

The Pathfinder

Give the Gift of Hope for the Holidays



"I have been trying to show my three daughters the importance of appreciating what we have and enjoying life to the fullest. But during the holidays, it was hard to get them presents. Even if they did not expect too much, like any child they wanted special presents. I am so lucky to be in a community that is so caring and helpful and giving to my children." – Laura

As we near the end of another challenging year, we are looking to the holidays for some cheer. Can you help us make sure that children in our community whose families are struggling are able to share in some of that joy?

Britepaths' Holiday Program is seeking donations of funds and gift cards to help 500 local families in need enjoy festive holiday meals and gifts for their children. The donations will help us provide gift cards that social workers at our Fairfax County Public Schools partner schools in the Fairfax HS and Justice HS pyramids will distribute to families with identified need.

A gift of \$100 will provide holiday meals for a family and \$50 will provide gifts for children. Any amount you can offer will make a big difference for children and their families who live very near you. We also welcome companies and organizations to sponsor our program.

Our new online donation platform makes it easy to donate and to create your own Holiday fundraising campaign if you're inspired. Visit britepaths.org/our-programs/holiday-program or contact 703.273.8829 to learn more.



2020 Impact Report

Britepaths' 2020 Impact Report is now available on the Financials page of our web site, britepaths.org. Request a printed copy at: info@britepaths.org or 703.273.8829.

"Britepaths Saved My Life"

"Amey" and her family were burdened with business and medical debt and on the brink of eviction when she contacted Britepaths and the Financial Empowerment Center at South County (FECSoco) in the summer of 2020.

Working with her volunteer Financial Mentor Dennis Elias over the past year, and with support from our Food Bridge program and other resources Dennis helped her access, Amey and her husband have been able to catch up on their rent, pay off \$6,000 worth of debt, start building their savings through our Matched Savings Program, and are starting to plan for buying a home.

Dennis is a Certified Financial Planner (CFP®), and his work with Amey was detailed in an article by our grantor the Foundation for Financial Planning (FFP), which encourages professionals like Dennis to provide pro bono financial coaching to community members who are struggling. FFP has provided funding for our Financial Mentoring and Coaching services at Britepaths and FECSoco since 2013, and also awarded us a Communities of Color grant with BNY Mellon's Pershing to further the outreach we have long been conducting in our community.

Amey spoke with Financial Literacy Director Marcelle Miles about her challenges and success. View the video and read the FFP article at: britepaths.org/Amey.



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

Values

At Britepaths...

We seek to learn the unique circumstances of each client, and craft solutions with the whole person in mind. As we guide others towards self-sufficiency, we accept that teaching others means nurturing self-awareness in ourselves.

We embrace our differences and see them as a source of strength.

We commit to individual and organizational efforts to nurture respect, compassion, dignity, equity, and self-esteem for each member of our community – inclusive of staff, clients, and supporters.

We value and respect our neighbors regardless of race, gender, age, sexuality, ability, religion, national origin, and gender identity.

We champion individual efforts, build community engagement, and challenge institutional constraints that deny any person the right to live and thrive.

We know that we are at our best when we see ourselves in each other.

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Your Support Fights Local Hunger



Britepaths reopened our Food Pantry in August after closing in March 2020. It is so great to see our families again!

September was Hunger Action Month in Fairfax County and across the U.S. There are numerous ways your support for our work is helping ensure that our neighbors in crisis have sustenance while they work toward stability.

In 2020, Britepaths’ Food Bridge program provided food services to 734 unduplicated households, impacting 2,631 individuals, including 1,227 children in those

homes. This includes Covid CARES Act food assistance, delivered food, emergency food, and fresh produce boxes that were delivered to families in quarantine due to Covid in the Alexandria area, in a pandemic pivot for the Our Daily Veggies program. Our Food4Thought program served 1,309 students in 20 FCPS partner schools.

This year, we are distributing Our Daily Veggies vouchers again, and also helping SNAP recipients purchase fresh produce at the Annandale Farmers Market.

In addition to donating funds, grocery store gift cards and food, community members can get involved by organizing a food delivery group, running a food or gift card drive, or creating Food4Thought weekend food packs to donate to our partner schools.

Learn more at: britepaths.org/news/fighting-local-hunger.

Melinda’s New Home

Congratulations to Melinda, who previously worked with our wonderful volunteer Financial Mentor Josephine Johnson to improve her financial situation.

In August 2021, she wrote to Financial Literacy Director Marcelle Miles to recommend a friend for our Mentoring program, and she shared this fabulous update. We’re so proud of her and happy for her and her daughter.

“It’s been a few years since I was blessed to have been introduced to your program.

“Josephine holds a special place in my heart for all that she did for me. I’m proud to say that my credit score has been over 700 for over a year now, and during COVID (2020) I was able to purchase my first home as a single mom!!! We moved in September of 2020.

“That is a goal and dream I had all but given up on, especially since I was getting closer to 50 during the time Josephine and I met. Here I am 50 and a home owner thanks to all your program and Josephine have done. Thank you!”



Whetzel Finalist for EXCEL Award

On October 15, Britepaths Executive Director Lisa Whetzel was named one of three finalists for the Center for Nonprofit Advancement’s Excellence in Chief Executive Leadership (EXCEL) Award. Read more at: britepaths.org/whetzel-excel.

Fairfax Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving

Britepaths is grateful to the organizers of the Fairfax Turkey Trot in Mantua for once again choosing us as the beneficiary of this fun 4-miler on Thanksgiving morning. After going virtual last year, the race is back to being in person again this year. Last year’s race raised more than \$7,000 to help our families. We hope you’ll join us and invite your friends. Register at: fairfaxturkeytrot.com.



Thanks for Helping Our Kids Go Back to School!

Thanks to our community’s support, we were able to provide school supply kits to 4,250 local students in need—twice the amount of kids we usually serve—to meet the overwhelming need. We are grateful to all who donated, and to our sponsors: NVAR Cares, Twins Ace Hardware, Mara Hair and Mode Studio and Wolf Run Foundation.

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3959 Pender Drive, Suite 200
Fairfax, VA 22030
703.273.8829
info@britepaths.com
britepaths.org
UWNCA: #9661; CFC#82471
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