





## THE MISSION

The Lucky Few Foundation is a global storytelling movement, shifting narratives to create a more inclusive world where everyone belongs. The Foundation ensures that family members, friends and loved ones of a person with Down syndrome have the opportunity to share what it means to be part of “the lucky few,” and everyone else has the opportunity to access it.

WE INVITE

YOU INTO

THE STORY



## HELLO FRIENDS!

If you've been following along for a bit you may be familiar with the work we have begun here at The Lucky Few Foundation where we're on mission to share a real and true Down syndrome story with the world.

### Why you may ask?

We tell the stories of the parents-who-are to offer a lens of love for the parents-to-be. Trading the fear of the unexpected, for trust in the goodness of what is. We tell the stories of the grandparents and aunties, teachers and coaches, co-workers and friends, each story peeling back the crusty, dark and toxic

narrative attaching a person's worth to their ability in order to shine a light on the intrinsic value and worth in every living, breathing, spectacular human with Down syndrome. We tell the stories to shift a narrative, making way for inclusion and belonging for all. **We invite you into the story.**

On behalf of the Board of Directors at The Lucky Few Foundation we invite you to join us in this narrative-shifting work helping us tell hundreds more stories. **Stories that open hearts, that shift narratives, that matter.**

*Heather & Josh Avis*

Founders of The Lucky Few Foundation



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THE

MOVEMENT

**The Lucky Few Foundation is a storytelling movement that highlights the humanity within a Down syndrome diagnosis.**

While the Avis family works as The Lucky Few brand, and Heather Avis writes and speaks as an advocate for inclusion, The Lucky Few Foundation is geared towards sharing the stage with others, emphasizing the importance of amplifying the voices of those who are commonly brushed aside. Sharing our experiences as people who know and love someone with Down syndrome allows people to see the beauty and magic within a Down syndrome diagnosis, and we know that there are millions of people out there who have similar stories. People whose intimate knowledge and understanding of Down syndrome, either as a person with DS or someone who loves them, can also change minds and hearts.







IT'S

OFFICIAL



**The Lucky Few Foundation officially launched on**

**March 1, 2022.** It's hard to believe that we have been in operation for only twelve months, considering the accomplishments we have been able to attain in our inaugural year. As we introduced the world to The Lucky Few Foundation and our mission to create a more inclusive world, we set to work to fund the This is Down Syndrome project, hosting our first live fundraising event, Storyschool Live. Just three short months after the launch, the first annual Storytelling Tour enabled us to connect with hundreds of people across five states. We wrapped our summer with the Lucky Mamas SoCal Retreat, growing the popular TLF X Ruby's Rainbow event for

mothers of children with Down syndrome. Finally, 2022 ended with the first annual Giving Tuesday online campaign, reaching donors and new supporters by leveraging the global online event.

In this initial year, the Foundation hired two part-time staff members and one volunteer to support the execution of the Avis's vision for the nonprofit. As we grow, we hope to develop a robust team of volunteers (and ultimately, staff) to further support The Lucky Few Foundation's mission to decrease the stigma of a Down syndrome diagnosis.

THE

VISION



The Lucky Few Foundation believes in a fully-inclusive world where our differences are not just accepted but are celebrated, embraced and encouraged. A world where everyone knows an actual living person with Down syndrome and what it means to be part of “the lucky few.”





CORE

VALUES

**INCLUSION**  
**INSPIRATION**  
**ADVOCACY**  
**AUTHENTICITY**  
**ENCOURAGEMENT**

We believe that everyone is worthy exactly as they are, and that different brings light. In a spirit of humility and being life-long learners, we are committed to presenting our message, products, and experiences in a beautiful, carefully crafted way that is real, relatable, and that has the utmost of integrity (including how we steward and manage our finances). We stand up for those who are overlooked, undervalued, and misunderstood, shifting the narrative in thought-provoking ways and moving people to action. We are committed to creatively and innovatively telling stories that light a spark and catalyze others to think and live differently, and are dedicated to cultivating a loving, warm, and kind culture and community.



**COLLABORATIONS**



**This year, we have prioritized working with other organizations in the Down syndrome community to further the Foundation's mission and to better serve our target audience.**

In 2022, The Lucky Few Foundation worked with local Down syndrome group, IVDSA (Inland Valley Down Syndrome Association) to showcase several families in their Little Steps (ages 0-3) support group. In April, the organization was recognized by Orange county nonprofit Love Out Loud, receiving \$10,100 to help fund the first storytelling tour. And during the summer storytelling tour, the Foundation worked with online community "Happiness is Down Syndrome"'s facilitator, Misty Coy Snyder and Gigi's Playhouse New Orleans to host storytelling events and photo sessions in their respective cities.







To celebrate Down Syndrome Awareness Month, NDSS, one of the nation's leading Down Syndrome advocacy groups, teamed up with The Lucky Few Foundation to spotlight young adults with Down syndrome as they shared what belonging meant to them. And finally, the annual Lucky Mamas Retreat continues to be co-hosted by The Lucky Few Foundation's President, Heather Avis, and Ruby's Rainbow co-founder Liz Plachta. These collaborations create strong connections and camaraderie within the Down syndrome community and beyond, and **The Lucky Few Foundation looks forward to strengthening the bonds we've created and initiating new ones as we promote our ideals of inclusivity.**

# EVENTS



## STORYSCHOOL

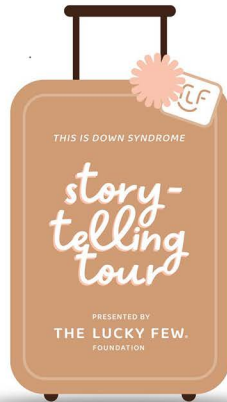
The first formal fundraising event to benefit The Lucky Few Foundation was 2022's StorySchool Live, hosted by storyteller and coach (and The Lucky Few Foundation board member) Katie Quesada. Eight unique, diverse speakers volunteered their time and talent to participate in the evening performance in Orange, CA. Approximately one hundred people attended the event, raising just over \$5,000 for the Foundation. This year, in 2023, we will host yet another StorySchool Live event, this time in Pasadena, CA. StorySchool's structure of bringing people together through authentic, compelling, and bite-sized stories is the ideal partnership for The Lucky Few Foundation with its dedication to shifting narratives. We look forward to continuing the event, sharing stories to fund stories.



## STORYTELLING TOUR

Last summer, the Foundation executed a successful tour, visiting five states in five weeks, including New Jersey (Morristown), Nauvoo (Alabama), New Orleans (Louisiana), Nantucket (Massachusetts) and South Carolina (Charleston). The hundreds of stories collected during the tour will be released throughout the year on social media and the Foundation's website. **Our aim is to hold one tour annually, visiting a variety of states across the country to establish a truly accurate representation of "the lucky few" in America.**

During the tour, the Avis family met with and collected the stories of over 200 people who know and love Down syndrome. Each family was invited to a dinner to meet each other and the Avis family, and the next day they enjoyed a professional photoshoot alongside anyone (cousins, grandparents, friends, therapists, teachers, neighbors etc...) interested in celebrating their loved one with an extra chromosome. Families are later given access to the photography so they can enjoy it for years to come.



# PROGRAMS





## THIS IS DOWN SYNDROME

The keystone program of The Lucky Few Foundation is the This is Down Syndrome project. This is Down Syndrome is an archive of authentic stories of people with Down syndrome and the people who love them. With stunning, top of the line photography and compelling short stories, the This is Down Syndrome project aims to attract mainstream audiences with its quality production, and impact readers with its heartfelt and honest portrayals of everyday people who truly know and understand Down syndrome. This is Down Syndrome works as a way to empower those who know and love life with an extra 21st chromosome by giving them the opportunity to share and celebrate their experiences, as well as acts as an archive for all people to see, learn about, and ultimately support and value individuals behind the diagnosis.



The Lucky Few Foundation's goal is to tell as many stories of Down syndrome as possible and create relational bridges between those who know and love someone with Down syndrome and those who don't. For example, someone learning their new neighbors have a child with Down syndrome could visit the Foundation's website, search "neighbor," and find several stories of people who are neighbors of someone with Down syndrome. The stories, then, provide real and true narratives to combat the fear or anxiety so commonly felt by those who are not personally connected to disabled persons. These stories shift harmful narratives based on outdated stereotypes, and create a more inclusive world.

**This year, the Foundation released over 200 stories to date and 4 micro-documentaries, and collected enough to continue publishing new stories until 2023's tour.**





## LUCKY MAMAS RETREATS

The brainchild of Ruby's Rainbow's Liz Plachta and The Lucky Few's Heather Avis, The Lucky Mamas SoCal Retreat is the Southern California iteration of the highly in-demand Lucky Mamas retreat in Austin, TX. The weekend is specially geared toward providing moms a weekend to relax and bond with others who truly understand the beautiful and difficult journey of motherhood in the Down syndrome sphere.

We know how taxing it can be to juggle doctor's appointments, therapy sessions, IEPs, etc... and we know moms of children with DS need extra support and self-care. The Lucky Mamas retreat is geared to provide just that, with a special emphasis in connecting moms with others who have been in their shoes. The retreat takes place in Ramona, CA, and attendees travel from across the country to attend.

Photo Credit: Dave Herring

# THE NUMBERS FOR 2022

We know that our efforts in shifting narratives and creating a more inclusive world would not have happened without the generous support of our donors, the Board of Directors and our hard working staff . With their help the following was made possible...

## EXPENSES

**\$15,978**

Lucky Mamas Retreat

**\$23,526.82**

General Operations

**\$31,093.55**

This is Down  
Syndrome Production

## INCOME

**\$12,850**

Proceeds from Lucky Mamas Retreat

**\$5091.48**

Proceeds from StorySchool Live Event

**\$4699.53**

Proceeds from Giving Tuesday

## NOTABLE

**250+** This is Down Syndrome  
Stories Captured & Published

**4** Short Documentary Films  
Produced & Released

**450**  
IG Posts

**6222**  
IG Followers

**495**  
FB Followers

**17**  
Patrons

**70+** Individual Donors

**8** Board Members

**2** Part-time staff

TOTAL  
DONATIONS

**\$74,919.31**

(Corporate & Individuals)

"True belonging never  
asks us to change who  
we are. True belonging  
requires us to be  
who we are."

- **BRENÉ BROWN**

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THE LUCKY FEW  
FOUNDATION

The Lucky Few Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.  
All donations are tax-deductible in full or in part. EIN: 86-2705908

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*Everyone belongs*