

Hartford Public Library Launches Racial and Social Justice Themed Book Clubs

Hartford Public Library is launching two book clubs wrestling with the topics of anti-racism and social justice.

The first, called The Awakening Book Club, starts today, August 13 at 6 pm. The club is targeted for young adults ages 13 to 25. To sign up, go to: bit.ly/TheAwakeningBookClub The club hopes to create a safe and open space for young adults to connect around a good book. The biweekly discussion series will center on a book of the month that prompts much needed conversation about past and present racial injustices. Not an avid reader? Come and hear what others have to say about this important dialogue.

“Connecting around a good book is one of the most meaningful ways to learn more about ourselves, each other and the world we live in. We want to inspire, engage and empower our young people to be thought leaders and decision makers,” said Bridget Quinn-Carey, HPL’s president and CEO.

Liz Castle, programming manager for the library, said that the book club was a result of a meeting with young local organizers in early June. “We basically asked them how we can support them as a library. They told us the most useful thing we could do is to help them connect with other young people, reading books, discussing books and how literature can help inform how they move forward with their social justice work,” Castle said.

Club meeting dates and the books are below:

August: *How to be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi

- Session 1: August 13
- Session 2: August 27

September: *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo

- Session 1: September 10th

- Session 2: September 24th

October: *So you Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Olou

- Session 1: October 15th
- Session 2: October 29th

November: *The New Jim Crow : Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander

- Session 1: November 12th
- Session 2: November 27th

December: *The Mis-education of the Negro* by Carter Woodson

- Session 1: December 10th
- Session 2: December 13th

Hartford Public Library has also become a partner with Noname’s Book Club, an online/irl community dedicated to uplifting POC voices. They do this by highlighting two books each month written by authors of color. From cult classics to the words of emergent authors, Noname’s Book Club highlights books that speak on human conditions in critical and original ways. In addition to social media presence have free virtual meet ups to discuss the monthly picks in a safe and supportive environment. The book club was founded by the rapper Noname in 2019 and has partnerships with libraries in Oakland, Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles.

Noname’s August Picks:

- *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*, by Toni Morrison
- *The Vanishing Half*, by Brit Bennett

For more information about Hartford Public Library’s offerings, visit hplct.org.



Double Dutch Classes Down by the River

In the 1970s and early 1980s, Hartford was the Double Dutch capital of the world. For the past few years, Lady Carrie Trimmier McCrory, Coach Rodney Hogan and other former champion jumpers and coaches have been reviving the sport in the Greater Hartford region with assistance from the Juvenile and Adult Diabetes Health Awareness (JADHA) Foundation. For the next six weeks, the group will be offering free classes for youngsters and adults on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at Riverfront Plaza in Downtown Hartford. Registration starts at 5:30 pm, then there is an exercise workout from 6-7 pm, followed by double-dutch at 7 pm. Limited slots available due to Covid 19 guidelines, so please register early and make sure to wear a mask. For more information, go to: https://www.facebook.com/events/285802929311360/?event_time_id=289949178896735. (Hart photo)



Practicing an Ancient Art at Kamora’s Corner

Henna artist Anil Deonarine (left) decorates the hand of Ty Rodriguez while her friend Erin Suhaimi looks on at a special art sale and healing bazaar held at Kamora’s Cultural Corner, 75 Sterling Street, Hartford last Saturday, August 8. Henna is a temporary body art resulting from the staining of the skin with special dyes. After the stains reach their peak color, they hold for a few days, then gradually wear off by way of exfoliation, typically within one to three weeks. Henna has been practiced for over 5,000 years in Pakistan, India, Africa and the Middle East. If you missed last Saturday’s event, not to worry, there will be a Black Art Sale at Kamora’s Cultural Corner this Saturday, August 15, from 4-8 pm. There will be art, music, unique creations, books and more. Admission is free. (Hart photo)

Showcase Hartford’s Gardens in the 7th Annual HUGS Awards!

Nominations are now open for this year’s Hartford Urban Gardeners Society (HUGS) Awards. The awards recognize Hartford residents, businesses, and organizations for their outstanding landscaping efforts in the city of Hartford.

Nominations can be made in the following categories:

Private/Home Gardens

- Yard or Container
- Food or Ornamental
- Ecological Restoration

Public/Business Property

- Landscaping or Planters
- Streetscape or Block Garden
- Ecological Restoration

Community/Organization

- Inside or Outside
- Neighborhood Efforts
- Ecological Restoration

RULES:

- Nominate yourself, or someone else
- Garden must be located in Hartford, CT
- Please include picture (s) and a short description as to why you like it!
- Submit nomination via mail, email or use the nomination form at www.knoxford.org; or Maria Burke, KNOX, 75 Laurel St. Hartford, 06106; info@knoxford.org

Nominations MUST include:

- Location of garden – address and owner name
 - Your Contact information—name (person nominating) address, phone, and email
 - Nominations due on Monday, September 7, 2020
 - A volunteer committee from throughout the city will select the winners in late September. Email info@knoxford.org if interested.
 - HUGS Award Ceremony TBA
- The 7th annual HUGS Awards are presented by: KNOX, Inc., McCarter & Enlish, Nartford NEXT, Advocacy to Legacy.

