



## GENERAL FACT SHEET

### General Information

- The Dollywood Foundation (DWF) was founded in 1988 by Dolly Parton to inspire children in her home county to achieve educational success and decrease high school dropout rates
- In 1995, Dolly's initial success launched what is now the flagship program of The Foundation, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library®.
- 501(c)(3) non-profit organization
- Headquartered in Sevier County, Tennessee
- Mission: To share the life and legacy of Dolly Parton as an inspiration for children to Dream More, Learn More, Care More, and Be More®.
- 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% of proceeds benefiting The Imagination Library in the Volunteer State.

### Select Foundation Milestones

- **1988:** Dolly starts the 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 donates \$1 million to the Monroe Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt
- **2018:** Dolly unveils the Hannah Dennison Butterfly Garden at Vanderbilt Children’s Hospital
- **2020:** Parton funds COVID-19 vaccine research
- **2022:** Dolly is awarded the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy Award in NYC

### **Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library**

- 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 (about \$2.10 per child)
- 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 include braille and bilingual book options
- Over 2 million free books are gifted each month to children around the world and 1 in 10 children in the USA under the age of five are enrolled in the program.
- Every 1.3 seconds, a book is mailed
- Over 190 million free books have been gifted since the program’s inception in 1995
- There are currently 15 Statewide Programs (legislation signed) in the United States: TN, NC, OH, WV, AR, DE, CO, KS, KY, WA, OK, D.C., and three launching in 2023: ME, MO, and CA
- 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!
- Website: [www.imaginationlibrary.com](http://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
- **2016:** 1 million books are 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:** 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: 200<sup>th</sup> million books gifted since inception milestone**

### **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:** DPIL and Dolly is awarded the Eric Carle Angel Award
- **2023:** The King Center awards Dolly & DWF the Christine King Farris Legacy of Service in Education award

### **Contact Information**

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Boilerplates for DPIL & DP:

### **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](http://imaginationlibrary.com).

## About Dolly Parton

Dolly Parton is the most honored and revered female country singer-songwriter of all time. Achieving 25 RIAA-certified gold, platinum, and multi-platinum awards, she has had 26 songs reach #1 on the Billboard country charts, a record for a female artist. Recently, Parton reached #1 on the Billboard Christian Airplay Chart for the first time for her duet with Grammy award-winning Zach Williams of "There Was Jesus," for which they won a Grammy that year, making that her 11<sup>th</sup> Grammy win. She received her first Dove Award for short-form video for her collaboration with KING & COUNTRY on the song "God Only Knows." Parton is the first artist to have topped the Billboard's Adult Contemporary, Christian AC Songs, Hot Country Songs, Christian Airplay, Country Airplay and Dance/Mix Show Airplay radio charts. Parton recently became the first country artist honored as Grammy MusiCares Person of the Year given out by NARAS. She has 47 career Top 10 country albums, a record for any artist, and 110 career-charted singles over the past 50+ years.

In 2014 the RIAA recognized her impact on recorded music with a plaque commemorating more than 100 million units sold worldwide. Her 2016 #1 album, "Pure & Simple," which topped the Billboard Top Country Albums and Americana/Folk Albums charts and debuted at No. 1 in the U.S., Canada, U.K., and Australia, added to that massive tally. She has garnered eleven Grammy Awards and 51 nominations, including the Lifetime Achievement Award and a 2020 win with KING & COUNTRY for their collaboration on "God Only Knows"; 10 Country Music Association Awards, including Entertainer of the Year; five Academy of Country Music Awards, also including a nod for Entertainer of the Year; four People's Choice Awards; and three American Music Awards. In 1999, Parton was inducted as a member of the coveted Country Music Hall of Fame.

In 2020, she released the Christmas album "A Holly Dolly Christmas" which went #1 on the Billboard Country and Holiday charts, as well released the bestselling coffee table book "Songteller: My Life in Lyrics." In 2021, she won an Emmy Award for Outstanding Television Movie for the film "Dolly Parton's Christmas on the Square" and this December 2022, she will be releasing on NBC an all-new original holiday movie called "Dolly Parton's Mountain Magic Christmas" which she is starring in as well as producing.

To date, Parton has led the donation effort of nearly 200 million books to children around the world with her Imagination Library. Currently, 1 out of every 10 children in the USA under the age of five, are enrolled in her program. Her children's book, Coat of Many Colors, was dedicated to the Library of Congress to honor the Imagination Library's 100 millionth book donation. In March of 2022, Parton released the book *Run Rose Run* which she co-authored with James Patterson which sat at # 1 on the New York Times Bestseller's List for 5 weeks, a record for this decade. She also released an accompanying album of the same name with original songs inspired by the book which reached #1 on three charts simultaneously --- Country, Americana/Folk, and Bluegrass Albums. From her "Coat of Many Colors" while working "9 to 5," no dream is too big and no mountain too high for the country girl who turned the world into her stage.