

# 2024 SPECIAL SESSION I

INTRODUCED

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## HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 631

Offered May 13, 2024

Prefiled May 13, 2024

4 Commending Lisa Whetzel.

5 Patron—Bulova

6  
7 WHEREAS, in 2024, Lisa Whetzel retires as the executive director of Britepaths, Inc., an  
8 award-winning nonprofit organization that provides safety net services and other programs to help  
9 Northern Virginia residents in need achieve financial stability and self-sufficiency, after nearly two  
10 decades of exceptional service; and

11 WHEREAS, a graduate of James Madison University, Lisa Whetzel joined the staff of Britepaths in  
12 2005 when it was still known as Our Daily Bread; in her original role, she developed, planned, and  
13 launched the Financial Mentoring Program and framework for current Financial Empowerment services;  
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Lisa Whetzel was named as the executive director of Our Daily Bread in 2007 and  
16 quickly expanded program offerings to address Fairfax communities' most pressing needs; she also  
17 increased collaborative efforts with community partners to better support clients; and

18 WHEREAS, in recognition of Our Daily Bread's growing mission, Lisa Whetzel oversaw the  
19 adoption of the name Britepaths in 2016, which increased staff morale and helped bring a new focus  
20 and stability to the organization; she initiated new marketing strategies to include a uniform brand on  
21 the website, social media, and marketing collateral with assistance from professional volunteers; and

22 WHEREAS, Lisa Whetzel expanded Britepaths from Fairfax County to all of Northern Virginia and  
23 secured grant funding to launch and operate the Financial Empowerment Center at South County,  
24 guiding 2,000 clients toward financial stability; she guided staff to maintain the organization's culture  
25 and integrity at the off-site location to exceed grant outcomes; and

26 WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Lisa Whetzel maintained an 80 percent staff retention  
27 rate while increasing program capacity to ensure that clients continued to receive support in their time of  
28 greatest need; she also tripled the organization's operating budget to an all-time high of \$7 million  
29 during that time, maintaining only a modest overhead rate to ensure maximum investment in services;  
30 and

31 WHEREAS, during her 17-year tenure as executive director, Lisa Whetzel secured funding for and  
32 implemented several pilot programs, with most becoming sustainable and impactful programs that  
33 surpassed outcomes; she assured the financial integrity of the organization through compliance with  
34 regulatory entities and provided transparency for constituents; and

35 WHEREAS, Lisa Whetzel also served as the face of the organization and as spokesperson for its  
36 programs, representing Britepaths in broad-reaching community advocacy efforts; in addition, she  
37 provided her leadership and expertise to other local commissions, committees, and task forces that have  
38 enhanced the quality of life in the region; and

39 WHEREAS, among many awards and accolades, Lisa Whetzel has received the Spirited Service  
40 Award from *Smart CEO* magazine and has accepted the Human Rights Award from the Fairfax County  
41 Human Rights Commission and the Non-profit of the Year recognition from the Northern Virginia  
42 Chamber of Commerce on behalf of Our Daily Bread and Britepaths; and

43 WHEREAS, throughout her career, Lisa Whetzel has enjoyed the love and support of her husband,  
44 Jay, and her children, Ben, Sam, and Anna; now, therefore, be it

45 RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Lisa Whetzel hereby be commended on the occasion  
46 of her retirement as executive director of Britepaths, Inc.; and, be it

47 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution  
48 for presentation to Lisa Whetzel as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for her  
49 accomplishments as a champion for vulnerable members of the Northern Virginia community.

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