



Martha L. Brogan,
City Librarian and Director, New Haven Free Public Library



In September 2014, Martha Brogan became the eighth City Librarian—and the first woman—in its 125+ year history to direct the New Haven Free Public Library (NHFPL). Founded by City Charter in 1886, the constellation of NHFPL today comprises the Ives Memorial Library located on the historic New Haven Green; four neighborhood libraries located on New Haven’s “main streets” across the city; a 24/7 digital branch; and a Readmobile that circulates to early learning centers and sites without a public and/or school library facility.

A department of the City of New Haven, the NHFPL is governed by a Board of Directors on which the Mayor serves *ex-officio* and to which she appoints nine members—all New Haven residents. Martha sits on the Mayor’s Kitchen Cabinet, is a member of the City Transformation Plan leadership group, and co-chairs the Adult Literacy Subcommittee of the Mayor’s Blue Ribbon Commission on Reading. In spring 2015, Mayor Harp, Superintendent of Schools Garth Harries, and Martha signed the White House *ConnectED Library Challenge*, pledging to get library cards into the hands of all school-age children in New Haven. In January 2016, they traveled to Washington, D.C. to attend the White House convening about this initiative where they were invited to present their strategies for closer public library and public school collaboration.

In adopting the NHFPL Strategic Plan, Martha focuses her attention on City Collaboration, Building Digital Bridges, Communicating Impact and Raising Revenues. She launched the “Penny for your Thoughts” advocacy campaign in 2015 to garner support for increased resources for the public library and bring its funding to 1% of the City’s General Fund budget. Over the course of the last two budget cycles (FY16-FY17), the library garnered seven new positions, building momentum in its efforts to reinvigorate library staffing which currently stands at 45 full-time employees. The goal is to attain equity of access to library resources and services across NHFPL’s neighborhoods through increased hours of operation that parallel those of the main downtown library facility.



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In addition to her responsibilities as City Librarian, Martha is the Executive Director of the NHFPL Foundation, a 501-c-3 which raises money to sustain and enhance the New Haven Free Public Library for future generations. In November 2015, the State Library awarded a \$1M public library construction grant to NHFPL to design and build a new Stetson Branch Library as a cornerstone of the new Dixwell Q Community House. The NHFPL Foundation expects to launch a capital campaign in fall 2016 to fund the opening-day collection, a teen studio, a collaborative learning classroom, community conversation space and other technology-enriched services.

Martha moved to New Haven with her family in 1990 to become the social sciences librarian at Yale University after employment at the University of Minnesota Libraries. During her eight-year tenure at Yale, she was active in the community as an advocate for the New Haven public schools and instrumental in efforts to reinstate library media centers throughout the district. With subsequent appointments at Indiana University and the University of Pennsylvania Martha continued to maintain her household in New Haven where her spouse has a 20+ year tenure on the humanities faculty of Gateway Community College.

Martha holds a B.A. from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota; a Master's degree from the School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vermont; and a Master's in Library Science from the University of Minnesota. Active in professional organizations throughout her career, Martha is eager to promote civic engagement, lifelong learning, and unfettered community access to information through the New Haven Free Public Library.

