

*solidarity*, n. a feeling of unity between people who have the same interests, goals, etc.

Dear Friends and Supporters,

2016 has been a busy year for the museum! Perhaps you attended one of our events, read about one of our programs in the newspaper, or heard about us on the radio or television. We have been working hard to fulfill our educational mission: to engage citizens by preserving and sharing history, promoting literacy, and advocating greater cultural understanding.

Please help us continue to **inspire, connect** and **preserve** our community with a tax deductible donation this year!

Everything we do is made possible by the solidarity we share with **YOU!** Together . . .

- We **inspire** people with the work of West Hartford's own Founding Father, Noah Webster;
- We **connect** our community to its history and heritage; and
- We **preserve** objects that tell stories of Webster and the community that molded him.

We hope that what you read in this letter will encourage you to continue your support with a **tax-deductible donation** to the 2016 Annual Appeal.

### **WE INSPIRE!**

Research shows that learning in museums resonates with students in a lasting way. Through exciting hands-on learning, the Noah Webster House engages more than 7,000 students every year. About 10% attend free-of-charge through the museum's **History Explorers** program for underserved Connecticut schools, which is funded by supporters like you.



With your financial support, in 2016 the museum began two important **NEW initiatives for students**.

**Our Day of Living History program is now part of the West Hartford Public Schools' fifth grade curriculum!** By attending a field trip to the museum as a historic character, students develop historical empathy and are better able to understand multiple viewpoints, increasing their likelihood of becoming engaged citizens in the future. The museum has pledged to pay the way for approximately 350 fifth grade students from West Hartford's five Title I schools.

**We brought back the West Hartford Town-Wide Spelling Bee!** Spelling bees have a historic tradition and what better place for one than the dictionary author's home town? Top spellers from all three public middle schools participated, and the winners of each school moved on to the Scripps Regional Spelling Bee. Plans are underway for an even larger event in 2017!



## **WE CONNECT!**

Learning isn't just for children. Thanks to the financial contributions of supporters like you, the museum continues to provide meaningful experiences to thousands of adults annually through a variety of events that are free or low-cost. Our goal for programs like the **West Hartford History** lecture series, exhibits, stimulating community conversations, and **West Hartford Hauntings** is to connect people to the community by highlighting our town's history and heritage.

In 2016 we offered two **NEW programs for adults**. How many of us drive through town every single day without knowing the stories behind what we see? The museum's new **Hidden History Bus Tour** provides the opportunity for residents to sit back and be a tourist in their own town, learning about landmarks forgotten by time and points of interest that once were. It's a unique opportunity to gain a greater appreciation for the people and places that define our town.

The new **West Hartford House Tour** explores the history of a West Hartford neighborhood and the people who lived there, illustrating why each home is *more than just a pretty house*. This year features six private homes in the Hartford Golf Club Historic District. In addition to the stunning architecture and impressive facades, we uncover the stories of the families that built the homes.



## **WE PRESERVE!**

As the West Hartford Historical Society, the museum functions as a repository for objects, manuscripts, and memorabilia related to West Hartford history and Noah Webster, most of which are acquired through donation. Objects from our collection illustrate our lecture series, and play a starring role in exhibits like **West Hartford Business: Images of Suburban Development** that opened in May 2016.



In 2016 we received artifacts including:

- A diary of a West Hartford resident from 1853
- A child's piggy bank from the West Hartford Trust & Co.
- An 1841 copy of *An American Dictionary of the English Language*
- A 19th-century bed from the Glover M. White estate on Farmington Avenue (now Hampshire House).

To better showcase our deep and diverse collection of artifacts, we will move forward with our plans for the **NEW West Hartford History Center**. Partially funded by a grant from the State of Connecticut's Department of Economic and Community Development, this renovation will expand and improve our current archive space, and ensure that our collection is properly cared for and preserved. Phase I, Design, is underway this fall, with construction slated for 2017.

**How can WE do it?** Hard work and focus on mission are part of the story. The other part is **YOU**, our dedicated supporters. In the spirit of solidarity, **please give today**. Your tax deductible contribution goes a long way to ensure that the Noah Webster House & West Hartford Historical Society continues to **inspire, connect, and preserve**.

Sincerely yours,



Jennifer DiCola Matos, Executive Director