



THE BPI POLIKOFF-GAUTREUX FELLOWSHIP FOR A PUBLIC INTEREST LAWYER OR POLICY ANALYST

Application Deadline: October 14, 2016

Business and Professional People for the Public Interest (BPI), a Chicago-based nonprofit law and policy center, seeks a recent law or public policy graduate to serve as the Polikoff-Gautreaux Fellow for one year, renewable for a second, beginning in Summer or Fall 2017.

The Polikoff-Gautreaux Fellowship offers the opportunity for recent law school or public policy school graduates to develop the experience, skills and network critical to a rewarding career in public interest advocacy. Fellows have gone on to become judicial law clerks, the executive director of a nonprofit organization that serves youth interests, to practice affordable housing law, to accept a full-time staff position with BPI and more.

Since its founding in 1969, BPI has worked to create a just society. Today BPI strives to resolve compelling issues of social justice and quality of life in the Chicago region by addressing the challenges of urban poverty, increasing housing and educational opportunity, building vital communities, and improving Illinois' criminal justice system. Considered one of Chicago's most tenacious and versatile advocates for the public interest, BPI's lawyers and policy specialists engage in legal and policy research, advocacy, organizing, litigation, and collaboration with nonprofit, community, business, academic, and governmental organizations. BPI is a recipient of the MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions.

REQUIREMENTS of the Fellowship are:

- Either a JD or MA/MS in public policy or related field (by Fellowship start)
- Demonstrated interest or experience in one of BPI's program areas
- Accomplished oral and writing skills
- Strong academic record
- Initiative, creativity and flexibility
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively with a variety of organizations, constituent groups, government agencies, and civic leaders.

Fellows receive an annual salary of \$52,000 with medical and dental coverage. Debt service on law school or graduate school loans for the duration of the Fellowship may be available, based on need.

Send résumé, writing sample, references and a cover letter detailing interest in the position by **Friday, October 14, 2016** to fellowships@bpichicago.org or via postal mail (postmarked by October 14, 2016) to:

**Business and Professional People for the Public Interest
Polikoff-Gautreaux Fellowship
25 East Washington Street, Suite 1515
Chicago, Illinois 60602
312-641-5570**

www.bpichicago.org

BPI is an equal opportunity employer. Persons of color are strongly encouraged to apply.



SOME ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE BPI POLIKOFF-GAUTREAUX FELLOWSHIP

WHY THE “POLIKOFF-GAUTREAUX” FELLOWSHIP?

The Fellowship was created in 1999 to honor Alexander Polikoff who served as BPI's Executive Director for 29 years, and Dorothy Gautreaux, the public housing activist who gave her name to Polikoff's most significant lawsuit. Through the landmark *Gautreaux* lawsuit, Polikoff has helped thousands of public housing residents live in non-segregated communities throughout Chicago and changed the face of federal public housing policy.

WHY WAS BPI CREATED? WHAT HAS IT ACCOMPLISHED?

BPI was founded in 1969 by prominent Chicago businessman and social activist Gordon Sherman on the premise that the business and professional community has a special responsibility to confront the problems of modern society. Assembling a small group of like-minded supporters, he created BPI to fight for the public interest. Since its inception, BPI's accomplishments illustrate the organization's wide-ranging commitment to equal justice and a better quality of life for all Chicagoans. For example, through a combination of legal and policy advocacy BPI:

- Helped improve life opportunities for thousands of victims of racial discrimination by the Chicago Housing Authority
- Led a successful legislative initiative to increase the availability of affordable housing in the job-rich Chicago suburbs
- Launched a community-wide effort in a neighborhood comprised largely of public housing to ensure that neighborhood children from birth to eight (and their families) are supported with programs and services that promote the intellectual, emotional, and physical well-being necessary for future educational and life success
- Partnered with the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice to develop a blueprint of system reform with a detailed action plan

WHAT WORK DO FELLOWS PERFORM?

As a result of the diverse range of issues BPI's work addresses and the complicated political dilemmas they present, working at BPI requires a variety of skills, creativity, and a willingness to go beyond traditional legal remedies to bring about social change. During a typical day, a BPI attorney or policy analyst might do any of the following:

- Negotiate the components of a site plan for a new mixed-income community in a working group of public housing residents, community members, housing developers, the Chicago Housing Authority and City of Chicago staff
- Conduct research and determine priorities for early education programs serving low income communities
- Conduct research for and assist in drafting municipal ordinances and state legislation to address the foreclosure and vacant property crisis
- Draft a motion to allow for the construction of public housing within the context of a new mixed-income community
- Develop policy proposals and legislation to reform the Illinois criminal justice system

WHAT DO FELLOWS SAY ABOUT THE FELLOWSHIP?

- *In my first six months as a Fellow, I had the opportunity to research complex legal issues for BPI's pro bono representation of Chicago's Inspector General in a case before the Illinois Supreme Court, participate in community meetings relating to the education-focused redevelopment of a historic public housing complex, and analyze local and federal public housing policies and programs – all while learning from committed and accomplished colleagues.*

Emily Blumberg, 2011 Fellow

- *BPI is one of the few places in the country where you can combine law, policy research, advocacy and organizing strategies in order to make a difference on major public equity issues confronting our society today. For people who want to bring about social change, the Polikoff-Gautreaux Fellowship is a perfect fit.*

Nick Brunick, 2000 Fellow
President, BPI Board of Directors

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