

Lucy Ito Named 2026 Recipient of the Renée Sattiewhite Neoteric Changemaker Award

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RELEASE

The [African-American Credit Union Coalition](#) (AACUC) and [40 Groups](#), Inc. announced today that

“

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Renée Sattiewhite

Lucy Ito, one of the most respected and influential leaders
in the modern credit union movement, has been selected
as the 2026 Renée Sattiewhite Neoteric Changemaker
Award honoree.

The national award—named for its inaugural 2023
recipient, Renée Sattiewhite, CEO and President of
AACUC—recognizes individuals who demonstrate
exceptional perseverance, advance the cooperative
principle of “people helping people,” champion relevant

and forward-looking ideas, and create meaningful programming that strengthens leadership
across the credit union system. The term neoteric reflects the award’s purpose: honoring
modern thinkers who advocate for new ideas and fresh approaches.

A Career Defined by Modernization, Collaboration, and Global Impact

Ito’s selection reflects a career that has uniquely bridged financial regulation, international
cooperative development, and industry leadership. She is widely known for her tenure as
President and CEO of the National Association of State Credit Union Supervisors (NASCUS) from
2014 to 2021, where she modernized collaboration between state regulators and credit unions
and strengthened coordination with federal agencies, including the NCUA.

Her leadership helped advance supervisory innovation, improve regulatory alignment, and
support a more resilient and forward-looking state credit union system.

Before NASCUS, Ito held senior roles at the World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU), where she
contributed to building and expanding cooperative financial systems across Eastern Europe,
Central Asia, Asia, and the Pacific. Her work supported financial inclusion, strengthened
emerging credit union networks, and helped communities in developing and transition

economies build sustainable cooperative finance structures.

A Trusted Leader in Times of Transition

In 2025, Ito returned from retirement to serve as interim CEO for California's Credit Unions during a major leadership transition—an appointment that underscored her reputation as a steady, strategic, and widely trusted leader.

Honoring a Modern Changemaker

"Lucy Ito exemplifies the spirit of the Renée Sattiewhite Neoteric Changemaker Award," said Dennis Sullivan, Founder & CEO of 40 Groups, Inc. and award sponsor. "Her career reflects a rare combination of regulatory expertise, global cooperative insight, and a deep commitment to strengthening the credit union system for future generations. She has consistently championed new ideas and practical solutions that move the movement forward."

"Lucy Ito is my personal SHERO!" said Renée Sattiewhite, President and CEO of AACUC. "In every role she has taken on, Lucy has demonstrated remarkable brilliance, effectiveness, and diligence. I have been inspired time and again by her ability to strengthen organizations and lead transformative change. Lucy is a force of nature, and I couldn't be more excited to see her receive this well-deserved honor."

Ito will be formally recognized at the [2026 AACUC Annual Conference](#), Wednesday, August 5.

About the Renée Sattiewhite Neoteric Changemaker Award Established in 2023 and named for AACUC President and CEO Renée Sattiewhite, this national award honors individuals who demonstrate perseverance, advance the cooperative mission of "people helping people," advocate for relevant and modern ideas, and create programming that strengthens leadership across the credit union movement. Nominations are open to all and must include clear documentation supporting the candidate's qualifications, along with a curriculum vitae or resume. Additional reference materials may be requested during the evaluation process.

About 40 Groups, Inc.



Lucy Ito, who has dedicated her career in credit unions as an advocate for new ideas and fresh approaches is the 2026 Renée Sattiewhite Neoteric Changemaker Award Winner.

40 Groups, Inc. creates high-impact leadership forums for CEOs, CFOs and Chairs in the community banking and credit union industries. Each Group convenes top leaders for deep-dive discussions, thought leadership, and relationship-building that supports transformational change. Learn more at: www.40groups.com

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Renée Sattiewhite

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