



Media Release * for immediate release

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Howard County Library System Attracts International Interest Educators in Czech Republic Invite Valerie Gross to Share HCLS' Award-Winning Formula

COLUMBIA, MD - Howard County Library System President & CEO Valerie Gross will depart on May 24, 2014 for an educational interchange with public and academic library professionals, faculty and students in the Czech Republic cities of Prague and Brno. The visit, which is in response to an invitation from the Masaryk University's Division of Information and Library Studies of the Faculty of Arts, will include numerous networking opportunities and various presentations.

Discussions and seminars will center on the growing movement and philosophy within the library profession that positions libraries as a key component of the education enterprise, alongside schools, colleges, and universities. Gross will share her professional insights on the topic and the role the approach played in earning Howard County Library System international recognition as the 2013 Library of the Year.

“It’s truly an honor to be forging relations with our public and academic library colleagues in the Czech Republic. I am looking forward to a wonderful exchange of ideas! Although translators will be at hand, I’m learning a few Czech phrases. I have gained a new appreciation for Mango*, our online language instruction tool.”

The trip includes presentations by Gross on the following topics:

- *The Education Advantage: Why the Czech Republic Needs Libraries More Than Ever*
- *American Libraries and the Education Advantage*
- *Libraries: Key to the Czech Republic's Education Enterprise*
- *Who We Are, What We Do, and Why It Matters: Our Distinctive Purpose*

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Educators In Czech Republic Invite Valerie Gross To Share HCLS' Award-Winning Formula

Library Journal calls HCLS “a 21st library model, with a curriculum worthy of study and consideration by every library in America, if not the world.” Gross will emphasize the library system’s award-winning staff and curriculum as she explains the “libraries = education” philosophy. Her presentations will also highlight Howard County’s dynamic community partnerships, including A+ Partners in Education, Choose Civility, Well & Wise, the Enchanted Garden, and HiTech.

Funded by the university, the week-long exchange concludes on June 1.

The capital and largest city of the Czech Republic, Prague is the fourteenth-largest city in the European Union. Brno is the country’s second largest city, the largest Moravian city, and the historical capital city of the Margraviate of Moravia.

Gross will share her experience daily on Twitter (#VGCzechIn) and via a video diary upon her return.

**Available for free via hclibrary.org, Mango provides adult level language instruction in up to 45 different languages and training for individuals in need of English as a second language instruction for 15 languages. Mango’s free mobile app is also available via hclibrary.org.*

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