

The Pathfinder

The Good News From 2020

In a year like no other, your support made a real difference for our families. You helped our neighbors weather the pandemic and keep setting and working toward their goals for brighter futures ahead.

In 2020, Britepaths and the Financial Empowerment Center at South County served 7,506 families. Your generous donations, and the support of 363 volunteers serving 6,227 hours, made this possible. Thank You!

Highlights:

- **Building Resilience: 2,523 People** received Financial Literacy, Workforce Development and Financial Empowerment Center services.
- **Stabilizing Families: 1,542 Households** received Food and/or Financial Assistance.
- **Supports for Children: 5,239 Children** received Food4Thought, Back to School, Holiday or Financial Literacy services.

"We run a small business. We had a steady income, but since the pandemic hit our world, we lost most of our income. We didn't lose hope because we know that there are noble people like you that really care about others. We really appreciate your help."

— Mr. K, COVID Food Client

Help Our Families Realize Brighter Possibilities

In 2020, we all had to deal with circumstances desperately beyond our control. But work stoppage, interruptions in school and shortfalls of basic household needs are not new experiences for all of us. For the families we serve, living in a constant state of crisis is a very familiar feeling.

Last year, with our community's support, we helped a lot of people find stability. But what comes after the storm? While many of our neighbors are still struggling to keep their homes and feed their families during the pandemic, others have begun to lift their heads up and wonder *"what's next?"*

Britepaths' commitment to stabilizing families continues, and we will continue to offer as much support as possible. But our mission to help guide individuals and families to better outcomes — through financial literacy, workforce development and targeted mentorship — also deserves additional focus, right now.

By supporting our Brighter Possibilities virtual campaign, you are saying that just surviving a major setback isn't enough.



We want all of our neighbors to move past their daily grind and find a pathway out of struggle. What's next for them? With *your* help, brighter possibilities.

We hope you'll Donate in April at britepaths.org/brighter, or use the enclosed envelope to mail a check.

Special Event: Join us on April 22 at 4:30 p.m. for a virtual Town Hall: Britepaths' Stability Programs through an Equity Lens. Registration link on our Brighter Possibilities page.

Contact Shannon Bryant at sbryant@britepaths.org or 703.273.8829 with questions.

Thank You to Our Sponsors!
Kim and Pete Scudera and Apple Federal Credit Union.



Mission

Britepaths provides our neighbors in need with short-term safety-net services and empowers them to work toward long-term self-sufficiency.

Services

- Stabilizing Families
- Building Resilience
- Supports for Children

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“This Is My New Beginning”

ITServe Laptop Donation Helps Bridge Digital Divide



Alicia Salmon receives a laptop from ITServe Alliance's Anil Atyam. Photo by Bonnie Hobbs, Fairfax Connection.

On February 10, local IT industry leaders from the DMV Chapter of ITServe Alliance donated 43 new, fully loaded laptops and accessories to Britepaths to help our families bridge the digital divide. We have distributed most of the computers to clients who have had difficulty accessing virtual education and work opportunities, especially during the pandemic. Some computers went to clients' children who need

them for distance learning and educational pursuits.

Avenues to Career Training (ACT) student Alicia Salmon was our first client to receive a laptop, and Anil Atyam presented it to her on behalf of ITServe Alliance. ACT had previously been conducted in person, but had to move to a virtual format last spring when the pandemic hit. Many students like Alicia did not have laptops or access to a place where they could use a computer.

Alicia was grateful for the laptop and said it would help her put her ACT training to use as she completes certification training and looks for a job in her chosen healthcare field. She said, "This is my new beginning."

Read more and view news stories from ABC7-WJLA TV and the Fairfax Connection at: britepaths.org/news.

Rashida's Work Continues, Thanks to You!

"Home now for us is a refuge," Rashida says. "It has become a place where, watching the news and seeing all the discord on TV, a place that we know is safe. It has become a refuge from COVID itself. Trying to maintain some semblance of hope for my children is one of my greatest goals."

When Rashida first came to Britepaths, she had experienced a number of setbacks, including homelessness. In just under two years — with guidance from our staff and volunteers and a lot of hard work — Rashida has reduced her debt, found stable housing, maintained employment and enrolled in school for Occupational Therapy. She is giving her all to maintain some semblance of hope for her two



children through a very difficult year. It's a lot, and she is their sole provider, but she's handling it well.

Your support for our work has meant that Rashida's family, and many others, have been able to stay in their homes and continue their inspiring paths to self-sufficiency despite the pandemic. Thank you!

Watch Rashida's video at: britepaths.org/news/Rashida.



Governors Volunteerism Award

Congratulations to our long-time volunteer Jean Schiro-Zavela, who received the 2020 Virginia Governor's Volunteerism and Community Service Award in the category of Outstanding Adult Volunteer. Jean's volunteer work is vital to ensuring that the data we collect and report about our Financial Literacy Program activities is timely and accurate. She has freed up countless hours for our staff so they can spend more time coordinating and delivering services to our clients.

Jean began volunteering for Britepaths in 2011, and has served more than 2,000 hours to date. Financial Literacy Director Marcelle Miles said, "She is so smart, detail-oriented, and she is the expert we go to with our questions about best practices for data entry. She is also a dedicated community member, parent and someone who gives back at every turn. Jean inspires me. Carole [Rogers] and I thoroughly enjoy having her on our team."

Due to the pandemic, her award was mailed to Britepaths and she picked it up recently.

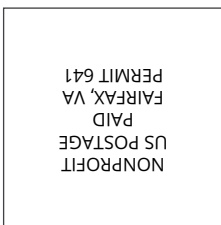
Read more at: britepaths.org/news/2020GovernorsAward.

Stay Tuned for Back to School

Thanks to our generous supporters, Britepaths was able to provide school supply kits to 2,500 Fairfax County Public Schools students last fall, and in a pandemic pivot, we also offered Digital Access support to families who needed to connect for distance learning.

This summer, we will once again partner with Fairfax County's Collect for Kids initiative to ensure that students in need at our partner schools are able to start the 2021-22 school year with everything they need to succeed. Details coming in June on our Back to School page at britepaths.org. Contact Dorothy Altmiller at daltmiller@britepaths.org or 703.273.8829 with questions.

Return Service Requested



UWNCA: #9661; CFC#82471
Catalogue for Philanthropy

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