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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hartford Public Library to Debut New Children's Recommendation and Family Engagement Service

Hartford Public Library is the first public library in Southern New England to provide Beanstack to families in its community.

Hartford, CT [October 5, 2015] -- Hartford Public Library is launching Beanstack, an online portal that offers free personalized recommendations for books, apps, events and more. A natural extension of the library's commitment to early literacy and education, Beanstack will be available to all Hartford community members, helping to engage them with their local library.

Beanstack is an innovative new way to connect children and their families with books, educational programs and apps that match each child's specific age, interests, reading level and background. It also provides tools that help families and classrooms keep track of what they are reading and earn recognition as they read more. The service is powered by children's curation company **Zoobean** and gives the library access to a database using over 1,600 tags unique to children's books in order to help patrons find the right content for their families.

Starting this week, residents of Hartford can sign up and use Beanstack from their home computer, mobile device, or in any of the library's ten locations. Every week, a book in the library's collection, along with a relevant program or event at their preferred branch, will be suggested specifically for that child. Recommendations are sent with a learning tip by email and are also available via an online profile that families can access anytime. In addition to helping families discover great books, the web application includes a reading log and fun badges. Residents do not need a library card to get started.

"Hartford Public Library is an innovative organization. And we believe that Beanstack is at the forefront of accelerating innovation in pursuit of grade level reading for all students," says Hartford Public Library CEO Matthew K. Poland. "This powerful, but easy-to-use tool will broaden our reach to families throughout the City and help youth librarians create even better reading experiences for children and their families at the library."

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Beanstack is offered and managed by Zoobean Inc., which provides innovative tools that help public libraries engage local families and build children's literacy. The company and its founders were featured on ABC's show, Shark Tank, where they received an investment from Mark Cuban.

"We started Zoobean to help kids find books that excite and appeal to them, and to make reading more fun," says Felix Brandon Lloyd, who co-founded the company with his wife Jordan Lloyd Bookey and serves as Chief Dad and President. "Connecting with libraries is a great way to do that. Personalized, weekly recommendations help families find great books and programs that are available at their local library to keep them reading and learning."

To date, Zoobean has partnered with over 50 libraries throughout the United States and Canada to offer Beanstack. Libraries licensing the service will gain access to Zoobean's database of children's books, apps, learning tracks and personalized recommendation system.

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ABOUT HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

As a finalist for the 2013 and 2014 National Medal from the Institute for Museum and Library Services, Hartford Public Library has been recognized as a 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 833,000 visits per year from adults, children and families seeking early literacy opportunities, work skills training, civic engagement, arts enrichment, and so much more. Visit www.hplct.org.

ABOUT ZOOBEAN

Zoobean provides innovative tools that help public libraries engage local families and build children's literacy. The company's core product, Beanstack, recommends books matched to each child's interests, along with learning tracks linked to fun badges. Zoobean has more recently introduced a comprehensive summer reading solution.