



For Immediate Release

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Raymond Library to Officially Open in Grand Reopening Celebration on September 26

(September 10, 2015) **East Hartford, CT** – Celebration will be on the agenda on September 26 as Mayor Marcia A. Leclerc invites the public to join her for a Grand Reopening ceremony for Raymond Library. From 11 a.m.-1 p.m., residents and members of the public will be able to partake in various activities, tours of the library and free food, culminating in an official ribbon cutting ceremony at 12:30 p.m. with Gov. Dannel P. Malloy.

This Grand Reopening ceremony will be a chance for Mayor Leclerc to showcase the \$9 million project and thank the Governor, the donors, legislators and residents of East Hartford, who waited patiently for their main library to reopen since breaking ground in January of 2014.

“This was a major project for East Hartford and an investment in our future generations,” Mayor Leclerc said. “This Grand Reopening ceremony will be a chance to celebrate this state-of-the-art library with the community.”

Raymond Library, which is currently open to the public, opened its doors unofficially in a soft opening on September 8.

When patrons cross through the library threshold during the Grand Reopening, they will experience a building that has gone through a \$9.5 million full-scale renovation and a 14,000 square-foot expansion, with amenities to fit every age group.

Mayor Leclerc, who championed the effort to find the crucial funding, eventually procured the necessary \$4 million in bonding from the state, as well as nearly \$800,000 in grants to allow the

newly expanded project to go forward, with help from the local state delegation and Gov. Dannel P. Malloy. The project also encompassed \$3.8 million in town bonding and local revenue sources, as well as nearly \$1 million from private donations.

With the renovation and expansion, Raymond Library now contains a Creative Commons space, with 3D printers, as well as a newly expanded teen space, with booths and a large children's section, which was tripled in size, with multiple "early literacy stations," holding thousands of educational games aimed at teaching and improving math, science and language skills. In addition, the library will offer multiple pieces of technology and equipment to accommodate the vision impaired, as well as the handicapped population; a rare books room on the second floor; Museum pieces and artifacts displayed throughout the library, as well as a beautiful "Butterfly Garden" next to the Main Street entrance of the library, in addition to many more amenities.

Beginning on September 8, Wickham Library returned to normal hours, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. after offering extended hours over the past few months. Programming at the library will also remain limited until the library's official grand opening, occurring at the end of September, in which there will be activities, speeches, food and a ribbon cutting to commemorate the official grand opening to the public. Small repairs will still be ongoing until that ceremony as well.

Raymond Library current hours of operation are as follows: Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-8 p.m.; Friday-Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and closed on Sundays.

For more information on the opening of the libraries and the services offered starting September 8, please contact the Library Department at 860-528-4664.

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