The mission of the Baker Institute is to help bridge the gap between the theory and practice of public policy by drawing together experts from academia, government, media, business and nongovernmental organizations. By involving policymakers and scholars, as well as students (tomorrow’s policymakers and scholars), the institute seeks to improve the debate on selected public policy issues and to make a difference in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policy, both domestic and international. The Baker Institute is an integral part of Rice University, one of the nation’s most distinguished institutions of higher education. The efforts of Baker Institute fellows and affiliated Rice faculty focus on several ongoing research projects, details of which can be found on the institute’s Web site, http://bakerinstitute.org.

The Shell Distinguished Lecture Series

The Shell Distinguished Lecture Series is the Baker Institute’s flagship speakers program, reflecting the vision of our honorary chair, former Secretary of State James A. Baker, III, and Shell’s commitment to defining the role of statesmanship, integrity and bold leadership in meeting the challenges of the 21st century. The ability of the Baker Institute to attract world leaders to the Rice campus, in combination with Shell’s generous support, has helped make the institute one of the nation’s most widely recognized and respected public policy think tanks. Inaugurated in 1995, the series has hosted distinguished guests including President Bill Clinton, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Nobel Peace Prize winner Nelson Mandela and King Abdullah II of Jordan.

Energy Forum

Located in Houston, Texas, the energy capital of the world, the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy has created a multifaceted program designed to promote original, forward-looking discussion and research on the energy-related challenges facing our society in the 21st century. The mission of the Energy Forum is to shed light on important trends—both regional and global—that shape the nature of global energy markets and influence the quantity and security of vital supplies needed to fuel world economic growth and prosperity. The choice of the word “forum” is deliberate. It reflects the group’s goal to serve as a focal point for the exchange of ideas on how to improve understanding of the complex political, cultural, religious, economic and social forces that influence open access to energy resources and their equitable distribution.

How Many Lightbulbs Does it Take to Plug in an Electric Car?

Monday, September 21, 2009

Doré Commons
James A. Baker III Hall
Rice University
Chris Paine
Writer and Director of “Who Killed the Electric Car?”

Chris Paine’s “Who Killed the Electric Car?” premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2006. The documentary, which detailed the demise of General Motors’ EV-1 electric vehicles and the behind-the-scenes politics, went on to win numerous awards and was the third highest-grossing theatrical documentary that year.

Previously, Paine executive produced “Faster” with Ewan McGregor about the world’s fastest motorcycle race, and “No Maps For These Territories” about science fiction writer William Gibson. He also produced for the MTV series “BUZZ” and assisted writer Michael Tolkin on the feature film “The Player.” Television appearances include “The Daily Show with Jon Stewart” (2006) and “Nightline” (2009).

His current film projects include “Charge!” about the world’s first electric motorcycle race (2010) and “Revenge of the Electric Car” (2011).

Paine is also the founder of Internet Outfitters, which went public as AppNet in 1999. His previous company, Mondo-tronics, provided materials for the Mars Pathfinder mission. More recently, he purchased and remodeled “The Marrakesh House,” a green events residence in Los Angeles.

Paine studied documentaries with Jon Else at Stanford University and theater with Sanford Meisner. He received a degree in international relations from Colgate University, and currently lives in Los Angeles.