



NEWS RELEASE

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University Settlement CEO Melissa Aase elected President of the IFS Board

New York, NY – University Settlement’s Chief Executive Officer Melissa Aase has been elected as the new President of the Board of Directors of the International Federation of Settlements and Neighbourhood Centers (IFS), the nation’s first settlement house announced today.

IFS is a global community dedicated to collaboration and positive change, with more than 11,000 member organizations worldwide. Active in more than 30 countries, its mission is to empower local communities by fostering collaboration, sparking innovation, and advocating for social justice. Arising from the settlement house movement, IFS brings together leaders from today’s settlement houses and neighborhood centers to help build a world where inclusivity and equality are at the forefront, enabling communities to thrive and contribute to a better global society.

“I am deeply honored to serve as the President of the IFS Board,” said **Melissa Aase**. “Together, we will strengthen the local impact of our members across the world, and connect that impact globally. I look forward to working closely with the board and members to build on our shared vision. Building healthy, equitable, civically engaged communities has never been more relevant, and that’s exactly what IFS members do worldwide.”

In a release, IFS notes that Melissa’s leadership “is expected to play a crucial role in shaping IFS’s direction as a global network committed to empowering communities. Her strategic approach and collaborative spirit align with the core values of IFS as the organisation tackles pressing social issues and strengthens its global impact.”

Outgoing President of the IFS Board **Pentti Lemmetyinen** said: “Melissa’s expertise and passion are invaluable assets to IFS. Her visionary outlook inspires change and helps us advance our mission. IFS’s core mission is to empower communities, promote equality, strengthen democratic structures, and create conditions for peace and reconciliation.”

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About University Settlement

University Settlement partners with 40,000+ New Yorkers in Lower Manhattan and Brooklyn every year to build on our collective strengths as we achieve healthy, stable, and remarkable lives.

For nearly 140 years, we've fought poverty and systemic inequality by building highly effective social services in collaboration with our neighbors.

Established in 1886 as the first Settlement House in the United States, we bring the values of our movement into the 21st century by meeting New Yorkers where they live, listening deeply to all perspectives, and creating space for responsive cooperation.

Joining with our neighbors to make stable foundations where people of all ages can grow and pursue their dreams, we build community strength.

We infuse a commitment to civic engagement, equality, and communal action into each of our programs, which include early childhood education, youth development, healthy aging, mental health and wellness, housing advocacy and benefits assistance, English classes for adult immigrants, community centers, and the arts.

#NYCisUS. What can we do together? Learn more at www.universitysettlement.org