

SECU Foundation

2020 Report of the Chair

Over the last sixteen years, SECU Foundation has promoted local and community development across North Carolina through the funding of projects that make significant impacts in the areas of education, housing, healthcare, and human services.

The past fiscal year began much like previous years, with a range of projects in the core areas funded by our Foundation. However, the COVID-19 pandemic soon faced us, striking and spreading with devastating force and changing the health care, economic, and social landscapes of states and nations across the globe. The SECU Foundation and State Employees' Credit Union moved quickly to deliver help, hope, and relief to many people and communities in North Carolina. I am so pleased to share with you reports on some of the support provided by the Foundation during the past year. Each project or grant is a reflection of the marvelous work being done for the people of North Carolina by you, through *your* Foundation!



The fiscal year grant funding began with a \$40,000 Mission Development Grant to help the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford establish a plan to expand an Independent Living Program for youth transitioning from foster care to adulthood. Similar grants followed for three additional non-profits to help them address organizational growth and long-term sustainability – Samaritan Colony in Richmond County, Freedom Life in McDowell County, and Onslow Community Outreach in Onslow County. These groups fight substance abuse, aid in transitioning previously incarcerated individuals back into the community, and support the basic needs of vulnerable populations – including our veterans.

SECU Foundation continued its strong support of education through the highly successful SECU “People Helping People®” high school and community college scholarship programs. These programs continue to change the lives of students, their families, and the future of our state. The annual renewal of these programs, along with the renewal of the SECU Bridge to Career Program, provided over \$5.8 million in scholarships which enabled hundreds of North Carolina students to further their education. The SECU Foundation commitment of over \$1 million for the renewal and expansion of the SECU Public Fellows Internship Program to 14 campuses of the University of North Carolina system provides incredible opportunities for students to obtain practical experience under the tutelage of local community civic and governmental leaders. These unique opportunities help broaden perspectives and enable the Fellows to make a difference in our communities.

On the healthcare front, SECU Foundation responded to a request from Komen NC with a challenge grant to help fund a two-year regional study of breast cancer, which is the most common cause of cancer-related death among women in North Carolina. The results of this study will be important in providing Komen NC with the framework to develop and implement a model of care adaptable to address demographic and geographic differences, and to offer more diverse treatment plans for those affected by breast cancer.

During the year, new initiatives were unveiled in the areas of housing, healthcare, and human services. Thanks to your collective financial commitment of \$8 million, four organizations were able to expand services and facilities significantly to address regional needs for greater access to services. SECU Foundation recognized the many challenges of homelessness for women and children in western North Carolina, awarding a grant to Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry for the Phase 1 completion of Transformation Village, a 90-bed transitional housing facility and community center. Your financial support for the Addiction Recovery Care Association, Inc. will help with the completion of a new campus in Winston-Salem for individuals recovering from substance abuse disorders.

In response to a growing need for emergency shelter services for women and families in Surry County, SECU Foundation stepped in with a grant to help make a dream a reality for The Shepherd's House, in order to build a new facility in support of expanding services. And in eastern North Carolina, the Foundation responded in a big way to help families who were displaced from their homes due to damages sustained from Hurricane Florence. Your generosity enabled NC Baptists on Mission to move forward with an ambitious project to repair up to 1,000 severely impacted homes, which will bring healing and relief to families still facing challenges from the 2018 storm.

I am very excited to share that the SECU Mountains to the Sea Habitat Challenge – a five-year, nearly \$11 million affordable housing project between SECU Foundation and Habitat for Humanity of NC – was completed! This effort resulted in the building or renovating of one Habitat home in each of North Carolina's 100 counties, providing 102 families with the opportunity to experience the benefits of home ownership.

As the COVID-19 virus spread, it presented enormous challenges for many in our Credit Union family and has impacted all of our lives. We recognized that thousands of people, businesses, and organizations were experiencing increasing economic pressure. The Foundation immediately went to work assessing the urgent needs of non-profits and providing statewide emergency disaster relief assistance.

I am proud to share with you that SECU Foundation awarded over \$8 million in COVID-19 relief grants with a focus on food security, shelter, financial assistance, and healthcare support. Statewide organizations included in this funding were Feeding the Carolinas, The Salvation Army of the Carolinas, NC Healthcare Association Foundation, and Meals on Wheels NC. The Foundation ended the fiscal year by providing operational support to 34 longtime grantees from across North Carolina, demonstrating a commitment to ensuring the sustainability of these organizations which provide critical services in their regional communities.

Initiatives funded by the SECU Foundation during the 2019-20 fiscal year made significant impacts across our state. While COVID-19 may have changed the needs of our state's citizens and non-profits, what has not changed is the resilience of the membership of SECU and our members' desire to help others. This is evident in the accomplishments of your Foundation this year and over our 16-year history.

You should be proud of the difference that you can make through the "Power of a Dollar." Your \$1 monthly contribution of the checking account fee to the SECU Foundation has been, and continues to be, a powerful force for community good here in North Carolina. Over our history, members have contributed nearly \$200 million in initiatives statewide that are uplifting people and giving them hope. You are providing resources to further their education, conquer their addictions and health challenges, overcome homelessness, and transform their lives.

Thank you for your continued support of SECU Foundation!

Sincerely,



Jo Anne Sanford
SECU Foundation Board Chair