From Yesterday…

1969–1978

1969: In response to the passage of the Tax Reform Act, 24 foundation leaders meet to establish the Southeastern Council of Foundations.
1970: 75 foundation representatives gather for SECF’s first Annual Meeting; William H. Bondurant begins two-year service as volunteer executive director of SECF.
1972: Charles S. Rooks becomes first full-time executive director of SECF.
1978: Robert Hull becomes executive director of SECF.

1979–1988

1981: SECF begins accepting corporate grantmaking programs as members.
1983: Dr. George Hitchings, who won the Nobel Prize in Medicine and served on the SECF Board, establishes the Triangle Community Foundation with $1,000.
1987: Hillary Rodham Clinton, then First Lady of Arkansas, delivers the Opening Keynote at the Annual Meeting.

1989–1998

1990: Martha Peck elected as first female chair of SECF; SECF Board adopts first strategic plan.
1993: SECF launches Community Foundation Initiative with special funding from Robert W. Woodruff Foundation and others.
1997: Grant from C.S. Mott Foundation enables SECF to begin program to increase philanthropy in the South.
1998: Martin C. Lehfeldt becomes executive director of SECF.

1999–2008

2000: Hull Fellows Program established in honor of Robert Hull’s 18 years of service as SECF executive director.
2005: SECF leadership convenes the first family foundation retreat in Point Clear, Alabama.
2008: Mike Howland becomes executive director of SECF.

2009–2018

2010: SECF holds inaugural CEO Forum in Jacksonville, Florida.
2011: Janine Lee becomes first female and first African American president and CEO of SECF.
2015: SECF relocates its Atlanta headquarters to the 20th floor of 100 Peachtree Street following 25 years of occupancy at the historic Hurt Building; the SECF board approves new strategic plan that will guide SECF’s work through 2020.
2016: The Southern Trends Report, developed in partnership with Candid and SECF, launches online. It documents the scope of philanthropic giving in the Southeastern region.
2017: SECF partners with MDC to produce the landmark report “Philanthropy as the South’s Passing Gear: Fulfilling the Promise.”
Making a Commitment to Equity

Throughout the year, members of SECF’s Equity Framework Task Force engaged in powerful conversations with each other, with other SECF members and with experts and thought leaders on the need to promote equity in the South and philanthropy’s role in addressing systemic disparities. The end result is SECF’s Equity Framework, which will serve as the foundation for our work going forward and can be adapted by SECF members to support their own missions.

A Strong, Growing & Active Community of Members

SECF welcomed 26 new members in 2019 and retained more than 92 percent of current members, a reflection of our demonstrated commitment to our membership, as well as our organizational culture, strength and vitality! Throughout the year, events and programs drew strong attendance and this year’s Annual Meeting broke all records with over 1,000 people in attendance. Members were also deeply engaged in work on the 50th Anniversary and Annual Meeting, the Equity Framework and SECF’s values and guiding principles.

Revamped and Refreshed Programs and Benefits

SECF’s Programs & Partnerships team rebuilt the Essential Skills & Strategies program from the ground up into a new offering, Philanthropy Essentials, that provides a guide to grantmaking in the 21st century for newcomers to the field and veterans seeking a refresher. Members also gained a new tool for engaging with one another thanks to listservs that make it easy to ask questions and get responses from hundreds of colleagues.

A Strategic Approach to Public Policy

SECF took its public policy work to the next level in 2019. A new section on SECF.org makes it easier than ever to track legislation, contact policymakers and stay up to date on the latest news affecting the sector. The Public Policy Committee and Board approved SECF’s first-ever Public Policy Blueprint, laying out an approach to policy work rooted in key values and priorities, as well as a legislative agenda for the year.

Celebrating 50 Years

All year long, SECF has celebrated five decades of connecting, supporting and strengthening philanthropy in the American South – along the way, we’ve reminded each other of why this network remains so important to the work we do. Articles in Inspiration magazine and on our blog, Engage, demonstrated how the work done in the past led us to today while highlighting people and places throughout the region. The success of a $1 million resource development campaign proved that, after 50 years, SECF remains as valuable as ever to Southern philanthropy.