

Hartford Public Library
12 Church Street
Hartford, MI 49057

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Hartford Public Library dedicates The Pokagon Children's Learning Center Space Greatly Enhances Resources for Children's Learning

HARTFORD – Earlier this year, the Hartford community celebrated the grand opening of the new Vanderlyn Community Center and Hartford Public Library facility located at 12 Church Street in Hartford. Today, The Pokagon Children's Learning Center within the Library is being dedicated to recognize the strong relationship between the community and the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians. While the in-person dedication event was cancelled due to concerns related to COVID-19, several leaders within the organizations that made the project possible took time to reflect on the significance of this new space.

“The Pokagon Band has strong roots in the Hartford community and our connection to the area is built on well-established connections and friendships,” said the Pokagon Band's Director of Language and Culture Marcus Winchester. “This learning center demonstrates the fact that this legacy continues to this day.”

At nearly 1,000 square feet, the center will include the latest early literacy computer resources, fiction and non-fiction children's books in an easy-to-access display, a children's play table consisting of early literacy programs where – when normal operations resume – 1-6 children will be able to work at one time or children and parents can work together.

“This space is a reflection of the Library's commitment to enhance the services it provides to people of all ages,” said Stephanie Daniels, Hartford Library Director. “This new space is a vast improvement over our previous facilities. Our children's programming, early learning activities, summer programs, and many other library offerings can be provided in a safe, clean, area that will open up many new learning and literacy opportunities to area children.”

The learning center was made possible, in part, by a grant from The Pokagon Fund to the Hartford Library. The Pokagon Fund is a nonprofit private foundation supported by revenue from The Four Winds Casino Resort in New Buffalo, MI. The fund's mission is to enhance the lives of the residents of in Hartford and other select communities through the financial support of initiatives that address education, poverty reduction, and community vitality.

“The Pokagon Fund is proud to have made a contribution that will have a lasting impact in the Hartford area for several generations,” said The Pokagon Fund Executive Director Dan Petersen. “Think of the thousands of children whose minds will be expanded and enriched through the facilities that we are celebrating today.”

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Those wishing to learn more about the all of the programming and resources that are available through the Hartford Public Library should access its website at <https://www.hartfordpl.michlibrary.org/> or by calling its new phone number (269) 588-5103.

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