

AN NC CHAMBER EVENT

Ag Allies Conference

Scott T. Hamilton
President, Chief Executive Officer
Golden LEAF Foundation



Scott T. Hamilton became the third president of the Golden LEAF Foundation in November 2019. As President, Chief Executive Officer, Scott provides strategic leadership and oversight for the Golden LEAF Foundation, ensuring the organization fulfills its mission to advance economic opportunity in North Carolina's tobacco-dependent and economically distressed communities. In this role, Scott guides overall organizational performance, cultivates key relationships with state and local leaders, and represents the Foundation across government, philanthropic, nonprofit, and economic development sectors. Since becoming President in November 2019, the Golden LEAF Board of Directors has awarded 548 projects totaling more than \$442 million, as well as \$31 million to support the Golden LEAF Scholarship Program and \$25 million to support the Golden LEAF Schools Initiative.

Before joining Golden LEAF, Scott served as Executive Director of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), a federal-state partnership focused on strengthening economic growth and community capacity across the Appalachian region. In this role, he led a team of more than 50 staff and oversaw significant investments supporting workforce development, infrastructure, and economic development initiatives. Prior to joining ARC, Scott held leadership roles with local and regional economic development organizations in North Carolina, including serving as President and CEO of AdvantageWest, where he supported economic advancement across the state's western counties and was the founding President and CEO of the Henderson County Partnership for Economic Development.

Scott holds a bachelor's degree from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He received additional training and certifications in economic development from the University of North Carolina School of Government and the Georgia Institute of Technology. Scott is a graduate of the Economic Development Institute at the University of Oklahoma and the North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center's Rural Economic Development Institute. In 2025, Methodist University awarded Scott the Doctor of Humane Letters, honoris causa (L.H.D.). This degree is conferred upon individuals who have provided exemplary service to the community. Scott is a current member and past president of the North Carolina Economic Development Association and has held leadership positions with numerous boards and organizations across North Carolina, including the North Carolina Economic Development Board and as a gubernatorial appointee to the North Carolina Commission on Workforce Development.