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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **THE ART OF COURAGEOUS NONVIOLENT LEADERSHIP**



HARTFORD, CT (October 12, 2015) – Hartford Public Library (HPL) in partnership with the CT Center for Nonviolence (CTCN) will host an intergenerational program series incorporating the principles of Kingian Nonviolence with the arts. The first program series will be offered on Mondays, starting October 10 through December 11, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Mark Twain branch, located at Hartford Public High School, 55 Forest Street.

While addressing the high rates of violence in Hartford’s most vulnerable communities this series will incorporate the Romare Bearden Collection at Hartford Public Library with the work of Kingian Nonviolence Conflict Reconciliation through: (a) two 8-10 week cohorts of youth programming, integrating art with the Six Principles of Kingian Nonviolence and historical components of the American Civil Rights Movement and (b) host four (4) Family Nights: Intergenerational Dialogues on Nonviolence and the Arts that will focus on the use of the arts in promoting nonviolence.

Thanks to a grant from the City of Hartford called “Challenging Hartford to Engage Critically and Keep Improving Together” – CHECK IT! , HPL and CTCN will create programming for approximately 40 youths at the Owl Enrichment Center (OEC), through the integration of the art of Romare Bearden and key elements of the Kingian Nonviolence Curriculum. The OEC is HPL’s after-school program at Hartford

Public High School. The OEC serves 80+ students from Hartford High's three academies: Law & Government, Nursing, and Engineering & Green Technology.

Consistent with CTCN's art-infused approach to teaching, participating students will examine HPL's collection of Romare Bearden's art and how its powerful visual influences help inform their understanding of the American civil rights movement, nonviolence, and current issues of social unrest, such as incidents of police brutality and the inordinate number of incarcerated people of color.

"We are excited once again to partner with CTCN.," says Library CEO Matthew K. Poland. "Using our stunning collection of the work of Romare Bearden to promote the relationship between the arts and nonviolence will add rich diversity to this awesome project."

A second program series will be offered next spring culminating in May 2016 with a community-wide celebration featuring individual student work, as well as a collaborative collage inspired by the "social commentary" of Romare Bearden's art.

#### **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 [www.hplct.org](http://www.hplct.org).

#### **ABOUT CT CENTER FOR NONVIOLENCE**

The CT Center for Nonviolence (CTCN) promotes a comprehensive framework for conflict reconciliation and coalition building rooted in the philosophy and practices of Dr Martin Luther King, Jr and the Civil Rights Movement. CTCN uses a proactive approach utilizing a comprehensive nonviolence curriculum developed by the legendary civil rights activist and scholar, Dr. Bernard LaFayette, Jr., former strategist for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Over the past five years, the CTCN has introduced 10,000 citizens and civic leaders to the practice of Kingian Nonviolence. The center tailors its programs and projects for each of the groups it works with and continues to develop sustainable long-term partnerships that allow nonviolence to grow.

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