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## **Diggs Construction celebrates school renovation project**

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Students, faculty, project participants and guests recently gathered to officially introduce the newly improved Mary M. Hooker Environmental Sciences Magnet School to the community.. The event began outside the new entrance, with a welcome from principal Richie Montanez-Pitre, and an introduction of Hartford's hockey team mascot, Puckey the Whale.

Attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance which was led by kindergartener Miranda Gernander, and followed by the invocation given by Reverend Bradford Howard. To honor all who were involved with the project, congratulatory remarks were given by mayor Pedro Segarra, mayor of Hartford; John Fanfara, CT state senator; Ada Miranda, chairperson of the Hartford Board of Education; Steven Adamowski, Ph.D., superintendent of schools; and Matthew Fleury, CEO of the CT Science Center.

Joseph DeSanti, director of Diggs Construction's Hartford office, proudly stated that more than 25% of the project was performed by local MWBE firms, and that approximately 100 local residents participated in the construction of this project. He also mentioned that the project was completed under budget and on time, thanks to all involved.

Other project team members from BL Companies and Mega Education, LLC also shared details about their experience on the project.

The Mary M. Hooker Environmental Sciences Magnet School will be the first LEED Gold project in the Hartford School Program. The unique PK-8 school, located on 17 acres of land close to downtown Hartford, contains six acres dedicated to an outdoor nature center and trail system. The construction consists of the complete renovation of the existing facility and construction of two new wings. Other educational features include a greenhouse, weather station, an aquatics lab, a butterfly vivarium and ecological displays in the main lobby.

During the ceremony, the 6th grade drum ensemble played a Peace Song, followed by J'Zeida Ortega who led the students and fellow attendees in the song Heal the World by Michael Jackson. At the completion of the song, student Miranda Curry; mayor Pedro Segarra; and Steven Adamowski had the honor of cutting the ribbon to officially introduce the renovated school.

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