

For Immediate Release

August 21, 2025

SECU Foundation

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE®

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SECU Foundation Awards \$300,000 Grant to Legal Aid of NC to Expand Services in Rural Areas

RALEIGH, N.C. – [SECU Foundation](#) recently announced a \$300,000 grant to [Legal Aid of NC \(LANC\)](#). The funding will support the software development and statewide implementation of its Innovation Lab, helping to bridge the rural-urban divide for access to legal services in rural North Carolina communities.

Since 2001, LANC has provided free, high-quality legal services to low-income individuals in civil matters. According to LANC, one-third of North Carolina counties are considered legal deserts, or having fewer than one attorney per 1,000 residents. In 2023, LANC managed over 25,000 cases and assisted more than 65,000 individuals in understanding their legal rights.



Pictured left to right: SECU Foundation Board member Chuck Stone, SECU Foundation Board Vice Chair Mona Moon, LANC Innovation Lab Advisory Board Chair Jeff Kelly, LANC Chief Innovation Officer Scheree Gilchrist, LANC CEO Ashley Campbell, and SECU President and CEO Leigh Brady.

With the Innovation Lab, LANC will collaborate with community partners, law schools, and tech experts to improve access to justice for rural North Carolinians. LANC will use rural hubs and mobile units to help individuals overcome barriers to legal resources. The first rural hub will serve Robeson, Hoke, Scotland, and Bladen counties. The shift to more virtual legal assistance is expected to impact up to 30,000 low-income individuals.

“We are so pleased to support Legal Aid of NC as they connect people with integral legal services they may not have access to otherwise,” said SECU Foundation Board Vice Chair Mona Moon. “For over 20 years, LANC has worked tirelessly to expand legal access to North Carolina communities, specifically for people without the means to pursue these services. Like SECU Foundation, LANC is grounded in the philosophy of People Helping People®.”

“Thanks to the SECU Foundation’s visionary support, Legal Aid of North Carolina’s Innovation Lab is reaching further into rural communities and harnessing technology to make legal help more accessible than ever,” said LANC Chief Innovation Officer Scheree Gilchrist. “We are grateful for this investment in creating sustainable, equitable solutions that ensure that our neighbors facing a difficult hardship in housing, safety, employment, and other basic needs have access to an attorney, regardless of their circumstances.”

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 88 years. SECU is the second largest credit union in the United States with \$56 billion in assets. It serves more than 2.9 million members through 275 branch offices, 1,100 ATMs, Member Services Support via phone, www.ncsecu.org, and the SECU 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 \$328 million for initiatives to benefit North Carolinians statewide.