

# BRIDGEPORT LIBRARY

## A Message from the President of the Library Board and the City Librarian:


The Bridgeport *Free* Public Library serves all the people of City of Bridgeport, the largest municipality in Connecticut with over 150,000 residents where more than 70 languages are spoken. Covering just 16 square miles, Bridgeport is one of the most diverse, densely populated cities in the U.S.

The Bridgeport *Free* Public Library condemns the systemic racism directed at people of color and all the murders, most recently of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery. These murders and countless other acts of violence and discrimination are not isolated cases perpetrated by a few bad actors. Endemic racism continues to be an undeniable part of America, woven tragically into its fabric long before our independence. Despite the pronouncement of self-evident truths “that all men [and women] are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”, it is self-evident that persons of color remain alienated in our society and are being denied these Rights.

Our Library mission promotes literacy in all its forms – including civic literacy – to connect our diverse communities, enable life-long learning, enrich lives and cultivate curiosity. We challenge ourselves and the entire community to be curious, become informed and protest, as the origin of that word means, to publicly bear witness to injustice in our society. The Bridgeport *Free* Public Library is a gathering place for the entire community. As such, we pledge to stand with our community in the ongoing struggle to eliminate the racial and social equity barriers that have plagued our nation far too long.



Jim O'Donnell, President



Elaine Braithwaite, City Librarian