

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Community Place of Greater Rochester, Charles Settlement House announce shared CEO

Beginning April 1, The Community Place of Greater Rochester Inc. and Charles Settlement House will operate under a shared chief executive officer. Scott Benjamin, currently CEO at Charles Settlement House, will take the helm of both organizations as they begin their fiscal years.

Under this arrangement, both agencies will maintain separate programs and boards of directors. While not a merger, this arrangement allows the agencies to share some administrative services — such as finance and human resources — and to discuss possibilities for further collaboration.

"We have two strong organizations, and this will make them stronger," Benjamin said. "Sharing some administrative services builds the capacity of both. The increased collaboration will allow us to seek out new opportunities for growth in both settlement houses."

The decision to pursue shared leadership came several months after The Community Place began its search for a new CEO in June 2017. Unable to find a candidate who met the agency's needs, The Community Place board of directors and Chief Operating Officer Garfield Grant approached Benjamin, who has led Charles Settlement House since 2006.

"The Community Place of Greater Rochester and Charles Settlement House share a common philosophy and approach to building community, by working together," Grant said. "Scott Benjamin has been a part of the settlement house movement for 12 years, and he has a good understanding of its mission and its positive impact on the Rochester community."

The agreement to operate under a shared CEO was approved by the boards of directors at Community Place and Charles Settlement House.

"We are very pleased that Scott Benjamin will use his settlement house knowledge and background to run both organizations for the betterment of the Rochester community," said Scott Hendler, chair of the Community Place board of directors. "Over the past 12

years, he has formed and built many relationships in the community and built successful programs that will help Charles Settlement House and Community Place of Greater Rochester move forward, grow and prosper for years to come. I am confident that with him on board, Community Place will continue to strengthen its efforts and our neighborhoods.”

“We look forward to working more closely with Community Place and to the opportunities this relationship will bring,” said Lydia Fernandez, chair of the Charles Settlement House board of directors. “With Scott Benjamin’s knowledge and experience, this arrangement will strengthen Charles Settlement House, Community Place and our neighborhoods.”

Settlement houses have played an important role in American history. They originated in the late 19th century with the purpose of supporting the growing immigrant populations and building community. Rochester’s settlement houses continue to bolster their surrounding neighborhoods through a variety of services that encourage individual and family sustainability. They offer programs and services including after-school and youth development programs, senior centers, emergency assistance, workforce development, and affordable housing.

The Community Place, established in 2001 from the merger of Lewis Street Center, Genesee Settlement House and Eastside Community Center, serves residents in northeast Rochester. More than 10,000 individuals utilize its programs and services.

Charles Settlement House, established in 1917, serves Rochester’s northwest neighborhoods, including JOSANA, Edgerton, Dutchtown, Brown Square, Lyell-Otis, Maplewood and Charlotte. More than 3,000 individuals utilize its programs and services.

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