

Good morning, and welcome to The New School!

My name is Michelle DePass, and I am the Director of the university-wide Tishman Environment and Design Center, and Dean of the Milano School of International Affairs, Management, and Urban Policy.

Thank you all for joining us for today's event and for the week of workshops to follow.

A very special thank you to Timon McPhearson, Chair of the Environmental Studies Program, and Director of the Urban Ecology Lab, who has worked tirelessly to bring this conference together.

Many of you have traveled from other states and even other countries, and we could not be happier to have you join us for these important conversations on building resilience to climate change in cities.

The New School's Tishman Environment and Design Center is a university wide research and practice center committed to creating a more just and sustainable world.

We collaborate with scholars, practitioners, students, activists and organizations across the university and in communities on projects and research focused on critical environmental issues including climate change and environmental justice.

In the face of the ever-increasing impacts of climate change, resilience is crucial -- and justice and equity are critical to that equation.

I'm sure this will be a recurring theme this week, and my hope for this conference is that the conversations we have this week will empower us all to take the ideas we share, and turn them into concrete and successful action.

At the end of this week, on March 25th, the NSF Urban Resilience project and the Urban Ecology Lab at The New School will host a “Visioning Climate Justice in Harlem” workshop together with WEACT and other local partners at the Manhattan Borough President’s office.

We are proud to support collaborative, community-based projects like this at The New School, and I look forward to learning about similar projects you all may be conducting in other cities across the United States and Latin America.

The cities represented by the Urban Resilience to Extremes Sustainability Research Network are collectively home to over 45 million people.

That is 45 million people whose lives, health, and well-being stand to be threatened by a myriad of issues ranging from extreme heat to coastal flooding and storm surges.

That is also 45 million people whose lives, health, and well-being can flourish if we are successful in our efforts to make our cities more equitable and resilient.

I look forward to hearing about the research being conducted and the efforts already underway to create a sustainable, livable future.

I thank you all for your contributions to this goal, and I thank you again for joining us at The New School.

With that I would like to turn over the podium to Chuck Redman from the School of Sustainability at the University of Arizona.