

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Development Director – Risa Rifkind



I am running for Development Director because I believe we are at a pivotal moment for LPA. We are at a moment where we need to decide what the organization's future will be and who it will serve. I deeply believe in an LPA led by Little People.

As the daughter of two average-height parents and the only Little Person in my family, I know the pivotal role of average-height family members in our lives. And with their blessing and agreement, LPs need to lead this organization because who else not only understands our lives but can share our culture and our dwarf pride.

The Development Director for LPA is responsible for the following:

1. Shall work with the Board of Directors and LPA Staff on identifying fundraising goals.
2. Shall be responsible for research and application for applicable grants and granting programs on behalf of LPA.
3. Shall oversee the Fundraising Committee.
4. Shall present a written annual report pertaining to the activities of this office at the annual conference.

As Development Director, I will work to create strategies that provide funding for new and existing programs that cultivate a sense of belonging and pride for current and future generations. I want to empower our community to advance in education, employment, and all areas that lead to full and independent lives. Funding strategies will also deepen the connection and understanding between Little People and the broader disability community. We are stronger when we work across social justice movements and intersectionality.

I know I have the right experience and background to execute all of my plans. I have spent the last 10+ years of my career in disability-led nonprofits and have served on several nonprofit boards, including as Treasurer for the organization CCAC. I have tripled fundraising efforts at CCAC, a newly created volunteer-run nonprofit.

I have also worked as a Program Officer for a fund at a large foundation, so I understand how to connect with Funders and successfully get grants. I also know how to build a culture of philanthropy so that Members are excited about giving. For LPA, this means first and foremost gaining back the trust of so many who have felt distanced.

At my day job, a small nonprofit based out of Chicago, I seek to advance leaders with disabilities because we know that we will create systems that will serve us when we are represented by those most marginalized.

Within LPA, I'm also serving as Chair of the Inclusion Committee. This is a new committee that is only just beginning and hopes to create a place where all Little People will feel welcome,

specifically those who have felt marginalized over the years, including LPs of color and their families. Creating this vision will take funding. I look forward to identifying ways to strengthen LPA's Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility work.

Recently, existing fundraising strategies allowed pharmaceutical companies that have since released a drug aiming to eradicate dwarfism, starting with achondroplasia, into our space. As Development Director and in cooperation with the Fundraising Committee, I will implement policies and practices that seek to grow our financial resources in a way that doesn't jeopardize our community.

As a lifetime member, I'm deeply committed to contributing to an LPA in which I want to raise our future family. We need to create funding strategies that will let LPA grow in a sustainable way that supports vital advocacy efforts and connects LPs to the resources they need. LPA has given me so much - lifetime friendships, role models, scholarships, and more - and I hope to contribute to an LPA that does this for even more people.

Development Director – Jon Welch



I'm Jon Welch, and I am honored to be running for a second term as Development Director for Little People of America. I have been a dedicated member of LPA for over 52 years. I was first introduced to our organization when my parents met Bob and Jackie East and Al and Harriet Stickney who were some of the original and key founding members of LPA. I was very fortunate to have had them and other members serve as my mentors and resources during my initial upbringing. None of that would have been possible if my average height parents had not made that initial effort in becoming supportive of LPA. I remember attending my first LPA National Conference in 1973 which was in Oakland, CA. It is through LPA that I met and eventually married my wife of 26 years Sonia. It is also through LPA that we adopted our two sons Garrett (14) and Andrew (12).

Over time, LPA had given so much to me, that it was time for me to give back. My start in LPA leadership began as a chapter officer back in the early 1990's, and I have served multiple stints as Chapter President, Vice-President, and Treasurer. From there, I served as Assistant District 12 Director and then District Director. Angie Giuffre and I developed a collaborative working relationship and strong friendship that continues today. We created and ran the first of what would become many successful Multi-District and Regional Conferences. I then served as Western Regional Representative before being appointed to my current role as Development Director. As Development Director, I am responsible for creating and building relationships with organizations that ultimately lead to securing sponsorships for LPA.

My reasons for serving are simple:

- To give back to LPA, the organization that has given so much to me and my family
- To serve our LPA membership
- To serve towards strengthening our organization
- To serve our LPA community

As your LPA Development Director for the past three years, this is what has been accomplished so far:

- Established ongoing relationships with Corporate, Employment, & Medical Organizations
- Created and built a solid Corporate Sponsorship Committee that meets regularly
- Developed and created LPA Corporate Sponsorship packet marketing materials
- Established focused Sub Committees to align with our goals and objectives. These are as follows:
 - Corporate Sponsorship
 - Employment Sponsorship
 - GOAL (Grant for Overall Accessible Living)
 - Grant Writing
- Raised over \$155,000 in Corporate Sponsorship money
 - Past corporate sponsors have included
 - Boutique Recruiting
 - City of Hope
 - HBO
 - Johns Hopkins
 - Morgan Stanley
 - Nemours
 - Parking Systems
 - Wells Fargo
- Created, developed, and raised over \$140,000 in Year End Campaign funds in the past three years
- *Between Sponsorship and the End of year campaign, a portion of our donations are made by our members*

How do the allocated sponsorship funds impact LPA?

- Provide funds towards LPA National Conference which helps reduce overall operational expenses
- Provide funds towards creating LPA educational materials
- The committee provided start-up funds for the GOAL Fund

If elected for another term, here is what our committee and I have as part of our Strategic Plan for the next three years:

- Raise \$175,000 in Corporate Sponsorship Funds
- Raise \$50,000 in Grant Writing Funds
- Raise \$50,000 in Employment Sponsorship Funds
- Raise \$150,000 in End of the Year Campaign Funds
- Increase number of recurring Corporate Sponsors to 10
- Grow sponsorship committee to 10 members

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your LPA Development Director for this past term. It has been an honor to do so. As you can see, a lot of hard work has gone into building LPA's Corporate Sponsorship program to provide LPA resources both now and into the future. On behalf of the Corporate Sponsorship Committee, I look forward to having the opportunity to serve another term and continue to build upon our success.

As a current board member, I enjoy supporting our membership on LPA's Board of Directors. Our Board of Directors is a dedicated group of volunteers who work hard to represent our members and help LPA move forward and successfully progress into the future.