwight Library in early April.

Lizandra Matias, manager at Dwight, said a line of people were waiting outside the door when she arrived at 8:30 a.m. on the second day of the clinic, which began at 10 a.m.

“The word spread like wildfire,” she said.

The Library worked to eliminate barriers like internet connectivity, language difficulties and limited access to transportation that made it difficult for people living in the neighborhood to register to receive their shot.

Matias, who speaks Spanish, acted as an interpreter for many people who received their vaccinations at Dwight. The Albany Library similarly offered vaccinations in the spring.

In addition to holding clinics at branches, HPL staff worked with the city’s health department to contact senior citizens and help them book vaccination appointments at other locations in the city.





YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES

The Library's Youth and Family Services didn't miss a beat in FY21, reporting the same number of participants in its annual Summer Learn program despite moving to a virtual platform. There were 352 youths in "Imagine Your Story," with weekly raffles for all age groups. Books and craft kits were distributed through contact-free pick up, and story walks hung up around the city.

In October, the Library began virtual afterschool programs with The Village at the Rawson, Wish and M.D. Fox schools. More than 1,000 students participated in 29 programs.

STEM programming remained popular throughout the year. The Youth Services Team collaborated with the Children's Museum in West Hartford to create a monthly Saturday STEM virtual program "Families Learn Together" that ran from October-December. The museum provided STEM kits and the Library provided three STEM-related books each month for participants to build home libraries.

Said Dan Butterworth, Outreach Coordinator at the Children's Museum: "Over the past five months you have all helped the Children's Museum's Families Learn Together programs continue and succeed in spite of the unprecedented obstacles we have all faced this year."

Youth and Family Services also coordinated and hosted a virtual Big Read author visit in March featuring Julia Alvarez with 75 students from three schools in attendance. Julia expressed that she enjoyed speaking with the children and sharing her stories.

As in-person programming returns, the Library plans to continue to innovate and find ways to interact virtually with children who do not have the ability to visit locations during or after school.

SPOTLIGHT

Library of Things

Hartford Public Library's collection contains far more than books, and that includes its ever-growing Library of Things, which was expanded this year to include many new items for children and families, thanks in part to a grant from the Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation.

Here's a look at some of what was added this year:

STEM Lab on the Go: This collection includes the Code-a-Pillar, where children connect segments to make the toy go forward, left, right or wherever they chose; a "talking telescope" that quizzes their astronomy knowledge; and Gravity Maze, a falling marble logic game.

CRIS Kids Book Bundles: Produced in collaboration with the Connecticut Radio Information System, a Windsor-based nonprofit radio station that serves people who are blind or unable to read due to various print challenges, these bundles include five books that are also narrated onto a preloaded MP3 player, earbuds and a sticker sheet for children to track their progress.

Math Kits: These new kits contain editions of "Bedtime Math" as well as math-based games that test children's skills like Counting Cookies, Sum Swamp and Math Balance.

Doll Kits: The Library also expanded its collection of children's doll kits. Each kit includes either a superhero like Batman, Spider-Man, or an American Girl WellieWisher doll, as well as a carrying case and two books.





YOUMEDIA & TEEN SERVICES

Limited in-person programming returned to YOUmedia in early 2021 with audio production workshops and assistance offered to teens who had worked with the Library to launch their own Twitch channels.

YOUmedia also launched the YHPS Radio podcast network, beginning with one show and planning for a second. The Library partnered with Real Art Ways to offer teens a weekly hybrid intro to filmmaking workshop series that culminated with them producing their own short films.

The Teen Services Discord Server became the central hub for program implementation and surpassed 100 users.

A new Connecticut Foodshare Backpack program began in late February, with Library staff delivering bags of shelf-stable food to families whose child or children participate in at least one afterschool teen program at HPL. In the first three weeks of the program, 3,415 pounds of food were delivered to 49 families. "This came at the right time," one student said.

In the spring, YOUmedia's photography mentor worked with students at Hartford Public High School learning how to shoot photos in a studio setting and how to edit those images. The students were offered the opportunity to have their graduation photos professionally taken at Bushnell Park and were given printed and digital copies.

The Boundless Enrichment program at Hartford Public High School added a soccer club where students watched the latest international games, attended local soccer matches and received academic support.



Top Young Adult Titles for 2020-21

TEEN BOOKS

My Hero Academia by Kohei Horikoshi

Attack on Titan by Hajime Isayama

Dragon Ball Super by Toyotarō Akira Toriyama

TEEN DVDS

A Silent Voice

The Avengers

Spider-Man

TEEN EBOOKS

The Maze Runner by James Dashner

Divergent by Veronica Roth

Allegiant by Veronica Roth



ADULT PROGRAMMING

The 18th season of Baby Grand Jazz, sponsored by the Kaman Foundation, shifted seamlessly to a virtual format in FY21. The four-month series boasted a total live virtual audience of 1,717 attendees from 97 countries, and the performance videos had more than 21,000 views.

Big Read programming was also offered virtually and saw strong engagement: more than 700 people participated in live events with more than 4,530 total views. The month-long series focused on Julia Alvarez's books *In the Time of the Butterflies*, *How Tia Lola Came to (Visit) Stay* and *If Dominican Were a Color* with programming around Dominican art, literature and performance, culminating in a live event with Alvarez and Connecticut poet Sarahi Almonte Caraballo with more than 300 attendees.

Another highlight of the year was the Hartford Changemakers Summer Program, which featured six weeks of intergenerational arts workshops celebrating Black, Indigenous and Latino/a/x changemakers in Hartford. Participants learned about historic community leaders in Hartford and ultimately produced two impressive murals in the North End and South End of the city.

In the weeks leading up to the Oct. 16 Census deadline and the November election, the Library continued to make trips out into the community to encourage participation and register new voters.

The year was capped off by the Library's first large in-person event in more than a year to celebrate LGBTQ Pride month. More than 150 attendees visited the Downtown terrace for Drag Queen Storytime, henna, free Italian ice and crown making.



SPOTLIGHT: ADULT PROGRAMMING

Baby Grand Jazz

Baby Grand Jazz has been one of Hartford Public Library's most popular offerings and this year was no exception.

With the pandemic making it impractical to welcome large crowds to the Library for the series of performances, library staff worked to stream live performances from the Center for Contemporary Culture to HPL's Facebook page and YouTube channel.

Viewers developed an online community and a sense of togetherness on the livestream chat and through social media. The virtual performances provided another venue for the audience to react and respond to the music and connect with each other and the musicians.

Bands that were unable to travel to Hartford due to COVID-19 restrictions filmed their own performances that were streamed on HPL's platforms.

"This brightens my Sundays every time," read one of the many positive comments in the live chat.

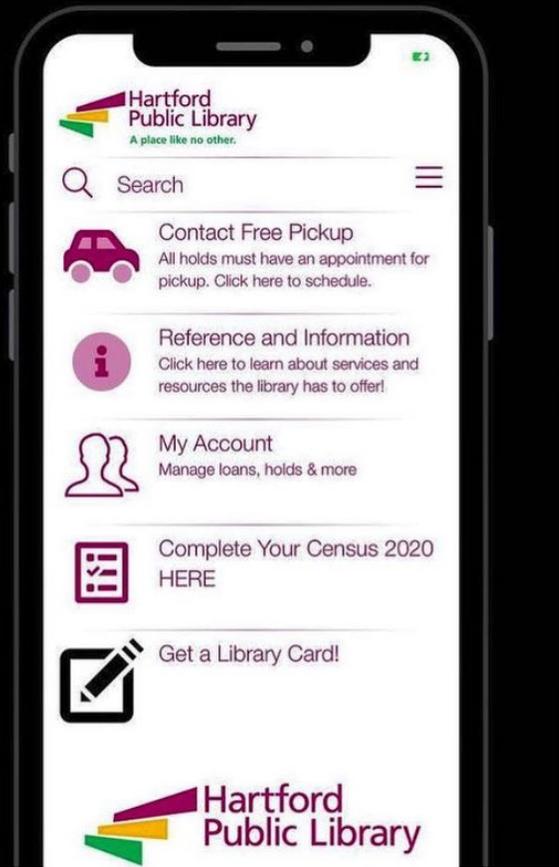
In April, the Library offered a limited number of in-person tickets to the concerts through a lottery system. The audience, masked and socially distanced, got to experience live music for the first time in many months.

"It felt uplifting and healing to sustain a creative community during a pandemic," said HPL Programming and Events Manager Liz Castle. "Musicians responded to the times by composing and performing songs about the grief, despair, and hope they have experienced this past year, and viewers responded with their own stories of loss. In an unprecedented time of struggle, this series provided a space of feeling together through music."



HPL APP

Connect
with HPL
anytime



TECHNICAL SERVICES

Hartford Public Library went fine free for all Library customers in June with help from the Technical Services staff. A total of 10,209 bills were removed from the system, restoring borrowing privileges to more than 3,000 customers.

The department also made the Library's ebook collection directly accessible in Hartford Public School students' online learning portal. In the third quarter of the year, students and teachers checked out more than 650 ebooks and audiobooks and Hartford Public Schools eresource book collections were used more than 50,000 times, equating to each student reading at least one book.

Over the course of the year, 23,741 items were added to the Library's physical collection. More than 2,000 new items will be added to the collection at the new Park Branch with 40% of the titles ordered in Spanish, reflecting the needs of the community.

Usage of the Hartford Public Library app remained steady and discovery of HPL titles through Google searches, a feature launched at the end of the last fiscal year, saw a steady increase.

More than 40 packages of recently discarded books were delivered to correctional facilities across the U.S., many of which had been locked down for months during the pandemic. The books were enthusiastically received and provided an important source of reprieve.



LIBRARY ON WHEELS

The Library on Wheels provided consistent library services to as many neighborhoods and customers as possible while HPL branches were closed and stocked Little Free Libraries throughout the city.

The 245 events it held in FY21 was a 79% increase from the year prior and the number of items borrowed was up 189%.

Beyond books, the Library on Wheels offered Wi-Fi hot spots to areas of the city that lacked internet access, provided outreach about the U.S. Census and helped register voters for the 2020 election.

The Library also partnered with Connecticut Foodshare to offer LOW services at its mobile locations throughout the city. With food insecurity at a high in Hartford due to the COVID-19 pandemic, those sites served more than 100 people per stop.





THE AMERICAN PLACE (TAP)

Throughout FY21, The American Place continued to offer certificate training, GED preparation services, English as a second language courses and its nationally recognized U.S. citizenship program, with classes offered online and in person.

GED testing services resumed in September 2020 at limited capacity, with 146 tests proctored through the end of June.

A total of 219 students enrolled throughout the course of the year. Adult ESL students were born in 43 different countries or territories, with 23% from Peru, 14% from the Dominican Republic and 10% from Columbia.

In FY21, 223 digital devices and Wi-Fi hot spots were loaned through the Crossroads to Connectivity initiative to help bridge the digital divide and assist those working toward educational and career goals.

In October, The American Place received grant funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to provide critical digital literacy skills training for Hartford residents.

The American Place was the 2021 winner of the Partners in International Education award from the Council on Social Work Education's Commission on Global Social Work Education.



SPOTLIGHT

Student Scholars

The American Place offers vital services to adults, but its afterschool program for teen English language learners has also been a resounding success, with many participants graduating at or near the top of their class at Hartford high schools.

“The focus is on immigrant and refugee teens who are newcomers to Hartford,” explained Michele Brophy, an instructional specialist at The American Place who runs the program. “Many have only been here two or three months.”

Brophy said the Library program, which began four years ago, “supplements, reinforces and extends what happens in the school day.” It also helps to create a sense of belonging among the students, who are able to discuss their shared experiences and build a sense of community. Students meet Tuesdays and Thursdays after school at the Library’s Downtown location for two and a half hours. They work with tutors who are recruited from local colleges and universities. The program has strong partners in Capital Community College and other institutions, Brophy said.

During the pandemic, students continued working with their tutors remotely, and the Library provided any equipment needed.

Brophy highlighted three students who recently completed the program and began classes at UConn this fall:

Alimeline Irankundra, a refugee from Malawi, was the salutatorian at Bulkeley High School and a member of the National Honor Society, among other accolades.

Samantha Fonseca immigrated to the U.S. from Brazil. She graduated third in her class at Bulkeley and was captain of the soccer team.

Honore Munyaneza, a refugee from Rwanda, was a soccer captain at Bulkeley and 11th in his graduating class.

“The motivation and hard work of these students to overcome and excel is just mind-boggling,” Brophy said.



Hartford History Center (HHC)

With many people unable to physically visit the Hartford History Center in FY21, staff went into overdrive to provide research assistance to those who called or emailed, including many Hartford and Connecticut residents but also to people from Georgia, Florida, Indiana, Illinois, Nebraska, California and Texas.

To celebrate the centennial of women's suffrage, an online exhibition, October 1920, was launched and included hundreds of digitized voter registration cards from some of the first women eligible to vote in Connecticut, as well as information about their lives. The exhibit earned a 2021 Award of Merit from the Connecticut League of History Organizations.

And as part of the Big Read in March, the HHC team produced two live virtual programs that highlighted historic and contemporary revolutionary Latinas in Hartford.

In April, the HHC was named to the Internet Archive's first class of its Community Webs program, a program to help public libraries create online community history archives.

Work began in earnest on the Hartford 2020 collection that will archive what has happened to our community during 2020, from the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. The collection aims to show how the pandemic has both further exposed the great inequities of our society and how resilient and innovative our communities can be. An exhibit and online resource will be forthcoming.



SPOTLIGHT

Dr. Fiona Vernal

UConn professor and researcher Dr. Fiona Vernal has found the Hartford History Center to be a welcoming work environment as she digs into the history of housing in Hartford through the lens of people who have made the city their home for several generations.

“I don’t think people realize the trove of manuscript sources that are here for this kind of work,” Vernal said. “It rivals the Connecticut State Library and it is the premiere place to do research about the City of Hartford.”

Vernal’s work includes examining the migration of the city’s West Indian, African American and Puerto Rican populations and documenting their experiences as they arrived and put down roots in Hartford. Through her research, Vernal said she has found numerous parallels between the issues that Hartford faced in the early to mid 20th century and the challenges of today including passionate discussions about schools, taxes and affordable housing.

“I’m hoping to help people understand the origins of the problems front and center in the city now,” she said.

The Hartford History Center has proved invaluable for her work. On a recent afternoon she sat working at a table with a stack of primary sources next to her and more records stacked on a cart behind her. The center’s collection includes the Hartford Town and City Clerk Archives that hold information about development, tax records and much more.

“This work would be impossible without the Hartford History Center,” she said.

Vernal has received recognition for her research including the Provost’s Award for Excellence in Community Engaged Scholarship from UConn and a Sustainable Global Cities award to continue work on her website www.hartfordbound.com.





FACEBOOK

6 9 9
P O S T S

47,000
C O M M E N T S

8,500
F A N S



INSTAGRAM

4 0 9
P H O T O S

19,000
E N G A G E M E N T S

3,000
F O L L O W E R S



TWITTER

1,000
T W E E T S

2,840
E N G A G E M E N T S

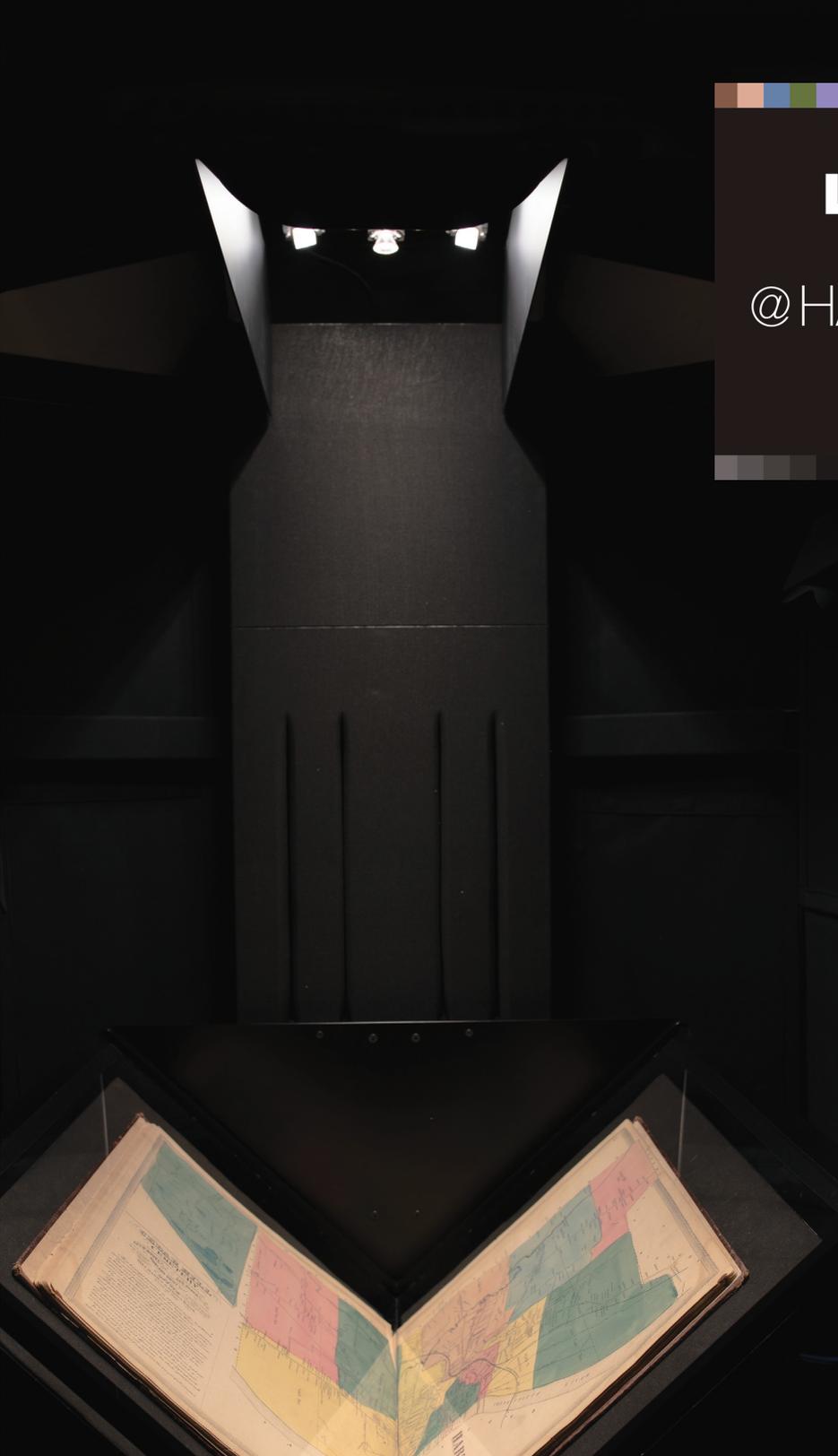
5,100
F O L L O W E R S

DIGITAL LIBRARY LAB

Hartford Public Library saw tremendous growth in the 2020-2021 fiscal year. One project, in the planning stages in 2019-20, blossomed to completion. The Library developed and equipped the Digital Library Lab @ Hartford Public Library (DLL@HPL), a new, innovative digital lab on the ground floor of the Downtown Library.

In early 2020, DLL@HPL had one major piece of reprographic equipment: a custom motorized and computer programmable XY table and a large camera column with a motorized arm. The DLL@HPL is now equipped with a custom-built book cradle designed for safe handling of very fragile bound volumes; an Atiz BookDrive Mark II book scanner, a dual-camera V-cradle book scanning system designed for quickly scanning books including paperbacks and long books difficult to photograph efficiently on the XY table copy stand; a custom designed photogrammetry system; and, two Xerox W110 high volume document scanners.

The DLL@HPL today stands ready to provide professional solutions for municipalities, businesses and nonprofits' digitization and indexing needs.



**DIGITAL
LIBRARY
LAB**

@HARTFORD
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

The DLL@HPL makes going virtual easy.

- Scanning of bound volumes to create high resolution, full color digital resources for preservation and access
- Optical character recognition for full text search
- E-book formatting options
- Detailed technical information for your next project or grant proposal

Request a quote today!

For information, please call the Digital Library Lab at 860-695-6293 or email DLL@hplct.org



THE ARTWALK

ArtWalk at the Hartford Public Library will be welcoming six talented artists this year whose exhibitions were postponed during the pandemic.

Wladyslaw Prosol: In “Portrait of a Picture” Wladyslaw Prosol will display abstract paintings and nontraditional landscape paintings. Prosol, who lives in New Britain, was born in Poland and trained as an architect. His works will be displayed from Nov. 5 to Dec. 11, 2021.

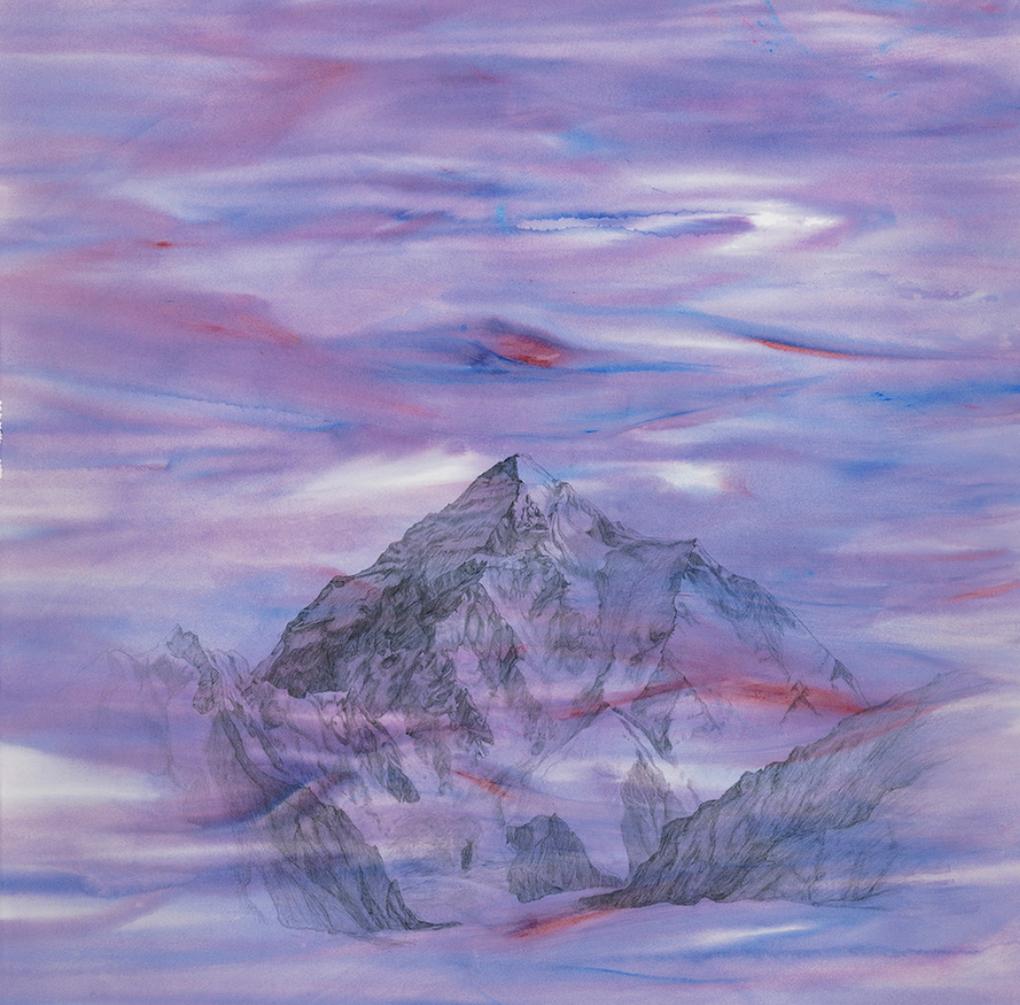
Michelle Thomas: In “Images of Empowerment” Hartford artist Michelle Thomas seeks to explore the “myriad of stories, experiences and art that have shaped the psyche of the modern day African American,” she writes in her artist’s statement. Her large-scale works use ceramic mask making techniques and found objects to create sculptural portrayals of people of African descent in the United States and seek to start a dialogue to “ignite action for a better world.” Her works will be displayed from Jan. 7 to Feb. 19, 2022.

James Finnegan & Michelle Cotugno: “Words in Clay, Words on Paper” features poetry printed upon fired clay objects in an effort to honor the written word and highlight the creative collaboration between writers and artists. Michelle Cotugno, a Springfield artist, sculpted the works in the exhibit, which was curated by James Finnegan, a published poet who served as poet laureate in his hometown of West Hartford. Their works will be displayed from March 11 to April 23, 2022.

Megyn Craine: “Artifact” is a collection of works about images, objects and ideas, combined to reveal unseen connections and create new layers of meaning. “Like an archaeologist, I look to unearth what lies beneath the surface of the everyday,” Megyn Craine, of Hartford, says in her artist’s statement. Her work will be displayed from May 13 to June 25, 2022.

Christa Whitten: “Gateways to Places We’re Told We Cannot Go” is described by Suffield artist Christa Whitten as “a response to the tension that arises while attempting to reconcile respect for differing cultural beliefs with the inequity of hindering access to a sacred space.” The series focuses on restricted access to spiritually charged locations across the globe, including based on gender. Her work will be displayed from July 15 to Aug. 27, 2022.





ABOVE:
Christa Whitten, "Base Camp"

RIGHT:
Megyn Craine, "Two Piece Set"

FACING PAGE, TOP:
Wladyslaw Prosol, "A Whisper"

FACING PAGE, BOTTOM:
Michelle Thomas



Hartford Public Library's Employee Recognition Program

JULY 2020—35 YEARS OF SERVICE

Somprasong Sikhounmuong

SEPTEMBER 2020—IN APPRECIATION FOR
DEMONSTRATING A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

Lina Osho-Williams

SEPTEMBER 2020—IN APPRECIATION FOR
DEMONSTRATING A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

Irene Blean

OCTOBER 2020—ANNUAL AWARD

Martha-Rea Nelson

JANUARY 2021—IN RECOGNITION OF
INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

Johana Blanco

JANUARY 2021—IN RECOGNITION OF
INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

Victoria Palmatier

APRIL 2021—IN RECOGNITION OF TEAMWORK

Joseph Cardinale

APRIL 2021—IN RECOGNITION OF TEAMWORK

Fabian Arroyo



*Martha-Rae Nelson
was the recipient of
Hartford Public Library's
annual employee
recognition award.*

2020-21 AWARDS

2020: NAMED TO THE NORTHEAST
DOCUMENT CONSERVATION CENTER
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Brenda Miller

2020: CLA PUBLICITY AWARD,
HONORABLE MENTION

Summer 2019 HPL Magazine

2020: HARTFORD STAGE'S INAUGURAL
INSPIRATION AWARD

HPL/Hartford Stage partnership

2020: HARTFORD BUSINESS JOURNAL'S
2020 WOMEN IN BUSINESS AWARD

Bridget E. Quinn

2020: U.S. CENSUS, IDEAS THAT COUNT

*Recognition of HPL's use of the self-check
machines to promote census participation*

2020: CITY OF HARTFORD'S HARTFORD
CHANGEMAKER AWARD

Homa Naficy

2020: THE INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM
AND LIBRARY SERVICES DIGITAL
LITERACY TRAINING AWARD

The American Place

2020: EDWARD C. AND ANN T.
ROBERTS FOUNDATION "CREATION
OF NEW WORK" AWARD

Hartford History Center

2021: AWARD OF MERIT, CONNECTICUT
LEAGUE OF HISTORY ORGANIZATIONS

*October 1920, online exhibition, Hartford
History Center*

2021: ACCEPTED INTO THE INTERNET
ARCHIVE'S COMMUNITY WEBS
PROGRAM FUNDED BY THE ANDREW
W. MELLON FOUNDATION

Hartford History Center, Jennifer Sharp

2021: HONORED BY THE URBAN LEAGUE
OF GREATER HARTFORD AS ONE OF
THE 2021 LEGACY HONOREES FOR
PATHS TO COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT

Michelle McFarland

2021: NAMED A 2021 HONOREE
OF 100 WOMEN OF COLOR

Martha-Rea Nelson

2021: NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICE AWARD

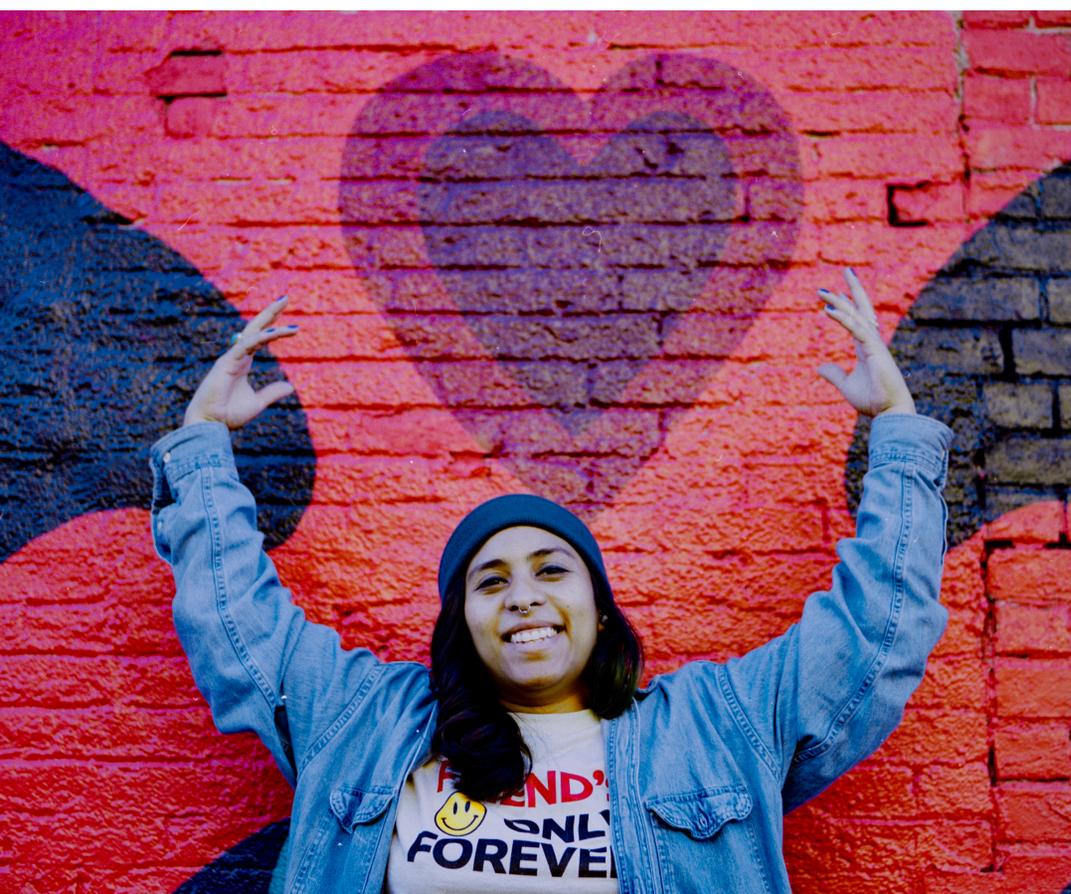
Graciela Rivera

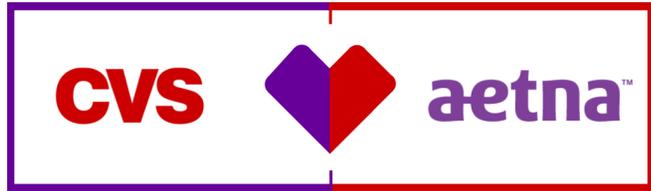
2021: NAMED TO CT EXPLORED'S
"20 FOR 20: A CRITICAL LOOK AT
THE FUTURE OF CONNECTICUT
HISTORY" ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Jasmin Agosto

2021: CONNECTICUT ART HERO,
CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Jasmin Agosto





*Many thanks to CVS/
Aetna, The Hartford,
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*In memory of the corporators who
passed in the last year.*



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Phyllis Shikora & Douglas A. Cohen

Thanks to Shipman & Goodwin

Through Shipman & Goodwin's pro bono partnership with The American Place at HPL, a conservative value of \$14,600+ was contributed by their attorneys assisting immigrants applying for US citizenship.



Shipman & Goodwin LLP



Hartford Public Library President and CEO Bridget E. Quinn and others cut the ribbon as the Downtown children's library reopened after a renovation project.

Timothy & Geraldine Sullivan
 Marilyn Traigert †
 Claudia Tudan †

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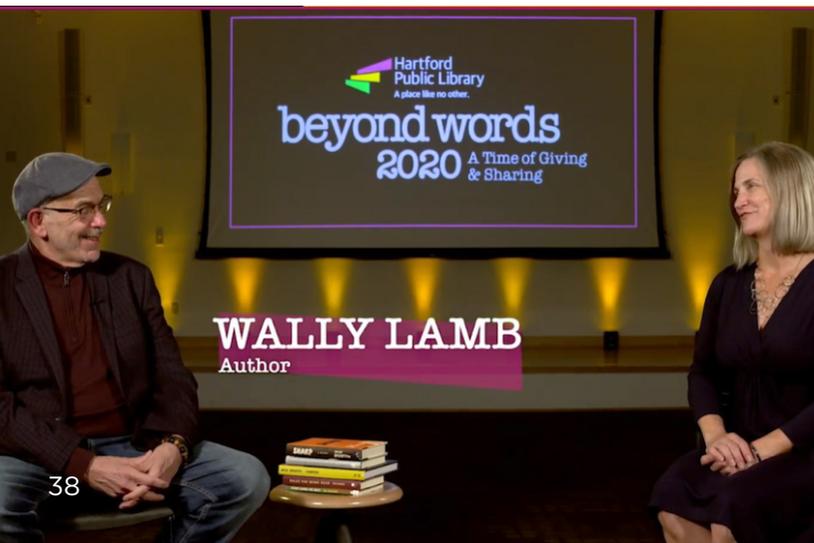
† Deceased as of 9/15/2021
 Donations 7/1/2020 to 6/30/2021.

beyond words 2020

MAGAZINE



JOE GIANNI
Greater Hartford Market President
Bank of America



WALLY LAMB
Author

BEYOND WORDS

Beyond Words, Hartford Public Library's largest annual fundraiser, was a virtual event in 2020, but it was not lacking in stories highlighting the impact of libraries on our community.

Critically acclaimed and bestselling authors Wally Lamb, Julia Alvarez, Amity Gaige, Christina Baker Kline and Jean Kwok highlighted the event, which was prerecorded and broadcast Dec. 3.

The 30-minute program also included a message from television writer and producer Norman Lear, who grew up in Hartford and graduated from Weaver High School in 1940.

He said he "enjoyed the hell out of the Hartford Public Library."

"It was there that I found my favorite ... book of essays, Ralph Waldo Emerson's 'Self Reliance.' I'll never forget the day I found that because I read a bit of 'Self Reliance' in the library. By the time I walked out I felt like a different person, I had grown up or something. My memory is so keen about the joy and fulfillment I felt at the Hartford Public Library."

The event raised more than \$225,000 in net proceeds for the Hartford Public Library and was viewed nearly 2,000 times on YouTube and Facebook.

Said Joseph Gianni, Greater Hartford Market President, Bank of America: "Giving to the Hartford Public Library is an investment in our collective future."

SPOTLIGHT

Legacy Gifts

The Hartford Public Library thanks those who have made legacy gifts to the Library, including the institution in their estate planning to ensure the library's resources remain robust and accessible for years to come.

The children's department at Hartford Public Library's Downtown location received a complete overhaul this year thanks to a generous legacy gift from the Grace D. Cassell Trust and support from the Mortensen Foundation.

Upgrades included new floors, colorful new paint and new furniture. The space formally reopened to children and their families on July 14.

The Library this year also received a generous legacy gift from Nancy Shepherd, a lifelong Hartford resident who died in 2017. She graduated from Hartford Public High School in 1966 before embarking on a nursing career. Shepherd was an avid reader and lover of libraries.

Phyllis Shikora, a Hartford Public Library board member, says she and her husband recently made a legacy gift to HPL and are pleased to know their support will help the next generation of families and children.

"We are excited to formalize this gift knowing we're supporting an institution that gives so much to the Hartford community," Shikora said. "In many ways HPL is the lifeblood of this city and we feel committed to ensuring its future. Whether it's checking books out, listening to the Baby Grand Jazz series, renewing our passports, seeing art installations or a myriad of other activities at the Library, we want to assure that future generations get to enjoy and learn at the Library."

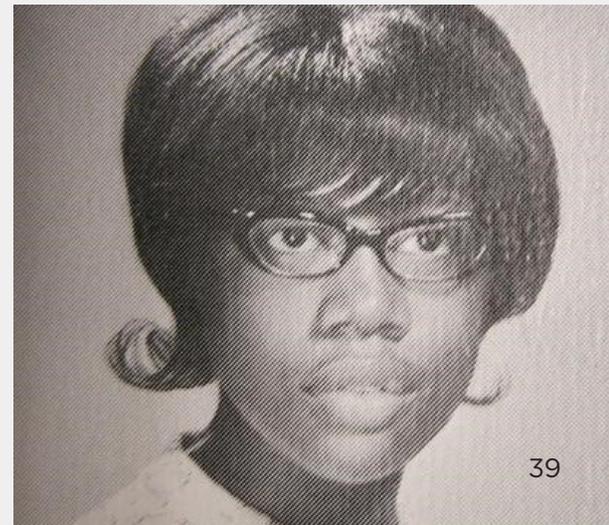
Planned giving is a way to be a supporter of the Library for years to come. When you honor your community by putting Hartford Public Library in your will or estate plan, there are benefits beyond the simple pleasure of giving.

According to your wishes, your generosity may be celebrated publicly or held in confidence. Legacy givers also have the opportunity to designate how their gifts are used.

Those considering leaving a legacy to Hartford Public Library are encouraged to contact Director of Donor Relations Gilda Roncari at groncari@hplct.org or 860-695-6296.

Images:

TOP: Family representing the Grace D. Cassell Trust stand with Hartford Public Library President and CEO Bridget E. Quinn, HPL board member Arunan Arulampalam and HPL corporator Marc Dibella in the renovated children's library. MIDDLE: Phyllis Shikora & Doug Cohen. BOTTOM: Nancy Shepherd.



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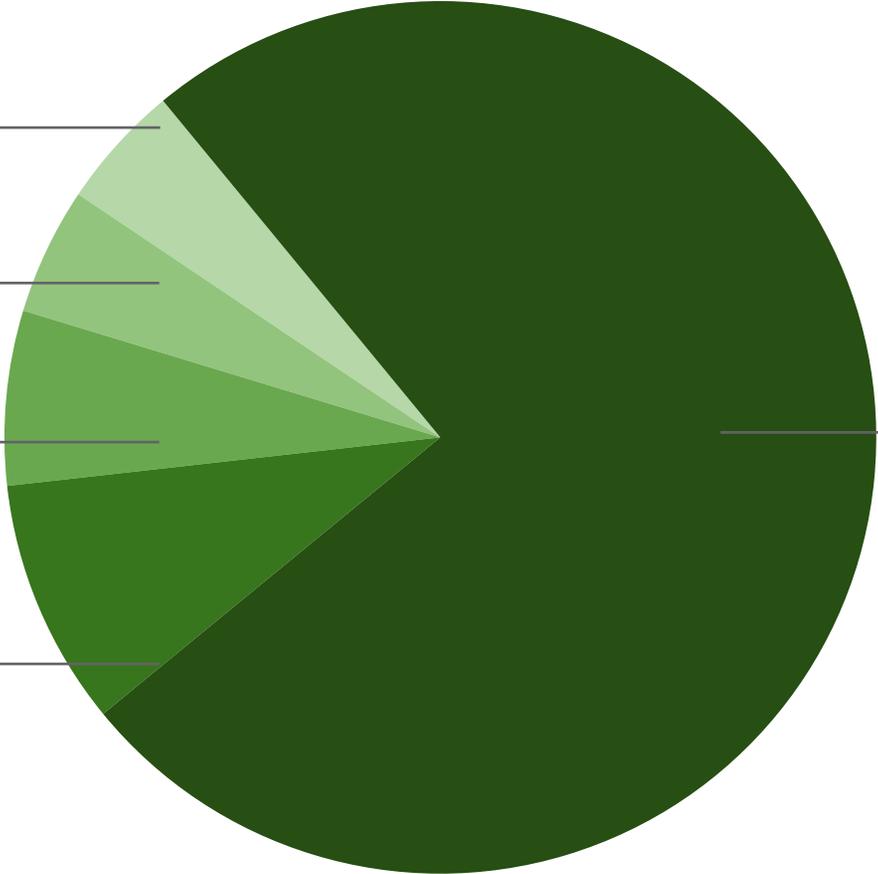
REVENUE

GIFTS
500,000

FEES INCOME
678,895

ENDOWMENT
794,432

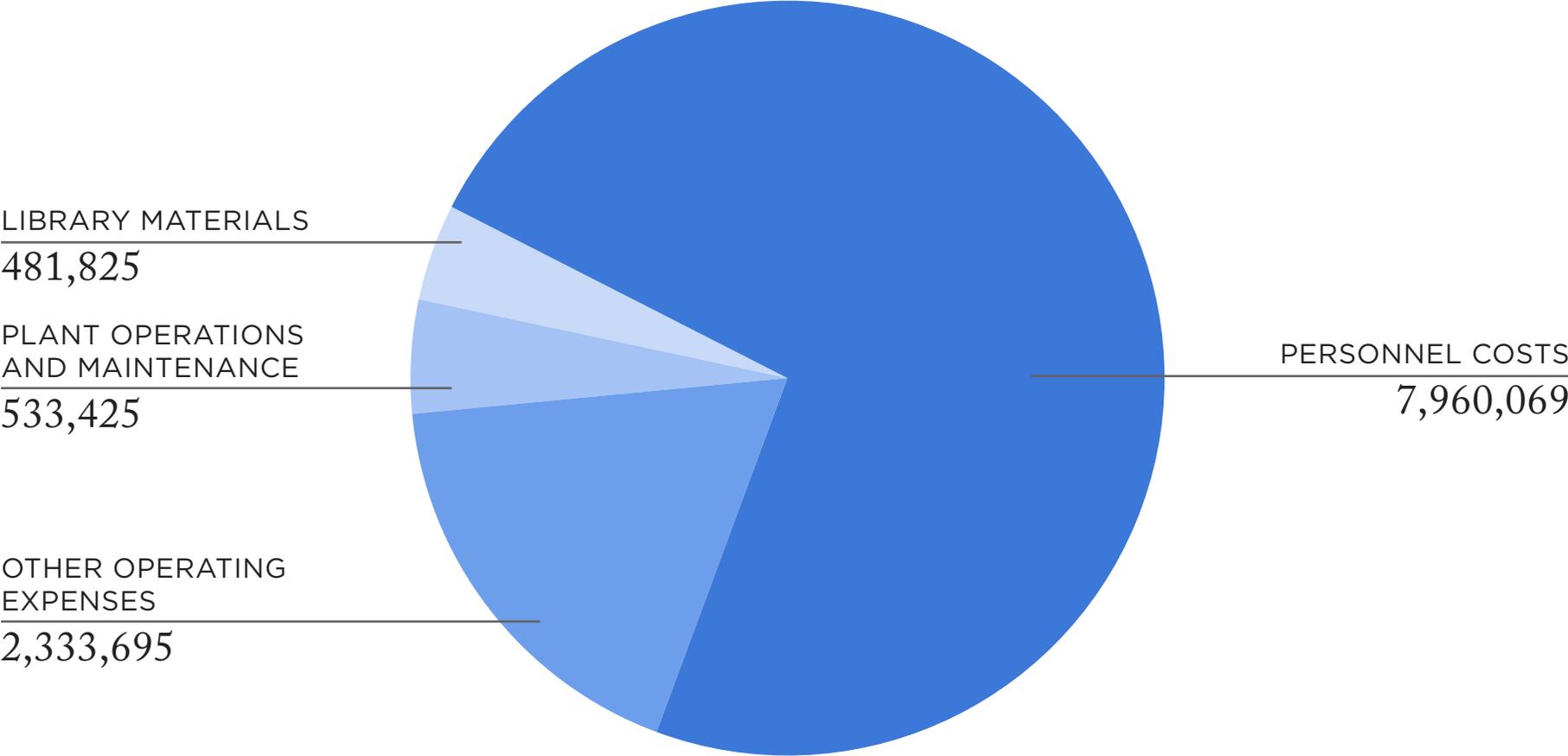
GRANTS
1,000,000



CITY CONTRIBUTION
8,335,687

TOTAL REVENUE 11,309,014

EXPENSE



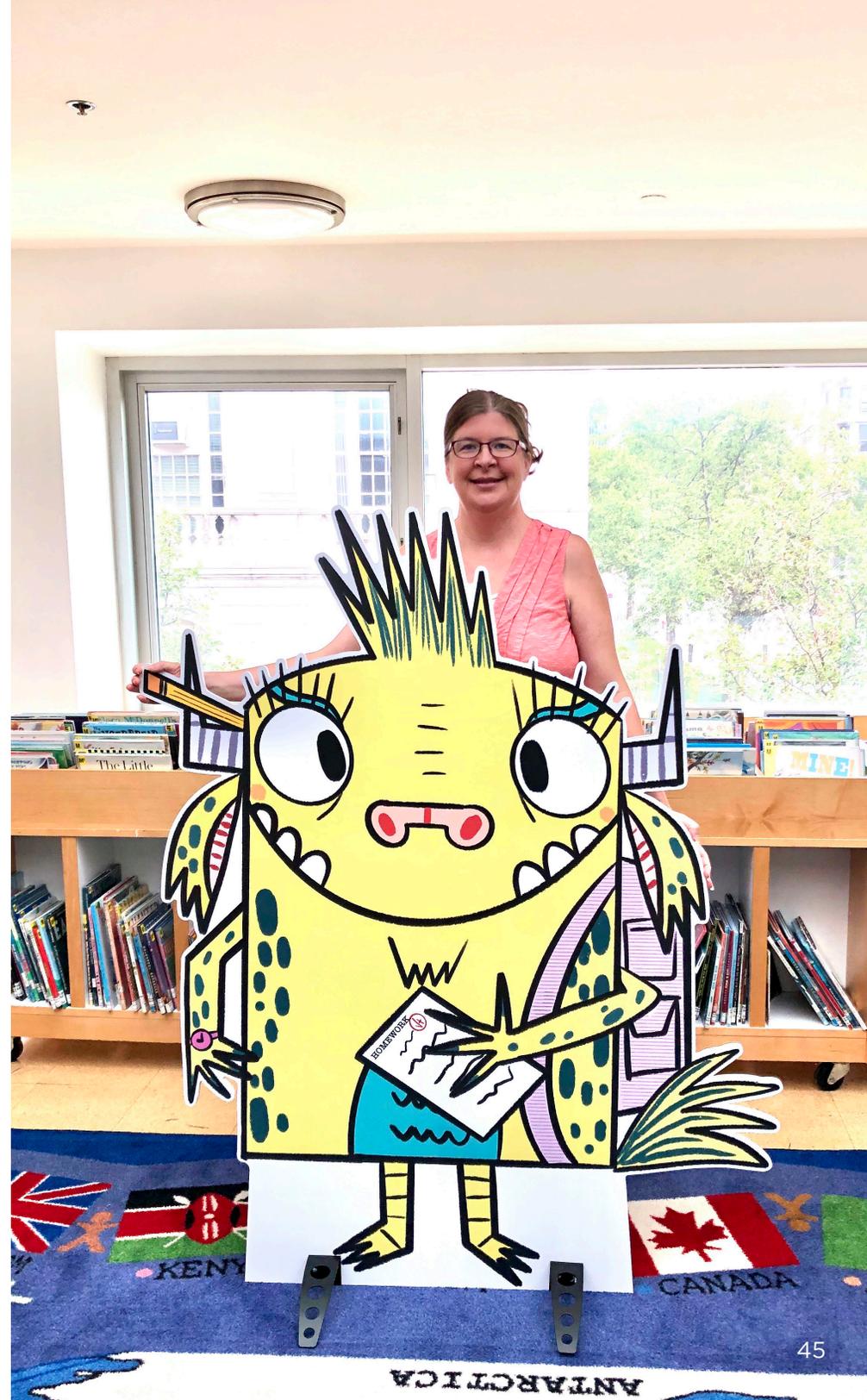
TOTAL EXPENSE

11,309,014

FY20—STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	FY21*
ASSETS	
Cash	1,067,648
Investments	23,122,649
Accounts Receivable	442,632
Contributions Receivable	495,723
Prepaid Expenses	103,282
Property and Equipment, net	8,471,464
TOTAL ASSETS	33,703,398
 LIABILITIES AND NET ASSET	
LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	68,681
Deferred Revenue	36,697
Refundable Advance	87,595
TOTAL LIABILITIES	192,973
 NET ASSETS	
Without Donor Restrictions	28,023,160
With Donor Restrictions	5,487,265
TOTAL NET ASSETS	30,224,842
 TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	 33,510,425

**FY21 is unaudited as of the printing of the Annual Report*



Swift Factory, 10 Love Lane. Photo credit Robert Benson Photography.



BARBOUR LIBRARY MOVING TO SWIFT FACTORY

With work completed on the new Park Street Library @ the Lyric, the Hartford Public Library's next big project is the relocation and expansion of the Barbour Library in Hartford's North End.

The Hartford Public Library Board of Directors in December formally recommended the recently renovated Swift Factory on Love Lane as the preferred location for a new North Hartford branch library. The two-story space is far bigger than the existing branch, which is located in a rented storefront.

"This opportunity lets us expand from that 2,000-square-foot storefront to a 15,000-square-foot location at the Swift Factory that will include not only full-service traditional library services but everything else, including teen services, youth services, in a way that it needs to be delivered for the community," HPL President and CEO Bridget Quinn said, during an appearance on "Pulse of the Region," the MetroHartford Alliance's weekly radio show.

She said the new branch would include a community learning center focusing on workforce readiness programming as well as offering classes on technology and for academic support services.

The Swift Factory produced gold leaf for projects across the country including the dome atop the Connecticut State Capitol but the company went out of business several decades ago and the building sat vacant until it was transferred in a \$34 million redevelopment to be a hub for small businesses.

"I think it's a perfect pairing to have the library in the same place that you have entrepreneurs and innovators and folks who are growing their businesses in Northeast Hartford," Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin said on the show.



The Park Street Library @ the Lyric is built on the site of the historic Lyric Theater, providing a lively community meeting place and learning center at the corner of Park and Broad streets, the heart of the Frog Hollow neighborhood for over 100 years.

The new building pays homage to the Lyric in numerous ways, including reproductions of these hand-painted murals that were installed in the second- and third-floor window openings of the Lyric Theater Business Block in 2000.