

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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# SECU Foundation

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE®

## **SECU Foundation Awards Teach for America with \$250,000 Grant**

*Funding supports expansion of RISE Fellowship to retain teachers in underserved communities*

**RALEIGH, N.C.** – A new round of grants recently approved by the [SECU Foundation](#) Board of Directors began with funding for a Reinvest in Student Excellence (RISE) Fellowship pilot with the North Carolina chapter of [Teach for America](#) (TFA NC). The Foundation’s \$250,000 grant will support an expanded cohort for 50 to 100 RISE fellows with leadership development pathways and individual coaching for the 2023 program year. TFA NC launched the program in 2021 to improve teacher retention in underserved communities.



Holding check left to right are TFA NC Executive Director Dr. Monique Perry-Graves and SECU Foundation Board member Jennifer Haygood, surrounded by staff and board members of TFA NC and staff of SECU and SECU Foundation.

Teach for America North Carolina works in partnership with school districts across the state to recruit, prepare, and support teachers while addressing student education inequality. The RISE Fellowship began in response to high rates of teacher turnover and the interest of TFA NC corps members to extend their service. TFA NC statistics show that North Carolina public schools started the 2022 school year with 4,000 teacher vacancies and a turnover rate as high as 22 percent in some areas.

“SECU Foundation’s support for the RISE Fellowship reflects the common bond we share – elevating North Carolina’s public education system and a strong belief in helping others,” said Jennifer Haygood, SECU Foundation Board member. “TFA NC’s 30-year footprint and impact in our state has been tremendous, and we are pleased to assist Teach for America NC and the RISE Fellowship program to help teachers meet their needs by acquiring valuable leadership skills and roles to help advance students’ personal and academic growth.”

“We are thrilled to receive this generous gift from SECU Foundation to support our ‘TFA NC RISE’ initiative. The program is essential in partnering with school systems and leaders throughout the state to retain teachers in communities that need them the most,” said Dr. Monique Perry-Graves, TFA NC executive director. “SECU Foundation has a tremendous legacy of providing critical funds and economic initiatives that benefit hundreds of thousands of people right here in North Carolina. We are honored to be recognized for the essential work that our corps members and alumni leaders are doing in quest for an equitable and excellent education for all students.”

**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 \$235 million for initiatives to benefit North Carolinians statewide.