

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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# SECU Foundation

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## SECU Foundation Launches New Disaster Response Pilot to Assist North Carolina Non-Profits

**WAYNESVILLE, N.C.** – [SECU Foundation](#) is pleased to announce the pilot of a new Disaster Response Program to address capacity building for North Carolina non-profits located in disaster areas as declared by federal or state governments. The pilot began with \$55,000 grants for [Haywood Pathways Center](#) and [Mountain Projects](#) to help with recovery from the social and economic impacts caused by the permanent closure of Haywood County’s Pactiv Evergreen Mill in June 2023.



Left to right are Scott Southern, SECU Foundation director of Grants Administration; Jim Schwalm, SECU senior vice president, Sylva; Mandy Haithcox, Haywood Pathways Center executive director; Jama Campbell, SECU Foundation executive director; Brooke Smith, Mountain Projects assistant executive director; and Selena Williamson, SECU vice president, Waynesville.

The funding model of the pilot combines the capacity building element of SECU Foundation’s Mission Development Grant program with financial resources for disaster relief. The program provides each grantee up to \$55,000 for immediate programmatic support within a two-year period and is intended to supplement and complement other philanthropic efforts and government assistance plans for emergency economic or natural disaster conditions that may occur in communities of need across the state.

“This capacity building pilot is a great opportunity to support communities experiencing disaster and proactively work with non-profit leadership to develop long-term strategies for recovery,” said Jama Campbell, SECU Foundation executive director. “Company closings like the paper mill in Haywood County create economic hardships with adverse ripple effects throughout the region. Our grant will help ensure that Haywood Pathways Center and Mountain Projects are better equipped to provide residents and communities with immediate support and meet the increased demand for their services.”

“The support of SECU Foundation not only allows Haywood Pathways to continue healthy organizational development, but also provides much-needed resources to meet the increasing demands within the Haywood community for both food and emergency shelter,” said Mandy Haithcox, Haywood Pathways Center executive director. “We are honored to be a part of this pilot project as we all work together for the betterment of our community.”

“We are grateful for the support from SECU Foundation that will assure we have the capacity to respond and meet critical needs that could arise from the mill closing,” said Patsy Davis, Mountain Projects Community Action Agency executive director. “Without this support, we would not be able to respond in a timely manner, which is so important when individuals and families face challenging situations.”

**About SECU and SECU Foundation**

A not-for-profit financial cooperative owned by its members, and federally insured by the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA), SECU has been providing employees of the state of North Carolina and their families with consumer financial services for 86 years. SECU is the second largest credit union in the United States with \$50 billion in assets. It serves over 2.7 million members through 275 branch offices, over 1,100 ATMs, Member Services Support via phone, [www.ncsecu.org](http://www.ncsecu.org), and a Mobile App. The SECU Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization funded by the contributions of SECU members, promotes local community development in North Carolina primarily through high-impact projects in the areas of housing, education, healthcare, and human services. Since 2004, [SECU Foundation](#) has made a collective financial commitment of over \$258 million for initiatives to benefit North Carolinians statewide.