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News Release



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Citizens in Search of a Voice

CT-N, Old State House Host Town Hall Meeting on Renewing Civic Health

Hartford, CT – How do ordinary citizens make their voices heard in a democracy they feel has forgotten about them? This has become the new universal question, equally likely to be overheard among the ranks of the Tea Party as among the tents of Turning Point Park, the epicenter of the “Occupy Hartford” movement. Next Monday, two icons of citizen education in Connecticut will join forces to search for an answer.

On Monday, November 14, the Connecticut Network and Connecticut’s Old State House will host a live televised town hall meeting entitled, *Renewing our Democracy: What Connecticut Can Be*. The conversation, moderated by CT-N’s Diane Smith, starts at 6 p.m in the Old State House’s historic Courtroom and will focus on how citizens and communities can work across differences to find solutions to problems. A panel of state leaders and activists, including Secretary of the State Denise Merrill and Everyday Democracy Executive Director Martha McCoy will interact with members of the live audience throughout the discussion, which will air live on CT-N.

The town hall meeting follows last month’s release of a report by the Civic Health Project Advisory Group, which offered strategies and project ideas aimed at strengthening Connecticut’s civic infrastructure. Everyday Democracy and Secretary of the State Merrill partnered with the National Conference on Citizenship (NCoC) to create this working group, whose members include both Diane Smith and Old State House Director Sally Whipple.

“For more than 375 years the Old State House and the ground it stands on have been focal points for political discourse and citizen communication, and this town hall meeting will be the latest in a long line of important conversations to unfold here,” says Whipple. “We are fortunate to share our mission of citizen education and engagement with CT-N, which will make it available not just to the Old State House audience but to everyone in Connecticut.”

Seating for the live audience is limited but open to the public. Those interested in attending the town hall meeting at the Old State House can register and get parking information at www.tinyurl.com/OSHTownHall. Since this is a live telecast, audience members must be in their seats no later than 5:45 p.m. To see this event live on CT-N, the network is available full-time on U-Verse channel 83 and on expanded basic cable statewide. Visit ct-n.com to find the channel location for the network in your community or to watch online.

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This town hall meeting is made possible through a grant from the Connecticut Humanities Council. One of the largest humanities councils in the nation, the Connecticut Humanities Council (CHC) nurtures thoughtful exploration of history and literature along with the cultural benefits of both. CHC's reading programs benefit Connecticut citizens of all ages by opening up the world of books to children, encouraging reading as a family activity and engaging adults in thought provoking book discussions. CHC granting programs support the work of museums, historical societies and other cultural organizations that bring the stories of Connecticut's past to life. This year, CHC will create or fund hundreds of cultural experiences and enrich the lives of residents and visitors statewide.

Located in Hartford just minutes from the Connecticut Science Center, Wadsworth Athenaeum and the riverfront, Connecticut's Old State House invites visitors of all ages to discover that their voices matter, and that words, ideas, persuasion and debate really can change minds – and, quite possibly, the world. The building served as the Constitution State's original seat of government from 1796 to 1878. For more information on admission prices, upcoming events and parking discounts nearby, become a fan of Connecticut's Old State House on Facebook, follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/CTOldStateHouse or visit us online at www.ctoldstatehouse.org.

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