



## PRESS RELEASE

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### ***Mayor Toni Harp, New Haven Public Schools' Superintendent Garth Harries and City Librarian Martha Brogan Join President Obama's ConnectED Library Challenge!***

NEW HAVEN – On January 19, Mayor Toni Harp, New Haven Public Schools Superintendent Garth Harries and City Librarian Martha Brogan joined more than 90 elected officials, school superintendents and library directors for a White House convening in Washington D.C. to explore ways to improve education outcomes for all children. The *ConnectED Library Challenge: Answering the Call* brought together 45 of the 60 communities that accepted [President Obama's challenge](#) last spring to get a library card in the hands of every school age child.



The New Haven leadership team was one of three communities invited to present their strategies for strengthening school and public library collaboration—highlighting ways to advance the goals of [School Change 2.0.10](#) as set forth by Mayor Harp and the New Haven Board of Education. The [New Haven Free Public Library](#) is working together with [New Haven Public Schools](#) to streamline universal distribution of public library cards, increase shared access to print and electronic resources, and develop common technology platforms and toolkits, including expanded high-speed broadband internet access any time, any place—spanning schools, libraries and homes.

Currently about half of New Haven school age children have public library cards: the *ConnectED Library Challenge* will double that number to more than 22,000 cardholders. A recent [Pew Research Center national study](#) reports that 85% of

the American public thinks that public libraries should coordinate more closely with local schools in providing resources to kids. Similarly the importance of public libraries in offering free early literacy programs to help young children prepare for school received 85% endorsement in Pew's study.

The White House event was carried out jointly by the [Urban Libraries Council](#), the [Institute of Museum and Library Services \(IMLS\)](#), [American Library Association \(ALA\)](#) and the [White House](#). The ConnectED organizers will prepare and widely distribute a national report to highlight outcomes from the January 19 meeting and will develop a strategy for inviting more communities to join the Challenge.

Social media coverage of this initiative continues at #LibrariesForAll. A video-recording of the 4-hour morning sessions, including New Haven's presentation, is accessible from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/live/connected-library-challenge-convening> (with New Haven at 2:22:10 to 2:39:30).



### **About the New Haven Free Public Library**

The New Haven Free Public Library welcomes more than 620,000 library patrons through its doors each year. The library system includes the Ives Memorial Library on the historic New Haven Green, 24/7 online services, the ReadMobile bringing books to early childhood learning centers, and four neighborhood libraries: Fair Haven, Mitchell, Wilson and Stetson.

The New Haven Free Public Library's mission is to ensure all New Haven's citizens have full and unlimited access to information and knowledge so that they may meet the needs of daily living, have opportunities for self-education, and participate successfully in self-government.

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