Celebrating 20 Years of Philanthropy, Partnerships and Collaborations  
1999 - 2019

When the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama was established in 1999, it managed a single fund of $13 million, the Stringfellow Memorial Health Trust. Since that time the Community Foundation has grown to over 200 funds with assets totaling $46 million. In 20 years CFNEA has awarded $16,858,087 in grants and $1,731,434 in scholarships. This growth is only possible through the many generous donors who have chosen to leave a legacy to their community.

The following milestones mark our history.

Between the years of 1999 and 2002 a Smoking Cessation Program becomes the springboard for the American Cancer Society to improve the Calhoun County Smoking Ordinances.

In 2000 the Prescription Drug Taskforce develops an internet platform with a $65,000 grant and expands statewide to generate more than $136 million annually in free prescription drugs to seniors.

In 2002 CFNEA joins community partners in establishing the Calhoun County Dental Center, known today as the Sarrell Dental Center.

In 2003 the Piedmont Education Trust adds in excess of $250,000 to their fund and establishes 16 scholarships for Piedmont High School graduates. Today this fund offers 29 scholarships totaling approximately $700,000.

In 2004 CFNEA is one of the first community foundations to achieve full compliance with the National Standards and has maintained compliance to date.

In 2005 Mr. and Mrs. Andrew J. Saks left an estate gift of $1 million dollars for a scholarship benefiting the graduates of Saks High School.

Striving to improve the quality of life in our community in 2006 the Community Foundation held five listening sessions throughout Calhoun County and shared research and quality of life indicators with a goal of establishing a seven-year strategic vision.

A grant in 2007 provides funding for Anniston High School’s Career and Technical Education Curriculum with the expanded course offerings and industry accreditation.

In 2008 the 100th charitable fund established with a $500,000 corporate gift – The Foothills Community Partnership Endowment Fund.
In 2009 the Board expanded its geographic service area to include 9 counties: Calhoun, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, DeKalb, Etowah, Randolph, St. Clair and Talladega and changed its name from the Community Foundation of Calhoun County to Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama (CFNEA).

An estate gift of $2.7 million dollars received in 2010 from the Ritch Family provides support to Rainbow Omega, a residential community that cares for adults with developmental disabilities.

Also this year the YMCA received a grant to restore their aging facility.

CFNEA joined Habitat for Humanity in celebrating the completion of its 136th home, making it the third home to be built with grants from the community foundation.

In 2011 the Community Foundation was asked to steward the Evans Litigation Scholarship Fund totaling $963,000.

A Tornado Recovery Fund was established with $250,000 in community support and a matching gift of $250,000 from the Patterson Foundation of Sarasota, Florida. The fund assisted rebuilding efforts in the four counties affected.

Piedmont City Schools received a grant to support their initiative, MPower Piedmont which provides a MacBook for every student grades 4 – 12. In 2016 President Obama recognized Piedmont’s Technology Initiatives and Personalized Learning as a National Model.

In 2012 the Community Foundation served as a convener to discuss rural housing opportunities in Alabama. The event brought together community leaders and organizations to discuss ways to improve and increase affordable rural housing.

An estate gift of $1.6 million from Dr. William Howard and Jessie Aiken Hodges Kryder, leave a life-long endowment to five organizations.

Between the years of 2012 and 2018 the Community Foundation introduced Standards for Excellence® training to the not-for-profit organizations within our region. To date, 109 organizations have attended the trainings and 16 organizations have achieved this national recognition.

In 2013 an effort led by Representative Barbara Boyd established The Freedom Riders Park Fund to support the Freedom Riders Park as a place of reflection and public education regarding civil rights.

In 2014 CFNEA celebrated the 100th Anniversary of Community Foundations.

In 2015 collaboration began with CFNEA to serve as the fiscal sponsor for the Workforce Investment Network to improve economic development in northeast Alabama.

In 2016 a relationship that spanned 17 years culminated in the legacy of Harland C. Jones. His estate, valued at $1.6 million, established a Field of Interest Fund and a Scholarship Fund.
The Longleaf Fund, an unrestricted fund, established by the board in 2000 reached its goal of $1 million dollars.

Jennifer S. Maddox receives her Chartered Advisory in Philanthropy (CAP®) designation.

The first Out of the Shadows Summit focusing on mental health was hosted in 2017 through a Stringfellow Health Fund Grant. The Summit is now an annual event.

In 2017 the Worlds of Work event was established as an annual event designed to introduce high school students to career opportunities.

The concept of Open Spaces Sacred Places® is introduced to the region in celebration of the 100-year legacy of Susie Parker Stringfellow.

Following the tornadoes of March 19, 2018, five funds were established to support rebuilding efforts.


The first in Alabama, a grant from the Stringfellow Health Fund supports a multi-city bike-share program to the cities of Anniston, Jacksonville and Oxford.

In 2019 a collaborative efforts, years in the making, comes to fruition. The E2 Program provides opportunities for education programs through Gadsden State Community College.