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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY PARTICIPATES IN NATIONAL LIBRARIES TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES PROGRAM, FOSTERS COMMUNITY ACTION

Hartford, Connecticut (June 9, 2015) — Hartford Public Library (HPL) is one of 10 public libraries across the country participating in an intensive 18-month, team-based training program that prepares community-engagement experts to work with members of the community on challenges at the local level. The Libraries Transforming Communities (LTC) initiative is a program of the American Library Association working in collaboration with the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation. Foundational concepts of the LTC program include turning outward towards the community, developing an understanding of the community's aspirations, and working together with community members to foster positive change. HPL's work in the LTC initiative is focused in Hartford's North End.

Richard Frieder, community engagement director in the Cultural Affairs and Public Programming Department at the HPL, is project leader for the initiative. "The purpose of the LTC initiative is to become more deeply connected to the community and to encourage and support community-driven action. We want to understand where North End residents want their community to go and help them get there," said Frieder.

As part of the Libraries Transforming Communities project at HPL, eight community conversations have been held in various locations in the city's North End over the past several months in an effort to learn about community member's aspirations and challenges, and to generate ideas for action.

As a result of the eight conversations, the Library is now partnering with community members and the Hartford Police Department on a three-session dialogue focusing on the topics of public safety, community violence, safe streets and building stronger relationships between the community and the police. At the end of the dialogue participants will identify action ideas and then work with partners to implement them. This initial dialogue is focused on the Northeast neighborhood. Additional dialogues may be held in other neighborhoods in the future.

"Moving in a new direction alone with flashes of action is not enough because it results in false hope," said Matthew K. Poland, chief executive officer of Hartford Public Library. "Through our work in community engagement we are committed to paying attention long enough to ensure something real is happening in Hartford over time. "

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 hplct.org.

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