

SECU Foundation

2019 Report of the Chair

This year marks the fifteenth anniversary of the SECU Foundation! From the beginning, the strategic focus of your Foundation Board was clear... to help identify and address community issues and promote community development primarily by funding large-scale projects in the areas of education, housing, healthcare, and human services. Each year has been an amazing journey of establishing new partnerships and investing in ideas which have advanced the mission of the Foundation to address real issues facing the citizens and communities of our great state. The initiatives we have undertaken since 2004, including those you will read about in the following paragraphs, have been made possible through your support and collective \$1 monthly contributions to the Foundation – a small but powerful investment that continues to bring remarkable and positive changes to those in need!



The 2018-2019 fiscal year began with a groundbreaking celebration for the SECU Dormitory at the North Carolina Future Farmers of America (FFA) Center in White Lake, North Carolina. The Foundation's \$400,000 gift to construct additional female housing space enabled the Center to grow and expand educational programs and camp services to FFA members and guests year-round. The SECU Dormitory opened its doors in June 2019.

A three-year Capacity Building Grant Pilot was developed to benefit North Carolina public charities whose visions merit strong potential but who could use some assistance to reach the next step to achieve their goals. Four worthy organizations received a collective total of \$180,000 in grants for organizational assessments to help increase capacity and position their organizations for future sustainability. The Foundation's grant to Alleghany Partnership for Children will help them move forward with their vision of building a new Children's Advocacy and Resource Center in Sparta for children and families who are victims of physical and sexual abuse. The Hospice House Foundation of Western North Carolina received pilot funding to help them complete their goal of opening the first inpatient hospice facility for residents in the six far western counties of the state. St. Gerard House in Henderson County will use their capacity building grant to provide individuals diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder and their families greater access to high quality autism treatment and services. And, ReCONNECT NC is working to develop an innovative program in the northeastern counties of Edgecombe and Pasquotank, where local leaders are working to re-engage citizens with the community and restore civil health for the long term.

Each year, SECU Foundation Board members, Credit Union staff, and volunteers have the honor of attending celebratory events for supported initiatives. Along with the groundbreaking of the SECU Dormitory, we joined officials from SECU Family House and UNC Hospitals to break ground for a new wing at the SECU Family House in Chapel Hill. A dedication was held for the SECU Center for MemoryCare in Asheville, extending their reach to patients and families statewide in need of comprehensive dementia care services. The SECU Autism Clinic at ABC of NC in Winston-Salem was dedicated during the fiscal year and is the first clinic of its kind designed to assist children and young adults diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder.

As we work to foster new community relationships and build on existing partnerships, amazing things are transpiring throughout the state. Your response to the needs of victims and families of domestic violence has helped an organization achieve their dream of constructing a new 5,000 square foot shelter in Carteret County – the SAFE, Shelter and Family Empowerment facility. Your response through the SECU Foundation after Hurricane Florence hit North Carolina’s southeastern coast and inland towns last year was equally commendable and the \$1 million donation helped ensure that your neighbors, friends, co-workers, and the families impacted by the storm were provided with water, food, and other essential items. Your investment to help expand the First Vote NC program resulted in public high school students across the state learning about the importance and mechanics of the voting process while participating in authentic online election simulations. The Foundation also worked with community leaders to revitalize the Southeast Raleigh area through the development of a Purpose-Built Community. Your generous \$2 million grant for the SECU Beacon Site is a wonderful demonstration of your concern for the welfare of others. Additionally, a three-year challenge grant was approved for a new healthcare pilot to address the shortage of nurses in the home health and hospice settings through a comprehensive and systematic approach to onboard new nurse graduates and nurses to the field.

It’s been a banner year for educational initiatives as well, with SECU Foundation helping to provide North Carolinians with \$7.2 million in scholarships, internships, and programs to help further education opportunities and tackle community challenges. Many of our state’s unemployed and underemployed citizens are already benefiting from the SECU Bridge to Career Program Pilot through grants to obtain state-related or industry-recognized credentials leading to sustainable-wage careers. The renewal of the SECU Public Fellows Internship Program has provided paid internships for up to 20 in-state undergraduates at nine of our public universities to gain real job experience under the guidance of a civic leader and to broaden their perspective on how their skills can make a difference in communities. Additionally, Lead for North Carolina became our first venture in education funding for college graduates, giving 20 young adult leaders a chance to explore public service careers in a government setting through training and placement in a paid two-year local government fellowship.

But we’re not finished yet... your substantial commitment of nearly \$5 million for the renewal of the “People Helping People®” scholarship programs continue to support hundreds of students’ dreams for a higher education. Cumulatively, over 7,400 students have benefited from these programs over the past fifteen years. Additionally, the Foundation’s investment to fund the expansion of Pathway to Practice NC, an online, self-paced program to address the state’s teaching shortage, will provide a convenient and affordable option for educators to earn their dual teaching certifications in both elementary and special education. Finally, the North Carolina Symphony is grateful for funding of a new Symphony vehicle to expand music education for teachers, students, and families in areas of the state with limited access to orchestral concerts and education programs.

It’s easy to see that the initiatives undertaken in the past year are creating positive and tangible changes in people’s lives and in the future of our state! No matter the quest, whether it’s to provide safe shelter or to help teens understand the voting process and why every vote counts or to devise programs to attract and build a new generation of high-quality teachers and nurses for schools and hospice care facilities in need, your \$1 monthly investment to the SECU Foundation is helping others in ways we could not have imagined. SECU Foundation has made a collective financial commitment of more than \$169 million over the last fifteen years for initiatives to help tackle new and ongoing challenges within our communities and state. I thank you for your support over the past year and look forward to the positive differences you, via your Foundation, will make in the year ahead!

Sincerely,



Robert S. Brinson
SECU Foundation Board Chair