



News, Research and Events

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Photo by John Moore/Getty Images

Q&A: Fallout from Afghanistan

Since U.S. troops began leaving Afghanistan in May, a spiraling military, humanitarian and political crisis has left many looking for answers. [Joe Barnes](#), a former career State Department diplomat and now the Baker Institute's Bonner Means Baker Fellow, provides his perspective in a Q&A for the Baker Institute Blog. [Click here to read.](#)

Latest research



Iran: Triumph of the hardliners

With the election of conservative Ebrahim Raisi as Iran's new president, a faction of the country's hardline leaders is poised to usher in a new era — one that will begin with Iran on a collision course with the United States, writes Middle East fellow [Mohammad Ayatollahi Tabaar](#) in *Foreign Affairs* magazine.



War on Drugs: Sobering lessons from Texas

Although Texans broadly support relaxing cannabis laws and other criminal justice reforms, state leaders are continuing the war on drugs and other policies that “propagate systemic racism,” writes drug policy fellow [Katharine Neill Harris](#) in a new [brief](#).

“Last year, we saw the biggest one-year decline in global oil demand on record ... This year, however, we’re likely to see the biggest increase ever recorded in oil demand.”

[Mark Finley](#), Fellow in Energy and Global Oil, to the [GailFosler Group](#)

Accolades

Baker Institute’s soil carbon offset protocol recognized. [BCarbon](#), a standard developed by the Baker Institute to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it in the soil as organic carbon, has been rated as [one of the best publicly available protocols](#) for soil carbon offsets by the nonprofit [CarbonPlan](#). BCarbon is co-led by [Jim Blackburn](#), a Baker Institute Rice faculty scholar and the co-director of Rice’s SSPEED Center, and [Kenneth Medlock](#), the James A. Baker, III, and Susan G. Baker Fellow in Energy and Resource Economics and senior director of the [Center for Energy Studies](#). Robin Rather, CEO of Austin-based Collective Strength, is the group’s facilitator.



Norman awarded prize for early-career scholars. Congratulations to Middle East fellow [Kelsey Norman](#), who won the [2021 Emerging Scholars Policy Prize](#) from the Perry World House at the University of Pennsylvania and *Foreign Affairs*! The competition asks emerging scholars to turn academic policy research into an accessible essay for policymakers. *Foreign Affairs* will publish Norman's entry, "Asylum Can't be Outsourced: The Danger of Politically Convenient Solutions to Migration," on a future date.

Events

Webinar — The improvised war: Former President Felipe Calderón and Mexico's War on Drugs. Baker Institute Mexico experts Tony Payan and Guadalupe Correa-Cabrera discuss their book on Mexico's drug war during the Calderón administration. **Sept. 9 | 11 a.m.** [Click here to register or for more information.](#)

In case you missed it — Climate change aspirations and the viability of small developing countries: A conversation with the Honorable Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo, VP of Guyana. The [Center for Energy Studies](#) hosted Guyana's vice president for a conversation on several nations' responses to climate change, from the perspective of small developing countries. Are comprehensive policies in place or being developed to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 and fulfill enhanced pledges to reduce greenhouse gas emissions? Or is this another round of "greenwashing"? [Watch the event video, recorded on Aug. 17, here.](#)

Check out our [Events page](#) in the coming weeks for new fall programming!

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