

The Larry Biondi Fellowship for Radical Thought & Action

Call for Applications

What: Paid fellowships for projects supporting the missions of Progress Center for Independent Living and Chicago ADAPT

Who: No restrictions on eligibility for those who apply

When: Fellowships run year round. Current applications are due **June 1, 2023**

How much: Fellows may receive a stipend of up to \$5,000 depending on project

Call for applications is now open for the Larry Biondi Fellowship for Radical Thought & Action. If you are interested in a paid 4-6 month fellowship working on projects that advance the work of two leading disability rights organizations in the Chicago area, we look forward to hearing from you. All successful candidates will be notified within one month of their submission that they have advanced to the prospective fellowship pool. Advancement to this pool does not guarantee acceptance as a Fellow. The timing of final fellowship determinations will be contingent on the nature of each project. Please send any questions to: biondifund@gmail.com.

What is the Larry Biondi Fellowship?

The Larry Biondi Fellowship is an opportunity for talented, disability-rights minded individuals to participate in 4-6 months of paid project-focused activity that advances the work of two disability-rights organizations: Chicago ADAPT and Progress Center for Independent Living (PCIL). Chicago ADAPT is a grassroots direct-action organization that promotes justice and equity for people with disabilities in Chicago. The group also participates in regional and national actions. Members of Chicago ADAPT have been key participants in historic milestones for the city's disability community, including the fight for accessible transportation on the Chicago Transit Authority. PCIL is an independent living center based in Forest Park that provides assistance and advocacy to people of all types of disabilities living in Suburban Cook County, helping with housing, employment, personal attendant services and other areas to support the self-determination. For more information on both organizations, please visit: www.progresscil.org and www.facebook.com/adaptchicago/

The Larry Biondi Fellowship offers two application tracks. First is the **Open Application Request (OAR)** through which individuals may submit project proposals of their own design and interest. Ideally, Open Applications will be projects that benefit both organizations by advancing their common interests. The second is the **Focused Application Request (FAR)** through which individuals submit proposals in response to the Fellowship Committee's periodic postings for special projects.

Who may apply?

The Open Application Request is open to all individuals of all skills and backgrounds who can demonstrate support for disability rights and justice, and the advance of independent living. Candidates must be able to participate in monthly meetings, either virtually or in person, of each organization as well as present bi-weekly (every 14 days) reports on their progress to Fellowship liaisons.

Open Application Request (OAR) Form

The Open Application Request is for individuals who develop their own 4-6 month project for the benefit of both Chicago ADAPT and PCIL. Applicants may request up to \$5,000. Applicants are required to provide a clear description of the project, how it will benefit the two organizations, the anticipated length of the project timeline and a set of specific goals within that timeline. **Email completed application to: biondifund@gmail.com or mail to Larry Biondi Fund c/o Progress Center for Independent Living, 7521 Madison St, Forest Park, IL 60130.**

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Pronouns: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

My preferred means of communication is by: _____

Stipend amount requested: \$ _____

Please respond to all of the following items. Use separate documents as needed.

1. Please provide a description of the project you wish to undertake. In the description include a) the project objectives, b) its required steps and processes, c) the monthly milestones you expect to meet, and d) the impact you believe the project will have on the organizations as well as the disability community at large.
2. List the resources you may need to complete this project.
3. Please describe any experiences and background that would indicate your ability to complete this project.
4. Please provide references that we can contact to help us determine your ability to complete this project.
5. Provide any samples or links to work that would help us determine your ability to complete this project.

Please review and check all the statements below.

6. I understand that I will be required to participate in monthly meetings of both organizations and present project updates at those meetings
7. I understand that I will be required to meet with my project liaison at least every 14 days to provide brief milestone reports on my work.
8. I will be available for feedback and maintain regular contact with my project liaison throughout the fellowship
9. I understand that I will be provided 50% of my stipend at the start of my fellowship and the remaining 50% at the conclusion.
10. I understand that Chicago ADAPT and PCIL will retain the ownership of, as well as the usage and duplication rights for, all products and services that are developed within my fellowship.

About Larry Biondi

Larry Biondi worked at Progress Center for 28 years. As Advocacy Manager, Larry led the Progress Center Community Organizers, implementing strategies to improve housing, transportation, public access and health care for the disability community. Larry also conducted Progress Center's Legislative Training Course.

A person with a disability, Larry hired and managed his own personal assistants. Perhaps as much as anyone, Larry knew the essential link between accommodations and independence and inclusion for people with disabilities. Without personal assistants, Larry would not have been able to live on his own. Understanding that link, Larry never stopped fighting to strengthen and build systems of community services so that all people with disabilities had the opportunity to access services and live independently.

In addition to his full-time job at Progress Center, Larry was a long-time member of Chicago ADAPT, a grassroots disability advocacy organization. Larry went to hundreds of local and national ADAPT demonstrations, participating in civil disobedience when local, regional, and national entities failed to recognize the needs and rights of people with disabilities.

At the front end of the Covid-19 pandemic, Larry actively engaged in two coalitions. As a member of the PPE for People with Disabilities Coalition, Larry joined the effort to ensure that people with disabilities in Chicagoland and their personal assistants had access to personal protective equipment. With the Institutional Rescue and Recovery Coalition, Larry advocated for residents of long-term facilities, who suffered an alarming mortality rate during the Covid-19 crisis.

Larry died on June 28, 2021.