BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE FOR THE PUBLIC INTEREST RECEIVES
MAC ARTHUR AWARD FOR CREATIVE AND EFFECTIVE INSTITUTIONS

MacArthur Foundation names Chicago law and policy center BPI a 2012 honoree

[Chicago, IL], February 16, 2012 – Today the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation named Business and Professional People for the Public Interest (BPI) a recipient of the MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions. The MacArthur Award, which recognizes BPI’s efforts to creatively address pressing social justice challenges in Chicago and the region, provides a grant of $750,000.

“The need for public interest advocacy is greater than ever. We face massive challenges in housing and education, with the negative effects of poverty and the foreclosure crisis a daily threat for thousands of families. The MacArthur Award will significantly strengthen BPI’s ability to develop and advance policies that help improve life outcomes for struggling families and help us to identify how we can best move this work forward in the future,” said Hoy McConnell, BPI Executive Director.

Founded in 1969, BPI is a public interest law and policy center that works to strengthen impoverished Chicago neighborhoods, preserve and increase affordable housing throughout the Chicago region, improve Chicago’s public schools, and promote open and honest government in Illinois. BPI will use its award to shape future strategic initiatives, support key investments in its Polikoff-Gautreaux Fellowship Endowment Fund, and upgrade communication tools including a newly designed website.

BPI is one of only 15 organizations from six countries to be recognized today with the MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions. “From Chicago to Kampala, these extraordinary organizations demonstrate exceptional creativity and effectiveness,” said MacArthur President Robert Gallucci. “They provide new ways to address old problems. They generate provocative ideas and they reframe well-worn debates. And their impact is altogether disproportionate to their size.”

The MacArthur Award not only recognizes an organization’s past leadership and success but also provides a significant investment in its future. The Foundation does not seek or accept nominations for these awards. To qualify, organizations must demonstrate exceptional creativity and effectiveness; have reached a critical or strategic point in their development; show strong leadership and stable financial management; have previously received MacArthur support; and engage in work central to one of MacArthur’s core programs.

About the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
The MacArthur Foundation supports creative people and effective institutions committed to building a more just, verdant, and peaceful world. In addition to selecting the MacArthur Fellows, the Foundation works to defend human rights, advance global conservation and security, make cities better places, and understand how technology is affecting children and society. More information is at www.macfound.org.

About Business and Professional People for the Public Interest
Founded in 1969, BPI is a Chicago-based public interest law and policy center that seeks out and addresses important issues of social justice and quality of life in the Chicago region. Currently BPI works to preserve and increase affordable housing, transform public housing and strengthen Chicago communities, improve Chicago’s public schools, and promote open and honest government in Illinois. Considered one of Chicago’s most tenacious and versatile advocates for the public interest, BPI lawyers and policy specialists use legal and policy research, advocacy, litigation, organizing and collaboration with nonprofit, business, community and governmental organizations to accomplish the organization’s mission. More information is at www.bpichicago.org.