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EBRI Welcomes Bridget Bearden, as New Research & Development Strategist

WASHINGTON – September 21, 2021 – The [Employee Benefit Research Institute](#) (EBRI) is pleased to announce Bridget Bearden, Ph.D. is joining the EBRI management team as its new Research & Development Strategist. In this new role she will be coordinating EBRI research efforts, managing the research team and workflow, amplifying EBRI research, and identifying opportunities to further evolve EBRI's expertise for its members.

Bearden is a researcher with more than a decade of content creation for investment audiences, including institutional investors, policymakers, industry professionals, financial advisors, and mass media. She is an expert in U.S. retirement plans, product distribution, and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) investing. She is also a demonstrated thought leader and research collaborator. Bearden is the founder of Strooga Consulting and has also served as Director of Institutional Marketing at Edelman Financial Engines, and Director of Retirement Research at Strategic Insight (now ISS Market Intelligence). She has a Ph.D. and Master of Science degree in Public Policy from University of Massachusetts, Boston, and an M.B.A. in Finance from Suffolk University's Sawyer Business School.

"We're tremendously excited about adding Bridget to EBRI's team. The past three years have been focused on building out new databases, augmenting our Centers, enhancing our surveys, and developing partnerships to create more value for EBRI's members, the industry, and policymakers," says Lori Lucas, EBRI's CEO. "Bringing on Bridget is intended to make sure we leverage all of these capabilities and resources so that we propel EBRI's research from the realm of valuable to invaluable for all of our constituents."

Adds Josh Cohen, head of Institutional Defined Contribution, PGIM, and EBRI Chair, "EBRI's Executive Committee is delighted that Bridget has agreed to help EBRI's incomparable research team become even stronger. Bringing in a professional with practical industry experience will ensure research is established and packaged in a way that is functional, innovative and actionable. Creation of this position is a strategic investment to help EBRI increase its strong independent, objective, fact-based research footprint and deliver even greater value to members and the public."

Notably, the evolution of the EBRI Research Team also includes the recent addition of Michael Gropper as a Research Associate. Gropper will focus on mining EBRI's databases, starting with its Public Retirement database, which was developed in 2020. Gropper is a Ph.D. candidate in finance at the University of North Carolina, who focuses on households' savings, investment, and retirement decisions.

Says Bearden, "It's exciting working with both the new talent on EBRI's research team, as well as humbling to join a research team that has many decades of collective research experience. I'm looking forward to amplifying the continued achievements of these renowned retirement, health benefits, and financial wellness researchers."

Bearden's new role begins September 27, 2021.

About EBRI

[The Employee Benefit Research Institute](#) (EBRI) is a nonpartisan membership organization committed to contributing to, encouraging, and enhancing the development of sound employee benefit programs and public policy through objective research and education. Founded in 1978, EBRI is the only private,

nonprofit, nonpartisan, Washington, DC-based organization committed exclusively to public policy research and education on economic security and employee benefit issues.