



LITTLE PEOPLE OF AMERICA
Empowerment • Awareness • Community

Little People of America
Press Release

Ford Foundation Grant
April 2023

Little People of America (LPA) is pleased to announce the acceptance of a grant of \$400,000.00 from the Ford Foundation. We thank Ford for their generous contribution to our organization.

This grant money will solely fund a radical and dynamic immersive experience of the history of LPs through the power of storytelling, preservation of historical materials, and digital media. This archival project will place the power back into our community's hands to uplift our history and amplify our full identity as a culture. These stories, *our* stories, provide a history and perspective on the significant architectural, social, and employment barriers our members have faced and our organization's resolve and fortitude in meeting these challenges.

Accurate representation of little people in media, politics, and society has consistently been skewed because the narrators of our stories have often been non-disabled people. We have faced inequality and discrimination due to the one-sided misrepresentation of LPs throughout history as jesters, sight gags, or oddities to either be pitied, feared, or laughed at. LPA's collective archival history is a largely unseen rebuke of that narrative. Our archives show leadership, pride, humanity, dignity, artistry, and organizational development.

The Ford Foundation grant will help to elevate our history and ensure a vivid and dynamic catalog of stories archived for generations to come.

“Preserving and displaying the powerful and resilient history of people with dwarfism is in alignment with the foundation’s U.S. Disability Rights work and our intention to shifting the narrative of disabled people, from one not defined by them, to one that is.” Said Rebecca Cokley, U.S. Disability Rights Program Officer, and lifetime member of LPA. “I look forward to a day when our history is known, acknowledged, and celebrated as both a proud culture and a part of the fabric of this country’s disability rights movement.”

“Our stories, historically told through the lens of non-LPs, has not accurately captured the lives of people with dwarfism. Having us be the storytellers of our own narrative is a powerful reminder of the importance of agency and representation of LPs.” Said Jennifer Crumly, Public Relation Director of LPA.

For more information on this project or the work of Little People of America contact Jennifer Crumly at Jennifer.Crumly@lpaonline.org.

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Little People of America (LPA) is the world's oldest and largest organization supporting people with dwarfism and their families. Historically, dwarfs have faced discrimination and marginalization within society, particularly in issues such as social acceptance, education, employment, and medical access. Founded in 1957 by actor Billy Barty, LPA throughout its history, has strived to educate the general population of our community's inimitable value and equal rights while instilling in our dwarf community, a sense of self-pride and communal culture."

The Ford Foundation is an independent organization working to address inequality and build a future grounded in justice. For more than 85 years, it has supported visionaries on the frontlines of social change worldwide, guided by its mission to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty and injustice, promote international cooperation, and advance human achievement. Today, with an endowment of \$16 billion, the foundation has headquarters in New York and 10 regional offices across Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. Learn more at www.fordfoundation.org.