



MEDIA FACT SHEET

The Dollywood Foundation General Information

- The Dollywood Foundation (DWF) was founded in 1988 by Dolly Parton originally to inspire children in her home county to achieve educational success and decrease high school dropout rates. Today, the Foundation's mission is to share the life and legacy of Dolly Parton as an inspiration for children to Dream More, Learn More, Care More, and Be More®.
- In 1995, Dolly's initial success launched what is now the **flagship program of The Foundation, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library®**
- **The mission of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is to inspire a love of reading**
- 501(c)(3) non-profit organization
- Headquartered in Sevier County, Tennessee
- Each year, provides \$15,000 Dolly Parton Scholarship funds to five high school students in Sevier County to help further their education at any accredited university
- Also administers several additional scholarships: In 2016, Dolly provided a \$30,000 Special Merit scholarship to a young girl in Arkansas. Once she reaches 18 years of age in 2032, the scholarship will be \$60,000.
- In 2016, Dolly used the foundation to establish the My People Fund, which raised over \$12M for families who lost their homes in Sevier County fires on November 28, 2016.
- In 2017, the foundation released Dolly Parton's Imagination Library license plates in Tennessee with 100% proceeds benefiting The Imagination Library in the Volunteer State.

Select Foundation Milestones

- **1988:** Dolly starts The Dollywood Foundation in Sevier County, Tennessee
- **1991:** Dolly establishes the Buddy Program, focused on reducing high school dropout rates in Sevier Co, TN. She asks every 7th and 8th grade student to "buddy up" with another student promising them each \$500 cash if they both successfully graduate. Dropout rates for these two classes fell from 35% to 6%!
- **2000:** Establishes the Dolly Parton Scholarship which offers a \$15,000.00 college scholarship to five high school seniors in Sevier Co., Tennessee.
- **2007:** Dolly raises \$1m for new Sevier Co. Hospital Birthing Unit and Dolly Parton Center for Women's Services

- **2016:** Dolly starts the My People Fund (\$1k/month for 6 months to families who lost their homes)
- **2017:** Dolly releases *I Believe in You* children's cd to benefit The Dollywood Foundation

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library General Information

- In 1995, inspired by her father's inability to read or write, Dolly Parton launches the Imagination Library to foster an early love of reading and learning in her hometown of Sevier Co., TN
- A premier, book-gifting program that mails *free* books to registered children every month from birth through age 5
- The Foundation covers overhead costs and negotiates wholesale pricing for the books, while local community partners fundraise to cover the cost of mailing and decided-upon wholesale book prices
- Operates in 5 countries: United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia and Republic of Ireland
- Enrolled children from birth receive 60 books by the time they graduate from the Imagination Library
- Book selections includes braille and bilingual book options
- Over 2 million free books are gifted each month to children around the world
- Every 1.3 seconds, a book is mailed
- Over 200 million free books have been gifted since the program's inception in 1995
- Programs in every state in the USA and currently 15 Statewide Programs
- Website: www.imaginationlibrary.com

Select DPIL Milestones

- **1995:** Inspired by her father's inability to read or write, Dolly Parton launches the Imagination Library to foster an early love of reading and learning in her home county
- **2000:** Begins a national replication effort
- **2004:** 1st Statewide program launches in Tennessee
- **2006:** Launches in Canada
- **2007:** Launches in the UK
- **2011:** Audio and braille books added
- **2013:** Launches in Australia
- **2014:** UK reaches all 4 nations in the United Kingdom
- **2016:** 1 million books mailed each month and Dolly awards a \$30,000 Special Merit Scholarship to 2-year-old, Evey Johns, in recognition of this milestone
- **2017:** Official DP License Plate Available in TN benefiting the Imagination Library
- **2018:** 100th million books (COMC) dedicated to The Library of Congress
- **2019:** Launches in The Republic of Ireland
- **2020:** Gifts its 150 millionth free book during 25th Year Anniversary
- **2020:** Award-winning Goodnight with Dolly Series launches
- **2021:** The Imagination Playhouse opens at Dollywood Theme Park
- **2021:** Canada DPIL reaches every province and territory in Canada

- **2021:** Worldwide premiere of “The Library That Dolly Built” with over 1 million viewers
- **2022:** UK gifts its 5 millionth book since inception
- **2022:** 2 million books mailed each month globally!
- **2022:** 1 in 10 children under the age of five in the United States receives a book in the mail each month from The Dollywood Foundation!
- **2023:** Over 200th million books gifted globally since inception

DPIL Awards and Accolades

- **2000:** Association of American Publishers Honors Award from Association of American Publishers
- **2001:** Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval
- **2003:** Child and Family Advocacy Award from Parents as Teachers National Center
- **2011:** Presidents Crystal Apple Award
- **2012:** Imagination Library recognized in the Academic Journal, Reading Psychology, for “Increasing parental reading through book distribution.”
- **2014:** Best Practices from the Library of Congress Literacy Award
- **2019:** Recording Academy Musicares honors Dolly for her philanthropic efforts
- **2021:** The Library of Congress Awards the Imagination Library with the \$150k David M. Rubenstein Prize
- **2022:** The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) honors Dolly with Distinguished Service Award
- **2022:** National Education Association awards Dolly with Friends of Education Award
- **2022:** Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library is awarded the Eric Carle Angel Award
- **2022:** Dolly receives the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy Award in NYC
- **2023:** The King Center awards Dolly & her Foundation the Christine King Farris Legacy of Service in Education award

Contact Information

- Mailing Address: 111 E Main St, 2nd Floor Sevierville, TN 37862
- Phone: 865-428-9606

Boilerplate for DPIL:

About Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library

Since launching in 1995, Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library has become the preeminent early childhood book-gifting program in the world. The flagship program of The Dollywood Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, has gifted over 200 million free books in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and The Republic of Ireland. The Imagination Library mails more than 2 million high-quality, age-appropriate books each month to enrolled children from birth to age five. Dolly envisioned creating a lifelong love of reading and inspiring children to Dream More, Learn More, Care More and Be More®.

The impact of the program has been widely researched and results suggest positive increases in key early childhood literacy metrics. Penguin Random House is the exclusive publisher for Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library. For more information, please visit [imaginationlibrary.com](https://www.imaginationlibrary.com).