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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Connecticut Science Center, Hartford Public Library Partner to Increase Engagement in Scientific Conversation, Inquiry

Hartford, Connecticut (March 20, 2015) – In an effort to bring science into everyday conversation, the Connecticut Science Center and Hartford Public Library present an ongoing series of facilitated lunchtime discussions in Downtown Hartford. **“Beyond the Podium: Lunchtime Science Conversations”** explores science issues that are currently part of a national dialogue including stem cell research, the vaccination controversy, environmental issues and how the brain works in the technological age.

Five lectures will be held in 2015, **beginning April 6, from 11:30 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. in the Hartford History Center on the third floor of the Downtown Library at 500 Main Street.** Those in attendance are invited to bring a lunch and beverages will be provided.

“Raising the level of conversation about science in a neutral and informal setting invites people to engage in the process of inquiry,” said Amy Sailor, School and Community Partnership Administrator at the Connecticut Science Center. “It is but one of many ways of fulfilling our mission ‘.....to inspire lifelong learning through interactive and innovative experiences that explore our changing world through science.’”

“Hartford Public Library recognizes that there is a great deal of interest out there about science that deeply affects us all,” said Brenda J. Miller, Chief Cultural Affairs and Public Programming Officer for the Library. “We thought it would be fruitful and helpful to bring together the public and experts on key subjects in science today, and for people to have a chance to ask questions and learn more.”

The first lunchtime conversation on **Monday, April 6** will address the topic: **“Cheap Oil: At What Cost to the Environment?”** and will feature Teresa Eickel, Executive Director of the Interreligious Eco-Justice Network, an organization that seeks to inspire and inform religious groups in Connecticut to be stewards of the earth. Among other science- and health-driven projects, Eickel helped run a statewide campaign to clean up grandfathered fossil fuel plants.

On **Monday, June 1**, participants will discuss ***“Connecticut’s Role in Stem Cell Research: Questions and Concerns”*** with Dr. Laura Grabel, the Lauren B. Dachs Chair of Science and Society at Wesleyan University and co-principal investigator of the Stem Cell Core grant for the University of Connecticut Health Center. All are welcome to this free science conversation series, which will continue August 3, October 5 and December 7. For more information, please visit hplct.org.

About the Connecticut Science Center

The LEED-Gold certified Connecticut Science Center, located in downtown Hartford, sparks creative imagination and an appreciation for science by immersing visitors in fun and educational hands-on, minds-on interactive experiences while maintaining an environmentally conscious presence. Serving 1.8 million people since opening in 2009, the Science Center features more than 165 exhibits in ten galleries and a range of topics, including space and earth sciences, physical sciences, biology, the Connecticut River watershed, alternative energy sources, Connecticut inventors and innovations, a children’s gallery, and much more. Other features include four educational labs, a 200-seat 3D digital theater, function room, gift store, and ongoing events for all ages. The Science Center is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing science education throughout the state of Connecticut and New England, providing learning opportunities for students and adults of all ages, and engaging the community in scientific exploration. The Connecticut Science Center is also the home to the Joyce D. and Andrew J. Mandell Academy for Teachers, offering powerful Professional Development for educators. More information: www.CTScienceCenter.org or 860.SCIENCE.

About the [Hartford History Center](#)

The Hartford History Center is a special collection of books, photographs, manuscripts and ephemera relating to over 300 years of community life in Connecticut’s capital city. The HHC is home to the Hartford Collection, which includes works by Mark Twain, Lydia Huntley Sigourney, Noah Webster, Harriet Beecher Stowe & Wallace Stevens.

The Hartford History Center is located on the third floor of the Hartford Public Library at 500 Main Street and is open Tuesday-Saturday from 1:00pm-5:00pm. Contact: 860.695.6297 or hhc@hplct.org

About Hartford Public Library

As a finalist for the 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 860,000 visits per year from adults, children and families seeking early literacy opportunities, work skills training, civic engagement, arts enrichment, and so much more. Visit hplct.org.