



BPI IS NOW:

IMPACT FOR EQUITYSM

Combating injustice together

2022 IMPACT REPORT

Dear Friends,

We are delighted to extend a warm welcome to you as we present our Impact Report for 2022.

This past year has been a testament to the unwavering commitment of our team, our supporters, and our partners who believe in the power of collective action to bring about meaningful change. We have been able to take bold and transformative steps towards racial, economic, and social justice in Chicago and throughout Illinois because of dedicated supporters like you.

Redressing structural racism is fundamental to Impact for Equity's social justice mission, and it is central to all of our program areas. Our work targets the fundamental structural inequities in major societal systems and the racialized economic disparities that are the predictable outcomes of those inequities. As we work to make systems more equitable, we are committed to ensuring that those most directly affected by transformative change play an active role in developing it.

Our housing and community development initiatives focus on promoting housing choices across the Chicago region, including for families living in or seeking affordable housing. We work to expand housing options, increase access to public and affordable housing, and promote investment in neighborhoods. In our criminal legal system initiatives, we advocate for policies and practices that create and protect alternatives to the criminal legal system, that promote justice and accountability, and that seek equitable outcomes for those impacted by the criminal legal system in Illinois. That work includes pursuing police accountability in order to increase public safety, promote racial justice, and enact systemic police reforms.

This Report bears witness to the combined impact we have achieved. As we reflect on the milestones reached, challenges overcome, and lives changed, we invite you to celebrate with us. Your partnership is an essential ingredient in our shared work toward a better future.

The challenges that lie ahead are significant, but they are not insurmountable. Together, we will advocate for a just and equitable society and create pathways for every person to live their fullest life in a thriving community free of systemic barriers.

Please reach out to us with any questions, feedback, or ideas. We value your partnership and look forward to continuing this journey with you by our side.

Once again, welcome to our Impact Report for 2022. Thank you for your steadfast support.

With our deepest gratitude,

Cara Hendrickson
Executive Director

Jonathan Kaden
President of the Board of Directors



P.S. We encourage you to share your thoughts and reflections with us on social media. Let's continue the conversation and inspire others to join our cause.

[@impactforequity](#)





Meeting the Moment:

A CHANGE FOR EQUITY

Since its founding in 1969, we have been a catalyst for racial, economic, and social justice in Chicago and Illinois.

Originally named Businessmen for the Public Interest, and later renamed Business and Professional People for the Public Interest or BPI, we were founded with the belief that the public interest should be served by fierce advocates who take on pressing issues of inequity with determination and fearlessness. Over more than fifty years, we have grown from a small public interest law firm to one of Chicago's most respected law and policy centers.

To best serve our mission, we continue to evolve. We asked you — our partners, supporters, and stakeholders — and you told us, in one voice, that our work has evolved beyond the name BPI. **We listened to your insights, and this year we acted to change our name to Impact for Equity.**

The process that brought us to this decision was grounded in collaboration, determination, effectiveness, equity, and integrity, the values that guide our organization and our work.

Our new name, Impact for Equity, expresses who we are: an organization that seeks justice through meaningful action. It is, in many ways, a north star for our future as an organization.

Making an Impact for Equity is how we will achieve:

- Fair, affordable housing free of barriers
- A state where fewer people have contact with the criminal legal system and
- Community safety in which police and government resources meet the needs of the communities they serve
- And a region where everyone has the right and opportunity to live their fullest life in a thriving community free of systemic barriers.

Continue to stand with us in this work, as we combat injustice together.



OUR VISION FOR IMPACT

Combatting the systems at the root of inequity: housing and the criminal legal system

At Impact for Equity, we envision a world where every person has the right and opportunity to live their fullest life in a thriving community free of systemic barriers. Across Chicago and Illinois, housing instability is a “revolving door” to the criminal legal system — two structural crises that interact with one another, further exacerbating their detrimental impact on communities. Policies and practices carried out by these two systems have long resulted in racial and economic segregation, community disinvestment, disproportionate mortality rates, mass incarceration, over-policing, and other systemic inequities.

To achieve our organization’s vision, we focus on two program areas — housing and the criminal legal system — to work to achieve our mission of eliminating systemic barriers to equity and to fight for racial, economic, and social justice.

The enduring legacy of redlining and residential racial segregation casts a long shadow over our communities, and the systematic criminalization of Black, Latine, and marginalized people both reflects and amplifies the patterns of residential segregation and disinvestment across our city and state. Residentially segregated and disinvested communities of color lack fairly distributed resources, and they are disproportionately targeted by law enforcement, leading to increased criminalization and incarceration of Black and Latine people. Involvement with the criminal legal system creates further isolation, discrimination, and barriers to resources and opportunities, including housing. Those affected by incarceration often experience disruptions and stigmatization including barriers to safe, affordable housing.

As our work evolves, we recognize that historical and continued disinvestment and oppression has resulted in these deep, interwoven injustices. It is our hope that together, we can aim to create a more safe, transparent, and accountable system and reduce the harms experienced by Black, Latine, and other people of color.



Housing

Representing Chicago’s public housing residents

Impact for Equity serves as legal representative for Chicago’s public housing residents and applicants in the *Gautreaux v. Chicago Housing Authority* desegregation lawsuit, dating back to 1966. On behalf of those residents, we participate in ten stakeholder working groups focused on the development of mixed-income communities across Chicago and work to promote authentic housing choices for residents. As the only non-governmental organization participating in all of the working groups across the city, our team continued in 2022 to amplify resident voices in those groups, assist in planning for the construction of public and affordable housing, and ensure compliance with other development requirements included in the *Gautreaux* settlement agreement with the Chicago Housing Authority.

Removing barriers from the criminal legal system to housing

We believe safe and affordable housing is a fundamental right. Without it, individuals with conviction or arrest histories are at an increased risk of housing instability and experiencing homelessness, which

can increase the risk of interacting with the criminal legal system. Along with other national, state, and local organizations, we called on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to issue new regulations and guidance that strengthen and reaffirm a person’s right to assisted housing, protecting those impacted by the criminal legal system. Our team made more than a dozen recommendations to update HUD’s admission policies to recenter the accountability on HUD to readdress, not perpetuate, the collateral consequences of a criminal legal system involvement in access to housing.

Creating communities that center residents’ belonging

While efforts have been made to construct mixed-income communities on former public housing sites across Chicago, less focus has been placed on creating communities that intentionally amplify the voice and belonging of the residents within those communities. We believe that resident-centered community building is a key component of a thriving and inclusive community. Through ongoing conversations with our partners and community residents, Impact for Equity organized a first-of-its-kind convening of residents, community building staff, property managers,

developers, owners, and national stakeholders from across Chicago and the country to learn from each other and work to create positive change. The lessons learned from this critical city-wide conversation, including the need to provide intentional, institutional support for community building, now drive our work to ensure that we are building and investing in communities as places of true ownership and belonging for those who live there.

Featuring *Gautreaux* in national civil rights clearinghouse

The Civil Rights Litigation Clearinghouse at the University of Michigan makes records of significant civil rights litigation available to build civil rights advocacy across the country. In 2022, the Clearinghouse was expanded to feature an extensive record of *Gautreaux v. Chicago Housing Authority*, including thousands of pages of court documents covering more than four decades of litigation. We celebrated this prominent event with a panel conversation focused on equity and justice in housing and the future of civil rights litigation as a mechanism for structural reform featuring Margo Schlanger, Professor of Law at the University of Michigan, and Norrinda Hayat, Associate Professor of Law and Director of the Civil Justice Clinic at Rutgers Law School.



Calling out challenges and opportunities in creating affordable housing

The city of Chicago has about 120,000 fewer units of affordable housing than it needs, and across the State of Illinois, that gap rises to nearly 300,000 units. Impact for Equity hosted a discussion among community members, advocates, affordable housing developers, and government officers regarding the challenges and opportunities of creating affordable housing in Chicago. Panelists Charlton Hamer, Senior Vice President at the Habitat Affordable Group, Marisa Novara, Commissioner at the Department of Housing for the city of Chicago, and Stacie Young, President & CEO of the Community Investment Corporation identified gaps and strategies in the preservation and creation of affordable housing, along with projects that serve as models for best practices.

Investing in breaking down barriers to economic mobility for families in Cook County

Widespread systemic inequities, which are maintained across systems and institutions, particularly impact families of color, creating high barriers to attaining the prerequisites for economic mobility, including

wealth accumulation, meaningful employment, quality education, and adequate health care. Impact for Equity and partners at Brightpoint, MDRC, and the Chicago Housing Authority, launched an effort to determine whether a package of family-centered coaching, employment, and other services would help families with low income who receive federal Housing Choice Vouchers to surmount those barriers. Impact for Equity leads this ongoing research effort and aids hundreds of families across Cook County.

Fighting for measurable strategies to increase affordable, accessible housing in Chicago

Fair and accessible housing allows people to live where they choose, free of discrimination. Part of our strategy to advance more equitable structures across Chicago is to hold institutions of power accountable. Impact for Equity partnered with a dozen other organizations to call on the city of Chicago to commit to measurable action steps to advance fair housing and create a more just and inclusive City. Alongside other members of the Advisory Committee for the Cook County Regional Assessment of Fair Housing, we urged the City to utilize the We Will Chicago comprehensive planning

process to incorporate previously identified, specific strategies to increase and preserve affordable, accessible housing options across the City.

Criminal Legal Systems

Creating a state where justice is not reliant on the criminal legal system

Coalition building is one of the many tools Impact for Equity utilizes to reduce silos and advance our work forward collectively. Impact for Equity is a leading partner of the Justice 20/20 Network, a coalition of policy advocates, grassroots organizers, community members, and those directly impacted by the criminal legal system. Together, we seek to eliminate the harms of the criminal legal system, disrupt the cycle of criminalization and incarceration, and support the creation of community conditions that lead to “no entry” into the system. Justice 20/20 is a vehicle for participants to collaborate, share information and potential opportunities, build shared narratives, and strategize about how to achieve common goals.



Expanding quality higher education programming in Illinois prisons

Despite the many benefits of higher education in prison, higher education programming is available to less than 3% of individuals incarcerated in Illinois prisons. Drawing from our work with the Illinois Coalition for Higher Education in Prison and Freedom to Learn, Impact for Equity released a policy report, *Higher Education in Prison: Understanding its Power and Fulfilling its Promise in Illinois*, that makes recommendations for expanding quality higher education programming throughout the state’s prisons. To amplify the need and paths forward, we hosted a panel discussion including Dr. Christina Rivers, a professor at DePaul University, Angel Pantoja, a former student, and Rep. Carol Ammons, legislative champion of a task force to study higher education in prison. In order to build additional opportunities to provide higher education in prison, and we presented at the Illinois Latino Council on Higher Education’s annual conference.



Building community to address the current state of policing

Impact for Equity brought together more than 100 stakeholders to consider the current state of policing in Chicago. Hosted in-person at the Jenner & Block office in Chicago, Sharon Fairley, Professor from Practice at the University of Chicago Law School, Robert Boik, Former Executive Director of Constitutional Policing and Reform for Chicago Police Department, and Oswaldo Gomez, Vice-President of the Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability, served as panelists. Shareese Pryor, former Impact for Equity Senior Staff Counsel and Director of Criminal Legal System and Police Accountability served as moderator. We identified the need to move forward with deep, transformational change at the CPD with urgency.

Advocating for urgent action to implement federal consent decree in Chicago policing

Despite the entry of a federal consent decree that sets out a pathway to reform, the Chicago Police Department’s progress in implementing transformational change is far behind the requirements for reform. Impact for Equity advocates for CPD’s

compliance with the federal consent decree. We have testified in federal court urging swift action; promoted public accessibility of the independent monitor reports through summaries of outstanding issues; provided testimony to the Chicago City Council Public Safety Committee; and engaged with media to provide thought leadership about independent monitor report findings.

Implementing the most democratic civilian oversight system in the country

Impact for Equity continues our deep involvement in the co-creation of community oversight of policing in Chicago. Building on the historic creation of the Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability and local, district councils across the city of Chicago, we continued our work with the Grassroots Alliance for Police Accountability (GAPA) to ensure implementation of the most democratic civilian oversight system in the country. We worked to raise public awareness of these new structures, we urged public officials to take the steps necessary to nominate and appoint the interim commission, we developed materials and conducted training to educate people and community

organizations around the city about how to get involved, and we helped lay the groundwork for the first-ever election of district councilors. And, we submitted community-based priorities and qualifications for the commission to consider in their selection of candidates for police superintendent. We have already begun to invest in the Commission as a tool for change, calling for a Chicago Police Department policy to eliminate officer involvement in white supremacist organizations and hate groups.

Pressing for prioritizing community safety in police policy

Foot pursuits by police officers present serious dangers to those involved and the community, but until recently, the Chicago Police Department had no policy setting out the parameters of foot chases. Impact for Equity worked with a coalition of lawyers and advocates in the Latine community galvanized by the deaths of Adam Toledo and Anthony Alvarez, who were both shot and killed by CPD as a result of foot pursuits. The group advocated for foot pursuit policies that value community safety and dignity. In response to our efforts, CPD issued a policy that reflects many of those recommendations in 2022.



Championing a blueprint for peace in Illinois

Impact for Equity participated in the Illinois Blueprint for Peace coalition, a group committed to advocating for proven approaches to bring peace and healing to our communities. The Blueprint aims to increase healing for those impacted by gun violence, to reduce gun violence by addressing the underlying trauma that shapes decisions to carry guns, and to reduce the carceral responses to gun violence. Our contributions to the

recommendations are reflected in the Blueprint report, published in June 2022.

Insisting on transparency and community safety in City budgeting

Despite an allocation of more than \$2 billion, the Chicago Police Department budget lacks basic elements of transparency and investments that create community safety. In collaboration with the

Justice 20/20 Network, Impact for Equity identified concerns regarding the proposed FY2023 CPD budget. On behalf of several organizations, Impact for Equity urged the City Council Budget Committee and the Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability to require more investment in community resources that support public safety and more transparency around the rationale for police spending and the true costs of policing in Chicago.

Building Public Interest

We invited various change-makers across Chicago to partner with us to address critical moments in 2022. Our *Building Public Interest* series created opportunities to inform, educate, and activate broad and diverse audiences.



FEBRUARY

Health Equity and the Pandemic

This event explored the sources of racial disparities in public health outcomes and the efforts to address those inequalities.

MAY

The Right to Choose and the Broader Fight for Rights

This discussion focused on the intersection between loss of reproductive health care and its impact on Black and Latine and low-income women.

JULY

Civil Rights Litigation as a Tool for Social Change

Our panelists discussed equity and justice in housing and the future of civil rights litigation as a mechanism for structural reform.

JULY

Chicago's New Inspector General

We interviewed Chicago's then-new Inspector General, Deborah Witzburg, who oversees the office that promotes effectiveness, efficiency, and integrity by identifying corruption and mismanagement in the City of Chicago.

AUGUST

Opportunities and Challenges in the Creation of Affordable Housing

This event included a robust discussion of models for the creation and preservation of affordable housing and challenges uniquely inherent to this work.

NOVEMBER

The Current State of Policing and Looking Ahead

Our panelists discussed the opportunities for transformational change in policing, along with the current barriers to achieving that vision.

Pictured from left: Deborah Witzburg, Chicago Inspector General; Ruqaiyah Yearby, professor and member of the Center for Health Law Studies at Saint Louis University School of Law; Charlton Hamer, Senior Vice President at the Habitat Affordable Group; Margo Schlanger, Professor of Law at the University of Michigan



Celebrating *Forging Ahead* for racial, economic, and social justice

In June, we held our first in-person annual event in three years at the Chicago History Museum. *Forging Ahead* saw hundreds of our existing and new supporters come together in celebration of our work and to recognize Leon Walker of DL3 Realty as Champion of the Public Interest and Candace Moore as our BPI Alumni of the Year.

Centering equity, inclusion, and shared power

Grounded in our 2021 strategic plan, Impact for Equity has focused on the priorities of equity, inclusion, and shared power and integrating those principles into the fabric of our organization. We aim to put into practice - in all facets of our work - organizational policies, culture, and principles that will move us toward our vision of shared power. We have developed a continuous loop of reflective practice and training, incorporating measurable assessments to inform our strategy as an organization.

These values inform how we show up in the community, work in partnership with our coalition members, produce research and reports, organize convenings, and champion solutions. Our organization is committed to creating, implementing, and continuously improving our organizational policies and practices to ensure diverse leadership and staff at all levels, value individual lived experience, and promote opportunities for each to collectively achieve our mission. In 2022, we provided racial equity leadership training to all board members and staff, created various staff practice and learning groups, and underwent an extensive revision of our hiring and employee retention practices to ensure they are aligned with our values.

As we look forward to the future, we embrace our commitment to these values with a resolve to continuously learn and evolve.

Developing the next generation of social justice leaders

Our fellowship and internship programs - including the Polikoff-Gautreaux program - are a vital aspect of leadership and change-making at Impact for Equity. We hire a recent law or policy school graduate each fall to become a Polikoff-Gautreaux Fellow for a two-year term. Fellows are fully integrated into Impact for Equity's staff as attorneys and policy analysts. Additionally, we periodically host other post-graduate law fellows including but not limited to Skadden and Equal Justice Works fellows. We also host law and policy summer and academic-year interns and externs who individually and in collaboration within one of our program areas assist Impact for Equity legal and policy staff to advance program priorities.



“Impact for Equity’s understanding that social justice issues don’t exist in a vacuum and its willingness to combine legal, policy, and advocacy tools really aligns with my values. The Polikoff-Gautreaux Fellowship provides me with an opportunity to dive deeply into important issues and address complex systemic inequities. **It meant a lot to find an organization whose fight for justice is inspired by a deep love for people.** I’m excited to continue exploring how to use who I am and the skills I build to help build a society without systemic oppression.”

Ashley Meeder
Polikoff-Gautreaux Fellow





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Martin Cozzola

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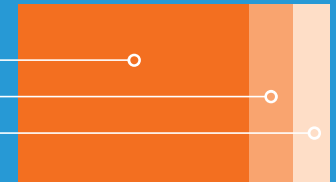
Financials

Sources and Uses of Funds: January 1–December 31, 2022 (actual)

Source of Funds	Amount	Percentage
Foundations	2,254,316	72%
Individuals	344,126	11%
Employee Retention Credit	209,855	7%
Fellowships/ Internships	116,000	4%
Miscellaneous	1,200	0%
Endowment Funds	190,290	6%
Total	3,115,787	



Uses of Funds	Amount	Percentage
Program Services	2,305,131	74%
Administration	435,839	14%
Fundraising	374,816	12%
Total	3,115,787	



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As of August, 2023

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Contributions made in 2023 will be included in next year's Impact Report.

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About Impact for Equity

An innovative public interest law and policy center, Impact for Equity combats systemic barriers to equity and fights for racial, economic, and social justice.

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