



NEWS RELEASE

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University Settlement receives New York City Council awards to bolster mental health offerings

New York, NY – University Settlement received nearly \$850,000 through the New York City Council’s discretionary awards process for the 2022 Fiscal Year, including significant expanded support for integrated mental health offerings within its Early Childhood Education and Older Adults programs, the social justice agency announced today.

The additional awards include \$300,000 for University Settlement’s Butterflies program, which provides mental health services to children under five. Butterflies will use the funds to support enhanced staffing in Early Childhood Centers, and also to begin providing expanded mental health supports to pregnant people who have experienced trauma.

University Settlement’s mental health programs for adults over 60 were also granted \$80,000 from New York City’s Geriatric Mental Health Initiative, the first time the agency has received such funding; it will support strengthening existing offerings while enhancing educational activities, support groups, and individual services, at a time when many older New Yorkers are experiencing significant mental health challenges.

“We are grateful to our advocates on the City Council, not only for these significant investments in our effective programs, which are a testament to the city’s confidence in our approach, but also for their perennial engagement with our neighbors’ priorities,” said **Melissa Aase, Chief Executive Officer of University Settlement**. “Access to mental healthcare is a fundamental driver of community strength, and that’s why University Settlement weaves it into everything we do. Although this sort of integration is fundamental to our approach, we often face significant challenges to identify financial support for it, and we salute the vision the Council has displayed with these awards.”

“We appreciate the Council’s recognition that human services organizations are essential infrastructure, and we’re grateful that these additional grants have been made,” said **Michelle Paige, Chief Program and Equity Officer of University Settlement**. “We receive these awards as welcome acknowledgment of the trusted partnerships our teams have forged with our colleagues across New York City’s vital safety net, and we look forward to

ensuring that mental health services reach New Yorkers who often have the hardest time finding them.”

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About University Settlement

University Settlement partners with 40,000 New Yorkers on the Lower East Side and in Brooklyn every year to build on their strengths as they achieve healthy, stable, and remarkable lives. For over 130 years, we’ve collaborated with our neighbors to pioneer highly effective programs that fight poverty and systemic inequality. Established in 1886 as the first Settlement House in the United States, we bring the values of that movement into the 21st century by meeting New Yorkers where they live, listening deeply to all perspectives, engaging with every individual holistically, and creating space for people to organize. Joining together with our neighbors to advocate for justice and equality, we help build community strength.

We work with New Yorkers of all ages. We infuse a commitment to civic engagement, equity, and communal action into each of our programs, which include early childhood education, mental health and wellness, benefits assistance and eviction prevention, adult literacy and education, healthy aging, community and recreation centers, performing and visual arts, and youth development.

Learn more at www.universitysettlement.org.